

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

PayPal

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for the *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_whs_01.php



Photographs kindly lent by

Mr. Arthur Mounford, Warrington.

**THE COTTAGE OF JOHN AND ALICE CROSS,
BOOTHBANK, CHESHIRE.**

“MRS. W——.”

(1) Letters, Mrs. W—— to J. W., *Arm. Mag.*, 1781; dated 18, 23, 30 April, 2 May, 30 July, 1761.

(2) J. W., *Journal*, 14 Sep., 1763; 17, 18, 19 Sep.; 1 Oct., 1764.

(3) Letter, J. W. to Miss T., *Works*, xii, 243; Bristol, 29 Sep., 1764.

If the above-noted letters and entries in the *Journal* are read in the order of their dates there will be given to us, by her self-revelation, and by Wesley's not unkindly descriptive criticisms, a living character-portrait of “Mrs. W——,” whom I should be glad to identify.

On 17 Sep., 1764, Wesley rode over from Bath to “Comb-Grove, a house built in a large grove on the side of a high, steep hill.” The house, which is still standing, overlooks the village of Monckton Combe, and is just under Combe Down, all well-known localities in the neighbourhood of Bath.¹ “I found,” he says, “Mrs. W——the same still, with regard to her liveliness, but not her wildness; in this she was much altered.” He preached to “a small, serious congregation,” such, we may presume, as one of the large rooms of the house, or the hall, would hold. “Afterwards we all spent an hour in singing and in serious conversation. The fire kindled more and more, till Mrs. W——asked if I would give her leave to pray. Such a prayer I never heard before. It was perfectly an original; odd and unconnected, made up of disjointed fragments, and yet like a flame of fire. Every sentence went through my heart, and I believe the heart of everyone present. For many months I have found nothing like it. It was good for me to be there.” He remained at Combe Grove for the night, and “preached again in the court-yard at 7 [a.m.], and it was now that one of the servants, who was in tears the night before, was thoroughly convinced that God had blotted out her sins.” The preacher left Combe Grove in the course of the morning, and “preached at Freshford at

1. An illustration of Combe Grove was given in *Meth. Rec.*, Winter Number, 1907, p. 57.

noon." From Freshford and Bradford-on-Avon he was back again at Combe Grove on the Wednesday, preaching there at 9 a.m., after a service at Bradford at 5-0 a.m. "I found again that God was" at Combe Grove. And then he pauses in his succinct narrative to characterise Mrs. W——, for of course it is she. "Is not this an instance of ten thousand of God's choosing the foolish things of the world to confound the wise?—Here is one that has not only a weak natural understanding, but an impetuosity of temper, bordering upon madness; and hence both her sentiments are confused, and her expressions odd and indigested; and yet, notwithstanding this, more of the real power of God attended these uncouth expressions than the sensible discourses of even good men who have twenty-times her understanding. Thus have I many times known God to attach his power to the words of extremely weak men. The humble overlooked the weakness of the men, and rejoiced in the power of God. But all his power is unacknowledged, unfelt, by those who stumble at the weakness of the instrument." The whole record is an interesting revelation of the man Wesley, as really as of the lady of whom he writes.

"I found Mrs. W—— the same still," he says, "but in her wildness . . . she is much altered." The words of comparison lead us backward to the previous year, 1763. On 14 September he is at Bath. After preaching, in Avon Street, as I suppose, he says, "I was not a little refreshed by the conversation of one lately come from London, notwithstanding an irregularity of thought, almost peculiar to herself. How much preferable is her irregular warmth to the cold wisdom of them that despise her? How gladly would I be as she is, taking her wildness and fervour together!" No name or initial is given, but we need not hesitate in identifying the visitor to Bath in 1763 with Mrs. W—— of the following year. The character-portrait belongs to the same remarkable personality.

He remained in Bristol until Monday, 1 October, 1764, and on his way towards Bradford-on-Avon, for Devizes and London, he gave another sermon at Combe Grove "to a small congregation of earnest, simple people," Mrs. W——, her household and neighbours, as we may conjecture. But whilst still in Bristol he had written on the Saturday, 29 Sep., to his correspondent Miss T——, a letter in which he incidentally describes Mrs. W—— to her, and the lines of the portraiture are those of the paragraphs we have been studying. "Have this faith and you have salvation. And this is the very thing you want. When that is joined to a

PROCEEDINGS.

strong understanding, it is well: But it may exist with a very weak one. This is the case with Mrs. W——, whose understanding is extremely weak; and yet she has strong faith, and such as exceedingly profits me; though I take knowledge that the treasure is in an earthen vessel. I see all that is of nature; but this does not hinder my rejoicing in that which is of grace. This is one branch of Christian simplicity." So far we may feel that we tread upon sure ground in our study of this lady.²

Further, a most important contribution to our knowledge of Mrs. W—— is made by herself in a series of religious letters to Wesley, written in 1761, at the dates noted at the head of this paper, and printed by Wesley in the *Arminian Magazine* of 1781. These are too long to reprint in full here, but they most convincingly agree with all the characterizations of her by Wesley. Moreover, they are full of *personalia* of great interest, which seem as though they ought to put into our hands many clues to her identification. She has, I think, two sons,—unmarried,—and two daughters, Jenny and Harriot. Their home is apparently not in, but near, London. A son came from town to see her. One day when Jenny went to town, Mr. Guilford, the preacher, came to see her. "Lately,"—she is writing on 2 May,—the writer "was called to London," to see her mother; she prayed with her; her mother was "justified." She herself, as the same letter informs Wesley, "was thought to be slipping away into eternity last week." Harriot, in her mother's judgment, is "a wonderful example of what God can do in a child." Mrs. W—— is looking for a boarding school for her (younger?) boy. Mr. Morgan³ thinks that Mr. Neal is "proper to board her son with." She accordingly takes a carriage, it is not expressly said where, but an accident happens to the carriage at Henley. Many are blessed under her prayers, and under her roof. At one of these domestic meetings, "three were justified in fifteen minutes."

2. Compare another piece of self-revelation, which draws our heart very close to Wesley. It is a little earlier than Mrs. W.'s letters to him. "Sat., 16, [Feb., 1760] I spent an hour in the evening with a little company at J. W——'s. I have not known so solemn an hour for a long season, nor so profitable to my own soul. Mysterious Providence! Why am I cut off from those opportunities which of all others I most want? Especially considering the benefit I might impart, as well as that which I might receive; seeing they stand as much in need of *light* as I do of *heat*." He knows his want, but he knows his strength!

3. No doubt James Morgan, the preacher, who was appointed to London in 1758, and is, I think, still in London, in December, 1761. (See letter printed in *Journal* under 4 February, 1763.)

Betty, her maid,—we recall the maid servant at Combe Grove,—“wants to be led through Jordan, too.” On one occasion Edward Petronet and Bryan Panson call to see her. Her experience stirs up Perronet, who questions her closely as to what is the blessing she has found. We know the type of Christian very well. It is unhappily not unknown to our experience of such temperaments, that Wesley should need to add to the series of Mrs. W——’s letters this note: “I can no more doubt of her really experiencing what she then wrote, than I can doubt of her vilely casting it away.”

On that last touch of comment I can throw no light. Still on the whole it has thus far been pretty plain sailing. But I cannot, after long searching and waiting for light, get much further. It will be remembered that on 14 Sep., 1763, she had “lately come from London.” On two occasions, once alone, and a second time in association with my friend Mr. G. B. Caple, of Bath, an early member of our W.H.S.,—I searched the Bath newspapers of 1763, hoping to find amongst the *Arrivals* in the months of August and September some name of a lady visitor beginning with the initial W, which moreover might perchance be found amongst the visitors of 1764 in the same months, or within any reasonably near, but earlier, part of the summer. If I could find a “W” lady visitor at or about these dates in both 1763 and 1764, I hoped it might be at the least a fact to be tried by other methods of enquiry, if in itself hardly more than a very slenderly supported conjecture. I did in fact find amongst the *Arrivals* of “Sep. 15th, 1763, Mrs. Wright, Miss Wright,”—which looked promising. In the *Arrivals* of 1764, but earlier in the year, “May 10, Mrs. Wright” appears. So far as Mr. Caple and myself could see, of the many names beginning with W, only “Wright” and “Miss Wright” were common to the lists of both years. It is not much in the way of evidence, of course.

I turned also to Lady Llanover’s volumes of Mrs. Delany’s letters, and, guided by the full Index, sought for a Mrs. Wright who should be a resident or visitor in Bath. Mrs. Delany on 23 Oct., 1760,—a year earlier than Mrs. W——’s letters,—calls upon Lady Cox,⁴ and on Mrs. Wright. It did not occur to me

4. Lady Llanover, iii, 607. A not altogether unkindly, and yet a little “superior” criticism of Lady Cox’s religion by Mrs. Delany (ii, 19, letter of 22 Dec., 1738) makes it pretty certain that this is the widow of Sir Richard Cox, of Dumbleton, co. Glos., bart., an early convert of Whitefield’s at Bath. (*C. of H.*, 1, 52), and, in the early days of the Revival, a friend of the Wesleys, especially of Charles.

PROCEEDINGS.

to search the *Arrivals* at Bath for 1760. Capt. Hill, the late occupier of Combe Grove, could tell me nothing as to its earlier owners or tenants. Nor did Mr. Caple or I find any piece of news in the Bath *Chronicle* which by chance might have told us whether Mrs. Wright lived at Combe Grove. All the facts above examined suggest to me that Mrs. W——was resident there, perhaps merely for the season. She seems to be mistress of the house and its arrangements. She holds meetings in it; secures sermons there from Wesley; other visitors at Bath may walk out to the meeting or the sermon; she keeps Wesley overnight as her guest. I repeat that I am only setting down a few facts and many conjectures, some of which may prove to be facts, or may lead some more fortunate student of the *Journals* to the identification I cannot reach. But her tenancy of Combe Grove makes her position quite such as would belong to a friend of Mrs. Delany.

I have searched the Wright obituaries in Sir William Musgrave's catalogue. There are not a few Mrs. Wrights. Two of them died in advanced years at Cheshunt, where one of them at least kept a ladies' school. The older lady, who died in 1781, aged 95 years, is "Wright (Mrs.) Mary, a widow lady, late of Cheshunt, Herts."⁵ There may really be nothing to our purpose in this piece of information.

I confess I should look more hopefully at a Mrs. Wright whom Charles Wesley mentions in a sentence of his letter to his wife, numbered by Jackson xxxix. Its date is only "July 29." No year is given, as was often Charles' way. But Mr. Telford suggests 1759. He had preached and had administered the Lord's Supper at West Street, and continues: "Mrs. Venn I carried to dinner at Mrs. Wright's. She has stood her ground against the whole religious world, and her husband at their head; neither can she yet give up her love, her special love, for the Methodist people and Ministers. . . . I trust to find her again in that day, among the children whom God hath given us. Doubting my strength, and fearing of a relapse I got a Preacher to supply my place at [West Street] this afternoon, and rode with Mrs. Venn to Cheapside. There she left me. . . ."

I assume that this is Henry Venn's first wife, née Bishop,

5. I have not a copy of the *Arm. Mag.* of 1781 by me to refer to, but I believe Mrs. W—— signs one of the letters to Wesley, M.W. (Otherwise, one might look inquiringly at "J.W——'s" house and its experiences, given above, footnote 2).

married to him in May, 1757.⁶ It is generally assumed also that "Mrs. Wright" is the second wife of the husband of Mehetabel Wesley. "Hetty" had died 21 March, 1750. In another letter, undated by C. Wesley, but also assigned by Mr. Telford to 1759, and numbered in Jackson lxxx, written from Seven Dials, 15 Feb., the writer says, "I breakfasted this morning with W. Wright's poor widow and Betty Duchesne." In yet another undated letter, xviii, written from Seven Dials, Monday night, 22 Sep., given also with a few variants in Jackson's *Life of C.W.*, ii, 91, Charles Wesley tells his wife how he had been unable to sleep in his room at the West Street Chapel house, and was summoned between one and two in the morning to his dying brother-in-law, whose house was near by in Frith Street, Soho. "He told me, before his wife, how he had settled his affairs; (not enough to her advantage, I think.) . . ." His widow was not left penniless; he had something to leave; he could have left her even better off. Whether Wright's widow could have been a visitor at Bath, and (temporary) tenant of Combe Grove, moving in Mrs. Delany's circle of friendship, I do not know. I can hardly conjecture anything. I am sorry to have nothing more complete to record in our *Proceedings*. Other workers may find the facts useful,—or useless. It may be worth setting down also that Mehetabel Wright, in 1743, wrote a letter to her brother John from Stanmore, which is not far from London. It will be found in Stevenson's *Wesley Family*, at p. 315. Why was she at Stanmore?

H. J. FOSTER.

QUARTERLY MEETINGS.

When was the first held?

The first mention in the official records of Methodism of

6. The Rev. John Telford prefers to identify "Mrs. Venn" as Henry Venn's (widowed) mother, rather than as his newly-wedded wife. In her will, proved 9 July, 1762, she is described as of Bread Street, London. (Mrs. Venn set Charles W. down from the coach "in Cheapside.") But I confess that Mrs. Venn's resolute stand for her Methodist friendships as against "her husband" and the (Church and Calvinist?) circle into which she had come, suggests to me Venn's young wife, rather than his mother, whose husband had been dead since 1739. (*Life of H. Venn*, p. 5). I ought however to say that Dr. John Venn agrees with Mr. Telford.

PROCEEDINGS.

this important Church Court is in the *Minutes* for 1749, where it is declared to be the business of an Assistant . . . "to hold Quarterly Meetings and therein diligently to inquire both into the temporal and spiritual state of each Society."

In the Appendix of the 1862 edition of the *Minutes* is printed a fuller copy of those for 1749. At this point there is added :

Q. But some of them know not the nature of Quarterly Meetings. How shall we help them?

"A. Desire John Bennet :

1. To send us up his plan.
2. To go himself as soon as may be to Newcastle and Wednesbury and teach them the nature and methods of these meetings."

It is remarkable that this *Minute* was passed within about six weeks after John Bennet's marriage to Grace Murray. Evidently he retained the confidence of Wesley as an administrator of Methodism.

In a long and interesting article in the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1843, p. 376, Rev. W. W. Stamp refers to the tradition that Quarterly Meetings took their rise at Booth Bank in Cheshire. This he sets on one side; and rightly so, though lasting interest attaches to the record of the Quarterly Meeting held there on 20 April, 1752.

The first page of the accounts then presented reads as follows:—*A True Account of the Money Bro^t in by the Stewards from Each Society in the Manchester Round; for the use of the Preachers, and for y^e discharging of Necessary Expence, Aprill y^e 20, 1752.*

These accounts have often been published, more or less accurately. The above heading I copied from the old book itself, which is in the Chapel Committee's office at Manchester. In my volume on Chester Methodism (p. 35) I have set down a number of other details. I venture to think that the book ought to be published. No historian of early Methodism in the wide area covered by the original Manchester Round can afford to neglect it.

The first page is declared by the Rev. George Marsden in a letter appended thereto to be in the writing of John Wesley. Now John Wesley certainly was not at Booth Bank on the date mentioned. My theory is that the accounts had been roughly kept on a loose slip and that Wesley on his next visit started the Circuit with a proper book, and showed them how it ought to be kept.

I hazard the further suggestion that as John Bennet severed

his connection with John Wesley at the end of 1751, the extensive area to which the name of John Bennet's Round had been given was then re-organized, and that the meeting at Booth Bank was the first of a newly-formed Manchester Round.

Mr. Stamp quotes from an old Society book kept by Grimshaw of Haworth, an account of a meeting held on 18 Oct., 1748, at Major Marshall's, at Todmorden Edge . . . of the Leaders of several Classes in several religious Societies . . . etc.

Mr. Stamp considers this to be in all probability the first Quarterly Meeting ever held in Methodism. The *Journal* of John Bennet, now in possession of the Conference, which I have recently had the pleasure of perusing, removes all uncertainty. Under date 27 July, 1748, Bennet, referring to an arrangement evidently fixed in advance, writes: "The first Quarterly Meeting in Lancashire is held at Major Marshall's at Todmorden Edge on Tuesday 18th October 1748." "The first Quarterly Meeting for Cheshire is held at Robert Swindel's in Woodley on Thursday October 20th at 11 o'clock."

The former of these meetings he records, in exact agreement with the quotation from the old book above referred to, except that his list of the "Stewards chosen to transact the temporal affairs" shows a variation in the Christian names. Samuel Greenwood, John Maden, Samuel Dyson, John Parker, is Bennet's account. The book however gives *James* Dyson, *James* Greenwood, with John Maden and John Parker. That Mr. Stamp correctly transcribes the book may be assumed from the fact that Everett (*Manchester* p. 95), writing in 1827, gives the same names. One would naturally follow the book written as it was by a man on the spot. In his earlier volume on *Sheffield* (1823) Everett speaks of the first Quarterly Meeting held in Sheffield somewhere between 1756 and 1760. The paragraph is somewhat obscurely expressed, and it is not quite clear whether he thought this to be the earliest of all Quarterly Meetings; probably he was referring to Sheffield only.

These earliest Quarterly Meetings are fully described in letters which John Bennet wrote to Wesley from Chinley, 22 October, 1748 (see *Meth. Rec. Winter Number*, 1902).

"On Tuesday the 18th of this instant was a meeting (at Todmorden Edge) of the Leaders in the several Societies belonging to Wm. Darney, etc. Four stewards were appointed to inspect into, and regulate the temporal affairs of the Societies; every Leader brought his Class Paper and showed what money he had received in the Quarter, which was fairly entered in a

PROCEEDINGS.

book for the purpose. The several Bills of Charges were brought in at the same time, and after they were thoroughly examined were all discharged. But alas! the people are exceeding poor, and will not be able to maintain the preachers and William Darney's family. The overplus after the Bills were discharged was only 9/2."

The number of the brethren at the meeting, as appeared by the books wherein the names are entered, was 358. This must mean the number of members represented by the leaders present.

"On Thursday the 20th of this instant was our Quarterly Meeting held at Woodley of the Leaders in Derbyshire, Cheshire, and part of Lancashire. The same method was used here as above. The Lord did bless our meeting in a very extraordinary manner. After business was ended we sang a hymn, several of the brethren prayed, and I gave a short exhortation. Oh, dear Sir, let this method be used in other places. Once a year we propose to meet all the Leaders, and at the other Quarterly Meetings the Stewards in each respective Society need only to be present with the particular accounts. This way will not be very expensive. I have made a small book which shall be kept in the Box with the Accounts, wherein an exact Account of the Marriages, Deaths, Backsliders, etc., shall be noted down that I may be able to give you an account thereof each Quarter. Our number of brethren at Woodley Meeting was 527."

Quarterly Meetings a few months later are thus described :—
"Chinley, Ap. 25, 1749. The Quarterly Meeting at Todmorden Edge was on Tuesday last. We had an unanimous Meeting. Mr. Grimshaw was with us, and preached in the evening to a larger congregation than hath been seen in these parts for some time. . . . accounts brought in from the several Societies in Cheshire, Derbyshire, and Lancashire, at our Quarterly Meeting held at Woodley on Thursday last. . . ."

Dr. Gregory, in his book on Methodist Polity, pp. 48 and 49, says that Quarterly Meetings took definite shape in 1750, but their constitution was not defined till 1852. As a comment upon the latter statement, it may be of interest to some to read the following Resolution from an old Minute Book in the Chester Circuit. "1833. Resolved that the Trustees, being members of Society, and the Local Preachers, be hereafter considered members of the Quarterly Meeting on the same grounds as the Leaders have heretofore been considered members thereof."

F. F. BRETHERTON.

[Our illustrations of the house of John and Alice Cross at Booth Bank, are from original photographs lent by our member, Mr. Arthur Mounfield, of Warrington. It will be seen that the original thatch of the roof has been (of recent years) encased for preservation in a covering of corrugated iron.—F.]

THE TWELVE RULES OF A HELPER.

These Rules first appear in the *Minutes* of 1744—the first year of which we have any printed *Minutes*. After this date Wesley published six editions of the large *Minutes*, and the rules of a helper are given in each, but with frequent alterations. In several particulars they were again altered by the Conference of 1797, a few years after Wesley's death. It may possibly be interesting to some readers of this *Journal* to have these alterations pointed out. The 1812 edition is evidently inaccurate, giving under the head of 29 June, 1744, the rules as amended in 1763. I shall be guided by the 1862 edition of the *Minutes*, vol. I.

When first formulated in 1744, *thirteen* rules were given, and in 1745 another was added, making fourteen. Two of these, standing as 10 and 11, were never re-printed. They read, "Take no money of anyone. If they give you food when you are hungry, or clothes when you need them, it is good. But not silver or gold. Let there be no pretence to say, we grow rich by the gospel."—"Contract no debts without our knowledge."

The following are the most important changes made:—

RULE II. The first edition reads, "Be Serious. Let your motto be—Holiness to the Lord. *Avoid all lightness as you would avoid hell-fire; and laughing as you would cursing and swearing.*" In all subsequent editions the words in *Italic* were wisely omitted.

RULE III. At first enjoined, "Converse sparingly and cautiously with women." Then this rule was strengthened by the words, "particularly with young women in private." The last three editions dropped the words, "*in private.*"

RULE IV. Evidently there was difficulty in bringing this rule to perfection. Number (1) edition reads "take no step toward marriage without first acquainting us." (2) adds, "with your design as soon as you conveniently can." (3), (4), and (5), drop the added words. (6) and (7) add, "without consulting your

PROCEEDINGS.

brethren." (8) further adds, "*without solemn prayer to God* and consulting with your brethren." The thought of prayer comes last!

RULE V. This rule at first read, "Believe evil of no one. If you see it done, well. If not, take heed how you credit it." Six editions then adopt this change, "Unless you see it done, take heed how you credit it." The Conference of 1797 wisely changed the reading to, "unless fully proved."

RULE VI. Has stood unchanged through all the editions.

RULE VII. In all the editions published in Wesley's lifetime this rule reads, "Tell everyone what you think wrong in him and that plainly," &c. The Conference of 1797 added "lovingly" to "plainly."

RULE VIII. The first edition states, "Do nothing as a gentleman." All subsequent editions read, "Do not affect the gentleman." All editions published during the life of Wesley read, "You have no more to do with this character than with that of a dancing master." The Conference of 1797 dropped the reference to the "dancing master."

RULE IX. In all the editions published during Wesley's life this rule reads, "Be ashamed of nothing but sin: not of fetching wood (if time permit) or of drawing water; not of cleaning your own shoes or your neighbours." Here again the Conference of 1797 makes a modification. References to fetching wood, drawing water, and cleaning one's neighbour's shoes, disappear, and we have simply the words, "No, not of cleaning your own shoes when necessary."

RULE X. No important alteration.

RULE XI. "You have nothing to do but to save souls. Therefore spend and be spent in this work and go always, not only to those who want you, but to those who want you most."

It is worthy of note that this rule was formulated twelve months after the others, but having once been given it has never since undergone the alteration of even one word. The paragraph beginning with the word "observe" is, after the first edition, placed under Rule XII.

RULE XII. The only change to be noted here is the substitution of the word "advise" for "direct."

In looking carefully over these rules we are impressed with the thought that, notwithstanding Wesley's wisdom and literary ability, he felt the need of frequently correcting or improving what he had written, and, in this case at least, of softening and toning down some of his expressions.

And it is rather amusing to find that while the words stand, "Do not mend our rules but keep them," neither he nor the Conference of 1797 (which gave us the final edition) acted up to this high ideal.

N.B. The eighth edition of the rules above referred to are found in vol. I of the 8vo. *Minutes*, 1862 edition. The first edition of the rules is on pages 24 and 28. The six following editions are on pages 492—497, in parallel columns. The 8th edition, which is the official and permanent one, is on page 678.

GEORGE LATHAM.

MISS BISHOP, HER LETTERS AND HER SCHOOL. (See below, p. 86.)

The printed letters to Miss Bishop (*Works*, vol. xiii.) are many of them composite, being made up of fragments of a much longer series, the originals of which are in the possession of Mrs. Alfred Hall, of Bristol. No. DCLXXXVII. is made up of extracts from four letters. I collated the printed series with these for Rev. R. Green, distributing and completing the conflated printed letters, and completing the series. Apparently a series has been made up, I think, by Wesley,¹ which might be "profitable" for devotional reading, the personal and historical touches being omitted. The earlier ones are addressed to Miss Bishop, "In the Vineyards, Bath"; or, what is really the same address, "Near the Countess of Huntingdon's Chappel"; "Near Lady Huntingdon's Chappel." After the letter to which this last address belongs, and part of which makes up DCLXXXVII. above mentioned, the address is generally "Near the Cross Bath, [in] Bath." A letter of 15 March, 1777, which forms the concluding paragraphs of DCXCII., is addressed "To Miss Bishop Schoolmistress in Bath," and the letters themselves show, *e.g.*, the last paragraph of DCLXXXVII., which belongs to "Colchester, Nov. 4, 1774," or a letter of Jan., 1774,—last paragraph of DCLXXXIX.,—that she is concerned with child education. But her chief work was done at Keynsham, near Bath, where Wesley visited her school, 28 Sep., 1781, 5 Oct., 1787. He regards her school as a successor to that of the Owens at Publow. Letter DCCCXLV. is in the original addressed "At her Boarding School In Keynsham, near Bristol." Local tradition says that our Keynsham chapel stands upon the site of her house.—H. J. F.

PASCAL AND THE WESLEYS.

II.

We have noted the introduction of Pascal's writings to English readers during the first half of the eighteenth century;

1. The footnote to 22 Oct., 1777, in *Meth. Mag.*, 1807, p. 328, is plainly Wesley's.

his mitigating influence on the bitter hostility in England to literature written by Roman Catholic authors; the admiration of Samuel Wesley for "Les Messieurs de Port Royal" and Pascal; the editions of Kennet's translation; and the influence of Pascal's *Thoughts* upon Susanna Wesley.

In 1737 we find Charles Wesley reading some of his mother's favourite books, not only for his own sake, but that he may give spiritual help to his sisters. On 12 Sep., he says, he "spent an hour with Hetty in discoursing on the inward change, and reading Law." The next day he writes, "Her convictions were much deepened by my reading *The Life of God in the Soul of Man*" (by Henry Scougal). On the 16th he walked to Stanton Harcourt with Mr. Gambold, and in the evening found his sister Kezia, who begged him to pray for her. She "owned there was a depth in religion she had never fathomed; that she was not converted, but longed to be; would give up all to obtain the love of God. I prayed, and blessed God from my heart; then read *Pascal's Prayer for Conversion*, with which she was much affected, and begged me to write it out for her." The prayer appears to have been No. IV in Kennet's translation (1733, p. 301). We give a portion:—

"I am sensible, O my God, that my heart is so hardened, so full of worldly ideas, engagements, solitudes and disquiets, that neither health nor sickness, nor discourses, nor books . . . nor all my endeavours, . . . can effect anything towards the beginnings of my conversion if thou blessest not all these means with the extraordinary succours of Thy grace . . . Since the conversion which I now beg of Thy grace is a work exceeding all the powers of nature, to whom can I apply but to the almighty Master of my heart, and of nature itself? To whom O Lord, should I cry; to whom should I flee for succour unless unto Thee? Nothing that is not God can fix my confidence or fill my desires. It is God alone whom I ask and seek. It is Thou alone whom I implore for the obtaining of Thyself . . . Rescue and retrieve my affections . . . Thou alone wast able at first to create my soul; Thou alone art able to create it anew; Thou alone couldst imprint on it Thy image; Thou alone canst revive and refresh that defaced image, even Jesus Christ, the express image of Thy substance."

In Charles Wesley's account of his own conversion he describes Mr. Bray, "who knows nothing but Christ, yet by knowing Him, knows and discerns all things." Was this an echo of Pascal's thought?—"Jesus Christ is the goal of all, and the centre to which all tends. Who knows Him knows the reason of all things."

That John Wesley held Pascal in high esteem there is clear evidence. Pascal's *Thoughts* appears in the *Minutes* of 1745 among "the books we should keep for our own use at London, Bristol, and Newcastle." We may note in passing that Pascal's favourite, *Epictetus*, is in the list of Greek classics to be read at Kingswood.

To Miss Bishop, a well-educated lady, who kept a school at Bath,¹ Wesley wrote in 1774 concerning the "reasonings" which perplexed her, advising prayer, but adding also, "Christian prudence not only permits, but requires you to add other means to this. I would especially recommend reading; particularly Pascal's *Thoughts*." As we have seen, this is precisely the reading that Wesley's mother would have commended to a reasoner of Miss Bishop's type.

Wesley, writing on Montesquieu's *Spirit of Laws*, thinks Montesquieu "unworthy of the violent encomiums which have been passed upon him. He excelled in imagination, but not in judgment, any more than in solid learning. I think, in a word, that he was a child to Monsieur Pascal."²

About the time that he prepared Pascal's *Thoughts* for publication in his *Christian Library* (13 Oct., 1752) Wesley wrote, "I read over Pascal's *Thoughts*. What could possibly induce such a creature as Voltaire to give such an author as this a good word, unless it was that he once wrote a satire? And so his being a satirist might atone even for his being a Christian." Wesley himself is satirical here. Voltaire, in his *Life of Louis XIV* (chap. 37), calls Pascal the first French satirist, and says "The best comedies of Molière have not more salt than the first *Lettres Provinciales*; Bossuet has nothing more sublime than the last." Had Wesley read Voltaire's *Life of Louis XIV*? There is one slight reference to that monarch in his *Journal*. We cannot find evidence that he had read Voltaire's critique of Pascal's *Thoughts* (1734).

Wesley published Pascal's *Thoughts* and *Prayers* in the *Christian Library* in 1753. He used Basil Kennet's translation, making a few alterations. Some superfluous words—for which Kennet had a weakness—are deleted. Latin quotations are either translated by Wesley, or omitted. Section X, on *The Jews* is abridged. Sec. XVII, *Against Mahomet*, is omitted entirely.³ The

1. See above p. 84.

2. For a modern estimate of Montesquieu's *Esprit des Loix*, see Prof. R. M. Johnston's *French Revolution*, Macmillan, 1909, p. 16.

3. Cf. Wesley's Sermon, cxxv. §14.

paragraphs relating to Epictetus and Montaigne, in *Moral Thoughts*, have also disappeared, with a few of the less important passages in other sections. Kennet himself says in an introduction, not printed by Wesley, that he omitted "some lines which directly favoured the distinguishing doctrines of those of the Romish communion."⁴ This, perhaps, lessens the literary value of the book, and it is regrettable that Wesley did not provide a translation in his own lucid style, so well fitted to reproduce the unsurpassed style of Pascal's French. Nevertheless, here is the substance of the *Thoughts*. Not even Kennet's too ornate and diffuse translation can rob them of their light and heat.

Wesley was one of "those generous souls" described by M. Boutroux, "who share with Pascal the desire that Christianity may be in themselves and others a living thing, and not a formula or the catchword of a party."⁵ To illustrate this from the writings of both would be an interesting study. It would involve (I) Attention to their terms—'reason,' 'heart,' 'judgement,' &c. Wesley presents little difficulty; we have his own definitions (e.g. Serm. lxx). But, as Vinet points out, while it is not impossible to ascertain the special meaning of Pascal's terms, the task requires caution. "It is perhaps with a glossary in hand we ought to set about reading him."⁶

(II) The following points might be studied.

The tendency of both to scepticism. Both passed from doubt to faith. To use Wesley's terms, both had "a new class of senses opened in the soul." To use Pascal's terms: both held that "the heart has its own reasons." But neither came to "faith"—to "intuitivism"—as a "counsel of despair." Of Wesley it might be said, as it has been said of Pascal, "his conversion was not the suicide of reason" (Vinet).

Both held a doctrine of grace—with a difference. Both proclaimed, "Jesus-Christ pour tous": "the sole prerogative of Jesus Christ to be an universal blessing . . . the sacrifice of our Lord on the Cross extends its meritorious influence to the whole world." "Aussi c'est à Jésus-Christ d'être universel." Both

4. Baron Moncrief well says "We find in these *Thoughts* one reference to confession, some words on the Pope's authority, not unmingled with misgivings that it might become tyrannical, some very hearty denunciations of schisms and Calvinists, but the staple of his *Thoughts* is evangelical, both in words and spirit, breathing the true doctrine of the Reformation in its breadth and power." Lect. on *Blaise Pascal*, Expositor, 1885, p. 345.

5. M. Boutroux, p. 208.

6. Studies in Pascal: *Of the Theology of the Book of the Thoughts*, p. 153.

7. Kennet's trans. adopted by Wesley. But we have an instance here

WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

held that "Jesus Christ is a God to whom we draw near without pride, and before whom we abase ourselves without despair." And we may observe that the contrasts between the two men are as striking as their spiritual kinship.

THOS. E. BRIGDEN.

EXTRACT FROM LETTER OF SAMUEL WESLEY, JUNR., TO JOHN WESLEY,
DATED 16 APRIL, 1739.

"I intreat you to let me know what reasons you have to think you shall not live long. I received yours dated 4th on Saturday the 14th. The post will reach me much sooner and I shall want much to know what ails you. I should be very angry with you (if you cared for it) should you have broken your iron constitution already; as I was with the glorious Pascal for losing his health, and living almost 20 years in pain."

JOHN'S ENDORSEMENT: "I think this was y^e last letter I received from him."

[NOTE.—The above extract is from a MS. letter from Samuel Wesley, Junr., Master of Tiverton Grammar School, to his brother John, amongst my large collection of original papers of the Wesley family, and forms an interesting reference to Mr. Brigden's article on Pascal in the Sept. No. of the *Proceedings*. John's MS. endorsement states it was the last letter he received from Tiverton. Samuel died 6 Nov., 1739.

GEO. STAMPE.]

METHODISM IN ALNWICK.

Continued from p. 69.

A visit on 20 and 21 May, 1766, follows in the *Journal*. Wesley spared an hour for Alnwick Castle, which the second Duke of Northumberland was just then "enlarging and improving daily."

At the Conference of 1767 a notable figure in the earliest history of the Evangelical revival, William Darney, "Scotch Will," was appointed to the wide Newcastle Circuit. Grimshaw of Haworth had owed much to Darney, and the rough vigour and real spirituality of his preaching in Alnwick were crowned with great success. A gallery was put into the east end of the chapel, to accommodate the growing congregation. A company of strolling players who happened to be in Alnwick, fitted up a

published an anonymous translation designed to correct this, and to express the thoughts of Pascal "in his own style," with considerable success. Kegan Paul's trans. of Molinier's text (Bell, 1905) is a modern gem, but in view of the revised text, can only be used here for purpose of comparison. of Kennet's elaboration of Pascal's terse, aphoristic style. In 1806, Bagster

PROCEEDINGS.

barn for a play-house, and "prepared," says Jacob Stanley, "a play against the Methodists; in which William Darney and the leading members of the Society were to perform their several parts"; (it will be understood, by actors who impersonated them and burlesqued their religion.) "The late Messrs. William Ferguson, who afterwards settled in London and in Holland, Thomas Gibson, Luke Mattison, and Edward Stanley, each had a part [thus vicariously] assigned to him." Somehow the play never got acted: we may suppose that the better public opinion of the town would not countenance the performance. Darney, himself a man of giant size, also confronted the players, and making his strong horse rear threateningly, he flourished his whip, crying, "Ye sons of Belial, come on!"¹ Poor "worn-out" Christopher Hopper was now settled in Newcastle, to become a blessing to the whole neighbourhood in his years of retirement.

I. It will be noticed that Jacob Stanley expressly identifies this William Ferguson with the London Methodist local preacher whose connection with Holland led to Wesley's two pleasant visits to that country. Neither the Memoir in *Arm. Mag.*, 1782, p. 292, nor Henry Moore, nor Tyerman, nor J. S. Stamp,—in the brief notice of the death of William's son Jonathan, sent by him to the *W.M. Mag.*, 1845, p. 292—connects Ferguson of Alnwick with Ferguson of London and Holland. Nor indeed does Stevenson (*City Road*, pp. 471, 481, 488), though a little comparison of the dates and ages which he gives, in association with William's wife Elizabeth, and his sons William and Jonathan and their sister Sarah [Peell], would make it pretty certain, if Stanley's testimony were not so express. Stevenson does not give anything beyond allusive reference to William the elder, and the indexing is not very clear. Stanley is a little inaccurate when he says that William "settled in Holland." His son Jonathan did so, for several years, but he himself only went over in the summer. (Perhaps Wesley's reference to William's "lodgings," 14 Aug., 1786, may carry this significance. They were in Amsterdam, 15 Aug., 1786).

Henry Moore, after a caustic reference to Whitehead's account of the occasion of Wesley's little tours in Holland, writes, what may be worth putting upon our pages: "Mr. William Ferguson, a member and local preacher in the London Society ['in the parish of St. Leonard's, Shoreditch,'—Stevenson] traded to Holland for some years, and generally spent his summers there. He was a truly pious man, and could not be hid from those who had *like precious faith*. He soon found in Holland some who were Methodists in everything, except the name He spoke much of Mr. Wesley, and of the people under his care, and distributed his sermons amongst his new friends. Of these they expressed their high approbation, and also their wishes to see the venerable Founder of Methodism among them. Mr. Ferguson pressed Mr. Wesley to visit these pious people." (*Life of Wesley*, ii, 288-9). A letter, J.W. to W.F., 7 Sep., 1779, refers to this dissemination of Methodist literature. Ferguson has written proposals from the Hague, but is in London again, where he can consult with Atlay, the book steward. (*Works*, xii, 492. Notice the pleasant little note which follows, to Mrs. Ferguson, who is expecting her guest in Amsterdam in 1786).—H.J.F.

WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

Wesley's record of the visit of 19 and 20 May, 1770, is noteworthy in connection with the only Alwick Methodist whose name is given in the *Journals*. "I found that wise and good man, William Coward, had been buried two or three days before. I judged it right to do honour to his memory by preaching a kind of funeral sermon." On the next day he met the Society and pays to the members the tribute "We seemed to breathe the same spirit with him who has just entered into the joy of his Lord." Perhaps William Coward is the overseer of the poor of that name in 1744, recorded by Tate. To Edward Stanley once more we are indebted for a full account of this steady supporter of early Methodism in the town, to which he had joined himself somewhere about the year 1750. In June, 1757 he accompanied Wesley as far as Kelso, and stood by the evangelist in the market place of that town.

Everett's MS. notes give some further particulars. "The travelling preachers put up at William Coward's; afterwards at Thomas Gibson's; afterwards at Edward Mattinson's; and afterwards at George Young's. The first had 1s. per night for them; but T. Gibson proposed taking them for 9d. or 10d.; and besides these, amongst the members were John Humphrey and Betty Morrison, of Grumbles Park; James Robinson, James Atkinson and his mother and sisters, William Taylor, of Shilbottle Colliery, John Morrison, of Whittingham Lane, and William, Richard, George, Martin, and Jane Morrison, of Snipe House.

"The Class Leaders at this period were William Coward, Thomas Gibson and James Robinson. The Local Preachers were Thomas Gibson and William Coward, and William Taylor, of Shilbottle. To these were afterwards added Edward Stanley, Luke Mattinson, Robert Rand, George Young, William Cass, John Dixon, John Foster, and William Ferguson." "The preachers had a circuit of six weeks, with one day's rest in the six. The preaching places were Felton, Swanland, Warkworth, Guyson, Alemouth, Shilbottle, Lesbury, Longhoughton, Dunstan, Link Hall, Rennington, Whittingham, and Rothbury, to which place they generally rode. But they often walked between twenty and thirty miles and preached twice." At Felton they put up at Mrs. Sample's, and afterwards at George Lambert's; the congregations were large in a morning. At Warkworth their host was George Robinson. At Alemouth they were received by Mr. Adams,—a relative of Attorney Adams—and John Jobson. Robert Garner, one of the first Methodists, took them in at Lesbury; John Morrison, at Shilbottle; James Murray, at Longhoughton, where

PROCEEDINGS.

they preached before his door; James Stephenson and Robert Thompson, at Dunstan; George Wilson, at Link Hall; Henry Wardhough, at Rennington; and Thomas Lee, at Rothbury. Such names deserve all honourable remembrance.

Thomas Rutherford (*Arm. Mag.*, 1806, p. 426, 1808, p. 357) removed to Alnwick in May, 1772, and in the following June heard Wesley preach in the Town Hall. Says the evangelist, "What a difference between an English and a Scotch congregation,"—he had come from Scotland—"these judge themselves rather than the preacher, and their aim is not only to know, but to love and obey,"

Robert Swan, one of the preachers appointed to the Newcastle Circuit, was put down to reside at Alnwick in 1773. The house taken for him was in the Green Bat. The Rev. William Monteith, of the Bondgate Meeting, the Rev. John Marshall, of the Clayport Meeting, and Robert Swan, lived in three adjoining houses, Mr. Swan being in the middle one. Mr. Marshall always told Mr. Swan that when Mr. Wesley came, everything in his house was at his service.

Visits by Wesley followed, on 9 June, 1774, 30 May, 1776, and 24 May, 1779, without anything of special remark, except that on the 25 May he again visited the Castle, comparing its rooms with those of Harewood House, near Leeds; much to their advantage, on the ground, not of profusion of ornament or abundance of gold and silver, but of "a *Je ne sçai quoi* that strikes every person of taste." He was back again in Alnwick, after visiting Scotland, on 21 June. In the May of 1780, he is there once more, spending an hour, as he came toward the town, at Hulne Abbey, then recently repaired by the Duke of Northumberland.

In the lovely autobiographical notice of Mrs. Planche, of Kelso, sent by William Hunter to the *Arm. Mag.*, 1791, we find an illuminating touch worth recording:—" [At Kelso] I could hear of no Methodists nearer than forty miles, namely at Alnwick." She went to Alnwick, and under the preaching of William Hunter,—"this eminently holy man," Atmore calls him, a native of Placey, near Newcastle (Atmore, *Memorial*, p. 203, sqq.)—found the peace her heart had long been seeking, in 1781. "The dear Methodists at Alnwick were kind to me beyond expression, and have been ever since. I pray God to reward them abundantly." In response to her appeal, Wesley directed Hunter to give a few days to Kelso, and in June of the following year, he himself visited it, staying with Dr. Douglas, Mrs. Planche's brother, as it appears.

Our *Itinerary* has entered a visit of Wesley to Alnwick on 28

WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

May, 1782, but without the *required. It is not expressly noted in the *Journals*, but two letters, one to Charles Wesley, and one to Charles Atmore, are headed "Alnwick, May 28, 1782." The visit of 15 and 16 June following is simply mentioned. He had come *via* Kelso, as has been said.

John Pritchard (*E.M.P.*, vi, 269) bears witness also to the admirable spirit of Alnwick Methodism. He was disabled with ague. "During my illness, which was at Alnwick, I found many friends, who spared neither cost nor pains to make me comfortable. Here I could spend my days cheerfully, among a loving, tender and affectionate people, who received my testimony with thankfulness and love." His stay in Alnwick produced choice fruit, not least in that, in 1783, a young man of Alnwick, Robert Johnson, was induced to enter the ministry. (See his memoir in *Meth. Mag.*, 1829, p. 359, 643, 1830, p. 217). He says: "I was born at Alnwick, January 20, 1762. My parents, though not wealthy, were respectable. My father had been a member of the Methodist Society, and retained a most sincere regard and esteem for both the preachers and people to the day of his death. My mother, who survived my father some years, was a woman of uniform and exemplary piety, and a steady member of the Society for about three score years." He was awakened under the influence of Robert Carr Brackenbury, in 1780, and the Alnwick Methodists completed the gracious work. He never expressed any wish to become a preacher, but was proposed by John Pritchard, and at the Conference of 1783 received an appointment to the Hull Circuit, where also he closed a long and honourable career of ministerial service in 1829.

Amongst the circuit records has been preserved a Stewards' Book, containing an account of the collections and their expenditure from 1783 to 1798. The following extracts may be given: "February 9,—the Sunday's collection was 5s. 4½d." "June 9,—to Doctor Gair, for attendance on Mr. Pritchard, 5s." A quarterly allowance of £3 12s. was paid to one of the preachers. In 1785 rooms were hired for the accommodation of preachers passing through Alnwick, the rent of which was £7 per annum. An inventory of the furniture of these was taken on 22 November. The income for the year was £55 8s. 1d., and the expenditure £54 12s. 1d. "7 June, 1784—a letter to Mr. Westley, 3d" Wesley notes a visit on 28 May, 1784.

Jeremiah Brettell, in his full autobiographical account of his life and labours, graphically describes a winter's storm which broke upon a fleet of colliers, picking their way from London to

the North, and which strewed the Alnwick coast for miles with wreckage and dead bodies.

In the autumn of 1785 and the spring of 1786, Dr. Coke travelled through a considerable part of England, looking into the condition of the trust properties and endeavouring to bring them into line with the Conference plan. The Stewards' Book records: "Sep. 12—Dr. Coke, one night 1s. 6d. Oct. 17—Letter from Dr. Coke, 5d.—October 30, Dr. Coke provided for, 1s."

The year 1786 was a remarkable one in Alnwick. The death of a young man, John Stanley, at the early age of twenty-eight, excited a deep interest. He had been irreproachable in conduct, but lacked "the one thing needful." When he did find it, his concern for the salvation of his acquaintances and the visitors to his sick room was full of extraordinary unction. Such a revival broke out, under the intense feeling awakened by his dying experiences and testimony, that the congregations became too large for the chapel, and further accommodation was found needful. In fact, so greatly did the work and the Society prosper, that it was resolved to erect both a new chapel and a preacher's house. Negotiations were entered into for the purchase of a plot of ground between Clayport Street and the Green Bat, in what is now called Chapel Lane. The property belonged to Mr. Edward Gallon, from whom it was purchased by Mr. John Dores, borrowing £500 from Mrs. Mary Gair and her sons, Edward and Robert. In course of time the mortgage was foreclosed and the ground sold by order of the Court of Chancery. Mr. Charles Mattison then negotiated for the purchase of the land on behalf of Mr. John Sanderson, who afterwards completed the bargain by covenanting to pay £200 at once to one of Mrs. Gair's sons, and £200 at the death of the other, with interest at 5 per cent. Mr. John Sanderson acted as trustee for the Methodist Society.

Wesley records his laying of the foundation stone of the new chapel on 2 June, 1786. It was in due course opened in December, 1787, by the Rev. John Grundell. He was a remarkable man. Born in Sunderland in June, 1761, he became blind while yet a child, but he improved his mind and accumulated knowledge till he became an able and acceptable preacher, preaching his first sermon, when only nineteen, in the Market Place, South Shields. Subsequently he itinerated in the neighbourhood, occasionally preaching under the direction of Wesley. He had a commanding voice, was mighty in the Scriptures, and highly esteemed in

Alnwick. It is of interest to note that, whilst the chapel was being built, Edward Stanley's son Jacob, the future President, then a boy of eleven years of age, came under conviction and joined the Society. [*W.M.M.*, 1826, 793 sqq.]

Wesley is sarcastic about the new preaching house, in which he preached at his next, and last, visit to Alnwick, 24 May, 1788. In his judgment it was a twin "scarecrow" to the chapel at Brentford. The new and larger chapel was not ordinarily filled, until the appointment of Charles Atmore, in 1791, whose effectual preaching made "Methodism at this time a great power in Alnwick, and in the district around." (*Tate's History*). [Reference was made in *Proceedings*, v, p. 127, to Jacob Stanley's attempt to vindicate the building, and to explain Wesley's strange pronouncement upon its design. "A description for which I know not how to account, on any other supposition than that he had been very much exhausted with his ride from Berwick, and that the organs of vision were then greatly impaired."] The chapel is still standing. It was registered for public worship in the Consistory Court of Durham, 30 Sep., 1788. The deed of conveyance of the chapel property is dated 16 July, 1793. The dimensions of the ground are given as 76 feet from east to west, and 214 feet from north to south, bounded on the north by two houses in Clayport Street, in the occupation of George Wardell, apothecary, and John Lindsay, attorney. A stable is mentioned as adjoining the back wall of the chapel. Mr. John Sanderson paid £200 to Ann and Edward Gair.

At the Conference of the following year Alnwick was cut off from Newcastle and made the head of a circuit, with three preachers, and sixteen preaching places: Earsdon, Plessey, Morpeth, Meldon, Saugh-house, Rothbury, Chattin, Berwick, Lucker, North Sunderland, Luckhall, Alnmouth, Warkworth, Lesbury, Dunstan, and Branton. William Hunter was its first superintendent. He had heard Wesley preach on his first visit to Plessey ("Placey" in the early *Journals*) 1 April, 1743.

The visit of 24 May, 1788, is the last recorded in the printed *Journals*, but the Society Book vouches for one last visit. "1790, May 12—Paid for Mr. Wesley's Horses, 10s. 3d." [That was, no doubt, the date of the payment of the bill, but the *Headingley Diary* shows 10 May as the date of the visit itself. See the *Itinerary, Proc.*, VI, pt. 8]. Moreover, the Rev. James Everett has preserved the following particulars. He was only six years old at the time, but the circumstances made a deep impression upon his mind. "It was in the Methodist Chapel at Alnwick, while at the

PROCEEDINGS.

Sabbath School, that I saw the venerable John Wesley. I might have seen him, and heard him preach, previously to the occasion alluded to, when led to the chapel by my mother. But the period alluded to is the only one aided by recollections distinct and personal. My impression is this: After we as scholars had received proper instruction on the subject of good behaviour, we were taught to expect the presence of a great and good man, who was loved by the wise and good, and especially venerated by the Methodists. We were summoned from our seats, and arranged in the front of the communion rails, forming two-thirds of a tolerable circle. The pulpit surmounted a small passage leading from a back door into the chapel, boxed off to the floor, a door right and left leading to the pews on each side of the ground floor, and a pair of folding doors opening into the communion immediately beneath the pulpit. From between the latter the venerable Wesley issued, whose step, even in age, seemed elastic. He was somewhat low in stature, having the features and form, the flowing curled wig, with which he is represented in various engravings. He addressed us, as we stood before him, briefly but affectionately."

An interesting document, which was preserved by Everett, and passed from him to Tyerman, gives a list of subscriptions headed by Wesley, for the building fund of the new House.

"Alnwick, May 10, 1790.

"We whose names are underwritten, design, with God's help, to subscribe as follows, weekly, towards the lessening of the debt of the preaching house.

"John Wesley, 2s. 6d.

John Stamp, 6d.

"Ralph Annett, 1s.

Luke Hindmarsh, 6d.

"John Pringle, 3d.

Samuel Purvis, 2d.

"James Gough, 2d.

George Wilson, 6d."

The heading, and his name, are written by Wesley himself, in a trembling hand. Wesley had brought John Stamp with him as the "assistant." Ralph Annett was an important tradesman in the town, and for many years bore office in the Society. But he followed Kilham, and joined the New Connexion. Luke Hindmarsh also joined the New Connexion, but returned to the Wesleyan Methodists. John Pringle, a pious and kind hearted man, was the founder of the large business, afterwards carried on under the style of Edward Thew and Sons. Samuel Purvis was a class leader, and the only one whose family continued to attend the chapel.

Newcastle, Sunderland, Hexham, and Alnwick formed one

of the new Districts devised by William Thompson and the Conference of 1791.

J. H. BROADBENT.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

422. ADDENDA TO ARTICLE ON THE INSCRIBED WINDOW PANES IN BINGLEY CIRCUIT. *W.H.S. Proc.*, vii, p. 25—28.

1. Of the two years that John Whitley spent in the ministry the first was spent in So. Staffordshire (Birmingham) where he had as superintendent Thos. Taylor, who, along with Mr. Wesley, had induced him to enter the ministry. Mr. Taylor had evidently arranged it thus, that he might be helpful to his old friend. The second year was spent at Thirsk.

2. The four words at the head of the third pane, "Death, Judgement, Heaven and Hell," form part of a verse which was found on tombstones about this period.

"Death, Judgement, Heaven and Hell, think, Christian, think,
You stand on vast eternity's dread brink,
Faith, Repentance, Piety and Prayer,
Despise this world, the next be all your care."—

Wes. Meth. Mag., 1785, p. 585.

—*Mr. Geo. Severs.*

423. STONES END. (*Proc.*, vii, p. 71, N. & Q. 417). AN ACT PASSED 1750: "To open and widen the road from the Stones-end at Lambeth to the alms-houses at Newington." Also to "make a new road from a place called Symond's Corner, on the new road, across St. George's Fields, to the Stones end in Blackman Street in the parish of St. George's, Southwark." Also "to erect a turn-pike or toll-gate at or near Symond's Corner, and to demand tolls: For every horse, mare, mule, ass—&c one halfpenny." [*Entick's Hist. and Survey of London*, 1766, vol. III, p. 50.]—*Rev. T. E. Brigden.*