

MOTIVE



METHODIST HERITAGE

Jim McLean

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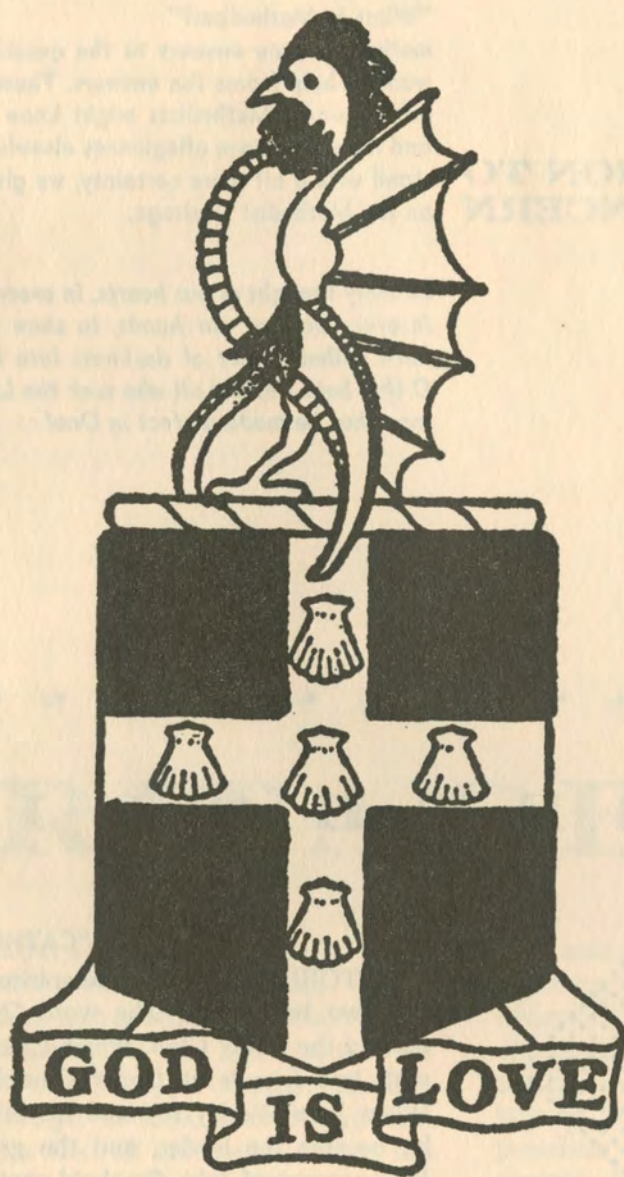
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WESLEY COAT OF ARMS

The oldest known coat of arms of the Wesley family dates from 1324. The emblem consists of a red shield with a white cross upon which are scallop shells, the sign of pilgrims. The mythical (rooster-serpent) cockatrice, whose glance was supposed to turn its victim into stone is perched over the shield.

There is no evidence that John Wesley ever used the family crest, but in recent years Methodist colleges and institutions have begun using it.

INTRODUCTION TO A SPECIAL CONCERN

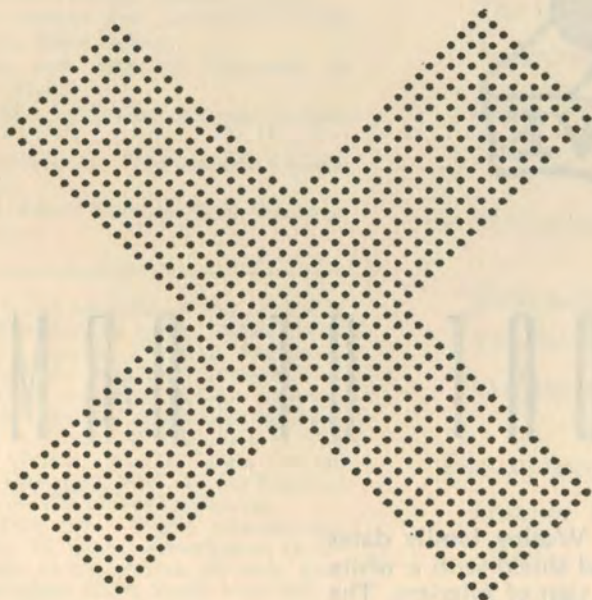
Most Methodists are uncertain how to answer the query: "What is Methodism?"

motive gives no answers to the question. We do, however, want to help frame the answers. Therefore, so that we who are known as Methodists might know ourselves the better, and those who have allegiances elsewhere might also understand with a bit more certainty, we give you a special issue on the Methodist Heritage.

In every thought of our hearts, in every word of our tongues, in every work of our hands, to show forth His praise who hath called us out of darkness into His marvellous light! O that both we, and all who seek the Lord Jesus in sincerity, may thus be made perfect in One!

—John Wesley

O U R M E T H O D I S T



THE "CATHOLIC" BEGINNINGS

HISTORICALLY as well as spiritually, Methodism had two beginnings. The word "Methodist" was first used of the "Holy Club" which Charles Wesley founded with two friends at Christ Church, Oxford, in 1728. When John Wesley rejoined his brother there in 1729, he became the leader, and the group expanded. The later account of John Gambold contains not a few hints for the Campus Group today:

It was their custom to meet most evenings either at Wesley's chamber or one of the others, where after some prayers (the chief subject of which was charity) they ate their supper together, and he (John Wesley) read some book. But the chief business was to review what each had done that day, in pursuance of their common design, and to consult what steps were to be taken next. Their undertaking included these several particulars: to converse with young students, to visit the prisons, to instruct some poor families, to take care of a school and a parish workhouse. They took great pains with the younger members of the university, to rescue them from bad company, and encourage them in a sober, studious life.

The rules of the first Methodists were simply:

1. Frequent Communion

The historical heritage of the Methodist Movement and its contribution to the life and faith of the Church today.

HERITAGE

BY JOHN J. VINCENT

2. Regularity in prayer and study

3. Teaching and other useful service to others.

Methodism began, then, among students at Oxford.

This is the first beginning. It was a revival in what might be called the "catholic" type of piety. Through reading Thomas à Kempis in 1725, John Wesley had been inspired "to give God all his heart," and to the end, much of the teaching on Christian Perfection was based upon à Kempis. The "Methodistic" use of "the ordinances"—public and private prayer, regular fasting, frequent Communion—was joined with systematic philanthropic work. More than one writer has compared this routine with that of Ignatius Loyola. It was, indeed, Wesley's insistence upon at least a weekly Communion that earned him the opposition of the university authorities as much as it later embarrassed the Anglican clergy of the country, bewildered and irritated to find their unfrequented altars weekly filled by "these people called Methodists."

But that is to anticipate. For the habits of "catholic" worship and devotion which were formed by the "Oxford Methodists" were insisted upon by Wesley all his life. It was, indeed, only when Methodists were increasingly excluded from the Anglican churches that the habits of regular Communion were broken. Then it was that Wesley continued to refuse the Methodists the right to have

their own celebrations of Communion, or to have their preachers ordained for the purpose. The pursuit of this disastrous policy was not corrected until the ordinations of 1836. It was partly avoided for the American Methodists by the ordinations for America during the Revolutionary War; though not wholly, for the ordained preachers were not numerous enough to make up the absence of the Anglican clergy, withdrawn to the safety of the homeland by the Bishop of London.

The "catholic" beginning to Methodism had its continuing influence not only in Methodist sacramentalism, but also in the Methodist teaching on holiness. Admittedly, the insistence upon "Entire Sanctification," let alone the conscious sense of the gift of it, took Wesley way beyond the limits of "catholic" piety. But many a Roman priest has been amazed to find how closely Wesley's teaching upon Christian life and discipline compares with that of his own church.

THE "EVANGELICAL" BEGINNING

In 1735, the Oxford Methodists dispersed, and Wesley, now back from his years in Georgia, turned his attention to the Moravians. He had, he said, "gone to America to convert the Indians." Now he cried, "but who shall convert me?" It seems that Wesley's strict devotion had not satisfied him deeply enough. Count Zinzendorf, he

found, preached salvation by faith alone, and it was Wesley's apprehension of this which marked the Aldersgate Street experience of May 24, 1738.

The experience has been variously assessed. Some have called it Wesley's "conversion," and, indeed, there are places where Wesley complained that before that date he was never "truly converted to God." There are other places in the *Journal*, Letters and Sermons, however, which suggest that too great an emphasis upon this side of the experience should not be placed. It may be well to set down what Wesley himself wrote in his diary:

In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before



nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation; 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.

Now, it is quite plain that the *new* thing here is that Wesley has ceased to be a man who gives to God and has become one who has received back from God. In his own words, from having "the faith of a servant" he now has "the faith of a son." In other words, this is Wesley's experience of Adoption, or his *assurance* of it. His conversion, properly so called, had occurred years before.

Thus, in the *Minutes of Conference* of 1746, Wesley asked and answered (the "Conferences" were always so conducted!) the following:

- Q. *Wherein does our doctrine now differ from that we preached when at Oxford?*
 A. *Chiefly in these two points:*

1. *We then knew nothing of that righteousness of faith in justification;*
2. *Nor, of the nature of faith itself, as implying consciousness of pardon.*

That is, 1: to the righteousness which is holiness, which Wesley ever preached, is added as way to and justification for it, the righteousness which is "imputed" to a man who has "faith" in the efficacy of the Cross of Christ for him. It is, again, 2: The insistence upon the possibility of *knowing* "salvation"—that is, assurance.

Roman writers, such as Piette and Burbidge, emphasize the "catholic" beginnings, and reduce the importance of the "evangelical." Many others, like Rattenbury, Simon and most Methodists, tend to overstress the "evangelical." The truth is surely somewhere between both extremes. Certain it is that Wesley very soon ended all connection with the Moravians, who "spoke blasphemously against works," and did not honor "the ordinances." The "religion of the heart" might have become Wesley's in 1738. But it never made his mind or will one jot the less disciplined.

THE "HORRIBLE DECREE" OF CALVINISM

There is, I have always felt, a certain assumed sympathy with Calvinism in the religion of the United States, which we in England do not have. There are, of course, historical reasons for this. Calvinism has always had little appeal in England, while America from the sixteenth century onwards has been the meeting-point of various forms of Puritanism, Dissent, and "Reformed" churches.

Attempts have been made, particularly by American writers like Croft Cell and more recently David Shipley, to place Methodism within this tradition.* They rightly point to the beginnings of the revival as being outside the Anglican Church of the eighteenth century. But they omit Wesley's lifelong adherence to Arminianism and Anglicanism, and his opposition to Dissent and Congregationalism.

His opposition was largely theological. Calvinism by its doctrine that some are predestined to damnation "made God worse than the devil." Against this, Wesley asserted that there is no man on earth who is so thoroughly depraved as to miss entirely the glorious benefits of the passion of Christ. This doctrine of Wesley's means not simply that "Christ died for all who receive it," but that "Christ died for all, whether they know it or not, and something of His goodness (call it 'natural conscience' or 'preventing grace') has entered into them."

Wesley also opposed George Whitefield, the Countess of Huntingdon and others because it seemed to him that their predestinarian opinions gave rise to carelessness of living. If God had decided people's fate anyway, then there was nothing we could do, so eat, drink and be merry, some argued. In the *Conference Minutes* of 1745, we read:

* Note article by Franz Hildebrandt in this issue which upholds the "Reformed" emphasis.

Q. *Wherein may we come to the very edge of Calvinism?*

- A. (1) *In ascribing all good to the free grace of God,*
(2) *In denying all natural free will, and all power antecedent to grace.*

Wesley's reply to Calvinism here was (1) to emphasize human free will in decision, (2) to stress Christian Perfection, toward which man must strive here on earth, and (3) to evolve a "double justification" theory. Man is justified here on earth in a moment by his faith in Christ; but there will also be a Final Judgment, in which he will be justified by his faith as evidenced in his life.

Hence, the Methodists parted company with the Calvinists. Wesley's loyalty to the Anglican Church, indeed, made him demand that Dissenters who became Methodists should cease attending their own services and attend those of the Church of England. The Methodists, of course, were not allowed by Wesley to have morning services in their "preaching houses," so that they could attend Communion at the Anglican churches. The "preaching service" was to be held in the evening.

"FAITH WORKING BY LOVE"

We may next see our Methodist heritage over against Reformation theology of the Lutheran kind. The whole matter has been carefully examined by Franz Hildebrandt in *From Luther to Wesley*. Here, it is only necessary to relate the notions of assurance and perfection to the classic Lutheran position.

Wesley had greater love for Luther than for Calvin; but he felt that Luther went dangerously near to discounting the importance of works, and to neglecting the fullness of salvation.

Whether Wesley understood Luther may be questioned. But to Wesley, Luther's insistence upon "faith alone" denied the part of the free will, and also man's own striving after perfection. Thus he wrote in 1739:

The grand error of the Moravians is that they follow Luther for better or worse, and hence their "no works, no law, no commandments."

For Wesley, the rigid dichotomy between faith and works was a false one, because "the gospel is simply the commands of the law, proposed by way of promise." Christ does not rid us of the law; he makes us fulfill it; and we can fulfill it because he has done so first.

Wesley also believed that perfection was possible to man, here on earth. By this, he did not mean "absolute perfection," but rather perfection *in Love*. In practice, this often led to a rather selfish and introspective kind of

religion, such as Lutherans have always opposed. But, in essence, Wesley's concern was simply to assert that God was powerful enough to make us exactly as he wanted us to be. Everything was of the grace of God, though, in fact, we shall be judged by what we have done with that grace.

This insistence upon the primacy of the grace of God should always be remembered by those who assert too simply that Wesley was "a consistent Arminian." Wesley was an Arminian rather than a Calvinist not so much because he emphasized man rather than God, but because he proclaimed the free and sovereign grace of God as over against those who would restrict that grace to any group.

THE HERITAGE IN PRACTICAL LOVE

We turn now to consider the Methodist Heritage in practical matters. Christian Perfection was not some vague, subjective, "spiritual" thing. It was a realistic demand for disciplined charity.

Lose no opportunity of doing good in any kind. Be zealous of good works; willingly omit no work, either of piety or mercy. Do all the good you possibly can to the bodies and souls of men.

In this matter, Wesley broke away from the "Catholic" idea of sainthood, and proclaimed that holiness belonged not to the cloisters of a monastery but to the noise of a busy street.

The tradition lasts on today. Idly do occasional Methodists complain, "Keep the Church out of Politics." Idly does the "Committee for the Preservation of Methodism" seek to exterminate the "Pink Fringe." Idly do members complain about Methodist attitudes to drink and gambling.

Matters of this kind belong essentially to the Methodist tradition. By this cannot be meant that Methodism has always had a "party line." Wesley was a High-Church Tory, while most Methodists toward the end of the last century were active in the Liberal and Labor Parties. At the International Socialist Conference in Copenhagen, 1950, the claim was made that British Socialism in its origins "was Methodist not Marxist."

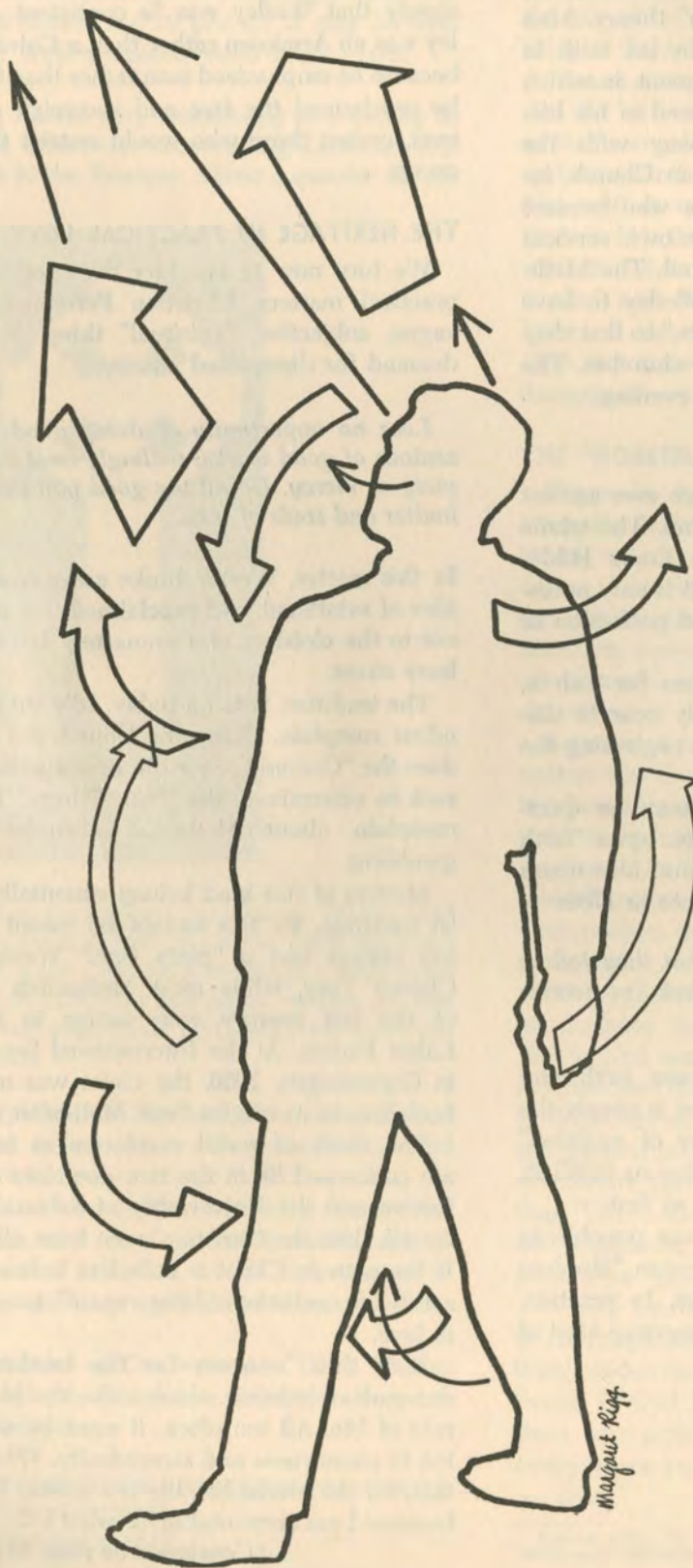
The seeds of social revolution as far as Methodists are concerned lie in the two doctrines of Christian Perfection and the Universality of Salvation. If Christ dies for all, then the Christian must treat all as if it were so. If the man in Christ is called to holiness, then he must act "with undistinguishing regard" toward his neighbor in love.

It is thus "concern for the brother" and also the demands of holiness which make the Methodist live to a rule of life. All too often, it must be admitted, this has led to narrowness and scrupulosity. What is important is that, for the Methodist, life is a serious business, not only because I am accountable for what I do, but also because

(Continued on page 48)



r e l i g i o u s



THE "momentous truth" of the witness of the Spirit, declared John Wesley in 1767, is "one grand part of the testimony which God has given [the Methodists] to bear to all mankind." Two centuries of Christian history support this judgment. The emphasis on religious experience, which centers in the Spirit's witness, has been a distinctive mark of the Methodist movement from its beginning.

WESLEY himself repeatedly cites the disclosures of experience, or man's "inward consciousness" of God. Expressions like "we experimentally know," "experience shows," and the "experimental knowledge of Christ" frequently appear in his utterances. Behind such expressions are two convictions: (1) God may be directly known; (2) this immediate awareness of God's presence and power provides strong evidence for the truth of the Christian gospel.

First, *religion is personal rather than academic*. It is not assent to propositions about God, but firsthand acquaintance with him and personal trust in him. His righteousness and love may be *lived through* by the individual, not merely believed in on the testimony of others. In Wesley's view we may be as immediately conscious of God's love for us and our answering love for him as we are that we are alive, or not in pain.

Following St. Paul in Romans 8:16, Wesley affirms that the Spirit of God, through "an inward impression on the soul," "immediately and directly witnesses to my spirit, that I am a child of God; that Jesus Christ hath loved me, and given himself for me; that all my sins are blotted out, and I, even I, am reconciled to God." To this testimony is added that of our own spirits—our consciousness of strength

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BY S. PAUL
SCHILLING

from God enabling us to live as his adopted children in justice, mercy, and truth.

Though the stress on religious experience has often been marked by an exaggeration of the role of emotion, Wesley did not fall into this error. He did insist on the importance of feeling, no doubt partly to correct the cold, impersonal intellectualism of his day. But he explicitly sought to avoid, on the one hand, a religion of "mere formality" without power, and, on the other, "the wildness of enthusiasm." The resultant interpretation he regarded as both "scriptural and rational." Religious experience for him involved man's total consciousness of God—in reverent thinking and obedient action no less than warmth of heart.

Wesley, moreover, warned his hearers against contentment with "any supposed testimony of the Spirit which is separate from the fruit of it." He who really experiences God, rather than a mere passing emotion, will evidence the appropriate fruits: "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control." To estimate the reality of one's experience, he suggested asking two questions: "Does it sink deep in humble, gentle love? Does it extend wide in all inward and outward holiness?"

Second, *the reality of the "experimental knowledge of God" offers powerful support for the truth of the Christian message.* Like scientists in their laboratories, the early Methodists made exciting discoveries which served to demonstrate what otherwise would have remained mere theory. Wrote Wesley, "I now am assured that these things are so: I experience them in my own breast." In his Sixth University Sermon he spoke of "the sure test of experience."

Obviously, this emphasis can easily

lead to dangerous excesses, encouraging the individual to confuse his own pious imaginings with objective truth. On the whole, however, Wesley was about as successful in avoiding narrow subjectivism as in escaping one-sided emotionalism. Personal experience was far from being his sole religious authority. Constantly he checked his findings with the historic revelation of God recorded in the Bible, the writings of the early Church Fathers, the experience of the Christian community, historical and contemporary, his own critical intelligence, and the conduct of those who claimed to have experienced the Spirit's witness. Repeatedly he cites "Scripture, reason, and experience" as his norms of religious truth.

Yet the role of experience remains crucial. Though Wesley admits that "experience is not sufficient to prove a doctrine unsupported by Scripture," he insists that it is "sufficient to confirm a doctrine which is grounded on Scripture." This is in principle his attitude toward religious experience and truth in general. Experience should never stand alone, and its intimations are suspect if they lack other support. On the other hand, no religious teaching means very much unless its claims are experimentally validated. Theoretical truth, however strongly supported by tradition or external authority, remains powerless and dead. The truth that saves and transforms is the truth that is lived. "The image of God impressed on a created spirit"—this is "the strongest evidence of the truth of Christianity."

ALTHOUGH Methodism has followed its founder in exalting the importance of personal religious experience, it has not been unique in this. Wesley himself wrote regarding the remarks of a true Methodist: "If any

man say, 'Why, these are only the common, fundamental principles of Christianity!' Thou hast said; so I mean; this is the very truth; I know they are no other."

Christianity began in a series of life-transforming experiences. The New Testament glows with the radiance of lives consciously made new through a direct meeting with God. The experience of the man born blind was that of many others who received spiritual sight: "One thing I know, that though I was blind, now I see." After Pentecost the disciples, "filled with the Holy Spirit," could not avoid telling what they themselves had "seen and heard." Peter "perceived" that God "shows no partiality." Paul was changed by an inward event on the Damascus road, and was sustained in repeated hardships by his awareness of the "living Christ." John could declare, "We know that we are of God." Indeed, the entire New Testament celebrates the fulfillment of the covenant of which Jeremiah had written: "I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts."

Wesley's distinctive contribution lay in his re-emphasis on this basic Christian truth. His teaching simply accented a word which has been in the Christian vocabulary from the beginning, but was largely forgotten in his day. Other individuals and groups—Schleiermacher, the Anabaptists, the Moravians, the Friends with their "Inner Light"—have also stressed experience. Yet nowhere else is the emphasis so clear, so central, or so free of aberrations as in John Wesley. Unfortunately, Methodists themselves have not always been as emphatic or as balanced as he in affirming that God can be directly known.

SURELY there is great need for this accent today. In spite of what Alec



Vidler has called "the appalling religiousness of America," there is little evidence among us of that personal awareness of God which makes all things new. Matthew Arnold's comment applies to us:

*[We] see all sights from pole to pole,
And glance, and nod, and bustle by;
And never once possess our soul
Before we die.*

Church members take God for granted, but too seldom know the thrill of genuine communion. So unacquainted are we with him that we are embarrassed even to speak his name, which is probably used profanely by blasphemers more often than reverently by believers. Many of us have a secondhand faith which we have never proved for ourselves. We lack the joy of personal discovery. We profess more than we possess. Our churches are often beehives of diversified activity; far less frequently are they centers of spiritual power.

Theologically, the nineteenth-century emphasis on man's religious consciousness, which sometimes exalted the human subject at the expense of the divine object, has given way to an opposite stress on revelation and a corresponding depreciation of experience. But this is a false opposition. Surely we do not have to choose between man-centered religion without revelation and God-centered revelation without experience. Any genuine revelation of God must take place in somebody's consciousness. The object of the divine disclosure in Jesus Christ is the reconciliation of men to God. How can this occur unless persons are

aware of God's forgiving mercy and recreating power?

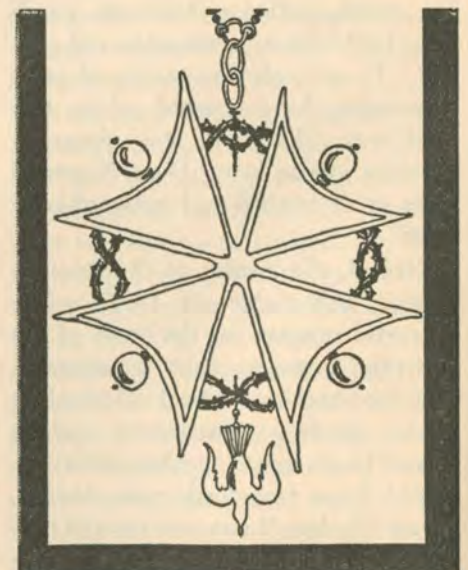
PRESENT-DAY theology speaks illuminatingly of religion as a divine-human encounter, often meaning primarily that man in worship meets a real Other rather than merely experiences his own feelings. Yet no encounter is genuine unless two are involved. If the Other truly encounters me, something must take place in my inner life which makes a commanding difference. The current stress on encounter is basically very similar to Wesley's emphasis on experience, which he always rooted in divine action. Methodists should welcome it. They may also enrich it by insisting that the God who is met is Redeemer as well as Judge, and that his coming means lives consciously renewed and sustained by his indwelling Spirit.

The stress on experience must be guarded in our day against the same dangers that beset it in Wesley's. The experience of God is not merely a vague, ephemeral wave of feeling. It is a consciousness of a real Presence, communion with a living Person about whom statements may be made, an occurrence with discernible intellectual content. A man's relation to God, like his friendship with another human being, involves his whole self—his thought and will as well as his feelings. We not only think about an experience after it is past; we think while we are having it. When we enter our closet to pray, we cannot check our minds outside. They are present and active throughout. The Holy Spirit is Spirit of truth as well as power. Recognizing this, we can avoid the narrow dogmatism and misguided emotionalism of some sects which stress the activity of the Spirit, while regaining something of their vitality and warmhearted enthusiasm.

Nor is the experience of God merely private or subjective. He who has it remains a member of the Christian community and the larger circle of humanity. If he really meets the Father of all men, he gains a heightened sense of social responsibility. He also discovers that God can be experienced and served in the whole of life.

Yet this very extension of religion makes all the more imperative the intensely personal practice of the divine presence. Like Napoleon and Hitler in their invasions of Russia, we may overextend ourselves and lose communication with our homeland. Extension without intension is disastrous. As Isaiah saw, if campers enlarge their tents and therefore lengthen their cords, they must also strengthen their stakes. A creative faith will match the breadth of its human concern with the depth of its experience of God.

HISTORIC Methodism and authentic Christianity alike declare this to be possible. God, said Rufus Jones, is "not a great he was, but the Great I Am." We can know him not only in theory or by hearsay, but in direct, personal encounter. His is the Holy Spirit, "the divine Presence in our lives, whereby we are kept in perpetual remembrance of the truth of Christ, and find strength and help in time of need." Christian faith is far more than subscription to a set of doctrines, however true; at heart, it involves a firsthand relation with him whose acts the doctrines seek to interpret.



justification by FAITH

BY FRANZ HILDEBRANDT

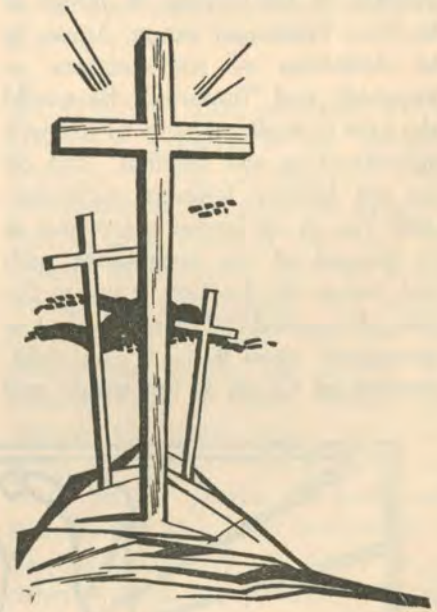
THESE things must necessarily go together in our justification: upon God's part, His great mercy and grace; upon Christ's part, the satisfaction of God's justice; and on our part, faith in the merits of Christ." This, says Wesley, in 1765, "is the doctrine which I have constantly believed and taught, for near eight-and-twenty years." It is expounded in detail in the four sermons on "Justification by Faith," "Righteousness of Faith," "The Lord Our Righteousness," and "The Scripture Way of Salvation." In British Methodism this is still compulsory reading for all ministerial candidates. John Lawson's *Notes on Wesley's Forty-Four Sermons* (Epworth Press, London, 1946) will prove helpful to students—the author is currently teaching at Emory University—and so will Professor Robert Cushman's article on our subject in *The Christian Advocate*, September, 1955.

There is nothing new about Wesley's summary statement. We observe that the need for justification is evidently taken for granted; man, not God, is called to account; the mode of thought is strictly "theocentric." And so it is "christocentric"; Christ's merits, Christ's satisfaction, Christ's benefits are the objective and exclusive ground of our acceptance by God. The operative texts are "the Lord our righteousness" (Jerem. 23:6) and "Jesus Christ is made unto us of God wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption" (1 Corinth. 1:30). The classic formula of the Reformers is also Wesley's: *sola gratia—propter Christum—per fidem* (by

grace alone, for the sake of Christ, through faith). George Croft Cell was right in speaking of the Luther-Calvin-Wesley faith; the three are on common ground, and their basic unity is more important than the marginal diversities magnified by their disciples.

*No good word, or work, or thought
Bring I to gain Thy grace;
Pardon I accept unbought,
Thine offer I embrace;
Coming, as at first I came,
To take, and not bestow, on Thee:
Friend of sinners, spotless Lamb,
Thy blood was shed for me.*

Charles Wesley's hymns, at this point, as at every other, really need a little more than a mere passing mention. But we must go back to John's initial sentence to recall that it is a verbatim quotation from the Homilies of the Church of England; nothing new indeed, but coming to Wesley—and through him, to England—with all the force of genuine surprise that such should be the official teaching of the mother church and that it should have been allowed to fall into such complete oblivion. To discover this was for him, as it was for Luther, to discover St. Paul; and without the help of Luther he would not, humanly speaking, have discovered him at all. What he learns in the decisive hour of Aldersgate is, almost in the style of modern theological instruction, a piece of analysis of Pauline vocabulary. Luther goes, in the Preface to Romans, through the several terms employed in the epistle, and when he comes to



"faith" and "righteousness" this is what Wesley hears:

Faith is not that human notion and dream that some hold for faith. . . . Faith is a divine work in us. It changes us and makes us to be born anew of God; it kills the old Adam and makes altogether different men, in heart and spirit and mind and powers, and it brings with it the Holy Ghost. O, it is a living, busy, active, mighty thing, this faith; and so it is impossible for it not to do good works incessantly. . . . Faith is a living, daring confidence in God's grace, so sure and certain that a man would stake his life on it a thousand times. This confidence in God's grace and knowledge of it makes men glad and bold and happy in dealing with God and with all His creatures; and this is the work of the Holy Ghost in faith. . . . Righteousness, then, is such a faith and is called

God's righteousness, or the righteousness that avails before God, because God gives it and counts it as righteousness for the sake of Christ, our Mediator.

IT is possible that in the underlining of certain phrases one could detect in Wesley a difference in nuance from Luther. He would probably not assume that "faith working by love" was, as it were, a thing that went without saying; he would want to make very sure that it was said and practiced, and he would have more use than Luther ever could have for the presence of the epistle of James in the New Testament canon. Again, in the definition of righteousness as "imputed" and "imparted" he would take care to spell out what in Luther's understanding was implicit. "But do you not believe inherent righteousness? Yes, in its proper place; not as the ground of our acceptance with God, but as the fruit of it; not in the place of imputed righteousness, but as consequent upon it. . . . The righteousness of Christ is the whole and

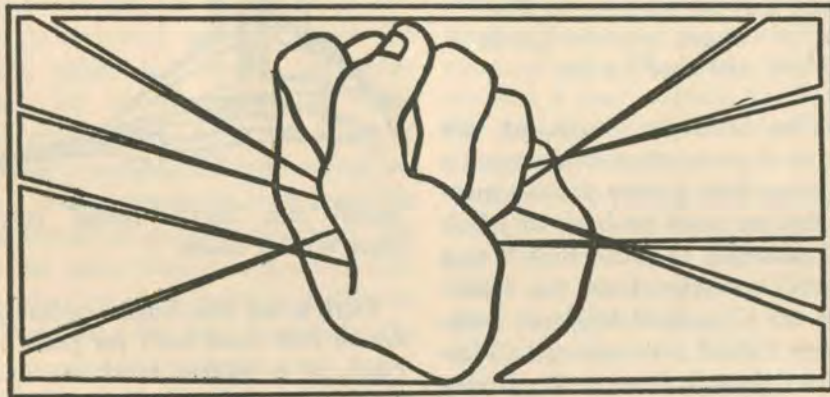
guage . . . yet effectually know the Lord our righteousness"; and quoting, to that effect, the dying words of Cardinal Bellarmine, who, when asked "unto which of the saints wilt thou turn?" answered: "it is safest to trust in the merits of Christ."

Such an admission, however, is no deviation from Luther's position. For Wesley, as for the Reformers, justification by faith remains throughout his life the *articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiae*, the article with which the Church stands or falls. "It was this doctrine which our Church justly calls the strong rock and foundation of the Christian religion, that first drove popery out of these kingdoms; and it is this alone can keep it out." But the battle is not simply and solely with popery; it splits the Anglican Church wide open from within, and Wesley finds himself "thrust out" because somehow—and this no mere accidental misfortune—the Church of England cannot contain what Soederblom, the Lutheran Primate of Sweden, in a famous reference to Wesley called "the Anglican edition of

mad dogs, and treated accordingly. . . . But this moved us not."

WHERE Methodism understands itself! Does it? That is the question. It is no longer the University of Oxford, but our own communion to which Wesley, could he speak today, would address his sermon "True Christianity Defended," with its grim text from Isaiah 1:2 "how is the faithful city become an harlot!" and its twofold charge that she has "denied her Lord, and listened to the voice of strangers, both in respect of doctrine and of practice." What has recently been said about the doctrine of Christian perfection in the last hundred years, is equally true about justification by faith: "the doctrine was not preached because in the colleges and seminaries it was no longer taught." Leading exponents of Methodism have put it on record that "we have no doctrinal claims staked off with NO TRESPASSING signs on the gate; we are ready to unite with all Christ's children everywhere in the building of His Church and the bringing of the kingdom of God on earth"; and that "Wesley's doctrine was the doctrine that few doctrines are essential." It all depends on what you mean by "few"! The early Methodists were in no doubt about it; "our doctrines" to them, were as definite as "our hymns," and not second, but prior, to "our discipline." And ministers of the British Conference, "permitted to reside abroad," are still annually required to answer whether they "believe and preach our doctrines." Even Trustees, originally and fundamentally, are charged with the guardianship over the doctrine preached in Methodist buildings lest it should be in conflict with Wesley's Standard Sermons and the Notes on the New Testament. And "O for a thousand tongues to sing," the only hymn worthy to occupy place No. 1 in any genuine Methodist Hymnbook, contained until the beginning of this century the verse:

*Look unto him, ye nations; own
Your God, ye fallen race;
Look, and be saved through faith
alone,
Be justified by grace.*



sole foundation of our hope. It is by faith that the Holy Ghost enables us to build upon this foundation. God gives this faith; in that moment we are accepted of God; and yet, not for the sake of that faith but of what Christ has done and suffered for us." Wesley is unwavering in his affirmation; but, as a son of the eighteenth century (and not only as that), he is tolerant of expressions and suspicious of all labels, aware that even in the camps of Rome and of the Mystics there are many, who "however confused their ideas, however improper their lan-

Luther." The break with Canterbury is inevitable, however slow and loath Wesley was to admit it, and where Methodism understands itself, it is a break beyond even "ecumenical" repair; for the "mother church" does not want and cannot bear the reminder of her own Articles and Homilies in the form administered by Wesley. "From 1738 to this time we could hardly speak of anything else either in public or in private but the doctrine that we are saved through faith. . . . In doing this we were assaulted and abused on every side. We were represented as



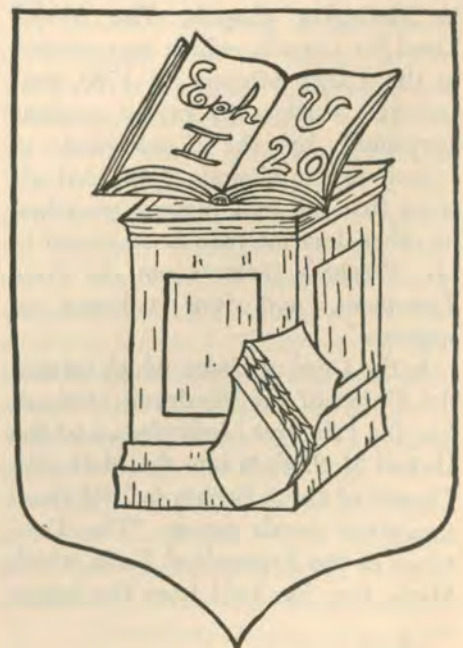
We have ceased to sing this, and the disappearance of such lines—of the whole weight of Wesley's poetry—from our modern hymnody is the measure of Methodist apostasy. Persuaded first that "doctrine does not matter," we have gone on to believe, very naturally, that "justification is not enough." None is easier to misunderstand than St. Paul in Romans: "what shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid!" There are always the twin dangers of nomism and antinomianism, the deliberately false conclusions drawn from this doctrine against which there is no theoretical safeguard; the only remedy for the abuse of scripture is its proper use. Wesley argued with the Moravians, as Luther had argued with the Antinomians of his day, but (as his later outbursts against Luther pathetically show) quite unaware of the precedent; today the same polemics would have to be directed against the far more prevalent nomist error which turns the Gospel into a new Law. The Church which prides herself of being "non-credal" is doomed to become super-legal instead. What for Wesley was an organic unity, "the gift of redemption and the life of holiness," we have broken into pieces which in vain we try to glue together; everything is determined by spiritual and material "special effort"; the reliance is quite plainly no longer on faith, but on works, with the inevitable result that restlessness is the dominant feature of the Christian life and that, in the last resort, the Church is justified by statistics.

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IT is but another side of the same story of limiting the Gospel and distorting the nature of faith, when time and again "experience" is rolled out as the banner of Methodist theology and held in contrast over against the Creeds to which other churches adhere. One just trembles to think what Wesley would make of a recent self-description of Methodism as "a pragmatic movement evaluating every great issue on the basis of whether or not it will work"—as though this were the supreme criterion of the evangelical revival; as though faith could ever be isolated from its object, the "deposit" of truth and grace, or from the blessed company of all faithful people who join in the Creed of the Church; as though we were saved by feeling and forced to work out our own Damascus; as though experience could ever mean anything else but, quite literally, "finding out" the truth of the Gospel "Whereas it is objected that experience is not sufficient to prove a doctrine unsupported by Scripture, we answer, experience is sufficient to confirm a doctrine which is grounded on Scripture." That is the ground on which Wesley teaches justification by faith; here, as with any other doctrine, he cannot "believe this till I find it in the Bible." And even at a point where he leaves it open whether or not, as the Reformers insisted, without this there can be no Christian Church, he goes on to assert that "most certainly there can be none where the whole notion of justification is ridiculed and exploded, unless it be a church as includes every child of man, of which, consequently, Turks,

Deists and Pagans are as real members as the most pious Christian under the sun."

JUSTIFICATION, according to the Protestant Fathers, is the material principle of the Reformation; scripturalness its formal principle. Justification is, as it were, in one word the content of scripture; scripture is the warrant of justification. We preach justification by faith because we preach the Word; and maybe the Church today is where Wesley was before Aldersgate when "the best advice he ever had" was given him by Peter Böhler: preach the faith until thou hast it, then thou wilt preach it because thou hast it. There is no other way to the recovery of this cardinal article of our Methodist heritage.



OUR CONFSSIONAL STANDARDS

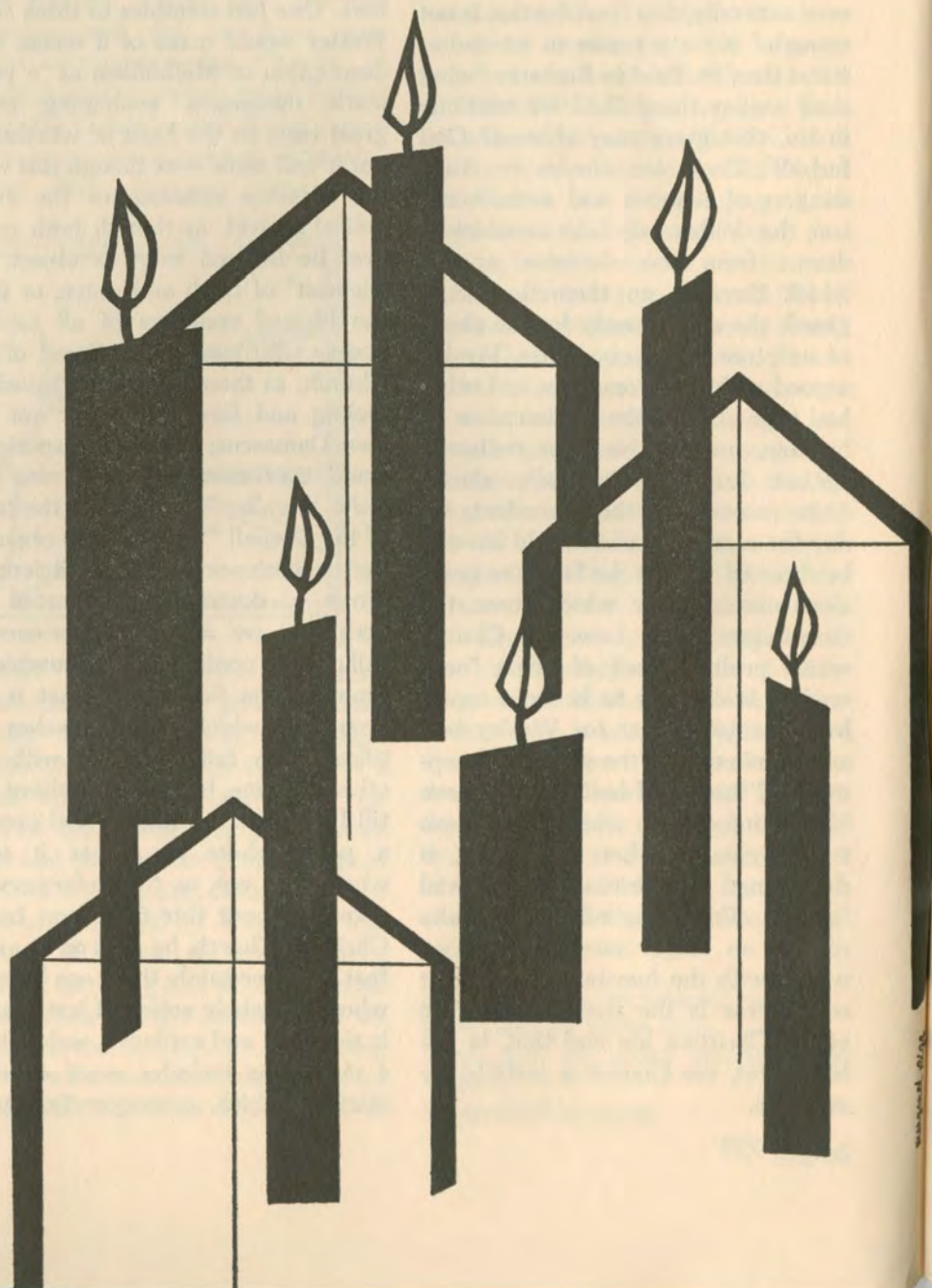
BY JOHN BISHOP

DR. FRANZ HILDEBRANDT has pointed out in his book *Christianity According to the Wesleys* that Methodism is unique among the major denominations in Christendom in that it expresses its doctrine officially in the form of expository documents: the Notes on the New Testament and the Standard Sermons. "Where others have Confessions or Articles of Faith, we point directly to the Bible as annotated by John Wesley; listening to his expert guidance, but bound only by the Word of God."¹

Wesley did not give his preachers freedom to preach what they pleased in Methodist chapels. The Model Deed for chapels, which was printed in the Large Minutes of 1763, empowered trustees to permit persons appointed by the Conference to preach in the chapels, "provided always that the said persons preached no other doctrine than is contained in Mr. Wesley's *Notes upon the New Testament*, and four volumes of sermons."

In the Deed of Union which ratified the Union of the Wesleyan Methodists, the Primitive Methodists, and the United Methodists into the Methodist Church of Great Britain in 1932 these important words occur: "The Doctrines of the Evangelical Faith which Methodism has held from the begin-

¹ P. 16.



ning and still holds are based upon the Divine revelation recorded in the Holy Scriptures. The Methodist Church acknowledges this revelation as the supreme rule of faith and practice. These Evangelical Doctrines to which the Preachers of the Methodist Church, both ministers and laymen, are pledged are contained in Wesley's *Notes on the New Testament* and the first four volumes of his sermons. The *Notes on the New Testament* and the forty-four Sermons are not intended to impose a system of formal or speculative theology on Methodist Preachers, but to set up standards of preaching and belief which should secure loyalty to the fundamental truths of the Gospel of redemption, and ensure the continued witness of the Church to the realities of the Christian experience of salvation. The Conference shall not have any power to alter or vary in any manner whatsoever the clauses contained in this Deed which define the doctrinal standards of the Methodist Church. The Conference shall be the final authority within the Methodist Church with regard to all questions concerning the interpretation of its doctrines."

JOHAN WESLEY was not a formal theologian and did not leave behind him a massive compendium of doctrine. But his Sermons and Notes have admirably served the purpose of doctrinal standards in Methodism for six generations past. In neither of these authoritative works did Wesley claim absolute authority or finality for his teaching. He says in the Preface to the Notes: "Whereinsoever I have mistaken, my mind is open to conviction. I sincerely desire to be better informed. I say to God and man What I know not, teach Thou me."

The Sermons are distinguished by a real and remarkable insight into theological issues in their relation to religious experience. Dr. Friedrich Loofs, one of the most eminent historians of dogma, remarks upon the wealth of their content, the orderly progress of thought, the practical earnestness and the sheer lucidity

which characterizes them all.² The phrase "Scriptural Christianity" admirably describes them. When John Wesley preached at the opening of the "new chapel" in City Road, London, he said: "Methodism, so called, is the old religion, the religion of the Bible, the religion of the primitive Church, the religion of the Church of England." In the preface to the Standard Sermons Wesley says: "I want to know one thing—the way to heaven; how to land safe on that happy shore. God Himself has condescended to teach the way; for this very end He came from heaven. He hath written it down in a book. O give me that book. At any price, give me the book of God. I have it: here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be *homo unius libri*. Here then I am, far from the busy ways of men. I sit down alone: only God is here. In His presence I open, I read His book; for this end, to find the way to heaven. If any doubt still remains, I consult those who are experienced in the things of God; and then the writings whereby, being dead, they yet speak. And what I thus learn, that I teach."

MANY who read and study the Standard Sermons do not always grasp clearly the great Christian truths which it is their purpose to proclaim. This is partly because of the changes in language and style since Wesley wrote two hundred years ago. But a more important reason is that Wesley is constantly speaking out of the background of his own religious experience. It is this experience which is the clue to understanding the essential message of his sermons.³

His message was often directed to those who were living in complete indifference to God, but also he constantly addresses himself to those who think they are Christian, but who in reality are stumbling along, as he himself had long done, in a kind of sub-Christian twilight. In many of his sermons this less-than-fully Christian state of mind, which he knew so well,

² Methodism's in Herzog-Haveck: Real chcyklopidic, Heft 119, 1762.

³ See C. Leslie Mitton: A Clue to Wesley's Sermons (Epworth Press).

is contrasted with the richness of the Christian experience in its fullness. He applied different names in different sermons to these two stages on the Christian life: the Almost Christian and the Altogether Christian, the righteousness of the law and the righteousness of Christ, under law and under grace, the faith of a servant and the faith of a son, the legal state and the evangelical state.

For Wesley repentance was the porch into true religion. The door is faith. Wesley warns again and again against imperfect forms of faith and inadequate substitutes for it. The kind of faith which alone will meet man's need is the faith of a son or saving faith. True faith is the key that unlocks the treasure store. By it we receive justification and salvation. By it we are accepted as the sons of God and born again into a new life. By it we begin to know the witness of the Spirit in our lives and enter into the joy which is the gift of the Holy Spirit. This true faith is not the final goal. It is the beginning of the race proper. From this new vantage point we are able to begin to press on to the goal of our high calling in Christ. This goal is variously called "holiness," "sanctification," and "perfect love." This is the object of our journey, to be enabled to love God with all our heart and mind and soul and strength and to love our neighbor as ourselves.

WESLEY'S teaching in his Standard Sermons must be interpreted in the light of his later discourses, deliverances, and experience, as tested by the experience of others. This has been excellently done by Dr. E. H. Sugden in his two-volume edition of the Sermons, published by the Epworth Press. (See also Maldwyn Hughes: *Wesley's Standards in the Light of Today*.) Thirty-two of the forty-four Standard Sermons deal with ethics, that is, religion in conduct. Wesley held that the vision of God is followed by the service of man.

Wesley's *Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament* was a considerable contribution to English biblical scholarship in the eighteenth century.

(Continued on page 57)

WHAT IS CHRISTIAN

SOME people have said that Methodists must be supreme egoists and optimists to believe in a doctrine called Christian perfection. Today when popular theology takes a rather dark view of human nature the words of John Wesley must sound strange, for he claimed that Christian perfection was probably the most characteristic contribution of the people called Methodists. Let us look for a moment at this dark view of man which Wesley's doctrine challenges in our time.

There is a reverse egoism afoot in our world which may appear as self-debasement. At times it may lead an overzealous individual to call himself chief among sinners, or a fundamentalist group to consider itself worthy of the very best in fire and brimstone. It may even lead certain neo-liberal theologians to keep enlarging on human sin before the need of God's redemption the way a trainer keeps raising the bar for a jumper. Ours is a time of very pessimistic theology where man's nature is concerned. This low view of man is expounded by persons versed in the Christian scriptures who appear to be less interested in the good news of the New Testament than in the dark night of human sin prior to it.

John Wesley, though intimately acquainted with human depravity, chose to emphasize the good news. In it he found a vision of Christian perfection which was as sufficient an antidote for pessimism in his age as it can be in ours. Man, said he, was not only redeemable, but also perfectible. The individual's high experience of the lordship of a loving God over all his motives Wesley called "entire sanctification" or "Christian perfection."

Before such perfection could become possible a man had to experience the forgiveness of sin by God and the restoration of communion with God (justification and rebirth). This was followed by a period of spiritual growth until one became aware, at last, that Godly love had become his total motive to the extent that sin no longer had power over him. A person thus perfected in love toward God and man no longer sinned (sin being defined as a conscious violation of a known law of God). Wesley was not calling for some super-human state. Perfected men were yet subject to ignorance, mistakes, infirmities, and the like, all of which might set off involuntary transgressions.

NOR was Christian perfection a static achievement in which one could rest on his sanctified laurels. Love, by its very nature, has to go on growing. Perhaps the dynamic term "perfectibility" more accurately describes this experience. Further, the only laurels on which the Christian may rest belong not to himself but to God. Only by God's grace can he be perfected. Pride, the great adversary and indicter of those claiming Christian perfection, is overcome in that deepest humility which knows what God has done and is doing in the underserving sinner. Reverent humility, awe, and thanksgiving fill one's explanation of his new state.

In our time theology, grown pessimistic in its obsession with human sin, needs to turn again to this profoundly optimistic emphasis on God's grace and mercy. This is the optimism which moves the doctrine of Christian

perfection. The human participant is not rendered passive while God, by grace, does all the work. Perfection is a relation of love, and participants in love, whether human or divine, must be active. The great "because" of Christian perfection is God's love, and the great "therefore" is transformed human service. This role of man causes the doctrine to be much more than a humanistic device for self-help or a subjectivistic doctrine of spiritual pulse-taking.

No matter how it is declared, there must always be a note of audacity in this doctrine. But it is the authentic audacity of a faith whose lord, while facing a cross, claimed to have overcome the world. One who grows in God's love does become increasingly sensitive to, but undaunted by, human sin. There is a power of Jesus Christ which does overcome the world. The First Epistle of John and, indeed, the whole New Testament declare this power.

THE fruits of this new relation with God suggest also a new relation between men. The list of the fruits drawn up by men from St. Paul through Wesley include peace, joy, patience, humility, gentleness, hope, and the like. These are not held up as goals of a self-help scheme in which God is the great psychological benefactor. These are the inner content of an experience filled with Christian love.

Methodists have sometimes declared that such perfection may come in an instant. Often, maturing love and faith operate quite unconsciously in us before bursting to the surface of self-consciousness. In this sense some-

motive

PERFECTION ?

BY GEORGE E. LA MORE, JR.

thing like an instantaneous perfecting can occur. For some of us, Christian love can grow with extreme rapidity, given the right conditions. For others it moves more gradually. But in no case may the recipient be passive or even lackadaisical during this process. The Christian seeking perfection has an alert faith and an active will toward knowing, experiencing, obeying, and serving God. He practices all the available means of grace (for example, prayer, communion, and Bible study) throughout his quest for perfectibility.

No watered-down religion can dare to use absolute terms like perfection. But a faith in an absolute God cannot afford to use lesser terms than perfection. Many there are who realize that successful faith must have great positive goals, but who say, "These goals are only ideal; we only aim at them but hardly expect to achieve them in this life." Actually such talk is more boastful than it looks. For here, coupled with this confession of inability, is an assumption that we human beings attempt the goals of our faith on our own strength. Far more humble, yet positive, is a faith which declares, "Goals are not goals unless they are believed to be realizable; and the goal of Christian perfection is realizable because the Spirit of God moves and works in me." Positive, Christian humility does not come by expecting little from self but by expecting much from God.

IN the Revised Standard Version of the Bible the Greek words for "perfect" and "perfection" have been frequently translated "mature" and "maturity." Here again is the essential
(Continued on page 57)

May 1957

Jim McLeon



"BEST OF ALL, GOD IS WITH US"

JOHN WESLEY

BY RICHARD CAMERON



JOHAN WESLEY once said that the story of his life began before he was born. Certainly we cannot understand him or the Methodism of which he was the founder without reference to his parents.

Both Samuel and Susannah Wesley had been brought up in the tradition of Puritan Dissent, but both had, at an early age, returned to the Church of England as by law established. They were the more loyal to it because they had chosen it for themselves, not been born into it. If their sons John and Charles spoke like loyal Church of England men, yet at times thought and acted with as stubborn a streak of independence as any Dissenter, the reason lies in this double ancestral heritage.

When John was six, the Rectory of Epworth Parish where he had been born, was discovered one night to be ablaze. The rest of the family escaped down the stairway, but young Jackie was first seen at his bedroom window

rubbing his sleepy, smoke-filled eyes after the stairway was a roaring chimney full of flame. Only the quick action of two neighbors who made a human ladder for John saved him—a "brand plucked from the burning" he ever after felt himself to be. There is real reason to suspect that the fire had been set by some of the men of the Lincolnshire fens, in resentment over their Rector's stubborn Tory principles, and that it was part of a campaign to drive him from the Parish. "But it would be cowardly to leave just because the enemy shoots close," he said. When John later had to face raging mobs, he must have remembered his father's courage.

Surely Susannah is the "Mother of Methodism." Hers was the "method" which taught all her children to "fear the rod and cry softly," which taught each of the nine of them the alphabet on his or her sixth birthday. It was Susannah who spent one hour a week with each alone in prayer and spirit-

ual counsel, who followed the boys to the university with letters which dwelt more on matters of spiritual moment than on family chat. She had courage too. When later, in her widowhood, John and Charles proposed to undertake a mission to the Georgia Indians, leaving her in the care of daughters only, she said, "If I had twenty sons, I should rejoice to see them so engaged, were I never to see them more."

AT Oxford, young Wesley was not afraid of seeming odd. To begin with, he was an earnest student. He deepened his acquaintance with the classical and biblical languages: Hebrew, Greek and Latin. He was able, when talking to scholars from other parts of Europe to converse with them in Latin. He studied logic, divinity, metaphysics, natural philosophy and the rest, a day of the week for each.

But he had the still greater courage needed to swim against the tide of religious indifference. He was a man whom a dream had possessed—a dream of a life *wholly* devoted to God. He became the leading spirit in a little group, derisively called the "Holy Club," who went often to Communion, spent their evenings in pouring over the Bible and studying the Church Fathers, spent their money on the poor instead of in taverns and at cards. They sought out the sick to help them and preached in Oxford's pestilential jails. Besides all this, they fasted twice in the week, prayed every hour on the hour, and, it must be confessed, came close in some ways to playing the Pharisee. But their busyness in good works brought John

motive

and the others no peace. Like many others, they sought a long way off what they couldn't find at home. In Georgia as missionaries to the Colonists, John did much good, but couldn't see it because he had been practically ousted from his mission by the Colonists.

So he returned to England weighed down by a great sense of failure. Some months later, the delayed impact of a lesson the Moravians had been trying to teach since his Georgia days really caught up with him. He found what he had been looking for, and found it by ceasing to thrash about in his search, by receiving it from God as a gift. "My heart was strangely warmed; I felt that I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for my salvation." These words of his describe what happened to John Wesley at a meeting in Aldersgate Street on May 24, 1738. But the results of that assurance multiplied in the revival that followed, filled every year of Wesley's remaining half century of labor, and have continued to this day.

JUST the day before, Charles Wesley had written the first of that constant stream of hymns which were to make the Methodists a singing people. Their friend George Whitefield was brave enough to break the Church's rules by preaching outdoors to the miners of Kingswood whom none had been able—or tried—to induce to enter any church. Whitefield had his reward when he saw the tears washing white furrows down the coal dust on the miners' cheeks. But John was the Field Marshal who commanded the advance. He had, it has been said, "an organizing genius not inferior to Richelieu's." His genius showed itself not only in powerful preaching of the Word that had touched his heart, but in the formation of Methodist Societies all over the land. Like St. Paul, he chose the great centers first: London, Bristol, Newcastle. But he did not neglect the country people who were still the greater part of England's population. He scandalized the estab-

lished clergy by pressing laymen into service as preachers. Before long

Their voice was heard in the wildest and most barbarous corners of the land, among the bleak moors of Northumberland, or in the dens of London, or in the long galleries where, in the pauses of his labour, the Cornish miner listens to the sobbing of the sea.

He divided the Societies into classes of a dozen each, in which each of the disciples was built up in the knowledge and love and service of God by the rest. Because God had found these men and women, many of them extraordinary only in wickedness, they found themselves—and they found others.

Field Marshal John did not direct the campaign from a safe headquarters miles behind the lines. He was at the danger points himself. He braved showers of stones and the clubs of mobs. But he faced them

down. Once a rough rushed up to strike him with his fist, but let his hand fall gently on his head instead. "What soft hair he has!" was all he said. Toward midnight one night Wesley emerged from the clutches of a mob which had been ready to tear him in pieces as he preached, and wrote in his *Journal* that he had lost only a little blood and the flap of one waistcoat pocket.

TOWARD the end of his life he rode a coach instead of on horseback. His journeys were no longer beset by mobs, but met by welcoming crowds, come out as for a royal progress. He could call thousands by name all over the Kingdom. He had seen many of them emerge from unspeakable lives to become sober, honest, clean and industrious, to walk trustfully in the light of God's countenance.

After the Revolution, in 1784, he "set apart" three men, of whom Dr. Thomas Coke was one, to put American Methodism on its own feet as an independent church. As Francis Asbury rode across the Appalachians, he was the lengthened shadow of Wesley. So, just before Wesley died, American Methodism had burst the mountain barrier, and had begun its westward march to the Pacific at a pace almost equal to that of the swift-moving frontier. Not only Canada and Australia, where Anglo-Saxons predominate, have nourished their share of Wesley's sons and daughters, but also non-Christian lands too numerous to name have heard the word of salvation from men and women aglow with the same fire which "strangely warmed" the heart of John Wesley many years ago.

JOHAN WESLEY died in 1791, feebly, but serenely uttering these words: "Best of all, God is with us." He had for fifty-three years preached the free redeeming grace of God for all. None was so vile, so sordid, so lost to human love and self-respect that God was not ready to save him. "No other man did such a life's work for England." Or, by extension, for America.



F R A N C I S

A R E A L F O U N D E R O F A M E R I C A

BY J. MANNING POTTS

SO frequently, in traveling over certain sections of the eastern states, one is told "Washington slept here." You get the impression that Washington was quite a traveler. But there were several preachers who slept in more places than Washington. John Woolman, the Quaker who traveled from New England to North Carolina, was certainly on the road more.

Francis Asbury outdistanced and outslept any person then living. His traveling companions, Bishops Richard Whatcoat and William McKendree, covered many states and, though they did not travel as extensively as Asbury, far exceeded Washington. Bishop Thomas Coke was really only a visitor to America. He made nine trips altogether. However, he was continuously itinerant when

he was in America and traveled most of the states in which early American Methodism was established. It should also be mentioned that some of Asbury's lesser-known traveling companions, who traveled with him only several years each, stacked up quite a milage.

In the early years of Asbury's travels in America, this man, whom Ezra Tipple called "The Prophet of the Long Road," had traveled over most of the thirteen colonies. However, from 1771 until the organization of American Methodism in 1784 at the Christmas Conference in Baltimore, he had established only a part of his circuit. He was well acquainted with the thirteen colonies, New York, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia.

A little later when there were seventeen states he was familiar with all of them and frequently talked of "the seventeen states of Union" he had visited. As years went on he extended his yearly circuit and though he did not reach all of it annually, it was enlarged so that it included Maine and Vermont to the north and Kentucky, Tennessee, and Ohio to the west. Though he visited Canada but once, what were called Upper and Lower Canada along the St. Lawrence were under his care and in his circuit. It is calculated that he traveled about 265,000 miles in America in the forty-five years of his ministry from 1771, when he began, to 1816 when he laid down his travel burden at the Arnold house in Virginia. A remarkable man! He did most of this on horseback though he also refers to his sulky, his calash, his chaise, his wagon, his gig, his carriage, and perhaps other kinds

of conveyances. One can see some of these types in the Smithsonian Institution in Washington today. However, if Asbury had only traveled this would not have entitled him to fame.

IN addition to traveling he visited more homes, knew more people, preached more sermons, had part in establishing more preaching places and churches than any other man. Asbury visited every kind of home from Washington's Mount Vernon to the one-room cabin homes where he slept on the floor with the whole family, even including the cats and dogs. He loved people even if once in a while he had too many in a log cabin at the same time and had to take to the woods to get relief. Not only did he know President George Washington, he knew several governors, Bassett of Delaware, Dickinson and Rodney of Delaware and Pennsylvania, Tiffin and Worthington of Ohio, and Lieutenant Governor Van Cortlandt of New York. It has been said that he very likely knew Jefferson and probably many other prominent persons were his friends. He traveled at times the well-beaten roads but usually he blazed trails. The wilderness roads of the frontiers were his highways as he pioneered preaching places in Tennessee, Kentucky, and Ohio.

Asbury preached in more places than any other person who lived in that day. After he had established preaching places and put a preacher there he visited most of them in his regular annual circuit. He would make out what he called a "plan" and send it ahead, listing the places and dates when he would be there to preach. The plan sometimes carried many preaching appointments and an examination of his daily journal shows

ASBURY



that he rarely missed carrying out his plan.

It was rare that he missed preaching a single day and he usually preached three times a day. It was not infrequent for him to preach at five o'clock in the morning when, *mirabile dictu*, he had hearers. He frequently preached in Established or Episcopal churches until the Methodist movement in America separated in 1784 from the mother church. He preached in barns repeatedly. When so many Anglican preachers left America during the Revolution, the churches were abandoned and Asbury found these, and many became Methodist preaching places. Homes were used regularly. In Virginia Madam Russell's home at the salt works, now Saltville, was a regular preaching place. There is an imposing church there today called the Madam Russell Church. She was the sister of Patrick Henry. Married twice, her first husband was General William Campbell, the hero of the battle of Kings Mountain in the Revolution. He soon died and she was married again, this time to General William Russell, another Revolutionary hero.

BOTH General Russell and his wife were converted by Methodist preachers and though General Russell soon died, the Widow Russell's home was a regular stop for Asbury. In fact, she built a room on to her home that Asbury might have his own room and that he might have a larger place in which to preach. Madam Russell soon manumitted her slaves as did Colonel Preston. He was a Revolutionary hero, Madam Russell's son-in-law who had married her daughter by her first husband. It is interesting in this day when the race issue is so acute to read the arguments of the Methodists

which motivated the manumission of their slaves. That of Madam Russell reads,

In the year 1795, a number of the citizens of Washington and Russell counties emancipated their slaves; among the number Elizabeth Russell, sister of Patrick Henry and wife of General William Campbell, Francis Preston, Charles Bickley and others. The deeds executed by Mrs. Russell and Francis Preston are as follows:

Whereas by the wrong doing of men it hath been the unfortunate lot of the following Negroes to be slaves for life, to-wit: Vina, Adam, Nancy sen., Nancy, Kitty and Selah. And whereas believing the same have come into my possession by the direction of Providence, and conceiving from the clearest conviction of my conscience aided by the power of a good and just God, that it is both sinful and unjust, as they are by nature equally free with myself, to continue them in slavery, I do, therefore, by these presents, under the influence of a duty I not only owe my conscience, but the just God who made us all, make free the said negroes hoping while they are free of man they will faithfully serve their Maker through the merits of Christ.

Given under my hand and seal this 21st day of July, 1795.

Elizabeth Russell, (L.S.)

Many Methodists who first went to Ohio went to be free from slavery. The Dromgoole papers which are extant in the University of North Carolina library and which are mainly the correspondence between Edward Dromgoole and members of his family who went to Ohio tell the story as other correspondence does. Edward Dromgoole, one of the first Methodist preachers, preached in Maryland and Virginia. He married in Virginia and settled there. The custom in those

days was for the Methodist preacher to "locate" or give up the active ministry when he married. In these letters are three from Asbury to Dromgoole. Dromgoole's home was a regular stopping place for Asbury when he traveled through Virginia.

Though Asbury's *Journal* has been known for years, his letters have never been compiled until recently. They will appear in the forthcoming volume of *The Journal and Letters of Francis Asbury*. Asbury was a great letter writer. John Wesley's letters, more than twenty-six hundred of them, have been compiled and are included in the eight volumes of *Letters of John Wesley* by John Telford. More have been found since the publication of this set. John Wesley, too, was a great letter writer. However, there is reason to believe Asbury wrote more letters than Wesley.

ASBURY wrote letters almost daily after the first few years of his itinerancy. He became the head of an ever-expanding ecclesiastical empire. There were few papers in that day. It became necessary for Asbury to spread news by letters. It became necessary for him to gather church statistics. It became necessary for him to distribute his "plans" of preaching. It became necessary for him to keep up with the preachers and the people he visited. Asbury also knew that he would become the historian of early Methodism. That was the main reason for keeping his *Journal*. In fact, he says so. No other historian, except Jesse

Lee, wrote during Asbury's lifetime any history of the church. Asbury's letters show that this was one of his major concerns. He tried to get men to write but was not successful, therefore, he wrote himself. He said at one time that he had written a thousand letters in one year. This would have been less than three a day. A cursory examination of his journal and letters will show that he was writing letters regularly. However, most of them have been lost. Few were ever printed. A nationwide search has been made to find his letters. The search extended to England where a few are preserved. However, a five-year search has brought to light only about three hundred and fifty. The search has also revealed other letters which throw more light on the real Asbury and which are germane to Asbury's life.

Much more is now known about Asbury than ever before. Two letters refer to a sweetheart by the name of Nancy Brookes, who lived in England. Evidently, contrary to general impression, Asbury did not wear the somber clothes he is supposed to have worn. He gives an order for a suit and indicates that he wishes it made of "light blue, my color." He sat on several occasions to have his picture painted. He had the tenderest love for his horses, especially Jane. He was said to have been very humorous in his conversation. Some of his humor is reflected in his *Journal*. He makes an interesting reference to Williamsburg, Virginia. Wednesday, December 11, 1782, he records:

I rode to Williamsburg—formerly the seat of government, but now removed to Richmond; thus the worldly glory is departed from it; as to Divine glory it never had any. I preached in James City court-house. The place has suffered and is suffering: the palace, the barracks, and some good dwelling-houses burnt. The capitol is no great building, and is going to ruin; the exterior of the college not splendid, and but few students; the Bedlam-house is desolate, but whether because none are insane, or all are equally mad, it might, perhaps, be difficult to tell.

THIS man who traveled more of America than any man of his time, who knew more people, preached more sermons, and who established more preaching places was one of the real founders of America. No wonder the National Historical Publications Commission of the United States Government said the *Journal of Francis Asbury* was one of the foundational documents of early American history. It was said by someone that when the early history of America was finally written that Asbury's contribution to the development of America would be shown to be as great as that of some of the early statesmen. We are confident that this is true. Here was an itinerant preacher who fathered an institution in the wilderness of America that in his lifetime outstripped in its membership that of the mother church in England under the Wesleys. Francis Asbury, the Prophet of the Long Road, was its guiding hand and its genius.



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FRANCIS J. McCONNELL

BY CHARLES M. McCONNELL

FRANCIS J. McCONNELL began his ministry in The Methodist Church at West Chelmsford, Massachusetts, in 1894. He died at Lucasville, Ohio, fifty-nine years later, "and left a lonesome place against the sky." As my brother Fred and I left the little country cemetery on the day of his burial, I said, "He was always 'Big John' to us who knew him as a brother on an Ohio farm." And Fred added, "He will grow bigger as the years go by."

In 1894, the Protestant churches were in the midst of a storm of "Higher Criticism of the Bible." Boston University School of Theology was the "eye" of this hurricane, and Hinchley G. Mitchell, professor of Hebrew in this university, was rated as a heretic for his teaching and writing about the Book of Genesis. A handful of students started a small-sized revolution against the teaching of Mitchell, and the Board of Bishops of The Methodist Church voted him out of the School of Theology on charges of heresy. One of his pupils, Francis J. McConnell, whom he once called "A Prince of Bible Expositors," sponsored the cause of this godly and courageous professor, known and loved by all but heresy hunters as "The Little Rabbi."

He never let up until he had taken his case to Mitchell's annual conference and to the General Conference of Methodism where he acted as lawyer and defender as well as interpreter of Higher Criticism. Heresy hunting in Methodism began with the Bible moths who flitted about the flame lighted by saints of God in search for truth. And many still flit about and get their wings burned. Every modern Bible reader, as well as minister, owes Hinchley G. Mitchell a lasting debt of gratitude. His great books, *The World Before Abraham* and *For the Benefit of My Creditors*, should be read and reread in these days.

WHILE the Bible was being defended by higher critics and their lower critics, another storm was being brewed by critics of Personalism, a philosophy ably advocated by Professor Borden P. Bowne of Boston University. Francis J. McConnell studied this philosophy under the great Bowne and became one of his most able advocates. McConnell could interpret Personalism to an annual conference or to a General Conference as Bowne could to a class of students in a theological school. And he performed this service to Personalism in the defense of Bowne when he was charged with heresy. Later he wrote Bowne's biography. Three days before the great philosopher's death he said to me, "McConnell was my greatest student and ablest interpreter."

In those early days of the present century, until about 1915, the Social Gospel was something akin to a church supper or the feeble chirp of some preacher against "Trusts" or "Big Business." Around 1912, Francis J. McConnell was resting up and cooling off his heavy artillery as president of DePauw University. All of a sudden, in the spring of 1912, he was elected a bishop of The Methodist Church. He had little opposition from heresy hunters, and had a reputation as a preacher and a Bible student and a philosopher who believed in a Personal God. The Social Gospel was not then well enough advanced to become "pink" or "red" or even "unsafe." Soon after his election as bishop, Francis McConnell joined with Bishop Herbert Welch as true advocates of the real social teachings of Jesus and insisted that they be applied to the whole of life. Before the Methodists really

(Continued on page 58)

the SACRAMENTS



in METHODISM

BY PAUL S. SANDERS

ONE fruit of ecumenical study and fellowship has been a revived interest in the sacraments. While related to a renewal of public worship, the sacramental revival is more nearly a product of the recovery of biblical theology. The esthetic and psychological considerations which underlie most of our attempted reforms of worship are significant, but they are not basic. The real question is whether our understanding of the Word of God requires sacramental actions as means both of the apprehension and the expression of God's working in us.

The answer depends on that to a related question. What is the place of the church in the economy of God's grace? For many of us renewed study of the biblical tradition has led to the conviction that the various aspects of Christian life are brought into meaningful juxtaposition by means of one overarching concept: the People of God as the locus both of God's revelation through historical event and of man's response of interpretation and faith. The church makes a claim no other social institution makes, that it is the household of God. It finds its essence in God's *covenant grace*.

SECTARIANISM threatens one indispensable facet of that key biblical category, theological liberalism another. If Christians are related to God merely one by one, and to each other only through voluntary association, the *corporate solidarity* which distinguishes the People of God is compromised. It is no accident that the Quakers and the Salvation Army have dispensed with sacraments; they have simply been more logical than sectarian Protestants, who have been able to retain the sacraments largely by means of a nominalistic literalism: Christ commands them, we obey. But interpreted in subjectivistic terms the sacraments are only *opera superaddita*, not essential. One is baptized in virtue of having already believed; the decision to receive the Lord's Supper and the assessment of its value rest largely upon one's feelings about it.

When sectarianism has been modified by theological liberalism, excessive reliance on human ability vitiates the other fundamental facet of the biblical category of covenant grace: the *priority of God's activity* over any human activity at all. With Christian faith delivered again to works-right-

motive

eousness, the sacraments inevitably appear as merely works of man. Doubts as to whether Christ instituted them (or even meant to "found" the church) cut away the one authority their observance had rested upon. They become merely symbols. Finally no justification can be found for either Baptism or the Eucharist besides their emotional and artistic appropriateness as traditional Christian pageantry.

American Methodism has traversed both these positions, and doubtless the sacraments should have died before this, except that there was always a counterpoise. We had inherited from Wesley a tradition which, however ignored or reinterpreted, somehow managed to remind us of a richer, more full-bodied interpretation of Christian faith than either revivalism or liberalism furnished. Our liturgical forms, however revised, generally managed to conserve a sacramental theology at least not repugnant to the biblical norm.

The recovery of the biblical doctrine of covenant grace has made possible a clearer appreciation of Wesley's thought than has been possible in the past. The same two emphases run through Wesley as characterize the biblical history of redemption: first, stress on God's initiative in revelation and reconciliation; second, stress on the corporate character of the human fellowship to which and through which God addresses himself.

THE earliest Christians called themselves the New Israel. The church with natural appropriateness and after deliberate judgment retained the Jewish canon within the Christian revelation. By this action it meant to say that God's Promise to Abraham and Moses and through them to Israel was realized in Jesus Christ; that God's creative grace toward Adam (as representative man), while rejected and thus compromised ("as in Adam all die"), had broken through in a new creation, the eschatological Kingdom inaugurated by Christ ("even so in Christ shall all be made alive").

By the incarnation, death and resurrection of Christ the covenant was

extended beyond ancient Israel to all mankind; the Old Covenant was not destroyed but taken up into the kingdom of God, embracing time and eternity, all sorts and conditions of men, and all man's life at all levels of his being. As the Resurrection parallels the deliverance from Egypt, so the gift of the Holy Ghost, the abiding Presence which is the basis of man's unity and community, parallels the gift of the Law, which Israel looked upon not as a burden to be borne but as the bearer of that gracious Love which alone made historical existence possible and meaningful.

A biblical doctrine of the sacraments must, then, be related to the history of redemption. They must be interpreted (as Wesley did interpret them) as primarily actions of God and only afterward works of man; and their reference manward must be seen as not primarily toward individual



man but rather the corporate Body of Christ, which in its historical manifestation means the church. These two principles must be our guide and critic.

Covenant theology entails infant baptism. Now, the infant cannot know what Baptism means; he does not assent to anything. Since Wesley omitted sponsors, the rationalization that others act in the child's stead disappears. Baptism therefore implies some meaning independent of conscious acceptance. (Otherwise believer's baptism as practiced in sec-

tarian churches would be mandatory.)

God receives the baby in Baptism not because of anything he or anyone else has done or will ever do. The whole church, including the parents but they no more than others, stands sponsor. Still, the child is not accepted in virtue of the faith even of the whole community. God's acceptance stems from his love; the church's faith is man's response to the promise of grace once more proclaimed and sealed every time a person is baptized. The church receives from God a person now adopted into the *koinonia*, receives him thankfully, humbly, and with praise. Baptism has not "saved" the baptized person; it has placed him where what is meant by Christian salvation is through God's will most open to realization.

THAT both baptism and justification are "by faith" means that the risk of cutting oneself off from the People of God is an ever-present possibility. Baptism, like the Eucharist, is an eschatological action; in faith the Kingdom is present, yet the Christian lives out his life "between the ages." The baptized person, reared in the fellowship of home and church, learns that he may and also how to respond in faith to the Promise. The whole of the Promise is not yet given or even known; meanwhile he dwells in faith, a citizen of two worlds, learning in the one how to be at home in the other and therefore how to be truly at home here.

Even during its most revivalistic period American Methodism never scuttled infant baptism, although its Gospel validity was evidently more felt than seen. When finally it produced native theologians able to explicate its practice, the prevailing temper had obscured what was to Wesley plain enough, and our church veered away from a covenant interpretation of Baptism.

Our present rite implies what is in fact our general view: that Baptism is the dedication of the child, or, more truthfully, the dedication of the parents to their obligation of rearing the child in a Christian home. While this facet of meaning is inherent in the

more classical view of Wesley, it by no means exhausts the whole meaning of the sacrament. It makes what is essentially a corporate action dominated by God's gracious activity into an individualistic act dominated by man's good resolutions.

Wesley's Eucharistic teaching is far too rich to be compressed into a few paragraphs. It may be sufficient to point to his most insistent affirmations, having first repeated what ought to be clear but seldom is, that the Wesleyan Revival drew nourishment from a vigorous Christianity which made no separation of evangelicalism and sacramentalism. Our usual demand for an either/or would have presented Wesley with a question he would have found hard to understand, much less to answer.

THERE can be no question that Wesley believed in the Real Presence in the sacrament, though he made no attempt to explicate the manner of it. That the Supper is a symbol is obvious; that it is a mere symbol he would never have allowed. What it symbolizes is by the Holy Spirit made here and now present for faith in the community. The Supper is a means of grace; Wesley insisted that it is just that, not grace itself, but certainly an efficacious channel which the same Lord who provided it as means uses that his Presence may be mediated to faithful believers who use it as means.

The Christ who is recalled in the Eucharist is the Living Lord; what is recalled is not merely the fact that Jesus died on the cross, but the whole biblical recital of the "mighty acts of God." In thus recalling what God has done, the community is existentially confronted by God. Even the barest memorial interpretation, did it but consider Who is being remembered, could not rest content to talk as if Christ were absent from his Table.

The Holy Communion has an especial covenant quality which makes it pre-eminently the sacrament of fellowship. Here Christians have communion with their Lord and through him with each other. Sectarianism erects fences around that fellowship; liberalism makes Christian fellowship

difficult to distinguish from all other fellowships. Wesley was sure the Eucharistic fellowship includes all willing to receive what God offers; even the unconverted, humbly seeking, are welcome.



But it is the Lord's Table and the reality of communion rests upon the Promised Presence, not the intensity of any man's devotion. Moreover, it is truly the communion of saints. Here are gathered at each celebration archangels, prophets, patriarchs, martyrs, and the whole company of the faithful, stretching backward through the whole covenant community and reaching forward through all ages until the Kingdom come and Christ be all in all. Such a concept staggers the imagination, challenges the moral sense, and lifts the Christian's communion from an act of private piety into an act of engrafting within the true Body of Christ. It provides not only participation in the realized Kingdom but by anticipation a foretaste of the Messianic Banquet.

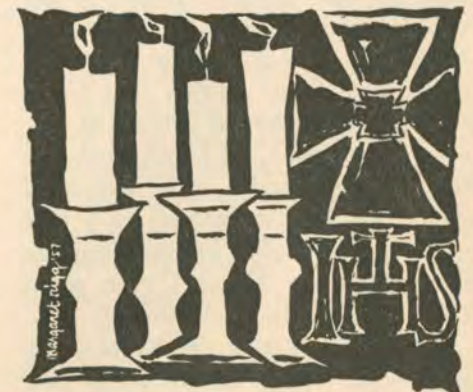
The heart of the Eucharist, finally, is its sacrificial character. Christ's one sacrifice cannot and need not be repeated; but that sacrifice is eternal event as well as historical event. Every Lord's Supper not only proclaims the Lord's death but makes existentially present for our participation the eternal sacrifice of the Son. Christ as Host offers at his Table himself as Food. Christians are there joined with him, and offer themselves in virtue of having been already accepted. The Eucharist both demands and is the means of that sacrifice of ourselves without which justification by faith is a travesty. We are called

to perfection in love; we love because he first loved us.

METHODISM arose within a tradition solidly grounded in evangelical sacramentalism; it was led by Wesley into an even deeper sacramental practice than was common in eighteenth-century Anglicanism. If modern Methodism has become indifferent (and even antagonistic) toward a genuine sacramentalism, the reasons are to be sought in our evolution. Methodism at mid-century appears to some of us well organized, commendably loyal, but terribly uncertain of its vocation. "If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?"

The ecumenical movement has driven us all to re-examine our separate traditions; that is gain, but a recovery of Wesley is no end in itself. He would be the first to sound the trumpet-blast: "Let Israel go forward!" What Wesley may help us learn is something more of the fullness of apostolic Christianity. A recovered sacramentalism, soundly based on the biblical tradition, far from being apostate from either Wesley or evangelical faith, would in fact help draw Methodism back into the mainstream of catholic Christianity.

So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit (Ephesians 2).





CHARLES WESLEY

250th Anniversary

1707-1957

O for a thousand tongues to sing
My great Redeemer's praise,
The glories of my God and King,
The triumphs of his grace!

Before his death in 1788, Charles Wesley wrote more than 6,500 hymns. Each came out of his deep conviction and experience as a preacher, evangelist and as the co-founder of Methodism. His music reads like the spiritual

diary of his life. Out of his experience among the Moravians in Georgia with his brother, John, and out of his work at Oxford where he was the leader of the Holy Club, the original Methodist group, came stirring melody and rich, lyric poetry.

This year, as The Methodist Church observes the 250th anniversary of the birth of Charles Wesley, his hymns continue to be examples of the finest theological, biblical and musical hymns ever written. One of the purposes in the celebration of this anniversary is to renew interest in congregational singing of the fine hymns of The Methodist Church. The emphasis is also to acquaint the Church with the life and work of Charles Wesley as a great religious leader.

Charles Wesley, who was five years younger than John, is the author of such hymns as "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing," "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling," "Jesus, Lover of My Soul," and "Come, Thou Almighty King." Though he was more strictly Anglican than his brother, his hymns reflect the deep feeling and sentiment of the Pietist movement. He was born in England December 18, 1707, and did parish work in Bristol and London.

Charles Wesley's hymns now appear in every Protestant hymnbook as well as in a hymnal of the Roman Catholic Church.

HYMN XL

(At the Opening of a School in Kingswood)

Come, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
To whom we for our children cry;
The good desired and wanted most,
Out of Thy richest grace supply;
The sacred discipline be given,
To train and bring them up for heaven.

Error and ignorance remove,
Their blindness both of heart and mind;
Give them the wisdom from above,
Spotless, and peaceable, and kind;
In knowledge pure their mind renew,
And store with thoughts divinely true.

Unite the pair so long disjoin'd,
Knowledge and vital piety,
Learning and holiness combined,
And truth and love, let all men see,
In these, whom up to Thee we give,
Thine, wholly Thine, to die and live.

Father, accept them in Thy Son,
And ever by Thy Spirit guide!
Thy wisdom in their lives be shown,
Thy name confess'd and glorified;
Thy power and love diffused abroad,
Till all our earth is fill'd with God.

—By Charles Wesley

THE HYMNODY OF THE WESLEYS

BY JOHN BISHOP

THE hymns of Methodism, which constitute the greatest body of religious verse in the English language, are the work of both the Wesleys. John Wesley's great contribution is his superb translations from the German. He went to America in 1736, intending to be a missionary to the Red Indians. On the ship by which he voyaged there were twenty-six Moravians, members of the *Unitas Fratrum*, the ancient Evangelical Church that goes back to the Bohemian Brethren in the Middle Ages. Wesley became interested in these people; ultimately he owed to them his evangelical experience.

John Wesley began to learn German on the voyage, and during the next year or two he translated thirty-three hymns from their hymnal, *Das Gesangbuch der Gemeine in Herrenhuth*. Four of these are by Gerhard; four by Scheffler; two by Tersteegen; and most of the rest by Moravian writers like Zinzendorf, Freylinghausen, and Spangenberg. Perhaps the finest of them all is the version of Tersteegen's *Verborgne Gottes Liebe du-*

*Thou hidden love of God, whose height,
Whose depth unfathomed, no man knows.*

Emerson once declared that this version was the greatest hymn in the English language.

It is interesting to remember that the first of these translations from the German was published in America in 1737, in a small hymnal which John Wesley issued there, "A Collection of

Psalms and Hymns," printed at Charlestown, and that this was the first hymnal to be published in America.

While John Wesley's share was a notable one, it was Charles Wesley who was the lyrical genius of the Evangelical Revival, and the greatest hymn writer in the English language. He produced an incessant flood of religious verse for nearly fifty years, producing some seven thousand hymns. His first hymn was written on the occasion of his great experience on May 21, 1738, "Where shall my wondering soul begin?" His hymns are the Pilgrim's Progress of the eight-



eenth century. They describe every event of the pilgrim's course from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City. John Wesley was the head and Charles was the heart of the Evangelical Revival. His hymns blend verse, experience, and doctrine into an indivisible unit.

HIS best work appeared in 1780, in the "Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People Called Methodists." It is an anthology, compiled by John Wesley, for which he selected, out of the great mass of his brother's verse, the best hymns. By judiciously shortening many of these, and omitting the weaker verses, he often made a per-

fect lyric out of a string of verses of variable quality. The result is that that Collection of 1780 is the greatest volume of religious verse in the language. You may not be ready to take the word of a fanatical Methodist for that conclusion, so let me quote two verdicts by distinguished men, one a Unitarian and the other a Congregationalist.

Dr. Martineau said, in a letter to Miss Winkworth, that the Collection of 1780 is, "after the Scriptures, the grandest instrument of popular religious culture that Christendom has ever produced." Bernard L. Manning in his delightful book, *The Hymns of Wesley and Watts*, said: "You may think my language about the hymns extravagant; therefore I repeat it in stronger terms. This little book ranks in Christian literature with the Psalms, the *Book of Common Prayer*, the *Canon of the Mass*. In its own way it is perfect, unapproachable, elemental in its perfection. You cannot alter it except to mar it; it is a work of supreme devotional art by a religious genius."

There is not very much that need be said about the metrical characteristics of the Wesleys' verse. John wrote hardly anything except in four or six-line stanzas of eight syllabled lines. There are twenty-nine verse forms used in the German originals of the hymns he translated, but he did not attempt to use many of these in his versions. Charles had a much wider metrical range, and uses about thirty different verse-forms. Most of his hymns are in the familiar meters: common meter, long meter, short meter, and six-eighths. Occasionally he employs other meters, and unusual ones, with striking success. So in the hymn,

*Love divine, all loves excelling,
Joy of heaven, to earth come down;
Fix in us Thy humble dwelling,
All Thy faithful mercies crown!*

the verse owes both its trochaic meter and the form of its first line to Dryden's Song of Venus in "King Arthur":

*Fairest isle, all isles excelling,
Seat of pleasures and of loves,*

*Venus here will choose her dwelling,
And forsake her Cyprian groves.*

Then again, Charles Wesley occasionally uses an anapaestic measure with effect. So in a noble hymn for Advent:

*All glory to God in the sky,
And peace upon earth be restored
Oh, Jesus, exalted on high
Appear our omnipotent Lord.*

This last hymn, one of the finest in the language for the season of Advent, may serve to remind us of the rather unexpected fact that it was the Evan-



gelical Revival, and not the Oxford Movement, that gave us nearly all the great hymns for the festivals of the Christian Year. In Advent:

*Come, Thou long-expected Jesus,
Born to set Thy people free.*

and on Christmas Day:

*Hark! how all the welkin rings,
Glory to the King of Kings.*

and at Easter:

Christ the Lord is risen to-day

and at Ascensiontide:

*Hail the day that sees Him rise
Ravished from our wistful eyes.*

and at Whitsuntide:

*Granted is the Saviour's prayer,
Sent the gracious Comforter:
Promise of our parting Lord
Jesus now to heaven restored.*

and on Trinity Sunday:

*Hail, holy, holy, holy, Lord
Whom One in Three we know;
By all Thy heavenly host adored,
By all Thy Church below.*

The hymns of the Wesleys are a mosaic of biblical allusions. Take the lines from "Jesus, Lover of my soul," which begin "Thou of life the Fountain art." This is derived from Psalm 36:9, "For with Thee is the fountain of life." This reminded the poet of three other verses: "Let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17); "Then Israel sang this song, Spring up, O well; sing ye unto it" (Numbers 21:17); "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:14).

This is one of the greatest hymns of the universal Church. It has been called the finest heart hymn in the English language, though it was not included by John Wesley in the 1780 Collection because he thought it too familiar in its address to Christ. Henry Ward Beecher said he would rather have written that hymn than to have all the fame of all the kings that ever sat on earth.

"O for a thousand tongues to sing" is a close second of Charles Wesley's hymns in popularity, and has been the first hymn in each successive Wesleyan hymnbook since 1780, but not in the current American Methodist Hymnal. It was written for the anniversary day of one's conversion, which fixes the time of its composition in May, 1739. It originally consisted of eighteen verses, of which the seventh is the first of the present hymn. The opening words of this verse were suggested to the writer by Peter Bohler, who, when Charles spoke to him a year previously about confessing Christ, said, "Had I a thousand tongues I would praise Him with them all."

One other of Charles Wesley's hymns must be mentioned, and that is the one which begins: "Come, O Thou traveler unknown." Dr. Isaac Watts said that this single poem "Wrestling Jacob" was worth all the verses he himself had written. James Montgomery regarded this hymn as among the author's highest achievements. Charles Wesley tells us in his *Journal* that he preached on this story in Genesis 32 many times. A fortnight after his death, John Wesley

broke down at Bolton when he tried to give out the lines from this hymn:

*My company before is gone,
And I am left alone with Thee.*

He burst into tears, sat down in the pulpit and buried his face in his hands.

THREE features of Wesley's hymns which mark them out from all others are named by Bernard Manning. First, they are full of dogma. They set forth the doctrines of the faith, like the hymn writers of the Greek Church. But Wesley not only sets out the orthodox faith, but he goes on to tell of a present experience, of its effects in his own life:

*What we have felt and seen
With confidence we tell.*

Thirdly, there is the glory of a mystic sunlight coming directly from another world. This transfigures history and experience. This puts present and past into the timeless eternal Now. "It is Wesley's glory that he unites these three strains—dogma, experience, mysticism—in verse so simple that it could be understood, and so smooth that it could be used, by plain men." His hymns confirm and restore our confidence and build us up securely in our most holy faith. He excludes all but God and the soul. He does not attempt to insert the Gospel into natural religion as did Isaac Watts. He is



obsessed with the greatest things. He sets forth in song the whole range of the evangelical faith.

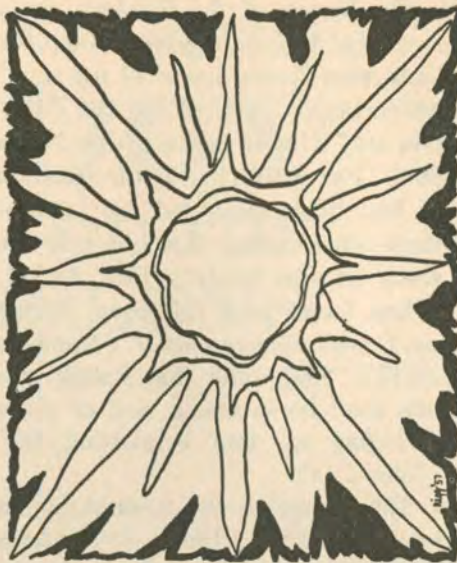
It is a remarkable feat. The walls of our Methodist Zion, like those of Thebes, were built by music and Charles Wesley is their Amphion.

Methodists have learned their doctrines, the bulwarks of their faith, from the hymns of the Wesleys. By
(Continued on page 59)

WE are at the end of one era in the life of prayer and worship, and at the beginning of another. We are coming to be aware, with Paul that, "We do not know how to pray as we ought"; we are beginning to recognize with honesty the dreadful state of our "prayer life" and our "worship experience." After a long period of attempting to "create an experience" through whatever devices we had at hand—usually psychological gimmicks—we are facing the sterility and shallowness of such manipulation of ourselves; of the strange (and unchristian) lordliness which supposes that before we ever begin such experimentation and invention, we are already possessed of full understanding of the worship of God.

Thanks be to God who has given us the gift of seeing that we do not know how to pray! Only through such a gift, the gift of knowing our blindness and ignorance and arrogance, can we truly ask, "Teach us to pray." Only when we are at the end of our own strength can we seek the strength of the One who helps us in our weakness, the One who has prayed through the Church for many centuries according to the will of God.

This recognition of our need to learn how to worship and pray has driven Christians of all sorts back to the early worship of their fathers in the faith; in the fellowship of the Methodist people, there has arisen a new concern for the work of John Wesley relative to our common worship of God. And many who have begun to pray and worship together on the basis of his recommendations testify that at last they are beginning to learn to pray, and that the worship of God is beginning to be more—vastly more—than a "worship experience" or a session of spiritual gymnastics. Inasmuch as this discovery is proving of great Christian value to so many, it might be worth our while to consider one of these services in some detail—not because it is the only possible way to worship God, but because it is a thoroughly Christian



REHEARSING THE DRAMA OF JOHN WESLEY'S

BY EDWARD C. HOBBS

way, which may instruct us in what the Christian worship of God is like.

IN 1784 John Wesley sent a book to America, for use by the Methodists here, called *The Sunday Service for the Methodists of North America*. At the Christmas Conference this book of services, earnestly commended by Wesley, was unanimously accepted for use in all Methodist congregations. It contained much of what is now the *Ritual*, plus much more that has not remained in print. One of these services was the Order for Morning Prayer. Wesley wrote: "I have prepared a liturgy . . . which I advise all the travelling preachers to use, on the Lord's day, in all their congregations. . . . I also advise the elders to administer the supper of the Lord on every Lord's day. If any one will point out a more rational and scriptural way, of feeding and guiding those poor sheep in the wilderness, I will gladly embrace it. At present I cannot see any better method than that I have taken." Wesley headed the service, "The Order for Morning Prayer, Every Lord's Day"—*not*, as in our present

Book of Worship, "suggested for occasional use"!

Wesley was scarcely trying to make dead ritualists of the American Methodists. As he himself said, he felt this was the most scriptural and rational way for the "poor sheep in the wilderness" to be fed and guided in the Christian life; hence he advised the use of this Morning Prayer Service every Sunday. Wesley himself used it every morning. "Scriptural and rational"—these were Wesley's concerns. And it is just these qualities which prove, on examination, to characterize the service throughout.

SCRIPTURAL: it is indeed that. About 95 per cent of it is straight out of the Bible. Even parts like the General Confession, which were "composed" by the Reformers or other postbiblical saints, are almost wholly a tapestry woven of biblical passages. (For example, compare the General Confession with the following Scriptural texts: Isa. 53:6; Psa. 119:176; I Pet. 2:25; Prov. 19:21; Jer. 18:2; II Chron. 28:13; Matt. 23:23; Psa. 38:3; Luke 18:13; Psa. 15:1; Neh. 13:22;

motive



OUR SALVATION

MORNING PRAYER SERVICE

Psa. 51:12; Rom. 15:8; I John 2:12; Titus 2:11-12; John 14:13. There are many prayers of confession; but none that are so thoroughly biblical as this.) And many parts of the service are Bible, pure and simple. Consider that the opening sentences are Bible verses; the Lord's prayer is taken from Matthew; the versicles are from the Psalms; the Venite is simply Psalms 95 and 97 arranged into a single Psalm; and of course the Psalm is from the Psalms!; the Old and New Testament lessons are indubitably scriptural; the Benedictus is out of Luke 1 (or, if the Puritan substitution of the Jubilate be followed, it is the 100th Psalm); and the final grace is from one of Paul's letters. The Te Deum, though written in the fourth century, is chiefly made up of biblical verses—the third stanza is almost entirely from the Psalms, and the quotations from Isaiah in the first are unmistakable to anyone.

RATIONAL: many services are rational, according to one kind of "reason" or another. There is a "rational"

form of devil worship, a rational service for juju-worshippers, etc. The rationality of Wesley's service is one which conforms to the rationale of the Christian faith—i.e., it systematically exhibits the Christian's relation to God, in accordance with the Christian understanding of that relationship. This structure may be seen in several ways, all centering around the basic threefold arrangement of the service. The three parts of the service are clearly marked for anyone who knows the clues; these are the "versicles," or exchanges of dialogue between minister and people which signal that a shift in direction is about to occur. The first exchange begins, "O Lord, open thou our lips; And our mouth shall show forth thy praise." The signal is clear—we are about to enter a service of praise. The other is the common, "The Lord be with you; And with thy spirit; Let us pray." The signal is just as clear—prayer is to follow. Following these clues, we see that the service has three well-defined portions: one of penitence and confession of our sin; one of praise,

thanksgiving, and hearing of God's Word; and one of offering ourselves and all that we hold dear to the care of God. We might call these the Service of Confession, the Service of the Word (for the praise and thanksgiving are all in the words of Scripture), and the Service of Offering. (The original, fuller wording of the Call of Confession announces this threefold arrangement of the service.)

THE arrangement of these parts is not accidental: it follows the course of every Christian's relation to God, as a reminder and an interpretation of that life before him. That is, we don't just "worship," whatever that means; we worship in a particular way, and that way is the way in which we always meet and acknowledge God when we meet the God who confronts us in Christ. The story is something like this:

In the midst of my sinful attempts either to go on about my own affairs apart from God or to "worship" God in my own way, God suddenly confronts me with his Word (which, when written down, we call the Bible—when concrete in events, we call Christ), which is the terrifying announcement that I am a sinner and that I cannot worship God in this condition. In the face of such a revelation, I can do no other (if I am to respond Christianly) than fall on my knees and confess myself to be indeed that which I have been shown to be—a sinner before God and man. Without this acknowledgment, I am only an imposter when I try to stand before God and worship him. But for those who confess their sin, he is faithful to forgive. Such forgiveness enables me—nay, commands me—to rise and praise God, to thank him for his innumerable benefits, and to hear with understanding his demands upon me in his Word. But if I confess such faith in such a God, it behooves me to cease my anxious care about my future, about the dangers which I fear might overwhelm me—and to offer all such concerns to him who cares for us, and who has assured us today of his care in all the Scripture we have heard.

Tomorrow, of course, I have forgotten that I can trust him, and that he cares for me; I am again attempting to live life on my own terms, attempting to find security in the passing-ness of life, attempting to avoid the hands of the One who gives both life and death, both Yes and No, both Cross and Resurrection. And as one who has forgotten, I am suddenly confronted by a Word which declares me to be a sinner, and calls me to repentance; and once more I am given his grace to enter another day—and so on, day after day. This is the story of my life. And this is the story of the Morning Prayer Service.

THE fearful Word is the first thing we hear—"Thou art the man!"—when we enter. (The sentences from Scripture—unfortunately, Wesley's sentences have been eliminated in the *Book of Worship*, in favor of some "calls to worship" which, with one exception, miss the whole point.) And the minister of God's church then explains to us that the Scriptures move us to confess ourselves to God as precisely that which the Scripture says we are—sinners. Hence we fall to our knees and confess together. And then—thanks be to God!—the word of pardon comes, through the words of the minister, freeing us to pray in the words of Jesus. The versicles remind us that we may now praise him, since he has opened our lips. So we rise joyfully to our feet, and join in singing his praises, in giving him thanks, in hearing his Word. When we have summarized this faith in our creed, we are called on to present our concerns to him, in the Collects. And as we go forth, grace, love, and fellowship go with us—grace which we call Christ, love which we call Father, and fellowship which we call the Holy Spirit, all which we acknowledge as the Holy Trinity. Amen!

Another view of this same pattern is that the first part deals with our past—sinful, clinging to us, weighing us down so that we are unable to be anything new in the present, forcing us to repeat over and over the same sort of sick responses to life; this we

take responsibility for, by confessing this past to be our own, and our own doing, and from this we are freed, to be *new men, reborn, resurrected to new life*. The second part deals with our present—being *risen men, newly born, new creations*, we give thanks for this new freedom and this new possibility of life which always meets us anew in this community in Christ. The third part deals with our future—the future which we so dreaded, which contains the unknown (whom we now know to be our Father, not a bogey, not fate, not luck, not chance, not doom!), which had so many terrors because we knew not how to control it. It is this future which we now welcome, meeting it with confidence, because it belongs to him who has already safely brought us to this day, who has shown us in Christ that while we are indeed only men, not God, and that while we cannot control the future, we are nevertheless able to meet it knowing absolutely that it meets us in love even when it presents the visage of a cross. We offer this future to him, trusting him and asking for his governance of it—not our own.

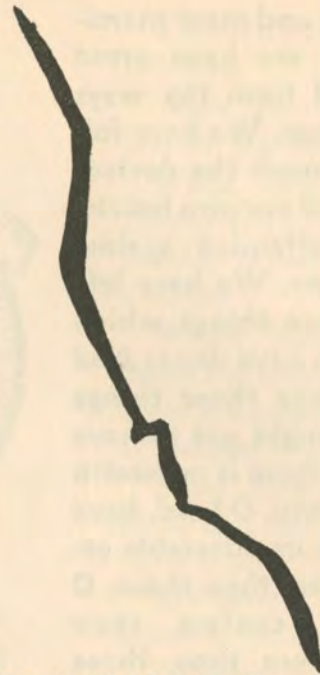
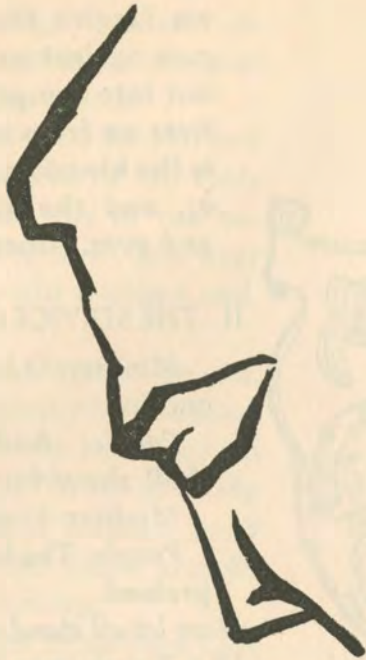
THERE are other ways to worship—but not before this God. While the particular prayers may vary, even be-



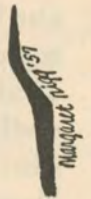
ing extemporaneous, and the praises may be other forms than these, this drama is the one we meet in Christ, and it is this one which we rehearse when we come together "for a remembrancing of him." All the great services of Christian worship, from the beginning till now, follow this fundamental scheme; the Communion is simply an elaboration of it, chiefly in the third portion (which is still offering), and even family prayers are simply miniaturization of it.

Detailed analysis of the service is impossible in the compass of a short article; but a glance at the structure of the middle portion of the service may give a hint as to what a beautiful and orderly (i.e., Christianly beautiful and orderly) way of worship this is. The service may be thought of as an arch, with the Te Deum forming the keystone. Before the Te Deum (on the left side, so to speak), we are engaged with the Old Testament or Hebrew aspect and witness to our faith; after the Te Deum (on the right side), we are involved with the New Testament or Christian aspect and witness to it. On either side of the Te Deum is a Scripture lesson—before, Old Testament; after, New Testament. Just beyond the lessons are the Hymns—before, an Old Testament one (a Psalm); after, a New Testament one (the Benedictus, from Luke 1—the Jubilate, often found as a substitute, is inappropriate since it is another Psalm, and was not originally here at all, having found its way in only under pressure from the "Psalm-singing Puritans" who refused to sing such new-fangled hymns as those in the Gospels!). And just beyond either of these is a declaration of our faith—before, a Hebrew one (the Venite, Psalms 95 and 97); after, a Christian one (the Apostles' Creed). The Te Deum itself is a perfect keystone, since it begins with a Hebrew expression of our faith (from Isaiah), and then "rounds the corner" with a doxology to the Trinity which opens up a "Christian" stanza, the hymn to Christ. Surely this is a full and adequate way of expressing the whole breadth of our praise and thanks to

(Continued on page 58)



JOHN WESLEY'S ORDER FOR MORNING PRAYER



I. THE SERVICE OF CONFES- SION

SCRIPTURE SENTENCES: *One or more to be read by the minister, all standing.*

When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. *Ezek. 18:27.*

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. *Psa. 51:17.*

To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled

against him: neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in his laws which he set before us. *Dan. 9:9, 10.*

I will arise, and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. *Luke 15:18, 19.*

Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified. *Psa. 143:2.*

CALL TO CONFESSON: *By the minister.*

Dearly beloved, the Scrip-

ture moveth us to acknowledge and confess our sins before Almighty God our heavenly Father with a humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient heart, to the end that we may obtain forgiveness by his infinite goodness and mercy. Wherefore I pray and beseech you, as many as are here present, to accompany me with a pure heart and a humble voice unto the throne of the heavenly grace.

Let us pray.

GENERAL CONFESSON: *By all, kneeling, or seated and bowed.*

Almighty and most merciful Father, we have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against thy holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; And we have done those things which we ought not to have done; And there is no health in us. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us miserable offenders. Spare thou those, O God, who confess their faults. Restore thou those who are penitent; According to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord. And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake, That we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life; To the glory of thy holy Name. Amen.

PRAYER FOR PARDON: *By the minister.*

O Lord, we beseech thee, absolve thy people from their offenses that through thy bountiful goodness we may be delivered from the bonds of those sins which by our frailty we have committed. Grant this, O heavenly Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our blessed Lord and Saviour. Amen.

The people shall answer here, and at the end of all other prayers. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER: *By all.*

Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as



we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

II. THE SERVICE OF THE WORD

Minister: O Lord, open thou our lips.

People: **And our mouth shall show forth thy praise.**

Minister: Praise ye the Lord.

People: **The Lord's name be praised.**

Here let all stand on their feet.

OLD TESTAMENT CONFESSION OF FAITH: VENITE: *By all, minister and people responsively.*

O come, let us sing unto the Lord.

Let us heartily rejoice in the strength of our salvation.

Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and show ourselves glad in him with psalms.

For the Lord is a great God and a great King above all gods.

In his hand are all the corners of the earth; and the strength of the hills is his also.

The sea is his and he made it; and his hands prepared the dry land.

O come, let us worship and fall down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker.

For he is the Lord our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; let the whole earth stand in awe of him.

For he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth,

and with righteousness to judge the world, and the peoples with his truth.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, it is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT HYMN: PSALM. *By all, in unison, from the Book of Psalms; at the end of which shall be said, "Glory be to the Father," etc. If no book be at hand, the 23rd Psalm may be said from memory.*

OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE LESSON: *The people seated.*

TE DEUM: *By all, minister and people responsively; all standing.*

We praise thee, O God; we acknowledge thee to be the Lord.

All the earth doth worship thee, the Father everlasting.

To thee all angels cry aloud, the heavens and all the powers therein.

To thee cherubim and seraphim continually do cry,

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth;

Heaven and earth are full of the majesty of thy glory.

The glorious company of the apostles praise thee.

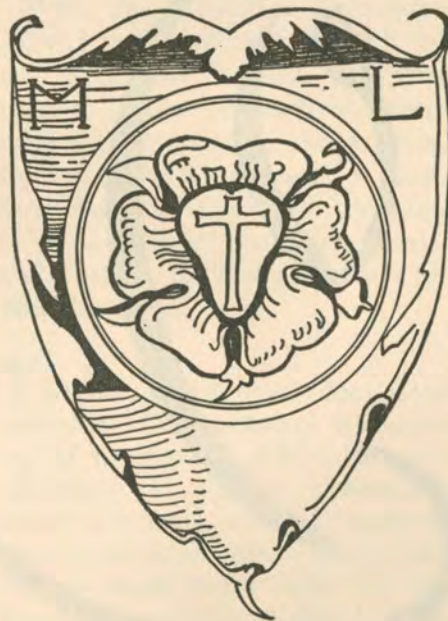
The goodly fellowship of the prophets praise thee.

The noble army of martyrs praise thee.

The holy Church throughout all the world doth acknowledge thee;

The Father of an infinite majesty;

Thine adorable, true, and only Son; also the Holy Ghost, the Comforter.



Thou art the King of glory, O Christ.

Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father.

When thou tookest upon thee to deliver man, thou didst humble thyself to be born of a virgin.

When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers.

Thou sitteth at the right hand of God in the glory of the Father.

We believe that thou shalt come to be our judge.

We therefore pray thee, help thy servants whom thou hast redeemed with thy precious blood.

Make them to be numbered with thy saints in glory everlasting.

O Lord, save thy people and bless thine heritage.

Govern them and lift them up forever.

Day by day, we magnify thee.

And we worship thy name ever, world without end.

Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day without sin.

O Lord, have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us.

O Lord, let thy mercy be upon us as our trust is in thee.

O Lord, in thee have I trusted; let me never be confounded.

NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE LESSON: *The people seated.*

NEW TESTAMENT HYMN: BENEDICTUS. *By all, minister and people responsively; all standing.*

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people.

And hath raised up a mighty salvation for us in the house of his servant David;

As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began:

That we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all that hate us;

To perform the mercy promised to our forefathers, and to remember his holy covenant;

To perform the oath which he sware to our forefather Abraham, that he would give us;

That we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear,

In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.

And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest, for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord, to prepare his ways;

To give knowledge of salvation unto his people for the remission of their sins,

Through the tender mercy of our God, whereby the day-spring from on high hath visited us,

To give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

NEW TESTAMENT CONFESSION OF FAITH: APOSTLE'S CREED. *By all.*

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic Church, the communion

of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

WITNESS TO THE WORD: *The People seated.*

III. THE SERVICE OF OFFERING

Minister: The Lord be withth you.

People: **And with thy spirit.**

Minister: Let us pray.

COLLECT FOR PEACE: *By all, kneeling, or seated and bowed.*

O God, who art the author of peace and lover of concord, in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life, whose service is perfect freedom; defend us thy humble servants in all assaults of our enemies, that we, surely trusting in thy defense, may not fear the power of any adversaries, through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

COLLECT FOR GRACE: *By all.*

O Lord, our heavenly Father, almighty and everlasting God, who hast safely brought us to the beginning of this day; defend us in the same with thy mighty power; and grant that this day we fall into no sin, neither run into any kind of danger, but that all our doings may be ordered by thy governance, to do always that which is righteous in thy sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE GRACE: *By the minister.*

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with us all. **Amen.**



PRAYER

BY DORIS BERRY • WINTHROP COLLEGE

METHODISM,

THE ECUMENICAL COMMUNITY,



AND WORSHIP BY JOHN MAGEE

AT the very center of religious life stands one of the most baffling barriers to a truly ecumenical community—the *cult*. The cult is the form of worship, the concrete expression of the religious life of the community in its moments of high celebration. Of the three elements which everywhere emerge in man's religions—creed, code, and celebration—the last is the most central for it gives life and color to the rest. We are experiencing a revival of interest in the cult among Protestants as is shown by the multiplication of official denominational prayer books, church remodeling which turns auditoriums into cathedrals, and in the definite increase of liturgy and symbolism. But the cult presents a difficulty in ecumenical negotiations by virtue of its nature as a richly detailed, concrete, historically rooted body of symbolic acts which celebrate the otherwise unvoiced

values of the adherents to that particular way of worship.

With the Christian conscience growing more and more disturbed by our unchristian divisions, and with concrete merger proposals constantly turning up for serious consideration, we must ask, What should our attitudes be toward our own traditions of worship? What issues are at stake and what are the best procedures for resolving them?

THE first need is plainly for a more adequate understanding of the meaning of worship as such. In the deliberations of religious liberalism, creeds and codes (what men ought to believe and what they ought to do) loomed much larger than the cult (how they ought to worship). Some thinkers even concluded that only ethics—the codes—really mattered. What men believed or how they

prayed was of little concern so long as their behavior was satisfactory. This view proved shallow. The tragic consequences of modern pseudoreligious social creeds such as fascism, communism, or racism have made us reconsider the importance of belief. But we have not yet begun to grasp the fact that both belief and action are focused and enlivened in our acts of worship.

Sociologist Lloyd Warner opens a recent study of American life with a detailed account of Memorial Day rites in a southern town where parades, flag salutes, patriotic sermons and editorials, prayers, gun salutes, and grave decorations are woven into a complex cult of the American war dead. Why all this ceremony? Warner concludes that these rites unite the community across religious and ethnic lines by giving collective expression to some of its most sacred values. In this analysis

he follows such celebrated sociologists and anthropologists as Weber, Durkheim, and Malinowski whose research drove them to the same conclusion, namely, that the cult is fundamental to culture, that worship is integral to community. Religious rites both express and create the deepest unifying experiences of the group. It is the common life and its experiences of ultimate concerns which give rise to the unified rite, and which, in turn, the unified rite celebrates. Worship is thus no mere addendum to human togetherness, it is organically related to every significant community. As T. S. Eliot says:

*There is no life that is not in community
And no community not lived in praise
of God.*

THE meaning of worship then is to be sought in profound experiences of ultimacy which must be shared, expounded, lived, and, above all, celebrated. Experiences of such supreme import arise out of specific historic situations and events and in this way define the cult in its uniqueness. Christian worship, for example, is a celebration of the unique historical experience of Jesus as the Christ, as the Word of the Father, as the event in time which unveils the significance of eternity. For us God-in-Christ is the central concern which controls the form and content of our worship. But for each branch of the Christian family there is a special variant of that central concern which has arisen out of historic community experiences essential to that group's understanding of its life in the world and its relationship to God. This in turn finds expression in unique variants of worship. When a man moves across these cult lines he finds himself in a strange and enigmatic world. He cannot understand things which are plain to the communicants to whom this mode of worship seems as natural as breathing. Douglas Steere tells of a Roman priest who laughed gaily at the Protestant service in the Church at Rome for omitting the Mass and still claiming to have completed an authentic act of Christian worship. We can share

Steere's amusement at the thought of that priest in a silent Quaker meeting.

By the close of the New Testament, three traditions of worship had been established in the Christian community: the Liturgy of the Father, the Liturgy of the Son, and the Liturgy of the Holy Spirit. The first is patterned on the Synagogue service of Bible reading, interpretation, psalm singing, and prayer—fundamentally the elements which make up the great preponderance of Protestant worship. The Liturgy of the Son is the Eucharist or the Lord's Supper—the primary focus of Roman Catholic worship. The Liturgy of the Holy Spirit is the free and often ecstatic worship which concerned St. Paul in the Corinthian Church and which is manifest today



in such nonliturgical groups as the Pentecostals and the Quakers.

The historical nature of Christian worship underlines what is so important to appreciate if we are to define our attitude toward our Church's responsibility in the ecumenical movement. We must see why the cult cannot be an abstraction of equal appositeness to every community. It is replete with symbols rooted in historic events and common experiences. And only through these symbols are the meanings genuinely apprehended. The event of Christ, for example, cannot be expressed abstractly in some verbal formula free of the particulars of history and Christian experience. Of course, theology may undertake such abstractions, but they can never serve in lieu of the concrete uniqueness essential to the acts of worship.

IN grasping the nature of worship we can now comprehend how at the

center of our religious life there has arisen a barrier to ecumenical experience, a difficulty arising not extraneously but fixed in the nature of worship itself. And the problem is compounded by a further fact that our concern for Christian Oneness is rooted in this very cult which is at the heart of our perplexity.

In the light of these facts, what may we do? Ineradicable as is the difficulty, there are attitudes and actions which mitigate it. Here are some of them.

First, as Methodists we can give more care to our own way of worship. We need to worship with a greater sense of historic depth. Too often our cult gives an impression of thoughtlessness, as though no principle or meaning infused the whole. Conventional selections of song, scripture, and inspiration are served up at random. Because of this the whole affair often impresses the worshiper with lack of awe and reverence, a shabby and sentimental religiosity displacing the awesome bowing down to the Holy One who is our God. We need a widespread acknowledgment of the shallowness of purely personal resources—of even the most gifted individual—over against the richness and range of the full Methodist liturgical heritage.

The Methodist tradition of worship begins in the established Church of Wesley's day. The founder had a deep appreciation for the sacramental life of Anglicanism and did not intend to draw his followers away from it. His Revival began, as Evelyn Underhill has said, "not as a revolt from institutional worship, but as an attempt to restore the continuity of the full Christian life of realistic adoration within the Anglican Church." This characteristic is so marked, she confesses, that for her "it is difficult to say whether early Methodism as its founders conceived it . . . was more Catholic or more Evangelical in tone." She calls our attention to Charles Wesley's Eucharistic hymns which "express with uncompromising directness the full Catholic doctrines of the sacramental Presence and the redeeming Sacrifice. . . ." If more evidence

were needed, we have both Wesley's private sacramental practice and his edition of the Anglican Prayerbook prepared for the embryonic Methodist Church in America.

Over against all this is the tradition of free worship stemming out of the fateful exclusion of Wesley from Anglican pulpits. Forced into the fields to preach, he developed the free forms of religious expression characteristic of the Evangelical Revival: ecstatic hymn singing, extempore praying, and lay preaching. These developed along with the more intimate rituals of the class meeting: group confession, personal prayer, Bible study, and the love feast. It was this complex of forms developed in the Revival which fitted most easily into the new democracy of the West and which shaped our American Methodist experience, and hence our cult.

BUT the American scene is changing. It is taking on the more settled characteristics of an older country: cities, lessened mobility, and more fixed traditions. Add to this the fact that we are a wealthy and increasingly educated people. Such circumstances make less relevant the more spontaneous features of Revival and frontier religion and call for a re-evaluation of the earlier more formal tradition.



Worship must have both historic depth and contemporary appositeness. With a large Church such as Methodism has become, having, for example, a larger share of senators and congressmen than any other denomination, certain social functions are properly expected. Prophetic social criticism and appeals for personal

holiness, characteristic of the preached Word, have to be coupled to the priestly function of a conserving cult which celebrates common values and covers the whole of the natural community life with appropriate significance. It has always been the proper function of a church (as distinct from a sect) to give special signification to those high moments of movement from one phase of life to another: birth, arrival at puberty, marriage, parenthood, and death; and to give positive interpretation to the large-scale social institutions which mark the common life. Since all this is done most effectively through worship, our liturgical life must come in for profound reassessment. Such liturgical reform must not be achieved at the expense of our tradition as a prophetic dissenting sect. We must not forget that Methodism is a body of covenanted adults who have not inherited but consciously chosen their Christian profession.

The problem for Methodism arises from its blending of the two types of ecclesiastical community, the Church and the sect, and the difficulty of adequately expressing this synthesis in appropriate means of worship. Such rites would serve the total needs of a natural community of families without failing to embody the demand for radical conversion and a covenanted vocation.

A final concern toward our own modes of worship might well take the direction of a greater objectivity. In many quarters Wesley's great appeal to Christian experience has been interpreted too subjectively. For him it meant a personal realization of the truth of the Christian proclamation. At our hands it has often become the cultivation of precious "worship experiences." But such manipulation of liturgical elements to produce feelings of religiosity debauches the cult. Whatever comes of worship must come from the Truth that is made known through it, not through a psychological manipulation of the worshiper.

WE may conclude these advices to Methodists on their own way of wor-



ship by observing that there is no substantial union possible with other Christians unless we have depth ourselves. But it is not enough to be concerned with the quality of our own cult. We must develop a respect for the liturgy of our fellow Christians.

This respect will grow out of humble but serious efforts at sympathetic appreciation and even participation in the worship of other groups. We can learn to discern points common to all Christian celebration: the reality of God, the centrality of Christ, and the presence of the Spirit. We can note the points of special strength such as the enviable inwardness of the Quaker or the authentic sense of the Real Presence of the Roman or Anglo-Catholic.

Where possible ecumenical worship should be cultivated at maximum rather than minimum levels of expression. At present this is exceedingly difficult, but it is worth working at with all vigor. If what we have said about the meaning of the cult is correct, then we may prophesy that ecumenical rites will emerge only out of common ecumenical experiences and the attempt to celebrate them fittingly. They cannot be manufactured, and the attempt to do so only produces syncretistic monstrosities. However, the creative moments will come, as they have come in the past. They have come in South India with the union of churches there as common experience and common faith have coupled with a profound sense
(Continued on page 59)

STAKE IN THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

BY COLIN WILLIAMS

THE ECUMENICAL DILEMMA

AT Amsterdam in 1948 the founding churches of the World Council of Churches entered into a Covenant: "We intend to stay together." At the Evanston Assembly in 1954 there was hesitation over a suggested extension of the Covenant in the words: "We intend to grow together."

The World Council of Churches, the official center of the ecumenical movement, represents, in fact, something of an unhappy love match. On the one hand, the churches declare that they have been led together by the divine initiative. "Christ is not divided; already we have our unity in Him. The World Council of Churches is not the product of human ingenuity; it is something into which Christians have been led by the Spirit of God." On the other hand, although God has led them together, they are not able to consummate the union which is the apparent purpose of their meeting. For spiritual marriage requires a mutual sharing of innermost secrets, and the churches have found that there is so far insufficient mutuality to make marriage possible.

So it is that the ecumenical movement is at present the expression of a contradiction. On the one hand,

there is a "given unity" from which the churches cannot turn aside:

The World Council of Churches is composed of churches which acknowledge Jesus Christ as God and Saviour. They find their unity in Him. They have not to create that unity; it is a gift of God.

But on the other hand, there are the stubborn differences of faith and of sin; theological and nontheological factors; and which are due to faith and which to sin, we are not sure.

We are then in a terrible dilemma:

Although we cannot fully meet, our Lord will not allow us to turn away from one another. We cannot ignore one another; for the very intensity of our differences testifies to a common conviction we draw from Him. The Body of Christ is a unity which makes it impossible for us either to forget each other or to be content with agreement upon isolated parts of our beliefs whilst we leave the other parts unreconciled.

So the truth is that we are caught between two signs:

1) We have recognized the sign of Christ's Presence in each other. The fact of the ecumenical movement has grown from this discovery, that

motive

METHODISM'S

churches which we did not believe to be churches in any real sense, share the same experience of the One Lord, speak with undeniable common reference to the same Christ and reveal in their worship and life the unmistakable reality of their relation to the same Saviour.

In short, we have recognized the sign of Christ's Presence in each other; and when Christ speaks we must listen; and when he speaks to us from other fellowships we must move out to meet him.

2) But we have also realized the Presence of Christ in our own separated traditions. It is through these traditions he has called us; and therefore we cannot doubt that our own tradition is owned by him.

And here is our dilemma: to refuse to move out to meet the Christ who has come to us across our divisions would be disloyalty; to move out in such a way that we surrender the riches of the tradition in which we have been called by Christ, would also be disloyalty.

THE CONFESSIONAL VIEWPOINT

It is against this background that we must view Methodism's stake in the Ecumenical Movement. It is dual. On the one hand, we must see that in loyalty to the tradition of Methodism in which Christ has called us, we must engage in the ecumenical encounter from the full depth of our confessional life; but on the other hand, we must constantly be on guard lest we forget that the exploration of our own life must be for the purpose of enabling us to return to creative encounter with those others of different histories and traditions in whom also we have recognized the Sign of Christ's Presence.

In this context, then, we see the validity and the danger of the growing consciousness of confessional roots which has accompanied the growing organs of interchurch cooperation. Alongside the World Council of Churches, International Missionary Council, World's Student Christian Federation, and the host of ecumenical agencies there has grown up the whole series of confessional bodies, such as the World Lutheran

Federation, World Presbyterian Alliance, and World Methodist Council.

Here both poles of the ecumenical movement are represented; this twin growth is healthy, so long as the purpose of the confessional bodies is to reach down into their own traditions in order to return to the full ecumenical encounter.

THE METHODIST VIEWPOINT

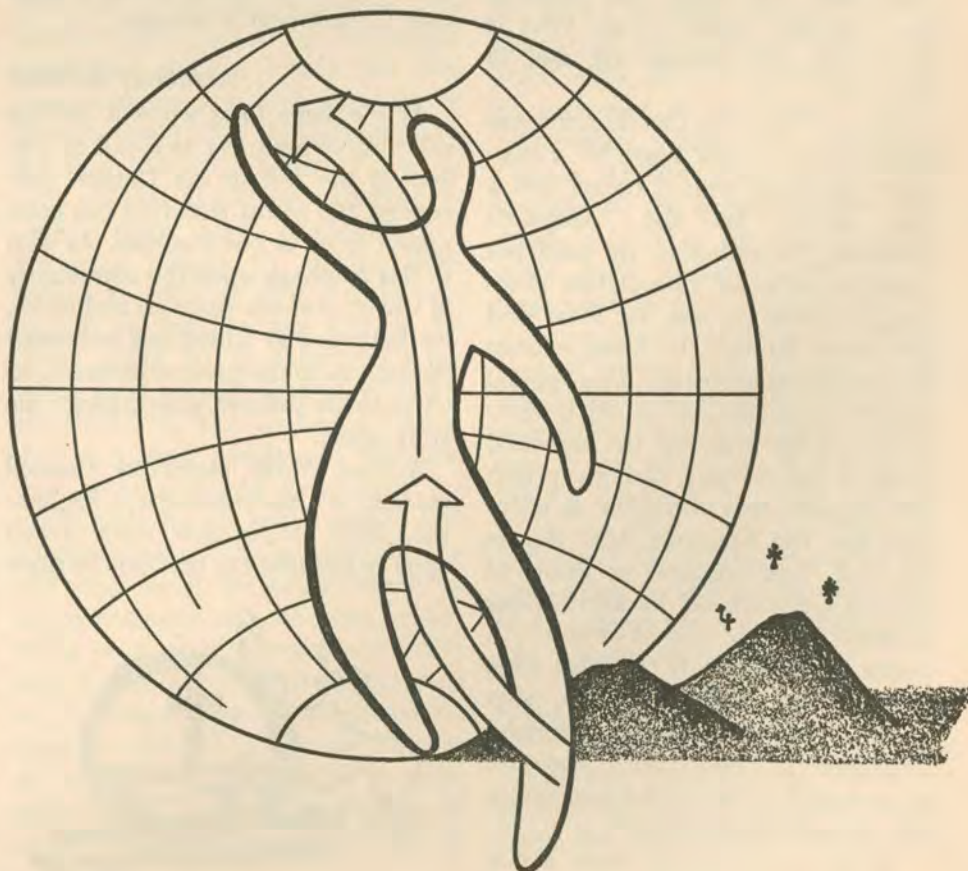
It is here that the going becomes difficult. Methodists have found that it is easy for them to lapse into a theological inferiority attitude when they are brought into the ecumenical encounter. Lutherans have a strong confessional position, many Presbyterians have an equally clear theological stance, and similarly with the Eastern Orthodox and even some Anglicans. But what is the Methodist position? It has even been suggested by some that the Methodist stake in the ecumenical movement is to insist that we must accept *no* position; that we should stand for complete theological freedom. From this viewpoint (or insistence on no viewpoint) the danger of the ecumenical movement

is that it is forcing us into a *theological* encounter, instead of into a Christian encounter, and that as Methodists we should be saying with Wesley: "If your heart is right . . . give me your hand."

THAT INESCAPABLE THEOLOGY

Perhaps we are very close to the Methodist viewpoint in this. But it is important to see that this is precisely a theological viewpoint. What is being insisted is that the essence of Christian theology lies less in abstract precision of doctrinal statement than in recognition of the living sovereignty of Christ who has created his Church for mission and for a living participation in his saving life. It was to Howell Harris, a Welsh Calvinist evangelist, that John Wesley seems to have first written these words: "If your heart is right . . ." (Letters II, pp. 8-9), and the point he is making is that agreement on matters such as predestination is not essential to a sharing in the mission of the Church.

This did not lead Wesley, however, to a thoroughgoing theological relativism. He certainly would have agreed



to the basis of the World Council—acknowledgment of “Jesus Christ as God and Saviour.” We must also remember that he accepted Article XIX of the XXXIX Articles, making it Article XIII of the XXV which he gave to American Methodism.

“The visible Church is a congregation of faithful men in which the *pure Word of God* is preached, and the *sacraments* be duly administered. . . .”

But Wesley’s theological drive was always in the direction of the living sovereignty of Christ over his Church. For Wesley, Word and Sacrament in the form of doctrinal confession and liturgical cultus, were not sufficient marks of the Church. Essential marks were also the mission of the Church and the holiness of the Church which come from the living relationship of believers to Christ.

In his sermon “On the Church,” based on Ephesians 4:4-6, Wesley concludes: “The catholic or universal Church is all the persons in the universe whom God hath so called out of the world as to entitle them to the preceding character; as to be “one body” united by “One Spirit,” having “one faith, one hope, one baptism, one God and Father of all, Who is above all, and through all, and in them all.”

This did not mean that doctrine was unimportant. There must be a constant grappling with doctrine, and a real regard for the “consensus fidelium.” Nevertheless, we must not make a particular formulation absolute, but must be open for what God has to say through the living witness of other Christian groups. This applied particularly to forms of church government. Wesley believed the threefold order of the ministry, bishops, priests and deacons, was normative in scripture and the Apostolic Age. But in the 1747 “Conversations on Forms of Church Government” he asks: “Does it follow that this (threefold order) is necessary? Answer: If this plan were essential to a Christian Church, what must become of all foreign Reformed Churches? It would follow; they are no parts of the Church! A consequence full of shocking absurdity.”

There was in Wesley then, a real

concern for Faith and Order; but believing in the fact that Christ is Sovereign over his Church, that essentially “the Church is Mission,” and that she is placed in the world for the spread of living holiness, Wesley was determined to be open for the evidence of Christ’s movement in other Christian groups. It is this that lies behind his open letter to the clergy in 1763:

I desire to have a league, offensive and defensive with every soldier of Christ . . . Come then, ye that love Him, to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

For this reason, one important Methodist stake in the ecumenical movement is to resist the tendency to make every difference in faith and order a barrier to union. We should look through the differences to the essential mark of the Church as Mission and register a holy impatience with the barriers that prevent our unity in mission. We should lead the way in experimentation in ecumenical relations, believing that God will use our loyalty to the task of mission to resolve our differences within a common commitment to mission.

METHODIST EMPHASES

At the same time we will see the call to growing unity as a call to witness to the rest of the Church concerning the truths that God has committed to us in our tradition. As well as this emphasis upon the sovereignty of Christ over our doctrine and order, we believe that Christ has witnessed through us to the great resources God offers to his children *now* through the Holy Spirit.

At the World Methodist Council meeting at Lake Junaluska in September, 1956, Methodists were called upon to examine our tradition to draw

out the essential meaning of our emphases upon the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and perfect love (sanctification). Commenting on this in a report in *The Ecumenical Review* (January, 1957), Kenneth Grayston remarks: “The doctrine of the Holy Spirit and perfect love draws attention to Methodist spirituality. Whenever we have been true to the original impulse that gave rise to Methodism we have been concerned with the practical consequences of becoming a Christian and being a Christian. Sometimes that has made our religion too subjective; sometimes we have been too narrow and censorious. But not infrequently, in our two hundred years, we have developed a well-balanced saintliness as the mark of ordinary church membership. We have believed and taught that this is the way not only for the spiritually gifted but for everyone; and now we want to know how this ideal is rooted in God’s self-giving to us, that is in the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.”

Here then is a further essential stake of Methodism in the ecumenical movement—a call to grapple with our own tradition to understand the Word God would say through us to the churches, concerning the gifts of his Spirit. Gordon Rupp in his *Principalities and Powers* speaks of the “optimism of grace” of Methodist theology; a word the Church needs to hear. But it must be confessed that Methodism is largely unable to make its contribution to the ecumenical movement, because of a failure to take seriously our own heritage.

METHODIST NEEDS

For this reason as Methodists we need the encounter with other traditions. We need once more to confront the questions of the nature of the Word and Sacraments on which the Church is based; and as we meet with Lutheran and Reformed, Anglican and Orthodox churches, where these questions are taken with great seriousness, we will be driven into that soul-seriousness from which true self-awareness can spring.



GAIN OR LOSS? THE MSM AND MERGER

BY JAMES H. BOICE, JR.



The Catholic Worker

A STUDENT may well have coined the word "ecumaniac" for the ecumenical discussion is certainly beginning to shake the student community in this country. Since Athens and the USCC regional conferences this past December the words—unity, diversity, and brokenness—have found their way into the student vocabulary.

Since the National Methodist Student Commission voted to become negotiators with the Disciple Student Fellowship, the Westminster Student Fellowship (USA), and the United

Student Fellowship this past August in a plan of merger creating a United Campus Christian Fellowship, the ecumenical discussion has been echoing in many quarters of The Methodist Church. The most important sign thus far is that Methodists are being confronted seriously with the problems of disunity in our campus ministry and the students are pursuing the problem unafraid of being dubbed "ecumaniacs."

THE PLAN OF MERGER

The *Plan of Merger (Plan of Merger of Several Student Christian Movements and Study Guide*, November, 1956) issued by the merger committee outlines briefly the contemplated purpose and structure of the proposed UCCF. In December the National Methodist Student Commission adopted an official statement on merger plans which emphasizes the following points: 1) Merger itself cannot be effected until it is an outgrowth of the life and will of the entire MSM. 2) In negotiations the MSM must remain faithful in its responsibility to The Methodist Church and to related boards and agencies. Any merger would necessarily be voted upon by the entire church and its related boards and agencies. 3) Negotiations must be accompanied by an examination on the part of the MSM of its own purposes and heritage. 4) An intensive study program of the whole ecumenical discussion must be initiated before any merger is realized. 5) The NMSC is committed to explore the possibilities of organic structure and unity, not as

an end in itself, but as a partial expression of the unity which we seek—a unity which is ultimately a spiritual unity in no way guaranteed by any organic structure or organization.

PRESENT STATUS OF NEGOTIATIONS

At this point in the discussion of the *Plan of Merger* the NMSC clearly recognizes the situation to be as follows: 1) An actual merger of the MSM with any group will take not less than four years and probably six or more years. 2) The climate within the MSM and The Methodist Church is such that an intensive study program would be necessary for an effective merger. 3) An effective merger of the MSM with any group will have to be cognizant of the MSM's organic relationship within The Methodist Church. 4) The other three groups involved in the present merger proposals have plans for immediate organic union resulting from an intensive educational program over the next year. 5) Even though the present plan of merger goes through in the near future without Methodist participation, the NMSC still feels strongly that in our time God is calling the various denominations into a closer unity, the form of which being yet unknown. The NMSC therefore still feels called to explore the possibility of an organic union of student Christian movements in this country.

PRESENT STATUS OF WORLD COUNCIL TALKS

Although concern for Christian unity is as old as the Christian Church itself, the Ecumenical Movement of

the modern church has achieved organizational expression only as recently as 1948 with the founding of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam. Even though the churches have been drawn into an ecumenical council by a nucleus of concerned individuals, the ecumenical discussion still continues largely on the leadership level of the various churches rather than at the local congregational level. Slowly a partial understanding of the unity to which we are called is sifting down to the local scene. This understanding is, of course, only partial so long as the World Council leadership itself is still in the formative stage of the ecumenical discussion.

It was not until this past August as a participant in the World Council Seminar for theological students that I fully appreciated the immense scope of the ecumenical discussion. Sixty-five students at Bossey, the World Council study institute on the shores of Lake Geneva, Switzerland, studied the topic, "The Church: Its Unity, Diversity, and Division." We soon learned that Christian unity is not a simple gathering together of separate churches. As we became involved in our diverse understanding of the church and the Christian faith, we saw that our traditions ranged from the Quaker position, through the old Catholic position, to the Greek Orthodox position. We found ourselves necessarily centered on problems of faith and order since it was unrealistic to turn our attention to ecumenical action before there was a clarification and understanding of our various traditions. And yet it was necessary for us to join in a common life of worship, work, and fellowship while we were together at Bossey. At this point we felt the real tension of ecumenical fellowship. As a Methodist I was confronted for the first time with the Greek Orthodox position which says that the Orthodox Church is the *true* Church. This frames the ecumenical question in a somewhat more complex light and jolts us to look sharply at the deep-seated differences which divide Christendom. Even in the most central experience of the Christian community, the Holy Communion, we

found ourselves in good conscience unable to share the common cup. At Bossey we discovered the ecumenical discussion to be much broader in scope than a discussion of merger among several churches of relatively similar tradition.

The considered opinion of World Council leaders is that the ecumenical discussion now has reached a significant turning point. It is generally agreed that the various churches within the council have rather fully defined for one another their individual positions on matters of faith and order. Now that we more clearly understand ourselves and our neighbors in the context of our separate traditions, the great task in our generation becomes



that of finding the essential agreements among these diverse traditions and the sources to which we may look for exploring a new basis for Christian unity in the twentieth century. The great ecumenical frontier today is not only a creative study of the Holy Scriptures, but a study of the early church fathers.

ECUMENICITY AND THE CAMPUS

The ecumenical movement was born on the frontier of the world mission of the church where our divided churches meet so sharply the judgment of the non-Christian world. The ecumenical movement has been no less evident in the campus Christian community where our divided witness meets so sharply the judgment of the college-university community. We find ourselves in the same embarrassing position as the university itself. The university which claims to seek out

the Universal finds itself divided into competitive departments and isolated specialists which often cloud the truth to which the university is dedicated. Just as serious is the divided, denominational competition of the campus Christian community for the active loyalty of students and faculty. If we are agreed that the true witness of the Christian community to the campus is to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, then our denominational approach to the campus is as suspect as the competitive departments of the university. If the Christian community is called to help the university more nearly become itself—a seeker after the Universal—we must out of necessity challenge the university with our united witness to the Truth. This means that we cannot substitute denominational cooperation for Christian unity any more honestly than the university can substitute departmental cooperation for a liberal education.

Seeing the significance of our call to a united witness to the campus is one thing, but to create an honest and practical program of ecumenical action is quite another matter. In many ways, the practical difficulty of getting beyond our differences is by far the harder task.

PRACTICAL QUESTIONS

The first practical question we ask concerning a merger proposal is what does our tradition stand to gain or lose in such negotiations? Although this is a necessary question, we are always in great danger of never seeing beyond it. For in truth, "what does it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his soul" (Matt. 16: 26). These disturbing words from the New Testament reverse the concern of our practical question. The real question is always the ultimate consideration of the soul. For instance, in the present merger proposal the real question concerns the soul of the MSM. What is the *raison d'être* of the MSM? If it is to confront the college-university community with our united witness to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, the material gains or losses of the MSM in the merger can never be the primary consideration. Our first

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motive



the wesley society

THE history of the Wesley Society can be told very briefly. It began on January 31, 1955, with an informal meeting of a small group of Methodist ministers, teachers and students in Christ Church, New York. They were brought together by the common concern over the "lost voice" of Methodism in theology and in the ecumenical movement; the assembly of the World Council of Churches at Evanston in 1954 was only the most-recent occasion to demonstrate the absence of the Wesleyan note from the general chorus and the need for the recovery and revival of our authentic heritage.

The New York gathering was a first attempt to explore how widely this need might be felt within the ranks of ministers and members of The Methodist Church, and how those who "cared" could be linked together. A newsletter was proposed which appeared later in the year and contained, beside factual and personal items of information, a booklist for the guidance into Wesleyan theology and, above all, into the first sources; the photostatic publication of the Asbury Supplement was announced which was, and is, obtainable from the Bookroom of Drew University, and which represents one practical way of re-introducing the Wesley hymns (most of them used in Asbury's early hymnals) to choirs and congregations of today.

There followed the retreats at Kirkridge, Bangor, Pa., the first of which

was planned at the initial meeting in New York and took place in April, 1955. Professors Cameron (Boston), Shipley (Garrett, now at Southern Methodist Univ.), and Hildebrandt (Drew) spoke to a group of about thirty ministers and students; some of the material of their lectures, with further contributions from other scholars, were later published in the summer edition of the *Drew Gateway*, 1955.

Dr. Claude Thompson (Emory), who had come to attend the first retreat, came again to speak, together with Professor Haas of Drew, at the second "Kirkridge" in October, 1955. The personal contact between members of various seminary and college faculties led to the establishment of the Advisory Council.

KIRKRIDGE, of course, while easily accessible to participants from the New York area, must inevitably be limited in its attendance. Other regions had, in fact, been active in the field, notably Indiana, where the Wesley Society was founded at DePauw, before it was "born" in New York. Professor R. S. Eccles, the Secretary of the Society, and Dr. Ronald Spivey, the minister of Wesley's Chapel in London, had the leading hand in this.

A second meeting at DePauw in November, 1955, was addressed by Dr. Franz Hildebrandt and Rev. Rob-

ert E. Chiles (Dayton, Ohio), the joint-editor, with R. Burtner, of the *Compend* of Wesley's Theology.

The same team, under the chairmanship of Professor Robert Montgomery, was instrumental in the launching of the Ohio Wesley Society at Ohio Wesleyan in May, 1956. Similar groups, not formally organized, are gathering at Chicago and Yale universities; and Boston, Union and Yale sent representatives to the Easter retreat at Drew in April, 1956, at which Dr. Paul Hoon led the devotions and Drs. Claude Welch and Franz Hildebrandt were the speakers. A students' meeting at Union took place in February, 1957, and an Easter retreat at Yale in April, 1957. The third "Kirkridge" in October, 1956, was addressed by Professors H. Y. Carr of Rutgers and H. D. Hummer of Temple University.

SO far, the Wesley Society has had little press publicity, but the mailing list has steadily grown and runs into several hundred names now. The meetings at Minneapolis in April, 1956, on the eve of the General Conference, were of particular importance and brought together delegates from Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oregon, Pennsyl-

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METHODISM

AN AMERICAN BRAND OF PROTESTANTISM

BY EARL BREWER

IN origin Methodism was a cultural diffusion from England, but in development it has been colored by the unique characteristics of religion and society in the United States.

The basic dissenting religious tradition, the absence of a state church, religious toleration, the voluntary character of church membership, the sect-type orientation of much of Christianity in early America, the large numbers of small religious bodies, and the rise to prominence of the denominational-type of religious organization are among differentiating factors in the religious culture of American Society.

Arising in revolt against religious decay and decline in the Church of England, Methodism was brought to this country by lower-class immigrants who had been attracted to it in England. Wesley authorized a ministry for the Methodists in America and the earliest Disciplines consisted of the provisions of Wesley for the English Methodists with only minor modifications to accommodate to American conditions. Although influenced by the church-type traditions of the Church of England the early Disciplines contained advices and arrangements for a small group sect-type religious order. The various injunctions to laymen and clergy, e.g., the rules of the societies, were not developed by small religious groups but came from the pen of Wesley and

were imposed upon his followers. Thus, early Methodism was a prescribed sect-type order—prescribed by a religious intellectual and organizer.

METHODISM got a comparatively late start in America. In 1775-1776 there were only around three thousand Methodists in ten circuits and fewer than fifty churches scattered along the eastern Seaboard from New York to North Carolina (see the map). It ranked ninth in a list of fifteen religious bodies in the Colonies on the eve of the Revolution. Roman Catholicism ranked tenth while the five strongest bodies, in order, were Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Church of England, Baptists, and Friends or Quakers.

The successive western frontiers were decisive influences in American history. They had a sectizing influence on religious groups, especially Methodism. For example, liturgically Wesley cut in half the elaborate ritual for the observance of the Lord's Supper in the Church of England. The frontier circuit riders slashed Wesley's form to one fourth its length (around fifteen minutes) and provided that "if the elder be straitened for time" he could omit all or any part of the ritual except the prayer of consecration.

These Methodist circuit riders followed the traders and settlers west-



ward. Long before territories became states they had been organized into districts or annual conferences. Before the Civil War these first settlers became the first citizens of growing towns, and Methodism moved from brush arbors to chapels and from "circuits" to "stations"—from lower-class sect-type to middle-class church-type organization. Today The Methodist Church is among a very few of the two hundred and fifty to three hundred religious bodies with congregations in all the forty-eight states.

AS the church spread geographically over the United States it increased as a proportion of the total population. As seen in the chart, Methodism claimed 1.2 per cent of the population, 65,181 members, in 1800. This increased more rapidly than a very

rapidly growing population until 5.1 per cent of the population, 1,185,902 members, was reached in 1850. From 1850 to 1900 there was another increase over the population to 5.6 per cent or 4,226,327 members. The last fifty years has witnessed a more moderate increase over the population growth to 5.9 per cent or 8,935,647 members. Since 1950 there has been a continued high birth rate and Methodist membership, naturally lagging behind around a decade, has fallen to 5.6 per cent of the estimated 1955 population (166,540,000) or 9,339,927 members.

The percentage of the total population in the membership of all religious bodies as computed by the National Council of Churches' *Year Book of American Churches* is shown, also, in the chart from 1850 to 1955. Although the bases for the two sets of percentages are not entirely comparable a rough picture of the proportion of Methodist membership in total religious membership can be seen. In 1850 Methodism was approximately one third of the total and this has declined steadily to less than one tenth in 1955. This, coupled with the fact that the largest single Protestant religious body, The Methodist Church, claims less than 6 per cent of the total population is ample evidence of the variety of religious groups in the United States.

Present-day geographic distribution of Methodist membership in the total population may be seen on the map by Jurisdictions. The Central Jurisdiction membership has been added into the various state totals and is not shown as a separate category. In 1950 there were 348,686 Negro members of The Methodist Church which was 2.3 per cent of the Negro population. Moving northward and westward from its origins in the Middle Atlantic States, Methodism grows somewhat weaker as a percentage of the population. In the Southeastern Jurisdiction 9.2 per cent of the population in 1954 was claimed in Methodist membership. The other Jurisdictions were South Central with 7.8 per cent, North Central with 5.5 per cent, North Eastern with 4.1 per

cent and Western with 2.4 per cent. In 1954 Delaware was the "most Methodist" state (12.4 per cent of the population) and Utah the "least Methodist" (0.6 per cent of the population).

INSTEAD of being limited to certain geographic sections or categories of population Methodism had indeed spread over the entire country and into all segments of the population. United Methodism accommodated to the wide diversity of the nation through five geographic Jurisdictions and to racial differentiation through the Central Jurisdiction. The entire jurisdictional system, especially the Central Jurisdiction, is under attack and current restudy.

The Methodist family of churches includes twenty-two denominations and 11,784,000 members in 54,295 churches. Only three of these bodies have over 1,000 members each (African Methodist Episcopal Church 1,166,301; African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, 760,000; and Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, 392,167). Most splits from the present body occurred over the race question. Ecclesiastical polity and the fundamentalist-modernists differences accounted for the others. Meeting diversity and difference through division has been common in the history of American Protestantism.

Methodism has given initiative and leadership to the ecumenical movement in the United States. It began last century in ecumenical conferences of Methodists and continued through cooperation with all such movements involving various denominations in the United States, Canada and, finally, the World. Methodist leadership has been important from the beginning in the National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches. Too, Methodism has led in the unification process with the merger in 1939 of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Methodist Protestant Church.

IT is characteristic of the sect-type body to appeal to one class, usually

the lower class, of persons. As social dynamics pushed early Methodists upward in the class structure it had profound implications for the denomination. It began to raise its educational standards, to assume more responsibility for community and social problems, to mitigate the prescriptions toward simplicity of dress and holiness of character, to adjust to the political and economic ideologies of the times. Methodism today is assumed to have its strongest hold in the dominant middle class. Yet sample studies reported in the May 15, 1948, issue of *Information Service* show Methodism's distribution in the class structure to approximate a national sample of the population more closely than any other major denomination. Occupational profiles of the relationship between Methodist membership and community population generally show overrepresentation of Methodists in the "white collar" and above occupations and underrepresentation in the "blue collar" and below occupations. There is, however, wide variations from community to community and from local church to local church.

There has been a gradual and continued accommodation of Methodism to democratic principles, although generally with more cultural lag than lead.

THE personal authority of Wesley was assumed by Asbury and the early bishops in America. Almost from the beginning there were efforts to curb and control this power through limitations imposed by the conference of preachers. With the rise of "constitu-



tional Methodism" and the delegated General Conference, numerous definitions of duties and powers of episcopacy were made. These reduced the discretionary and arbitrary power of bishops and made them amenable to constitutional church government. At the same time the growth in the size and strength of Methodism greatly increased the influence of episcopacy and it remains in the "strong executive" class today.

The constitutional development of Methodism has been compared and contrasted with that of the federal government. The presidency is compared to episcopacy, Congress to General Conference, and the Supreme Court to the Judicial Council. Although this analogy breaks down at some fundamental points few would deny accommodative forces at work here. For example, it is a long step from the discretionary discipline exercised by Wesley over members and the elaborate trial and appeal procedures for laymen and clergy in the present judicial section of the *Discipline*. One interesting difference in the constitutions of Methodism and the United States is that Methodism has "life-time" episcopacy and "term" members of the Judicial Council while the United States has "term" presidency and "life-time" members of the Court.

THE rise to power of laymen in Methodism is one of the most intriguing aspects of this accommodation to democracy. In the early conference of preachers the clergy had all power and rights and the laymen none. The Methodist Protestant Church was organized to protest the need for "mutual rights" for laymen during the period of Jacksonian Democracy. Gradually, reluctantly, and painfully Methodism came to limited, then, equal rights for men and, finally, for women. This included equal representation in the annual and general conferences. Actually, with the proliferation of specialized lay offices in local churches lay members make up the bulk of official boards, quarterly and district conferences.

Provisions for official congregational initiative and approval of church plans, the functions of pastoral relations committees, and the admission of women to the full ministry are other evidences of this accommodative process.

Indeed, in 1936 the Methodist Episcopal Church *Discipline* carried a resolution on "The Case for Democracy" which identified Methodism with democracy as fully, if somewhat more critically, as medieval Roman Catholicism with feudalism.

Accommodation to "free enterprise"

individualistic economics has been an important chapter in American Methodism. Beginning with a common salary or "provision for necessities" for bishops, elders and deacons the church during the first fifty years of its life went "congregational" in salary arrangements. The people served by a pastor arranged his salary and claimed no responsibility for other pastors. The number and strength of the local membership determined the salary. The rise of industrialized, managerial economics has tended to lessen this earlier individualism and develop "grades" or "categories" of income based on type of job, etc. Today bishops draw a common salary from a common source as do district superintendents in many annual conferences. There is permissive legislation for a "basic salary plan" for ministers.

Economic rationalism has permeated and elaborated various aspects of Methodist structure. Involved from the beginning in the printing business, the amounts of space required in the successive *Disciplines* to describe the proliferation of bureaucratic organizations closely related to money enterprises is remarkable. Besides the Publishing House, provisions for missionary money, and church extension funds are examples. Methodism has in its organizational structure, as re-



Geographic distribution of Methodist societies, 1775-1776, and total estimated population. Methodist membership and percentage of population in membership by geographic jurisdiction, United States, 1954. (Source: adapted from Charles O. Paullin and John K. Knight, *Atlas of*

the Historical Geography of the United States, plate 82J; adapted by Fred Shippey and Earl Brewer from United States Census of Population. Series P-25, No. 108, Annual Conference Journals, and General Minutes of the Annual Conferences of The Methodist Church, 1954.)

presented by the *Discipline*, gradually increased bureaucratic complexity in areas dealing with the raising and spending of money for Christian causes and decreased in areas dealing with individual personal religious experiences. The only exception would be in the elaboration of liturgical materials. In the beginning the *Discipline* was a constant appeal for greater zeal "to reform the continent and to spread scriptural holiness over these lands." Gradually, it changed into a constitutional manual and organizational chart providing for the affairs of an elaborate "legal-rational" religious bureaucracy. During the same period this process has occurred in the economic organizations, the governments, and other religious bodies of the United States.

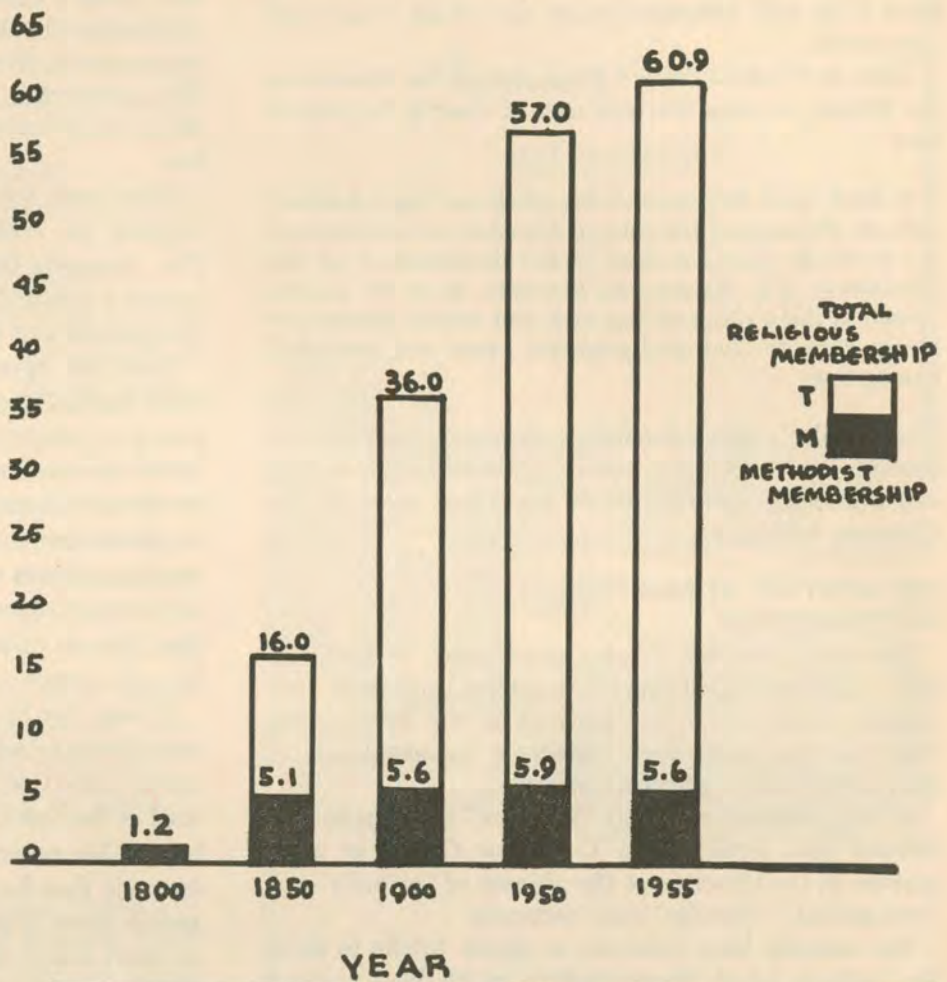
METHODISM, then, has developed in American society as a peculiarly American brand of Protestantism. It has worked out the dynamic of its inner life in the framework of a society characterized by democracy, faith in science and education, capitalism and Protestantism. In other ages or societies it might have been a dependent "church within a church," an ascetic religious order, or an underground religious movement. Instead it has risen to respectability and responsibility, to a sense of Christian integrity through cultural influence, and to a place of leadership in the denominational-type family of Protestant bodies.

The vital, if uneasy, forces, part-sect and part-church, which are held in moving equilibrium in the denominational-type body provide the orientation and strength for Methodism as it faces its future—a future requiring far-sighted strategy to overcome elements of cultural *lag* and project a program of religious *lead*.

1. Can Methodism move toward "equality of religious opportunity" for all its people regardless of race or class or place of residence?

2. Can Methodism provide a full-orbed education for its clergy without losing the common touch?

PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION IN MEMBERSHIP



Percentage of population in Methodist membership and in total religious membership, United States, 1800-1955. (Source: U. S. Census of Population, 1800-1955; Methodist History as

Revealed in Statistical Form and General Minutes of the Annual Conferences of The Methodist Church, 1950, 1955; Year Book of American Churches, 1956.)

3. Can Methodism develop a town and country parish strategy in keeping with modern day "tractor agriculture" and declining farm population?

4. Can Methodism develop a "master plan" for urban parish strategy to cope with the increasing complexities of rapidly urbanizing America?

5. Can Methodism once again cultivate the intense personal religious experience in dynamic small groups within the church so that membership

means more than attending public worship and paying the budget?

6. Can Methodism develop an evangelistic spirit and strategy to make an impact on today's population equal to that of the circuit riders during the first one hundred years in the United States?

7. Can Methodism, tragically torn by racial strife almost from the beginning, prove by its practice as well as its pronouncements that in Christ all men are indeed brothers?

Our Methodist Heritage
(Continued from page 5)

what I do will influence others for whom I am also responsible.

Thus, in Wesley's Second Discourse on the Sermon on the Mount, he says that the man of God is "a man of love."

Indeed, good in general is his glory and joy, wherever diffused throughout the race of mankind. As a citizen of the world he claims a share in the happiness of all the inhabitants of it. Because he is a man, he is not unconcerned in the welfare of any man; but enjoys whatsoever brings glory to God, and promotes peace and good will among men.

Thus Wesley's active denunciations against political corruption, the liquor trade, luxury, unemployment, slavery and war arise naturally from his whole view of the Christian faith.

THE HERITAGE IN PRACTICAL CHURCHMANSHIP

We have seen that Wesley owed much to both the "Catholic" and "Evangelical" traditions, and as a theologian stands within the tradition of the Reformation while at the same time preserving independence of Calvin and Luther at important points.

In his organization of his "Societies," it seems to me, Wesley goes further than Luther or Calvin in some matters in the direction of the alliance of "catholic" and "evangelical," "churchy" and "sectarian."

Our concern here, however, is merely briefly to show the heritage which Wesley left to us in these matters. It is a heritage perhaps best described as "pragmatic ecclesiasticism."

It is certainly "ecclesiastical." It knows nothing of "solitary religion." It insists upon regular sacraments and ordered liturgy, upon disciplined training and mutual confession among members. The idea of Methodism as a distinctive church, with its own distinctive principles, is a modern idea, of course. It was the constant and irrefutable boast of Wesley that Methodism was "the religion of the Bible, the primitive Church, the whole Church in the purest ages, and the Church of England." "Our doctrines," as Wesley called them were, as he said, "those of the Thirty-nine Articles, the Book of Common Prayer, and the Homilies of the Church of England." But for an episcopal failure of nerve when Wesley suggested ordination for some of his preachers for America, we all might still be in the episcopal succession today. We may indeed feel with justice that eighteenth-century Anglicanism was a pit from which we were dug, rather than a rock from which we were hewn, but that does not alter our heritage.

Much has happened since then. Both the Anglican Evangelical Revival and the Oxford Movement could be said to be the logical outcomes of the Methodist movement. Ideally, Methodism holds together the two

things thus emphasized. Moreover, it is obviously true that Anglicanism could not long have controlled so large and unruly a child as Methodism. It was inevitable that Methodism should become a church of her own. Wesley's practice, if not his intention, led naturally to this. The pity is that, in the early nineteenth century, some of the more "catholic" of the Methodist traditions were lost.

They were lost because Wesley's genius for bringing together the ecclesiastical and the expedient was lost. For, alongside this ecclesiastical interest, must also be placed a consistent *pragmatism* in all matters of church government and faith.

This bias sprung naturally from the nature of the little Methodist societies. A Methodist "Society" was a group of people who already belonged to Anglican or other churches, but who met together weekly with others previously of no church allegiance. They met together for instruction, discipline and training, and such activities were in addition to the attendance at the Parish churches for weekly Communion and service. It was natural, therefore, that no strict doctrine of the church should be held by such groups as such.

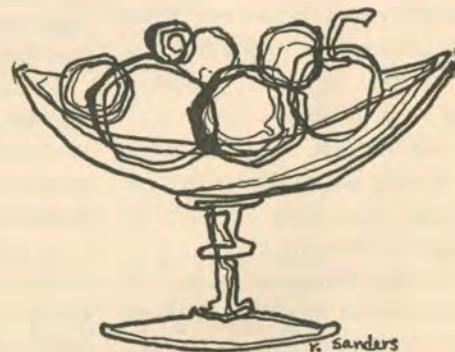
Wesley, for his part, insisted that church organization was always subservient to the demands of the Spirit. The needs of the Gospel came before all else. If laymen were used of the Spirit, then Wesley must overcome his objection to lay preachers. If crowds were converted in the open air, then he must "submit to become more vile" and preach there. If people were without the Sacrament, then he must ordain them ministers to give them the means of grace. Books, hymns, chapels, prayer book—whatever the Methodists needed—must be provided for them, whatever ecclesiastical critics said.

THE HERITAGE TODAY

Within all discussion with other churches, therefore, the Methodist will be guided by principles such as these:

1. Loyalty to the "catholic" faith and discipline as inherited by us.
2. Loyalty to the needs of man and of the preaching and living of the Gospel.

I have not listed here any of the so-called "distinctive



doctrines," because as we have seen, most of those doctrines arose out of practical considerations or out of doctrinal controversies; and they tend as a consequence to be perhaps stated in an extreme way. However, it does seem to me that in no Confessional agreements could a loyal Methodist deny:

1. The universality of the Gospel of Christ.
2. The need for and possibility of confident personal faith.
3. Holiness, which is practical Christian love.

Beyond this, the Methodist will naturally want to bring his genius for fellowship (dating from the early Class and Society Meetings) and his love for his hymns (especially those of the Wesleys themselves).

Beyond all else, the loyal Methodist will be a man of truly catholic spirit. He will not be partisan. He will set up his shop neither for exclusive episcopalianism which denies grace elsewhere, nor for Free Churchmanship which loses discipline and order. He will neither surrender liturgy for chaos, nor freedom for dullness. He will be loyal to the creeds and he will preach the Gospel as need be. He will look to his own heart but will know that he must care above all for the hearts of others.

So preached Wesley in his great sermon on "Catholic Spirit"; the words guide us still.

While he is steadily fixed in his religious principles, in what he believes to be the truth as it is in Jesus; while he firmly adheres to the worship of God which he judges to be most acceptable in His sight; and while he is united by the tenderest and closest ties to one particular congregation—his heart is enlarged toward all mankind, those he knows and those he does not; he embraces with strong and cordial affection neighbours and strangers, friends and enemies. This is catholic or universal love.

A man of catholic spirit is one who loves as friends, as brethren in the Lord, as members of Christ and children of God, as joint partakers now of the present kingdom of God, and fellow heirs of His eternal kingdom—all, of whatever opinion or worship, or congregation, who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ; who love God and man; who, rejoicing to please and fearing to offend God, are careful to abstain from evil, and zealous of good works.

He is the man of a truly catholic spirit, who bears all these continually upon his heart; who, having an unspeakable tenderness for their persons, and longing for their welfare, does not cease to commend them to God in prayer, as well as to plead their cause before men; who speaks comfortably to them, and labours by all his words, to strengthen their hands in God. He assists them to the uttermost of his power in all things, spiritual and temporal. He is ready "to spend and be spent for them"; yea, to lay down his life for their sake.

May 1957

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campus roundup

ATHLETIC AWARDS

As the 1956 athletic seasons came to a close five athletes were awarded honors above and beyond the laurels won on the field.

Bobby Morrow, the Olympic runner, was given a special day at Abilene Christian College. Said Howard Norton, president of AAC: "Bobby Morrow has shown the world it doesn't take a sissy to be a Christian."

Brooklyn Dodger pitcher Carl Erskine and Olympic pole-vaulter Bob Richards were honored as two of the outstanding young men of the nation by the United States Junior Chamber of Commerce. Robin Roberts, ace pitcher for the Philadelphia Phillies, received the Golden Deeds Award for 1957 from the Exchange Club of Philadelphia.

Jim Swink, Texas Christian University's all-American back, received the top sportsmanship award for his last season on the gridiron.

EDUCATION LEGISLATION

Three significant measures have been introduced into the United States Senate by Hubert E. Humphrey (D., Minn.).

The first provides that scholarships should be made available to gifted high-school students unable to attend college because of lack of funds. The second proposes a two-part program by which summer work opportunities should be made available to teen-agers in national parks and forests and which proposes grants to states to establish and strengthen controls and treatments for juvenile delinquency. The third measure is the School Construction Act of 1957 which would authorize federal payments to states to assist in constructing more schools.

All the proposals are now undergoing consideration in the Senate. Perhaps the most significant one being the latter, which might promise some relief to both state and private institutions which are beginning to suffer from inadequate space and facilities.

At any rate, the Senate is aware of the forthcoming crises in education with the influx of new thousands of students, comments the Los Angeles City College *Collegian*. "The future of education lies

with the federal government and the future of government lies with the students of its colleges," it says.

WORTH QUOTING

Dr. Chad Walsh, speaking at the University of Rochester on "Being a Christian on Campus":

"The function of the church is a hospital for sinners, not a museum for saints."

AND A FLUB

Reporting the forthcoming play, "The Terrible Meek," as a part of the religious emphasis week program at Denver University, the campus newspaper, *The Denver Clarion*, said:

"The program, which will take place at Buchtell Chapel, will feature the Wesley Players' presentation of 'The Terrible Week' and selections of sacred music by the University Choir among other things."

And another journalism professor slashes his wrists.

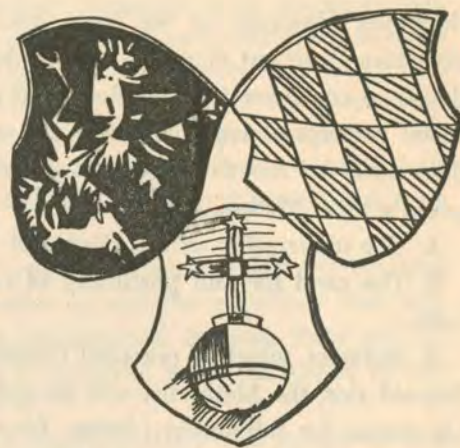
TESTIMONY FROM A MOVIE STAR

Don Murray who rose to acclaim as the star opposite Marilyn Monroe in "Bus Stop," is a member of the Church of the Brethren and shares his church's stand on the Sixth Commandment. He was a conscientious objector in World War II and in accordance with American law was given the opportunity to serve as an assistant in a refugee camp in Italy.

Today, as a result, he is still active in refugee work. He and his wife, Hope Lange, are tithing their movie salaries that they may embark on a trip back to Italy. There they will inspect the situation in the present refugee camps, set up financial reports and see if they can provide for two additional service workers from America.

"There are still nearly 3,000 people behind barbed wire in Naples," he explains. "Many of them are Yugoslavs who don't want to go back to their own country. And so they are actually prisoners. What is needed is a real plan for them."

Mr. Murray volunteered to remain six additional months beyond his specified time there during the war that he might continue to help the refugees. He participated in various dramatic services and shows for the refugees during his stay. He recalls dramatizing the story of Jesus. "I think it was the greatest experience of my life," he says.



Remarks the *Christian Science Monitor*: "This is a new Hollywood leading man . . . a new idol of the bobbysoxers. Surely, he is a man to confound the seekers of stereotypes in Hollywood."

AND AN EDITORIAL EXCERPT

From the University of Rochester's *Campus-Times* editor, Tom Rickert:

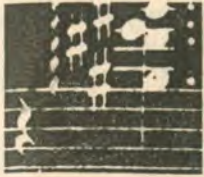
"Five New York City college professors recently teamed up to bar the editor of *The Daily Worker*, John Gates, from speaking on their campuses. This action rose out of requests from two of the colleges for Mr. Gates to speak at student meetings. The decision of the professors is in poor taste and, in the final analysis, dangerous. . . . Of course, it should be made clear that Mr. Gates probably has no great message for college students. . . . All the same, it is an insult to the intelligence of a student body to assume that they would fall victim to the guiles of Mr. Gates or any other Bolshevik. Furthermore, the very act of barring Mr. Gates fell right into his hands—it provided fuel for a fire which will very likely die completely only when it is allowed to be fully exposed."

MORE FRET ABOUT INCREASES

According to a recent poll made by *Time Magazine*, U. S. colleges are ill-prepared for tidal wave of new student applications.

"By the time the present crop of first graders is ready for college," says Dean of Admissions Arthur Howe of Yale, "enrollments may soar to 8,000,000 from the present 5,000,000 over the nation."

It is already becoming increasingly difficult for high-school students to attend particular universities. As the new increase comes closer, the poll indicates, admissions requirements will be drastically tightened.



MUSIC

BY HOBART MITCHELL

THIS year I have been trying to show the relationship of music to meditation periods and worship services, and I have suggested that each is a different path to the same end, a different way of doing the same thing. Some people cannot use meditation effectively; they need the activity and prepared mind track of a worship service. Others find liturgy and activity a distraction, and if they attend such a service, they attempt to meditate anyway.

Considered carefully, the worship service, it seems to me, also calls on its attenders for moments of meditation. If it is a prepared path for focussing and holding the worshiper's attention on God or on a spiritual idea related to God, then in effect when properly used, it is an outward physical exercise to help the worshiper to focus on God, to meditate. And at points in the order of service, a particular opportunity is given the worshiper to meditate. When a soloist sings "O rest in the Lord" or "But the Lord is mindful of His own" or "He shall feed His flock" or "If with all your hearts ye truly seek Me" or "Come unto Him all ye that labor" or when a chorus sings "He, watching over Israel" or "We like sheep have gone astray" or "Bless thou the Lord, O my soul," the worshiper can hear the words and let them sing in his own spirit to God. These pieces of music (whether "live" or recorded, whether solo, choral, or instrumental) give time in the service for meditation and a deep focus on God. And when we meditate at such moments, we cease to be a spectator in the worship service; we become at last a participant.

Similarly in a period of meditation, the prayers and passages of scripture and phrases uttered in the mind by the individual worshiper bring that meditation into parallelism with the worship service. If the worship service needs in it the moments for meditation to give it vitality and depth, the person, meditating, unless he be a

saint, needs the aid of prayer and scripture to keep him focused.

IT is important that we establish this point in our minds so that we can use music and the other ingredients of worship with understanding and success. For both the kind of music used and the way in which it is used depend upon what is desired at that moment in a period of worship.

When a worship service of readings and prayers and speaking alternated with music is wanted, then the music used usually should maintain a unity of mood so as to hold the whole service together. When an extensive meditation period is wanted, however, then the music needs to be varied in kind and mood and intensity, for in this case a long sequence of the same kind and mood of music becomes boring. The mind ceases to meditate and goes to sleep. In this case, in addition to the unity of the whole and the coherence of the parts, a subtle and sufficient variety is necessary to hold the interest and the focus.

As an illustration, we at CHANCEL prepared a worship service recently that opened with an organ recording of Dunstable's "Agincourt Hymn." Following the call to worship, we placed William Byrd's "Pavane." This led to an excerpted reading of Psalm 139, after which we used the second movement of Bach's cello sonata #2 in D major as a meditation piece. A Prayer of Confession and a Prayer for Unity used in the French Reformed Church followed, after which we placed the singing of "But the Lord is mindful of His own" from Mendelssohn's *Saint Paul* and a viola and organ recording of Schubert's "Litany for All Souls." A closing prayer was taken from the Gelasian Sacramentary, and then as concluding music, we used an organ recording of Bach's *Sinfonia to Cantata #156*, "I Stand at the Threshold."

Such a listing of the service on paper, I realize, does not have much meaning for anyone unfamiliar with the music, but the point is that all this music had the same meditative feeling. Had this been a meditation period, however, we could not have used this sequence of music at all. It would have been too much of the same kind of music to link together without verbal interruption. But because it was a worship service with

the music broken apart by readings and prayers, these pieces gave to the whole service not only a quietness and depth but a unity of mood.

THE instrumental version of Haydn's "Seven Last Words of Christ" is a longer work which also offers a very good example of this point. It is divided into seven parts, and in a Holy Week service, it can be used as a whole with appropriate scripture or prayer or spoken meditation between each musical part (which was the way it was originally used). Each part expresses one word, and the whole gives unity to the service. There is sufficient variety between its parts so that it might also be played from beginning to end without pause for a Good Friday meditation period. Such long works have to be used with care, however, and in general this work is not best used as a whole. Aside from Holy Week, either in worship services or in meditations, it is best used in parts, a single movement at one point in a worship service, one or two movements played at different points in a meditational sequence.

Dupre's "Passion Symphony" is another such work. Its movements are long to be distributed through a worship service as a unifying piece of music. Moreover, only a service that used its meaning as a center of focus and made the readings and prayers point up the music could take the whole symphony. In any other service, at the most only a single movement

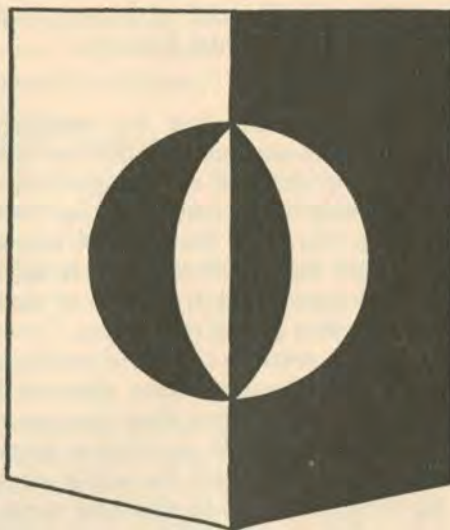


could be effectively used. It could be listened to as a whole in a meditation period, and since its movements refer to the time before Christ's coming and the Nativity and the Resurrection as well as the Crucifixion, it could be used more generally than just during Holy Week. But even in meditational music sequences, we at CHANCEL have found it most useful when we have used it one movement at a time in combination with other pieces.

WHEN a worship service or meditation period is being prepared, it goes without saying that every potential piece of music, short or long, has to be tested not only to see that it has a sacred feeling but also to determine what it expresses spiritually. Then, as with the other ingredients of the service, the music has to be chosen and used for the purpose of helping the minds and spirits of the worshipers to participate in the service. Specifically, that means it has to be used to exalt and inspire the attender, for this is what opens the spirit and makes inner change possible. A worship service has no point, it seems to me, unless it inspires a person to change his ways, to grow, and to live thereafter closer to the ways and spirit of God.

Time and again, I have cautioned that a good ear, a sensitive mind, and close listening are necessary to put together spiritually expressive sequences either of music alone or of music broken with words. Anyone who has the potential ability and the ear for music can develop this skill to a high degree through practice and careful, objective listening either by himself or in a group music workshop. But the one rule above all others for achieving this skill is that he must never settle for what "will do." He must stay at work testing and trying until the worship service or the meditational music sequence really fits together and is effective.

FINALLY, I do not believe it possible to build either a worship service or a meditational sequence of music that is spiritually valid except by working in a reverent and meditative (prayerful) frame of mind and preferably in or close to the atmosphere of the church sanctuary. We are using music, but what we are building is a service or period of worship.



ON "EXPLAINING" MUSIC

BY LINDSEY PHERIGO

Someone is always asking me to "explain" the meaning of some particular piece of music. John, who never listens attentively to classical music at all, says he doesn't understand any of it. To him, even the Schubert Unfinished Symphony is mysterious. "What does it mean?" he asks. Joe, on the other hand, likes all the standard classics, but rebels in horror at Schönberg or Bartok or Hindemith. "It doesn't make sense," he protests. "It's just a lot of noise."

John and Joe are different only in degree. They're both asking to have music "explained" to them. What does this involve? In its simplest form, it's a request to have the meaning of the music put into words. They understand words, and thus, through them, they hope to understand the music. "Explaining" Bartok's music means translating it into words.

I doubt if this is ever possible. Music expresses its own meaning in an idiom which cannot be translated. Music is an art-form, and like a great painting it says what words cannot say. That is its *raison d'être*. If "explanations" in words were possible at all, then music would be superfluous. We can no more explain in words the "sense" of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* than we can play on the piano an intelligible explanation of Plato's *Republic* or the Sermon on the Mount. Let's stop this nonsense, and let words be words and music be music.

Of course, some music is "program" music. In this case, some indication of what the music is about is supplied

by the composer. This may be a help, but it is not a real explanation, either. It only helps. In the last analysis, the music is still music and not words. Even songs, with their explicit text, say something to the hearer that the words alone cannot express.

The real secret to the meaning of music lies in repeated exposure to it. If it cannot make its own message and meaning clear, what it says must forever remain unknown.

THE NEW RECORDS

Opera steals the show this month. Victor first issued the *Verdi and Toscanini* album (LM-6041; \$7.96), a collection of broadcast tapes dating from 1942 to 1948, and one studio recording (1952) of the Overture to *La Forza del Destino*. It includes excerpts from *Nabucco*, *I Lombardi*, *I Vespri Siciliani*, *La Forza*, *Louisa Miller*, *Rigoletto* (Act IV), and *Othello*, as well as the *Hymn of the Nations*. Then, right on the heels of this release came the long-awaited *Aida* (LM-6132; \$11.92), from the 1949 broadcast, with some studio revisions of 1954—Toscanini's last conducting.

Toscanini's mastery of Verdi's music is unmatched. Both of these albums are destined to be standards of excellence for years to come; I think Toscanini's intimate knowledge of Verdi will make them permanently important. In this music Toscanini is at his best. One can question his interpretations of Mozart, Beethoven and Brahms, but not his Verdi.

Karajan's great performance of Brahms' *German Requiem* (on Columbia) is seriously challenged by a new version from Victor. Rudolf Kempe leads the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra and the Choir of St. Hedwig's, with Elizabeth Grümmer (soprano) and Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (baritone). The Kempe performance certainly supercedes the previous Victor set (by Robert Shaw), and the Decca version by the same orchestra and chorus under Fritz Lehmann.

None of the available versions is poor; Karajan's is not definitely displaced by Kempe's, partly because of Hans Hotter's profound understanding of the music. The new Victor version, however, is in the same class and includes Fischer-Dieskau's eloquent performance of the Mahler song-cycle *Kindertotenlieder* on the fourth side. This extra feature certainly makes the new Victor album the "best buy," for

all the other versions of the Brahms' *Requiem* take all four sides. The song-cycle is very well sung, in Fischer-Dieskau's usual style, full of expression and with excellent diction. The best rival version (also a "fourth side," this time coupled with the Bruckner *Fourth Symphony*) is by Schey on Epic; his voice is not the equal of Fischer-Dieskau's, but his style justifies serious comparison.

The Beggar's Opera, a racy collection of English songs arranged by Pepusch and set in a libretto by John Gay (d. 1732), is given its best performance on records in a new Victor album (LM-6048; \$7.96). It is Frederic Austin's revision (made in 1920) that is recorded, with the spoken lines by members of the Old Vic Company and the music under the direction of Sir Malcolm Sargent. The singers are generally excellent, and come from the English operatic stage. The opera is not great enough to justify any more attention than it gets here.

In orchestral music the honors go to Fritz Reiner for most excellent performances of two Strauss tone poems, *Till Eulenspiegel* and *Death and Transfiguration* (Victor LM-2077; \$3.98). This is Dr. Reiner's best work on records, in my opinion, as well as his recording debut with the Vienna Philharmonic.

Another Reiner record, with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, is disappointing (Victor LM-1999; \$3.98). It features the Tchaikovsky *1812 Overture* (in a brisk, undignified reading), and contains also good but not inspired versions of Liszt's *Mephisto Waltz*, Dvorák's *Carnival Overture*, Weinberger's "Polka and Fugue" from *Schwanda*, and Smetana's *Overture to The Bartered Bride*. I recommend this collection only to those who especially want this particular (or peculiar) assortment in hi-fi sound.

Another potpourri record is surprisingly good. Felix Slatkin conducts The Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra in four works which are related somehow to Spain, in an album entitled *España* (Capitol P-8357; \$3.98). Ravel's *Bolero* is more interestingly and colorfully played here than elsewhere on records—*Bolero* fans take note. It is even better than the new Munch version on Victor. To it is added good performances of Rimsky-Korsakov's *Capriccio Espagnol*, Ravel's *Alborada del Gracioso*, and Albeniz's "Triana" from *Iberia*.

Of considerable historical importance is Capitol's new version of Milhaud's *Suite Provençale* and *Saudades do Brasil*, with the composer conducting the Concert Arts Orchestra (P-8358; \$3.98). The results are authoritative versions of both suites.

No special virtues mark the Ballet Theater performances of Strauss' *Graduation Ball* and Meyerbeer's *Les Patineurs* (Capitol P-8360; \$3.98). Joseph Levine conducts efficiently, but the music doesn't sparkle like it should, and the orchestra is no virtuoso ensemble.

Pianists will treasure the complete set of *Songs Without Words* (Mendelssohn) that Victor has just issued (LM-6128; \$11.92). They are played by Ania Dorfmann in just the right style. The music is deceptively simple and will survive repeated hearings without becoming tiresome.

Excellent also is a new edition of the Chopin *Etudes* by Ruth Slenczynska (Decca DL 9890/1; \$7.96). The Opus 10 record also includes *Impromptus* Nos. 1 and 2, and the Opus 25 record has also the 3rd *Impromptu* and the *Fantasy Impromptu*. The Pianist has a thorough mastery of the music, and plays it with remarkable clarity and with a sure understanding of what she is playing.

Another Agi Jambor album of music by Bach is available (Capitol PBR 8354; \$7.96). In it she plays seven *Toccatas* and four *Fantasias* on the piano. They are significant performances, worthy of study, but not truly great ones.

On a new Westminster record (XWN-18356; \$3.98) Khachaturian conducts his own *Piano Concerto in D Flat Major* (Lev Oborin, pianist), and Kabalevsky conducts his own *Piano*

Concerto No. 3 (Emil Gilels, pianist). In both performances, the orchestra is the State Radio Orchestra of the U.S.S.R. The record will always be of interest because of the composer's leadership of the orchestra.

Of special interest to violists and Primrose fans is a new record of music for viola by Ernest Bloch (Capitol P-8355; \$3.98). Primrose plays the *Suite for Viola*, the *Suite Hebraic*, and two independent pieces called *Meditation* and *Processional*. Primrose's performance of these works can be given an unqualified recommendation.

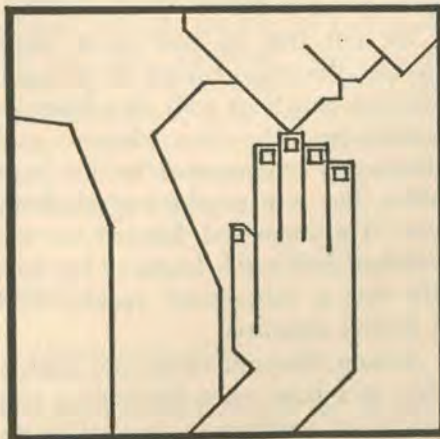
Heifetz fans will enjoy his recording of the *Concerto No. 2* ("the Prophets") of Castelnuovo-Tedesco (Victor LM-2050; \$3.98). On the reverse side, Heifetz plays Richard Strauss' *Sonata in E Flat*, Op. 18, with Brooks Smith, pianist. The concerto, with Wallenstein and the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, makes its recording debut; this is Heifetz's second recording of the sonata, and definitely replaces the first (issued as Victor M-200 about twenty-five years ago, with A. Sandor, pianist).

A new version of the "Death and the Maiden" Quartet (Schubert), by the Hollywood String Quartet (Capitol P-8359), is quite satisfactory without rising to the heights. At times the violin and cello dominate the performance, but the over-all effect is quite persuasive.

Reissues of importance from Westminster include Doyen's performances of the Chopin *Ballades* (XWN-18037; \$3.98), Farnadi's of Bartok's *Piano Concerto Nos. 2 and 3* (XWN-18277; \$3.98), and Rodsinski's of Tchaikovsky's *Fifth Symphony* (XWN-18355; \$3.98). The excellence of these performances has already been recognized.

From Victor comes a reissue of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, with Flagstad and Schwartzkopf, and the Mermaid Singers and Orchestra under Geraint Jones (LM-2019). It's the best version on LP, but there's still lots of room for further improvement. The performance lacks grace and buoyancy.

Hi-fi fans, especially those who are also fans of Mr. Magoo, will be delighted with "Magoo in Hi-Fi" (Victor LPM-1362; \$3.98). The "Mother Magoo Suite" on the reverse side is a clever musical tidbit by Denis Farnon, who writes the scores for the Magoo cartoons.



BOOKS



REVIEWED BY ROGER ORTMAYER
CONCERNING METHODISM

Methodists have been vigorously belabored, and often humiliated, with the accusation of being nothing but religious pragmatists backed by a feeble and sentimental doctrine. In the current theological controversies, Methodists have sometimes felt that they are moving in some forgotten slough rather than in the main stream.

This need not be the case. Methodism has a vigorous doctrine, acceptable to the orthodox demands of Christendom. It has an emphasis which it must assert, in John Wesley's words, the "grand depositum which God has lodged with the people called Methodists." It is the New Testament preaching of divine love, of Christian perfection, sought and obtained in this life.

The trouble is that when thus baldly stated, it offends both orthodoxy and conscience. It must be taken in context, in the pattern which Wesley intended. He did not see the doctrine of perfection, confirmed in sanctification, apart from the holy Catholic Church. That is, Wesley's preaching of the doctrine was always in relation to sacramental doctrines. He did not admit of the doctrine in isolation from the historic responsibilities and channels of the Church.

Methodism on the American frontier did not live in this context. The Church was not there except in an erratic form. For the early Methodist preachers, however, the doctrine of perfection was precious and constantly preached. The context of the preaching, however, the Church, was missing and the doctrine developed some mischievous aspects. Holiness societies and partisans sprang up, struggling for power in the Church.

The result was schism and a whole

batch of holiness sects broke off from historic Methodism. They came into being because their leaders felt that Methodism was not preaching any longer the true doctrine of Christian perfection. They were often correct in their claims. The unfortunate thing was, however, that neither was their preaching the true doctrine of Christian perfection, as Wesley taught it. It was blatantly doctrinaire, individualistic and subjective, and placed almost entire reliance upon an ecstatic and instantaneous sanctification in contradistinction to Wesley's parallel thinking on gradualism and nurture both before and after the central experience. And, as noted, it had no sacramental theology, which for Wesley was the nest in which it had to be hatched and nurtured.

In mid twentieth century, as Methodism recovers its sacramental understanding of itself as a Church, it is also time to recover and assert, the doctrine of Christian perfection. A most important contribution to this recovery is *Christian Perfection and American Methodism* by John L. Peters (Abingdon Press, \$4). It is the best study anywhere available regarding this doctrine in relation to the historic development of American Methodism. For Methodists concerned about themselves, and for others who would understand what Methodism has and should believe, the book is indispensable.

One of Methodism's greatest ecclesiastical leaders, throughout the period of the holiness schisms was Bishop Matthew Simpson. Bishop Simpson was in anticipation of the direction Methodist policy and polity were going to move.

He felt that he had never experienced the requirements of holiness. He was impatient with its schismatic tendencies. He was devout and thoroughly consecrated to his high office, but in a nontheological direction. He immersed himself in the political and social issues of his day. He was a magnificent speaker and a skillful organizer.

Bishop Simpson came into leadership at a time when Methodism was ready for a reform in its vital being.

He led it from the status of a frontier sect to that of cultural respectability and power. This transformation and the man who both led and typified it are the subject of a fine biography, *The Life of Matthew Simpson*, by Robert D. Clark (The Macmillan Company, \$5.50). He was to typify Methodism at its most typical, and best, for the next two generations.

The good bishop sought to interpret to the Church and to society the implications, as he saw them, of the dynamic era following the Civil War. He was vigorous in reform movements, active in practical political maneuvering and boldly liberal in his acceptance of the doctrine of evolution, for instance. He sought to help the transformation of his church by encouraging better architecture and music, sponsored lay participation in church affairs, encouraged learning and scientific findings, worked for seminary education for his clergy and enthusiastically sponsored interdenominational cooperation.

Bishop Simpson was absolutely right for his times. He helped Methodism find its destiny in relation to its times. Today is a new era, and while Bishop Simpson's prescriptions are not those required in an "age of anxiety," the vigorous commitment typical of him is a necessity.

MYTH AND THE NOVELIST

The literary artist is a myth maker. It is his task to evoke those symbols which shock us into recognition of ourselves and our world.

C. S. Lewis is one of the best myth tellers of our time, on whatever level you choose to list him. He has the kind of artistry with the basic symbols, words, which compels admiration. He knows how to write, with both violent metaphor and subtle analogy which attack the imagination. He knows how to think, requiring the reading mind to be alive to the implications of vigorous thought. He has the classic scholar's grasp of the past and its movements which is not a gift, but the result of long, long years of research and study.

The difference between C. S. Lewis and the usual run of science fiction

motive

and fantasy writers is that between an earthworm and a swallow. Yet this classicist, this Oxford scholar has chosen the most typical genre of our time in which to write: fantasy and/or science fiction. It is this apocalyptic imagination which is required to communicate to this age of trouble.

In his latest novel, *Till We Have Faces* (Harcourt, Brace and Company, \$4.50), Lewis' classic training is more obviously evident than in many of his earlier novels, but the penetrating analogy is just as skilfully alive. In fact, I must disagree with many of the critics and insist that this new novel is far and away the best that Lewis has written, and I have read and reread them all.

Lewis has chosen to retell the story of Cupid and Psyche, surviving in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*. As he tells it, the story of the beautiful princess and the Mountain God, of the ugly princess who tells the story, of shapeless passion and Greek tolerance, of faith and pain and doubt and triumph, is a provocative testimony to the poverty of our symbols in current religious life and the possibilities of faith if we can once recapture the nearly limitless dimensions of the religious imagination.

Mika Waltari's *The Etruscan* (G. P. Putnam's Sons, \$4.50) is similarly a story of gods and men and most of the passions they evoke. The author is also an excellent writer, a man of learning, and one possessed of a violent imagination. *The Etruscan* is a first-class story. But what a difference there is in the two novels!

The difference is a question of dimension. The Waltari novel is thoroughly engrossing and even exciting. The enthusiasm of the reader is exhausted by the story itself. It is surface. One reads, finishes, and that is all. Next book coming up.

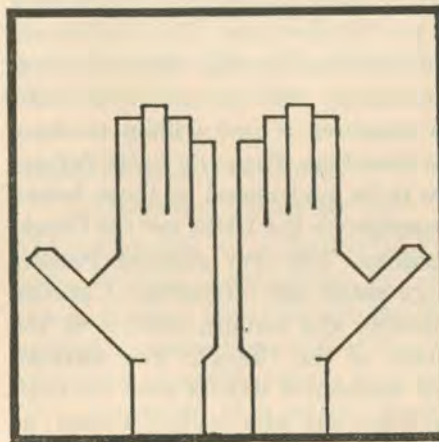
The reader cannot dismiss *Till We Have Faces* after he finishes reading. It insists on hanging around, not just in the corners of memory, but in the center of critical attention. When one has finished reading he has only started to deal with the tale. Fundamentally, it is the difference between

fairy tale and myth. Quite a difference, too.

THE WORLD'S GREAT RELIGIONS

This vastly informative and magnificently illustrated book is probably possible only through the efforts and backing of an important magazine such as *Life*. While the price of the volume may seem a bit stiff, it is amazingly low when one considers what he gets in *The World's Great Religions* by The Editors of *Life* (Time, Inc., book trade distribution by Simon & Schuster, Inc., \$13.50).

Because of *Life's* ubiquitous existence, most Americans are already partially acquainted with the contents of this volume. The six major religions of the world have been sympathetically interpreted, with emphasis on contemporary practice but put in an historical framework. Extensive additions have been made to the original



magazine series, including a 65,000-word anthology of writings drawn from the scriptural foundations of each faith.

Christianity is given by far the most space. One gratifying inclusion is the great-art series on the life of Christ chosen with the counsel of a committee of the National Council of Churches' Department of Worship and the Arts and produced in the combined Christmas, 1955, number of the magazine. This stands as one of the greatest art reproduction series of all time, and adds significance to the over-all value of *The World's Great Religions*.

RELIGIOUS PAPERBACKS OF IMPORTANCE

Early last fall Harper & Brothers publishers distributed the first six

volumes in their new paper-bound series to be known as "Harper Torchbooks." It was an impressive list.

The second six in the group are now available. They are testimony to the editorial discrimination in the choice of titles. Every volume in the series is worthy of a permanent place in a library of religious resources.

Martin Buber, *Eclipse of God* (\$1.15)

Johannes Eckhart, *Meister Eckhart: A Modern Translation* (\$1.45)

Morton S. Enslin, *Christian Beginnings* (\$1.25)

The Literature of the Christian Movement (\$1.50)

Austin Farrer, Ed., *The Core of the Bible* (95 cents)

Ludwig Feuerbach, *The Essence of Christianity* (\$1.45)

Harry Emerson Fosdick, *A Guide to Understanding the Bible* (\$1.75)

Edgar J. Goodspeed, *A Life of Jesus* (\$1.25)

Soren Kierkegaard, *Purity of Heart* (\$1.25)

H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture*

George Santayana, *Interpretations of Poetry and Religion* (\$1.45)

Evelyn Underhill, *Worship* (\$1.75)

With the advent of Lent, 1957, another new religious paperback series was launched by Association Press. The series is titled "Reflection Books."

Reflection Books operate on a somewhat different purpose and plan. They sell at the one price of 50 cents per copy and \$5 per dozen. Their editors insist they are designed for the average churchgoer and the average college student.

Primarily the first six releases are revisions of existing works. One volume, especially prepared for the series, is a condensation of twenty-five sermons, chosen from their own sermons by leading clergymen.

The format of the series is toward the small size. The design is tidy.

Roland H. Bainton, *What Christianity Says About Sex, Love and Marriage*

Hazel Davis Clark, ed., *The Life of Christ in Poetry*

Georgia Harkness, *Religious Living*
James H. Nichols, *A Short Primer for Protestants*

Stanley I. Stuber, *Basic Christian Writings*

(Sermons of leading clergymen)
Words to Change Lives

The pioneer of the modern quality paper-bound book, such a happy event for the impecunious student and professor, Doubleday's Anchor Books, continues to put out books of seminal importance. The latest list includes:

G. Polya, *How to Solve It* (mathematical method) (95 cents)

R. P. Blackmur, *Form and Value in Modern Poetry* (\$1.25)

Sigmund Freud, *The Future of an Illusion* (95 cents)

Charles Brenner, *An Elementary Textbook of Psychoanalysis* (95 cents)

Marcel Proust, *Pleasures and Days* (95 cents)

Lionel Trilling, *The Middle of the Journey* (95 cents)

Karl Jaspers, *Man in the Modern Age* (95 cents)

Stillman Drake, ed., *Discoveries and Opinions of Galileo* (\$1.25)

Of interest to laymen and ministers are the Apex Books. The latest list includes:

Leslie D. Weatherhead, *When the Lamp Flickers* (\$.125)

Ralph W. Sockman, *The Higher Happiness* (\$1)

George A. Buttrick, *Prayer* (\$1.50)

Winfred E. Garrison, *A Protestant Manifesto* (\$1.25)

Edgar J. Goodspeed, *How Came the Bible?* (\$1)

Halford E. Luccock, *In the Minister's Workshop* (\$1.25)

John Bright, *The Kingdom of God* (\$1.25)

Frederick C. Grant, *An Introduction to New Testament Thought* (\$1.50)

Hurrah for the classics!

One of the specially miserable kinds of arrogance of which we human beings are sometimes possessed is that which refuses to read any book but the latest, the rest being "out of date." Such an attitude is matched only by that which refuses to read any but books ten years old and preferably as many centuries.

This is simply to insist that any sensible book reader will make sure that his reading of the current is balanced by consistent dipping into the classics. As we have enthusiastically commented before, one of the best series to obtain, for the reading of the Christian books of proven worth, is

"The Library of Christian Classics," published as a uniform set by *The Westminster Press* at \$5 per volume.

These volumes are new editions. Usually they are new translations or revisions of existing translations. Each has an excellent introduction plus explanatory notes, bibliography and index. When complete they will form a 26-volume library of the great depository of Christian thinking and witness through the time of the Protestant Reformation.

The newest additions to this notable collection are:

A Scholastic Miscellany, edited by Eugene R. Fairweather

Early Latin Theology, edited by S. L. Greenslade

Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers, edited by George H. Williams and Angel M. Mergal

The scholastic writers are those who led the great intellectual achievement of the Middle Ages. This intellectual life is woven into the fabric of Western culture and the man who snubs its treasures is one willing to deny his parentage. The early Latin Fathers are to be understood as those before Augustine in the Latin, not the Greek, tradition. The four eminent Fathers represented are Tertullian, Cyprian, Ambrose and Jerome, writing on the theme of the Church. The spiritual and Anabaptist writers were the radical reformers who made, however, as distinctive a contribution to the rise of modern Christianity as Luther, Calvin and the Anglican leaders. It is a world of vast theological distances, diversity and inchoateness—"the left wing of the Reformation." Another distinctive characteristic, a part of the groundwork of American Protestantism, was the common insistence upon separation of church and state.

Even these classic sets require the editors to eliminate much that they would prefer to have printed, but the editor of such a tidy volume as *The Early Christian Fathers*, edited and translated by Henry Bettenson (*Oxford University Press*, \$4), certainly must be pressed to decide what can be included within restricted limits. The editor of this handy volume has,

however, made a good selection from the writings of the Fathers from St. Clement of Rome to St. Athanasius. For the casual reader, occasional dipping, or as an introduction which may lead to seek fuller acquaintance, this is a good work.

Robert Payne has written a vividly readable and popular interpretation of the Fathers of the Eastern Church, *The Holy Fire* (*Harper & Brothers*, \$5).

The author has certainly made the vivid imagination of the Greek Fathers live once more for us. The only trouble is that his own colorful adjectives sometimes get in the way of the thought which must also be communicated. Nevertheless, this interpretation is one highly to be regarded, and that it makes no "contribution" to scholarly research is no reproach. Such is not the intent. The purpose is to open up for us woefully ignorant Westerners the brilliant fire which has burned in the Orthodox world. In fact, it is the reviewer's personal opinion that for those who are on the search for exciting treasures in the Christian world, the place to go is into the life and liturgy of the Eastern Church. At least that is where I'm going to do a lot of searching.

David Wesley Soper's *Epistle to the Skeptic* (*Association Press*, \$2.50) deserves a wider audience than the title suggests. If anything, the faithful stand in even greater need of the insight and counsel of this volume than do the skeptics.

Nobody can long live at his thoughtful best, Dr. Soper tells us, who does not hold faith and skepticism together in a relationship of tension. "Skepticism and faith, criticism and commitment," he says, "are perpetual necessities—to ordinary men and women as well as scientists, philosophers and saints. No man can really afford to abandon either. . . . Put differently, faith without skepticism is idolatry; it claims infallibility in its grasp of truth, not in its possession. . . . Skepticism without faith is a false absolute; absolute skepticism is not skepticism but a new infallibility—an absolute commitment except from searching scouting."

Our Confessional Standards

(Continued from page 13)

Many of his translations and corrections anticipated those of the Revised Version of 1881. Charles assisted his brother in the work, which was destined to be of wide and continuous service to many students of the New Testament. In his corrections of the Greek text, as well as for much of his comment, Wesley used the work of Johann Albrecht Bengel, *Gnomon Novi Testamenti*. (1742). "This book still stands out among the exegetical literature not only of the eighteenth century but of all centuries for its masterly terseness and precision and for its combination of spiritual insight with the best scholarship of his time."⁴ Wesley described the Lutheran scholar as "that great light of the Christian world." Bengal's rule of scripture reading is "to apply thyself entirely to the text; apply the matter entirely to thyself." Without Bengel's *Gnomon* Methodism would be immeasurably poorer in its scriptural foundations. It would be in danger of narrowing down the fullness of the Gospel to a mere sectarian "emphasis," and there are still those who would identify "our doctrines" with one isolated issue, such as the experience of conversion, the teaching of perfection, or the blessing of fellowship. But we have not so learned Christ. Bengel insisted on the whole "economy" of the Bible as against our own favorite notions. For "scripture," he says, "is the foundation of the Church; the Church is the guardian of Scripture. When the Church is in strong health the light of Scripture shines bright; when the Church is sick, Scripture is corroded by neglect; so it comes to pass that the treatment of Scripture corresponds, from time to time, with the condition of the Church."

THE *Notes* are indispensable to all who would appreciate Wesley's contribution to thought. He designed this work chiefly for plain, unlettered men, who understand only their mother

⁴ Sanday and Headlam: Romans I.C.C. Introd. cv. cf. Hildebrandt: *Christianity According to the Wesleys*. p. 21.

tongue, who yet reverence and love God's Word and have a desire to save their souls. Wesley's declaration that "the Scripture of the Old and New Testament is a most solid and precious system of divine truth" must be received as his steadfast belief. His recognition of some of the principles of textual criticism and a reasonable higher criticism must not be forgotten. He was not a worshiper of the Bible as a book. He regarded it as a library containing the supreme divine revelation, which should be loved and studied with reverence, and with eagerness to understand and obey its commands. Scripture, says Wesley, "interprets scripture; one part fixing the sense of another. It is certain none can be a good divine who is not a good textuary."⁵ Wesley, like the Apostle Paul, gloried in the "fullness of the blessing of the Gospel," and it is this fullness that is the mark of Wesley's Scriptural Christianity, and it is for this that Methodism stands.

What Is Christian Perfection?

(Continued from page 15)

idea of growth on a deeper level of being, vision, and purpose. As there are no limiting dimensions to the love of God, so there is no end to the possibility of growth for one in that love. The maturation of a person suggests two necessary aspects. First, a mature person does accept and does not flout the responsibility for his way of life. But secondly, he does not think of his career as his own self-sufficient accomplishment. Maturity brings insight into one's dependence on many other persons and things. Naïve self-sufficiency is the height of immaturity and imperfection. Only he who approaches God, and man too, in the attitude of responsible obedience and self-conscious dependence has found the heart of Christian perfection.

On the practical side, let us note the need for a thorough attempt to find a way of meaningfully witnessing to this doctrine. Probably most of the errors associated with it are due to the ways Methodists have introduced it to

⁵ Works X482.

the uninitiated. In a sense, this is the type of doctrine which must not be an introductory show piece. Rather, it is a culminating type of idea to be presented to those who have been exposed to the ideas and experiences which lead toward it. It must never be flaunted in a conversation on human ability. But it must be held up in any thorough declaration of God's power and love. Perhaps the model of modesty for such a witness is John Wesley. Though he formulated this emphasis on perfection and frequently referred to others who were perfected, he never claimed to have achieved this for himself.

AS we have seen, the doctrine of Christian perfection must always find as its basis for optimism and its defense against pride the grace and love of God. This is the heart of Christianity. We may hold with Wesley that Christian perfection means nothing more than a life growing constantly in the spirit of love, of which God alone is the author. We can say, then, that when we read in our Bibles, "Be ye perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect," this is not an impossible demand on human ability. Rather we are receiving a high invitation plus its divine authorization. The great parallels to this relation are: "We love Him because He first loved us"; and "Love one another as I have loved you."



Francis J. McConnell

(Continued from page 21)

knew what was happening, the "Social Creed of the Church" was adopted by the Methodist General Conference and became the fighting document of Methodism for a generation.

In 1924, The Inter-Church World Movement published a Report of the Steel Strike. Francis J. McConnell was chairman of the investigating committee and drew the fire of the Steel companies. It was a hot, sizzling fire which never ended. In later years the fight spread to other areas of injustice which the Social Gospel had invaded as a mission field for the churches. I know how vicious and unrelenting this fight against McConnell was until the day of his death. He was regarded as the arch-enemy of social injustice in any shape or form.

At Eastertime a few months before his death I saw him in New York City. As we walked through the door into Methodist Headquarters, an unopened letter fell out of his pocket. I picked it up and gave it to him. He stuffed it carelessly into his pocket with these words,

"Nothing important, just another letter from some committee in Washington looking into my social views."

AS a bishop of The Methodist Church, Francis J. McConnell made it safe for the most prominent or the least known Methodist laymen or minister to preach and practice the Social Gospel.

Any one of the three areas of Christian living—Bible, philosophy, social justice—in which Francis J. McConnell made his contribution would be enough for any man in one lifetime of eighty years. But here was a man who was a "triple threat" man to the Devil. And in the fourth—that of *personal* religious living—as a Christian "Big John" was really BIG. His worst opponent never found an opening in his personal life by which to destroy him. As proof of this I offer this as a bit of evidence. An offer of one hundred thousand dollars was made by predatory interests which he opposed for any evidence which would prove his guilt of a sin which could be used against him. The offer was never accepted and is a testimony of his character and his strength as an opponent of evil.

Rehearsing the Drama of Our Salvation

(Continued from page 30)

God, and our hearing of his Word! A single hymn and a brief Bible reading would suffice; but how bare and stark that would be, compared to this witness!

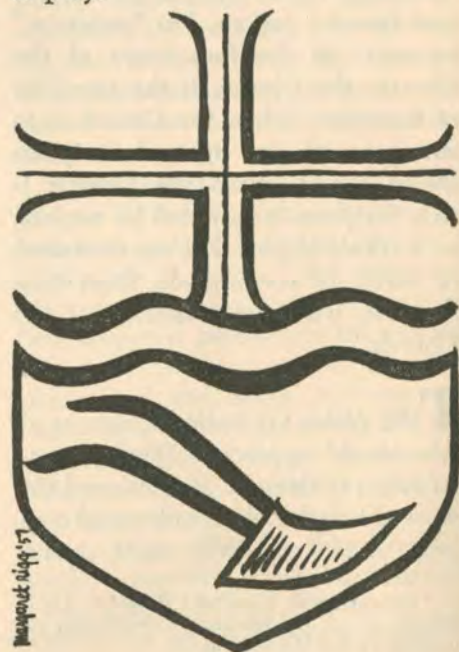
THIS service was originally intended for daily use—hence, it contained no provision for sermon or money-offering. When, however, it began to supplant Communion on Sunday morning, these items were simply tacked on the end. But an understanding of the meaning of the service indicates clearly where they belong. The offering money is a part of the offering of ourselves, and it therefore would belong somewhere in the third part (perhaps it is simplest to place it before the collects). The sermon is clearly a contemporary and immediate witness to the meaning of the Word of God for this congregation on this particular day, and thus properly belongs at the conclusion of the second section of the service. A service is possible without either, of course; but it has often proved to be helpful, even in very informal use of the service, to have a brief witness to the Word (for example, a "two-minute

word"), testifying to the meaning of our coming together in this way. It certainly need not be a "sermon" in the usual sense. I personally remember many more such two-minute testimonies than standard thirty-to-forty-minute sermons, and have often found them more helpful.

The Scripture lessons call for a special note. They are *not* read as the text for a sermon; they are read *in their own right*, and we listen to hear what they themselves have to say—not to wonder what the minister will do with them. Hence, it is well if a substantial lesson can be read each time—say, an entire chapter (which will take from two to five minutes, depending on length). And it is desirable, if the service is used regularly, to have them continuous—i.e., start a book in each Testament and read a chapter every service till the books are finished, at which time other books may be begun. Even Bible-hardened teachers of New Testament like the author of this article find the books suddenly springing to life with unexpected vigor. After all, they were written to be read aloud! It often helps to read from modern translations which are not known "by heart" to everyone—the newness of the lan-

guage helps make the Word lively to us.

THE final test of this service is what happens when we worship together through it. *Not* how we feel as we worship—that, after all, depends on a multitude of psychological and other factors; but what happens to us as Christians, in our lives, as we pray together in this way. I, for one, have a testimony to make: slowly, painfully, but joyfully, I am learning to pray.



The Hymnody of the Wesleys

(Continued from page 27)

singing them they have not only got to know them, but to receive and approve them. Their songs have been walls of defense against the assaults of error. The strength of the walls lies in the fact that the stones are from the quarry of the Word of God. Half of Charles Wesley's hymns consist of well-considered and succinctly expressed comments upon some selected passage of Scripture. But beside those immediately founded upon a text, every hymn is steeped in Scripture metaphor and language. Take any hymn at random, examine it line by line, and it will be discovered that behind almost every expression lurks a word or image of Scripture. If Methodism has maintained its evangelical orthodoxy now for two centuries, the fact is due not so much to John Wesley's clever apologies, convincing sermons and clear commenting, as to the influence of Charles Wesley's hymns. And the reason is that the hymn presented the Scripture or the doctrine, not as a truth or a dogma to be accepted, but as a glowing experience to be enjoyed.

METHODISTS need to be recalled to the greatness of their spiritual heritage in their hymnody. In the hymns of the Wesleys we possess a unique treasury of devotional poetry, but we have been neglecting this, and singing instead the flabby and sentimental verses of modern poetasters. In the American Methodist Hymnal there are only fifty-four hymns by Charles Wesley as against some two hundred and fifty in the English Methodist Hymnbook. Dr. Franz Hildebrandt has recently collected a hundred and eleven hymns written or translated by the Wesleys, including some of the sacramental hymns, in the *Asbury Supplement*, copies of which can be obtained from him at Drew University, Madison, New Jersey. Other books worth reading on this subject, in addition to Bernard

L. Manning, are Henry Bett: *The Hymns of Methodism* and two books by J. Ernest Rattenbury: *The Evangelical Doctrines of Charles Wesley's Hymns* and *The Eucharistic Hymns of John and Charles Wesley*. All published by the Epworth Press, London.



Methodism, the Ecumenical Community, and Worship

(Continued from page 37)

of historic depth to produce rites of great dignity, beauty, and expressiveness. Our trust in God should lead us to expect that the richness of man's experience of Christ will combine endlessly with cultural variations to produce liturgies equal in quality to any of the past. The important fact is the organic character of the product. Worship cannot be contrived; it must grow out of the root of faith. This root, properly cultivated, will produce its own rites and its qualified celebrants.

WE can make no greater contribution to the unity of Christendom and to our eventual coming together in worship than to find greater depth in the Spirit for ourselves and our people. If the cult celebrates the deepest concerns, then the cultivation of those concerns will in time produce a unified rite.

One word more. The variety will remain. It should remain, considering differences in culture, life-situations, and temperament. But the unity should become more and more dominant until all these variations become minor themes in a liturgical fugue worthy of Christ and his One Church.

Gain or Loss

(Continued from page 42)

concern therefore is to determine whether or not the participation of the MSM in the merger will be a step in the direction of a bona fide united Christian witness. This means, of course, that the ultimate question of the meaning of the merger and the practical questions of the wherewithal of the merger can never really be separated. This much does seem to be clear, we are certainly not called to enter irresponsibly or unintelligently into a premature merger which may or may not be a step in the direction of true Christian unity.

What the MSM stands to gain or lose in the present Plan of Merger or in any proposal for organic union of various student Christian movements may be outlined briefly as follows: The MSM stands to *gain* 1) an organizational structure potentially more capable of expressing a united Christian witness to the campus; 2) an understanding of its own Methodist heritage in the context of the whole Christian fellowship; 3) a greater stewardship on the part of The Methodist Church of funds, leadership, and program now carried on within a denominational structure; 4) a clearer definition of the mission of the *whole* church to the college-university community and our part within it; 5) a firsthand knowledge of the MSM's stake in the ecumenical discussion as a frontier of The Methodist Church in this area. The MSM stands to *lose* 1) some major Methodist emphases such as the evangelical concern which is noticeably understated in the present Plan of Merger and some of the richness of the Wesleyan tradition in a watered-down theology; 2) the wholehearted support of The Methodist Church out of which come financial support as well as the recruitment, education, and placing of staff personnel particularly in this quadrennium which has placed an emphasis upon religion in higher education; 3) the essential nurture of The Methodist Church as found in its fellowship, worship, and sacraments; 4) a further concern for that unity which seeks us out by substituting an organic union

of student movements for a more fundamental spiritual unity; 5) its denominational identity while merely establishing another denomination at work on the campus in the form of the UCCF; 6) an authentic ecumenical structure in those areas of the country and on those campuses where the MSM is the only member of the merger group now at work.

CONCLUSION

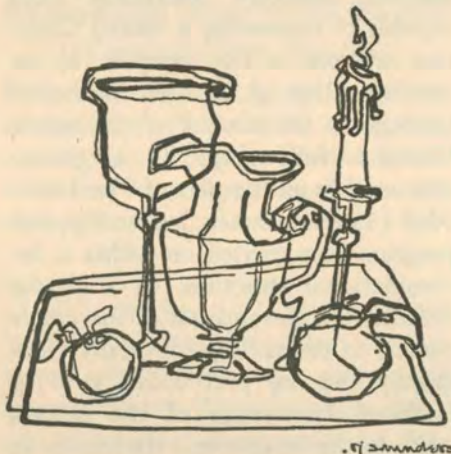
Many other advantages and disadvantages could be stated here and certainly none of the above-mentioned gains or losses are inevitable in the present Plan of Merger or in any future negotiations. Yet these are some of the important practical considerations we must face as we take seriously our continued commitment to the exploration of organic union among the student Christian movements in this country.

names proposed which the Council hopes to add to its panel. The forthcoming publication of *The Voice of Wesley* (The Tipple Lectures at Drew University, 1956, given by Drs. Harold Roberts, Robert E. Chiles and Franz Hildebrandt), though independent of the Wesley Society, is the most recent move which will help the cause and with which this report may fittingly be concluded.

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The Wesley Society

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vania and Tennessee. The speakers were Bishop Raines, Professor Robert E. Cushman (Duke) and Professor Franz Hildebrandt. Dr. Cushman's lecture on "Theological Landmarks of the Wesleyan Revival" was subsequently published in the Nashville *Bulletins* of the Department of District Evangelism.

The first full meeting of the Advisory Council was held in Christ Church, New York, in November, 1956; plans were laid for the further widening and strengthening of ties with the churches, seminaries, colleges and the rank-and-file membership of Methodism, and several new

GIVE LOVE NO TONGUE

by Annette B. Feldmann

Give love no tongue
 Let him be mute
 Lest you break the enchantment of his arrow
 Let the shaft sink into your heart,
 So that you become aware too keenly
 Of desert waste, surging sea, forest murmurs
 And all that we call beauty.

Give love no tongue and call him by no name
 When you shall hear the lyric sounds of nature's lute,
 Identify it with all thoughts of love.
 Remaining mute!

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THE HOLY CLUB

"I'll admit they do a bit of good and they mean well, but their enthusiasm!"

The Proper Professor unconsciously felt the knot of his necktie, making sure it had not slipped from dead center. It had not, nothing about him was ever a deviation to the right or to the left. He prudently sipped his coffee, testing that it be neither too hot nor too cold to enjoy.

"Now why would a fine student such as John get mixed up with the Holy Club?" he wondered to his companion as he set his cup down. ". . . a fine mind . . . a potentially good scholar, but this religious passion can easily throw a young fellow off balance. He loses his objectivity."

His companion agreed that it was too bad that John faced the loss of the detached point of view.

"There are some things it is not proper for a scholar to commit himself to. Although I do not wish to meddle with the religion of students, I must say my patience is tried by the religious devotion that nearly becomes an aberration."

Together the two instructors mused upon the misbegotten commitments of the intellectual adolescents in their community; hoped that some day they would develop into something more reasonable and artistic; paid their checks and went back to their separate offices. They prepared new lectures that were dispassionate and logical.

The next morning the Proper Professor called to order a special committee appointed by the President. As Chairman he announced, "We are requested to bring in a recommendation to the faculty regarding the curriculum in religion. Dr. Wesley, do you have the report of the Student Council action?"

"Yes, I do. It's rather interesting. You know, the students have had a special committee studying this subject for the past year and a half. Now they have a report and want action."

"Just what do they expect?"

"They insist that the purpose of a liberal arts education is commitment. I never thought of it in quite such terms, but thinking about their observations, it seems to have merit."

IN
UNISON

"Commitment! Oh, no, not that . . . commitment!"

"Where did they get notions like that?"

"A liberal education is critical, not committed."

"That's what happens when you let a bunch of kids loose. They are not educated yet!"

"Nuts!"

"Dr. Wesley," said the Proper Professor, "it seems that the committee is going to make short shift of the student recommendations."

"So it seems."

"Can we make any recommendation to the faculty?"

"I move the matter be tabled."

"Second."

"All in favor aye." . . .

"All opposed no. . . . One 'no,' just for the record. . . . Gentlemen, that takes care of commitment. I shudder to think what might happen if the Holy Clubbers got hold of education."

He adjusted his necktie. It was dead center.

GOD IS DEAD IN GEORGIA

Eminent Deity Succumbs During Surgery—Succession in Doubt As All Creation Groans

LBJ ORDERS FLAGS AT HALF STAFF

Special to The New York Times
ATLANTA, GA., Nov. 9—God, creator of the universe, principal deity of the world's Jews, ultimate reality of Christians, and most eminent of all divinities, died late yesterday during major surgery undertaken to correct a massive diminishing influence. His exact age is not known, but close friends estimate that it greatly exceeded that of all other extant beings. While he did not, in recent years, maintain any fixed abode, his house was said to consist of many mansions.

The cause of death could not be immediately determined, pending an autopsy, but the deity's surgeon, Thomas J. J. Altizer, 38, of Emory University in Atlanta, indicated possible cardiac insufficiency. Assisting Dr. Altizer in the unsuccessful surgery were Dr. Paul van Buren of Temple University, Philadelphia; Dr. William Hamilton of Colgate-Rochester, Rochester, N. Y.; and Dr. Gabriel Vahanian of Syracuse University, Syracuse, N. Y.

Word of the death, long rumored, was officially disclosed to reporters at five minutes before midnight after a full day of mounting anxiety and the comings and goings of ecclesiastical dignitaries and members of the immediate family. At the bedside, when the end came, were, in addition to the attending surgeons and several nurses, the Papal Nuncio to the United States, representing His Holiness, Pope Paul VI, Vicar of Christ on Earth and Supreme Pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church; Iakovos, Archbishop of North and South America, representing the Orthodox Churches; Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, Stated Clerk of the Presbyterian Church in the USA, representing the World Council of Churches, predominantly a Protestant institution; Rabbi Mark Tannenbaum of New York City, representing the tribes of Israel, chosen people, according to their faith, of the deceased; The Rev. William Moyers, Baptist minister, representing President Johnson; the 3rd Secretary of the Soviet embassy in Trinidad, representing the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics; and a number of unidentified curious bystanders.

Unable to be in Atlanta owing to the pressure of business at the second Vatican Council, now in session, the Pope, in Rome, said, in part: "We are deeply distressed for we have suffered an incalculable loss.

The contributions of God to the Church cannot be measured, and it is difficult to imagine how we shall proceed without Him." Rumors swept through the Council, meeting under the great vaulted dome of St. Peter's, that, before adjourning the Council in December, the Pope will proclaim God a saint, an action, if taken, that would be wholly without precedent in the history of the Church. Several aged women were reported to have come forward with claims of miraculous cures due to God's intervention. One woman, a 103-year-old Bulgarian peasant, is said to have conceived a son at the very instant God expired. Proof of miracles is a precondition for sanctification according to ancient tradition of the Roman Catholic faith.

In Johnson City, Texas, President Johnson, recuperating from his recent gall bladder surgery, was described by aides as "profoundly upset." He at once directed that all flags should be at half-staff until after the funeral. The First Lady and the two presidential daughters, Luci and Lynda, were understood to have wept openly. Luci, 18, the younger daughter, whose engagement has been lately rumored, is a convert to Roman Catholicism. It is assumed that the President and his family, including his cousin, Oriole, will attend the last rites, if the international situation permits. Both houses of Congress met in Washington at noon today and promptly adjourned after passing a joint resolution expressing "grief and great respect for the departed spiritual leader." Sen. Wayne Morse, Dem. of Oregon, objected on the grounds that the resolution violated the principle of separation of church and state, but he was overruled by Vice President Hubert Humphrey, who remarked that "this is not a time for partisan politics."

Plans for the deity's funeral are incomplete. Reliable sources suggested that extensive negotiations may be necessary in order to select a church for the services and an appropriate liturgy. Dr. Wilhelm Pauck, theologian, of Union Seminary in New York City proposed this morning that it would be "fitting and seemly" to inter the remains in the ultimate ground of all being, but it is not known whether that proposal is acceptable to the family. Funerals for divinities, common in ancient times, have been exceedingly rare in recent centuries.

and it is understood that the family wishes to review details of earlier funerals before settling upon rites suitable for God.

(In New York, meanwhile, the stock market dropped sharply in early trading. Volume was heavy. One broker called it the most active market day since the assassination of President Kennedy, Nov. 22, 1963. The market rallied in late trading, after reports were received that Jesus—see 'Man in the News,' p. 36, col. 4—who survives, plans to assume a larger role in management of the universe.)

Reaction from the world's great and from the man in the street was uniformly incredulous. "At least he's out of his misery," commented one housewife in an Elmira, N. Y., supermarket. "I can't believe it," said the Right Reverend Horace W. B. Donegan, Protestant Episcopal Bishop of New York, who only last week celebrated the 15th anniversary of his installation as Bishop. In Paris, President de Gaulle, in a 30-second appearance on national television, proclaimed: "God is dead! Long live the republic! Long live France!" Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy, widow of the late President, was reported "in seclusion" in her Fifth Avenue apartment. "She's had about all she can take," a close friend of the Kennedy family said. News of the death was included in a one-sentence statement, without comment, on the 3rd page of Pravda, official organ of the Soviet government. The passing of God has not been disclosed to the 800 million Chinese who live behind the bamboo curtain.

Public reaction in this country was perhaps summed up by an elderly retired streetcar conductor in Passaic, New Jersey, who said: "I never met him, of course. Never even saw him. But from what I heard I guess he was a real nice fellow. Tops." From Independence, Mo., former President Harry S. Truman, who received the news in his Kansas City barbershop, said: "I'm always sorry to hear somebody is dead. It's a damn shame." In Gettysburg, Pa., former President Dwight D. Eisenhower, released, through a military aide, the following statement: "Mrs. Eisenhower joins me in heartfelt sympathy to the family and many friends of the late God. He was, I always felt, a force for moral good in the universe. Those of us who were privileged to know him admired the probity of his character, the breadth of his compassion, the depth of his intellect. Generous almost to a fault, his many acts of kindness to America will never be forgotten. It is a very great loss indeed. He will be missed."

From Basel, Switzerland, came word that Dr. Karl Barth, venerable Protestant theologian, informed of the death of God, declared: "I don't know who died in Atlanta, but whoever he was he's an imposter." Dr. Barth, 79, with the late Paul Tillich, is widely regarded as the foremost theologian of the 20th Century.

(There have been unconfirmed reports that Jesus of Nazareth

33, a carpenter and reputed son of God, who survives, will assume the authority, if not the title, of the deceased deity. Jesus, sometimes called the Christ, was himself a victim of death having succumbed some 1932 years ago in Palestine, now the state of Israel purportedly on orders of a Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, and at the behest of certain citizens of Jerusalem. This event, described by some as 'deicide,' has lately occupied the deliberations of the Vatican Council, which has solemnly exonerated the Jews generally of responsibility for the alleged crime. The case is complicated by the fact that Jesus, although he died, returned to life, and so may not have died at all. Diplomats around the world were speculating today on the place the resurrected Jesus will occupy in the power vacuum created by the sudden passing of God.)

Dr. Altizer, God's surgeon, in an exclusive interview with the Times, stated this morning that the death was "not unexpected." "He had been ailing for some time," Dr. Altizer said, "and lived much longer than most of us thought possible." He noted that the death of God had, in fact, been prematurely announced in the last century by the famed German surgeon, Nietzsche. Nietzsche, who was insane the last ten years of his life, may have confused "certain symptoms of morbidity in the aged patient with actual death, a mistake any busy surgeon will occasionally make," Dr. Altizer suggested. "God was an excellent patient, compliant, cheerful, alert. Every comfort modern science could provide was made available to him. He did not suffer—he just, as it were, slipped out of our grasp." Dr. Altizer also disclosed that plans for a memorial to God have already been discussed informally, and it is likely a committee of eminent clergymen and laymen will soon be named to raise funds for use in "research into the causes of death in deities, an area of medicine many physicians consider has been too long neglected." Dr. Altizer indicated, finally, that he had great personal confidence that Jesus, relieved of the burdens of divinity, would, in time, assume a position of great importance in the universe. "We have lost," he said, "a father, but we have gained a son."

(Next Sunday's New York Times will include, without extra charge, a 24-page full-color supplement with many photographs, reviewing the major events of God's long reign, the circumstances of his sudden and untimely death, and prospects for a godless future. The editors will be grateful for pertinent letters, photographs, visions and the like.)

There has been as yet no statement from Jesus, but a close associate, the Holy Ghost, has urged prayer and good works. He also said that it is the wish of the family that in lieu of flowers contributions be made to the Building Fund for the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City so

that the ellipse may

be finished.