

the following manner. In a magnetic disturbance we have frequently a general displacement of the various elements—the horizontal force, for instance; now on the curve which represents this slow but considerable displacement a large number of comparatively small but very abrupt changes are superimposed. These latter appearances are invariably accompanied by quick and strong alternations from positive to negative of the earth currents, while the former slow motion, although it may be of large range, hardly appears to have any galvanic equivalent at all. This would appear to favour the induction hypothesis, according to which small but abrupt magnetic changes should give rise to strong earth currents alternately positive and negative without reference to the position of the magnet above or below its normal at the time.

136. Another fact bearing upon this hypothesis is that mentioned in § 83. From this it would appear that on ordinary occasions the curves recording the progress of the declination needle at Kew and Stonhurst are as nearly as possible identical, but on occasions of disturbance the range at Stonhurst is greater than that at Kew by an amount not apparently depending so much on the magnitude of the disturbance as on its abruptness. The introduction of the element of abruptness would appear to be in favour of the mixing up to some extent of induced currents with the phenomena in question.

137. Sir George Airy has not been able to detect any resemblance in form between the regular diurnal progress of the magnet and that of the earth currents. It seems, however, possible that the peaks and hollows alluded to in § 73 may form an important and integral part of the daily magnetic movement, and there even appears to be some evidence that the diurnal progress of the earth currents bears a nearer resemblance to that of the peaks and hollows than it does to the progress of the smoother curve which is usually held to represent the diurnal variation. But this is a question which can only be decided by more prolonged investigations.

138. To conclude, there can be no doubt that at times of great magnetic disturbance we have currents in the upper atmospheric regions and in the crust of the earth which, so far as we can see, must either be due to atmospherical electricity or to induction, or to a mixture of both. The proportions of this mixture can only be decided by further inquiry and by the multiplication of stations where atmospherical electricity and earth currents may be observed. It ought to be mentioned that the experience of the Kew observers, as far as this extends, seems unfavourable to the hypothesis of a connexion between auroras and atmospherical electricity.

139. *Lunar-Semidiurnal Variation.*—From the fact observed by Broun (§ 98) that the moon's magnetic influence is as nearly as possible inversely proportional to the cube of the moon's distance from the earth, it is impossible to refrain from associating it either directly or indirectly with something having the type of tidal action, but in what way this influence operates we cannot tell. Is it possible that the earth currents observed by A. Adams (§ 101) are induction currents generated in the conducting crust of the earth by the magnetic change caused by the moon,—inasmuch as these currents were found by him to be strongest in one direction about the lunar hours 3 and 15, when the lunar-diurnal magnetic effect is changing most rapidly in one direction (§ 95), while they were found to be strongest in an opposite direction about the lunar hours 9 and 21, when the lunar-diurnal magnetic effect is changing most rapidly in an opposite direction?

140. We might perhaps expect from the analogy of the tides that the sun should possess a semidiurnal magnetic effect similar in type to that of the moon. Now Sir George Airy in his analysis of the earth currents observed at Greenwich (*Phil. Trans.*, 1870) during days of tranquil magnetism has detected in such currents a semidiurnal inequality having maxima in one direction at solar hours 3 and 15, while it has maxima in the opposite direction at solar hours 9 and 21. The reference to solar hours in this inequality is thus precisely similar to that which the inequality observed by Adams bears to lunar hours.

141. If there are induced currents of this nature in the crust of the earth, we might naturally suppose that there will be corresponding currents in the upper regions of the earth's atmosphere, and in accordance with the suggestion made by Professor Stokes (§ 132), we might perhaps suppose that these currents will be strongest when the upper atmospheric regions are heated by the sun and thereby rendered better conductors. Is it not possible to suppose that the influence of daylight upon the lunar magnetic effect discovered by Broun (§ 97) may be due to this cause, and may it not also induce us to recognize the possibility of a maximum lunar influence (§ 99) at times of maximum sun-spots, when there is reason to believe that solar radiation is most powerful?

142. *Secular Variation.*—Sabine and Walker are agreed in regarding this variation as cosmical in its origin, and they are apparently of opinion that it is caused by some change in the condition of the sun. It seems difficult if not impossible to attribute it to anything else, since the terrella of Halley cannot be now regarded as having a physical existence. Again it is more than possible—it is probable—that there are solar variations of much

longer period than eleven years. On the other hand the evidence given in § 81, tending to show that an access of sun-spots produces a change in the magnetic state of the earth consistent with the hypothesis that the magnetizing power of the sun has then been augmented, requires to be confirmed by more observations; and even then it is certain that this magnetic change produced by a considerable change in spotted area is extremely small. We cannot therefore regard the very large secular magnetic change as due to a non-cumulative magnetic influence of some long-continued solar variation; nor does it seem possible to attribute the change to solar influence at all unless we regard this influence as producing results of a cumulative nature.

It is possible, however, to regard solar influence as producing a cumulative effect in one of two ways, or by a combination of both. For (1) time is necessarily an element in any influence acting upon the hard-iron system of the earth—presuming the earth to possess such a system. There are in fact indications in the results of § 82 that a system of this kind is perhaps connected with the American pole; yet, even allowing the influence of time, it seems difficult to account for the peculiarities of the secular variation by an hypothesis of this nature. But (2) any long-continued variation of solar power would no doubt act cumulatively in producing an increase or diminution of the large ice-fields round the poles of the earth. In the course of time this cumulative change in the extent and disposition of these might perceptibly alter the distribution of the convection currents of the earth—and these, according to the views herein indicated, might in their turn perceptibly alter the earth's magnetic system.

143. *Concluding Remarks.*—If we agree to look for an explanation of terrestrial magnetism and its changes to strictly terrestrial processes, we may derive some assistance in our search from such considerations connected with symmetry as enable us, for example, at once to perceive that when two perfectly similar things are rubbed together we cannot have electrical separation, because there is no reason why the one should be positively and the other negatively electrified. Suppose then that an observer stands at the equator and looks towards the north, and then turns his back upon the north and looks towards the south. In the first position let him regard the northern system of meteorological processes and motions, and in the second the southern. Now if symmetry obtained absolutely in these systems—that is to say, if the observer, whether he regarded the northern or the southern system of things, had in either case precisely similar phenomena at his right hand and at his left—then we should see no reason why the earth should be a magnet, or why one hemisphere should be the seat of magnetism of the one kind rather than of the other. If then we regard meteorological processes and motions as being in some way the cause of terrestrial magnetism, we must direct our attention to that peculiar element which causes a want of perfect symmetry such as we have described in meteorological phenomena. This element can hardly be anything else than the rotation of the earth, which is from left to right to an observer facing the north, but from right to left to an observer facing the south.

144. Now if we look upon the terrestrial meteorological system modified by the earth's rotation as having produced somehow in the past the magnetic state of the earth, it seems most natural to regard the system which formerly produced this magnetic state as being likewise that which at present maintains it in its efficiency, and which also accounts for the various magnetic changes which take place. It would seem therefore that terrestrial meteorology and terrestrial magnetism are probably cognate subjects, and that they ought to be studied together in the well-founded hope that the phenomena of the one will help us to explain those of the other.

Furthermore, if these meteorological processes—deriving their one-sided character from the earth's rotation—are to be regarded as accounting not only for the origin but for the maintenance of the earth's magnetic system, we can hardly fail to imagine that these processes must derive part of the energy which they exhibit from that of the earth's rotation. Tidal energy we know is derived from this source; but we must likewise regard part of the energy displayed in convection currents whether in the air or in the ocean as derived no doubt from the same source. And we may perhaps allow that in the phenomena of tidal action, as well as in those of convection currents of the air and ocean, there may be, not merely a transmutation of actual energy directly through friction into heat, but likewise a transmutation of it, ultimately perhaps into heat, but first through the intermediate agency of electrical currents which serve to maintain the magnetic state of the earth and to produce magnetic changes.

Now if this be the case, if there be a large and complicated system of tidal and convection currents all tending to change the rotative energy of the earth ultimately into heat, whether directly through friction or indirectly through the medium of electricity, it is surely impossible with the present state of our knowledge to calculate with the smallest pretensions to accuracy at what rate this transmutation is taking place, and hence at what rate the velocity of the earth's rotation is being slowly diminished. (B. S.)

METHODISM

I. WESLEYAN METHODISM.

THE history of Wesleyan Methodism embraces—(1) the Methodism of Oxford, which was strictly Anglican and rigidly rubrical, though it was also more than rubrical; (2) the evangelical Methodism of the Wesleys after their conversion (in 1738), of which the Wesleyan doctrines of conversion and sanctification were the manifesto and inspiration, while preaching and the class-meeting were the great motive and organizing forces,—a movement which before Wesley's death had developed into a form containing, at least in embryo, all the elements of a distinct church organization, although in its general designation and deliberate claims it purported to be only an unattached spiritual society; and (3) Wesleyan Methodism since the death of Wesley, which, by steps at first rapid and afterwards, though leisurely, distinct and consecutive, assumed an independent position, and has grown into complete development as a church.

1. *Oxford Methodism.*—This began in November 1729, when John Wesley, returning to Oxford from Lincolnshire, where he had been serving his father as curate, found that his brother Charles, then at Christ Church, had induced a few other students to join him in observing weekly communion. John Wesley's accession lent weight and character to the infant association. Their first bond of association, besides the weekly communion, was the common study of the Greek Testament, with which they joined regular fasting, the observance of stated hours for private devotion, the visitation of the sick, of the poor, and of prisoners, and the instruction of neglected children. They never themselves adopted any common designation, but of the variety of derisive names they received from outsiders that of "Methodists" prevailed,—a sobriquet the fitness of which, indeed, as descriptive of one unchanging and inseparable feature of Wesley's character (which he impressed also on his followers), was undeniable.

This first Oxford Methodism was very churchly. Between 1733 and 1735, however, a new phase was developed. Its adherents became increasingly patristic in their sympathies and tendencies, and Wesley came much under the influence of William Law. In regard to this period of his history, Wesley himself says that he

"Bent the bow too far, by making antiquity a coordinate, rather than a subordinate, rule with Scripture, by admitting several doubtful writings, by extending antiquity too far, by believing more practices to have been universal in the ancient church than ever were so, by not considering that the decrees of a provincial synod could bind only that province, and the decrees of a general synod only those provinces, whose representatives met therein, that most of those decrees were adapted to particular times and occasions, and, consequently, when those occasions ceased, must cease to bind even those provinces."

It was in 1736, during his residence in Georgia, whither he had gone as a missionary of the Propagation Society, that he learnt those lessons. Notwithstanding his ascetic severity and his rubrical punctilios, the foundations of his High-Churchmanship were gradually giving way. When he returned to England he had already accepted the doctrine of "salvation by faith," although he had not as yet learned that view of the nature of faith which he was afterwards to teach for half a century. He had, however, as in the journal of his homeward voyage he tells us, learned, "in the ends of the earth," that he "who went to America to convert others was never himself converted to God." In this result his Oxford Methodism came to an end.

The original Methodism of Oxford never at any one time seems to have numbered as many as thirty adherents.

There was a set called "Methodists," but there was no organization, no common bond of special doctrine or of discipline; there were habits and usages mutually agreed upon, but there was no official authority, only personal influence. The general features of the fraternity, if fraternity it may be called, seem to suggest closer analogies with the "Tractarian" school in its earlier stages than with anything else in modern history, and the personal ascendancy of John Wesley may remind us in some measure of the influence exercised a century later by J. H. Newman. There was no more any germ of permanent organization in the Oxford Methodism of 1735 than in the patristic and "Tractarian" school of Oxford of 1833.¹

2. *Methodism after Wesley's Conversion.*—John Wesley landed at Deal, on his return from Georgia, on February 1, 1738. His journals on the homeward voyage, says Miss Wedgwood,² "chronicle for us that deep dissatisfaction which is felt whenever an earnest nature wakes up to the incompleteness of a traditional religion; and his after life, compared with his two years in Georgia, makes it evident that he passed at this time into a new spiritual region." "By Peter Böhler,³ in the hands of the great God," he writes in his journal, "I was, on March 5, fully convinced of the want of that faith whereby we are saved." This "conviction" was followed on March 24 of the same year (1738) by his "conversion."

Like most good men of that age in England, Wesley, before he came under the influence of his Moravian teacher, had regarded faith as a union of intellectual belief and of voluntary self-submission—the belief of the creeds and submission to the laws of Christ and to the rules and services of the church, acted out day by day and hour by hour, in all the prescribed means and services of the church and in the general duties of life. From this conception of faith the element of the supernatural was wanting, and equally that of personal trust for salvation on the atonement of Christ. The work of Böhler was to convince Wesley that such faith as this, even though there might be more or less of divine influence unconsciously mingling with its attainment and exercise, was essentially nothing else than an intellectual and moral act or habit, a natural operation and result altogether different from the true spiritual faith of a Christian. This conviction led him a few days afterwards to stand up at the house of the Rev. Mr Hutton, College Street, Westminster, and declare that five days before he had not been a Christian. When warned not thus to despise the benefits of sacramental grace, he rejoined, "When we renounce everything but faith and get into Christ, then, and not till then, have we reason to believe that we are Christians." It is true that for several years after this he remained High-Church in

¹ One evidence of this is to be found in the early and wide divergence of the various members of the Oxford Methodist company, after their brief association at the university came to an end. We know which way the Wesleys went; we know also the separate path that their friend Whitefield made for himself. John Clayton, the Jacobite churchman, settled at Manchester, renounced the Wesleys after they began their evangelical movement, and remained an unbending High-Churchman to the end. Benjamin Ingham became a great evangelist in Yorkshire, founded societies, and, with his societies or churches, took the decisive step of leaving the Church of England and embracing the position of avowed Dissent. The saintly Gambold, a poet as well as a theologian and preacher, became a Moravian bishop. James Hervey was in after life a famous evangelical clergyman, holding "Low" and Calvinistic views. These were the chief of the Methodists of Oxford.

² *John Wesley and the Evangelical Reaction of the 18th Century.*

³ A disciple of Zinzendorf, then in England on his way to America.

some of his principles and opinions, but nevertheless his ritualism was dead at its roots.

This experience also made Wesley an evangelist. He had a forgotten gospel to preach,—the gospel by which men were to be converted, as he had been, and to be made "new creatures." And this result, this new birth, was not dependent on any churchly form or ordinance, on any priestly prerogative or service, or on any sacramental grace or influence. To raise up, accordingly, by his preaching and personal influence, a body of converted men, who should themselves become witnesses of the same truth by which he had been saved, was henceforth to be Wesley's life-work. This was the inspiration under which he became a great preacher; this also made him an organizer of his living witnesses into classes and societies. In the pulpit was the preaching power; in the class-room was the private and personal influence. The vital link between the pulpit and the class meeting was the doctrine and experience of "conversion." Thus Wesleyan Methodism is derived, not from Wesley the ritualist, but from Wesley the evangelist.

Wesley's doctrines offended the clergy. His popularity as a preacher alarmed them. The churches were soon shut against him. He attended the religious meetings—on a Church of England basis—which had existed in London and elsewhere for fifty years, so far as these were still open to him, the Moravian meetings, and meetings in the rooms of private friends, but these were quite insufficient for the zeal and energy of himself and his brother, who had been "converted" a few days before himself. Accordingly, in 1739, he followed the example set by Whitefield, and preached in the open air to immense crowds. In the same year also he yielded to the urgency of his followers and to the pressure of circumstances, and, becoming possessed of an old building called "the Foundery," in Moorfields, transformed it into a meeting-house. Here large congregations came together to hear the brothers. About the same time, in Bristol and the neighbouring colliery district of Kingswood, he found himself obliged, not a little against his will, to become the owner of premises for the purpose of public preaching and religious meetings. Here was the beginning of that vast growth of preaching-houses and meeting-rooms, all of them for nearly fifty years settled on Wesley himself, which, never having in any way belonged to the Church of England, became, through Wesley, the possession of the Methodist Connexion.

The religious societies through which the Wesleys, after their conversion, exercised at first their spiritual influence were in part, as has been intimated, Moravian,—that in Fetter Lane, of which the rules were drawn up by Wesley himself in 1738 (May 1), being the chief of these,—and in part societies in connexion with the Church of England, the successors of those which sprang up in the last years of the Stuarts, as if to compensate for the decay of Puritanism within the church. In 1739, however, a strong leaven of antinomian quietism gained entrance among the Moravians of England (Böhler himself having left for America in the spring of 1738); and Wesley, after vainly contending for a time against this corruption, found it necessary formally to separate from them, and to establish a society of his own, for which a place of meeting was already provided at the Foundery. This was the first society under the direct control of Wesley, and herein was the actual and vital beginning of the Wesleyan Methodist Society, that is, of Wesleyan Methodism. Hence the Wesleyans celebrated their centenary in 1839. It was not, however, till 1743 that Wesley published the Rules of his Society. By that time not a few other local societies had been added to that at the Foundery, the three chief centres

being London, Bristol, and Newcastle. Hence Wesley called his Society, when he published the "Rules" in 1743, the "United Societies." His brother's name was joined with his own at the foot of these Rules, in their second edition, dated May 1, 1743, and so remained in all later editions while Charles Wesley lived. Those Rules are still the rules of Wesleyan Methodism. Since Wesley's death they have not been altered. During his life only one change was made of any importance. In 1743 the offerings given weekly in the classes were for the poor, there being at that time no Conference and no itinerant preachers except the two brothers; after a few years the rules prescribed that the weekly contributions were to go "towards the support of the gospel." The Society is described as "a company of men having the form, and seeking the power, of godliness, united in order to pray together, to receive the word of exhortation, and to watch over one another in love, that they may help each other to work out their salvation." "The only condition previously required of those who desire admission into these societies" is "a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins." The customary contribution was a minimum of a penny a week or a shilling a quarter.

In 1739 these societies were not divided into "classes." But in 1742 this further step in organization was taken, and the change is recognized in the rules of 1743. Leaders were appointed to these classes, and became an order of spiritual helpers and subpastors, not ordained like lay elders in the Presbyterian churches, but, like them, filling up the interval between the pastors that "labour in the word and doctrine" and the members generally, and furnishing the main elements of a council which, in after years, grew up to be the disciplinary authority in every "society." In every society there was from the beginning a "steward" to take and give account of moneys received and expended. After a few years there were two distinct stewards, one being specially appointed to take care of the poor and the "poor's money," the other being, in general, the "society steward." And, finally,—though hardly, perhaps, during Wesley's lifetime,—in the larger societies there came to be two stewards of each description. The leaders and stewards together constituted "the leaders' meeting," of which, however, the complete circle of functions grew into use and into recognition only by degrees. The Rules of the Society, which are strict and searching, relate to worship, to conduct, and to the religious life, but do not once mention or refer to the Church of England, the parish church, or the parish clergy. The only authority at first was the personal authority of the two brothers, exercised either directly or by their official delegates. After years had passed away the leaders' meeting came to have an important jurisdiction and authority, but its rights and powers were neither defined nor recognized until after Wesley's death. From first to last there is no trace or colour of any Anglican character in the organization. Moravians or Dissenters might have entered the fellowship, and before long many did enter it who had either been Dissenters or, at any rate, had seldom or never entered a church. What would to-day be called the "unsectarian" character of his society was, indeed, in Wesley's view, one of its chief glories. All the time, however, this "unsectarian" society was only another "sect" in process of formation. Wesley for many years before his death had seen that, unless the rulers of the church should come to adopt in regard to his society a policy of liberal recognition, this might be the outcome of his life-work. And it would seem as if in his private confidences with himself he had come in the end at times to acquiesce in this result.

Still more decisive, however, was the third step in the

development of Wesley's "Society." The clergy not only excluded the Wesleys from their pulpits, but often repelled them and their converts from the Lord's Supper. This was first done on a large scale, and with a systematic harshness and persistency, at Bristol in 1740. Under these circumstances the brothers took the decisive step of administering the sacrament to their societies themselves, in their own meeting-rooms, both at Bristol and at Kingswood. This practice having thus been established at Bristol, it was not likely that the original society at the Foundery would rest content without the like privilege, especially as some of the clergy in London acted in the same manner as those at Bristol. There were therefore at the Foundery also separate administrations. Here then, in 1740, were two if we include Kingswood, three—separate local churches, formed, it is true, and both served and governed by ordained clergymen of the Church of England, but not belonging to that church or in any respect within its government. As thereafter during Wesley's life one of the brothers, or some cooperative or friendly clergyman, was almost always present in London and in Bristol for the administration of the sacraments, these communions, when once begun, were afterwards steadily maintained, the Lord's Supper being, as a rule, administered weekly. Both on Sundays and on week days full provision was made for all the spiritual wants of these "societies," apart altogether from the services of the Church of England. The only link by which the societies were connected with that church—and this was, a link of sentiment, not an organic one—was that the ministers who served them were numbered among its "priests."

In 1741 Wesley entered upon his course of calling out lay preachers, who itinerated under his directions. To the societies founded and sustained with the aid of these preachers, who were entirely and absolutely under Wesley's personal control, the two brothers, in their extensive journeys, administered the sacraments as they were able. The helpers only ranked as laymen, many of them, indeed, being men of humble attainments and of unpolished ways. For the ordinary reception of the sacraments the societies in general were dependent on the parish clergy, who, however, not seldom repelled them from the Lord's table. So also for the ordinary opportunities of public worship they often had no resource but the parish church. The simple service in their preaching-room was, as Wesley himself insisted, defective, as a service of public worship, in some important particulars; besides which, the visits of the itinerants were usually, at least at first, few and far between. Wesley accordingly was urgent in his advices and injunctions that his societies generally should keep to their parish churches; but long before his death, especially as the itinerant preachers improved in quality and increased in number, there was a growing desire among the societies to have their own full Sunday services, and to have the sacraments administered by their own preachers. The development of these preachers into ministers, and of the societies into fully organized churches, was, if not the inevitable, at any rate the natural, result of the steps which Wesley took in order to carry on the work that was continually opening up before him.

In 1744 Wesley held his first Conference. The early Conferences were chiefly useful for the settlement of points of doctrine and discipline and for the examination and accrediting of fellow-labourers. They met yearly. Conferences were a necessity for Wesley, and became increasingly so as his work continued to grow upon him. It was inevitable also that the powers of the Conference, although for many years the Conference itself only existed as it were on sufferance, and only exercised any authority by the permissiveness of its creator and head, should continually increase. The mission of its creator and head, should no longer delay the legal result was that in 1784 Wesley could no longer delay the legal constitution of the Conference, and that he was compelled, if he would provide for the perpetuation of his work, to take measures

for vesting in trustees, for the use of "the people called Methodists," under the jurisdiction of the Conference as to the appointment of ministers and preachers, all the preaching places and trust property of the Connexion. The legal Conference was defined as consisting of one hundred itinerant preachers named by Wesley, and power was given to the "legal hundred" continually from the first to fill up the vacancies in their own number, to admit and expel preachers, and to station them from year to year, no preacher being allowed to remain more than three years in one station.

By this measure Wesley's work was consolidated into a distinct religious organization, having a legally corporate character and large property rights. And yet Wesley would not allow this great organization to be styled a "church." It was only a "society"—the "United Society"—the Society of "the people called Methodists"—the "Methodist Society." And of its members all who were not professed Dissenters were by him reckoned as belonging to the Church of England, although a large and increasing proportion of them seldom or never attended the services of that church. The explanation of this apparent inconsistency is that Wesley admitted none to be Dissenters except such as were so in the eye of the law—those who, "for conscience sake, refused to join in the services of the church or partake of the sacraments administered therein"—and that he interpreted "the Church of England" to mean, as he wrote to his brother Charles, "all the believers in England, except Papists and Dissenters, who have the word of God and the sacraments administered among them."

But Wesley was to carry his Society to a yet higher pitch of development, and one which made it still more difficult to distinguish its character from that of a distinct and separate church. In 1738 Wesley had been theoretically a High-Churchman. For some time even after he had entered upon his course of irregular and independent evangelism he continued to hold, in the abstract, High-Church views. But in 1746 he abandoned once for all his ecclesiastical High-Churchmanship, although he never became either a political or a latitudinarian Low-Churchman after the standard and manner of the 18th century. He relates in his journal under date January 20, 1746, how his views were revolutionized by reading Lord (Chancellor) King's account of the primitive church. From this time forward he consistently maintained that the "uninterrupted succession was a fable which no man ever did or could prove." One of the things taught him by Lord King's book was that the office of bishop was originally one and the same with that of presbyter; and the practical inference which Wesley drew was that he himself was a "Scriptural Episcopos," and that he had as much right as any primitive or missionary bishop to ordain ministers, as his representatives and helpers, who should administer the sacraments, instead of himself, to the societies which had placed themselves under his spiritual charge. This right, as he conceived it to be, he held in abeyance for nearly forty years, but at length he was constrained to exercise it, and, by so doing, in effect led the way towards making his Society a distinct and independent church.

In 1784, the American colonies having won their independence, it became necessary to organize a separate Methodism for America, where Methodist societies had existed for many years. Wesley gave formal ordination and letters of ordination to Dr Coke, already a presbyter of the Church of England, as superintendent (or bishop) for America, where Coke ordained Francis Asbury as presbyter and superintendent (or bishop), and Coke and Asbury together ordained the American preachers as presbyters. From that ordination dates the ecclesiastical commencement of American Episcopal Methodism—in which the bishops are only chief among the presbyters whom they superintend, superior in office but of the same order. The Episcopal Methodism of America represents to-day the largest aggregate of Protestant communicants and worshippers of the same ecclesiastical name to be found in any one nation in the world.

The following year (1785) Wesley ordained ministers for Scotland. There his societies were quite outside of the established Presbyterianism of the day, with its lukewarm "moderation"; while the fervid sects which had seceded from the state church would hold no terms with Arminians like Wesley and his followers. Hence Wesley was compelled to make special provision for the administration of the sacraments in Scotland. He therefore ordained some of his ablest and most dignified preachers, was careful to give them formally in his correspondence the style and title of "Reverend," and appointed them to administer the sacraments north of the Tweed.

At length, in 1788, Wesley ordained a number of preachers (Mr Tyerman says seven) to assist him in administering the sacraments to the societies in England; and of these he ordained one (Alexander Mather) to be superintendent (or bishop), his brother Charles being now dead, and Dr Coke sometimes absent for long periods in America. The number of societies which demanded to have the sacraments administered to them in their own places of worship continually increased, and their claims were often too strong to be resisted, especially when the parish priest was either a public

opponent of the Methodists or a man of disreputable conduct. Before Wesley's death (in 1791) it would seem that there were more than a dozen of his preachers who had at different times, in Scotland or in England, been ordained to administer the sacraments.

The foregoing view of the development of Methodism as an organization, during the lifetime of its founder, will have conveyed a general idea of its structure and polity. There is one cardinal, though variable, element in its organization, however, of which there has as yet been no occasion to speak. The societies of Methodism—each of these consisting of one or more "classes"—were themselves grouped into circuits, each of which was placed under the care of one or more of Wesley's Conference preachers, who were called his "assistants" or "helpers," the assistant being the chief preacher of a circuit, and the helper being a colleague and subordinate. The "assistants" were directly responsible to Wesley, who had absolute power over them, and exercised it between the Conferences. The same power he equally possessed in the Conference, at the yearly meetings, but he made it a rule, during his later life, to take counsel with the Conference as to all matters of importance affecting the permanent status of the preachers personally, or relating to the societies and their government. He thus prepared the Connexion, both preachers and people, to accept the government and the legislative control of the Conference after his death.

At the time of Wesley's death there were in Great Britain, the Isle of Man, and the Channel Islands, 19 circuits, 227 preachers, and 57,552 members. In Ireland there were 29 circuits, 67 preachers, and 14,006 members. There were also 11 mission circuits in the West Indies and British America, 19 preachers, and 5300 members. The number of members in the United States was returned as 43,265.

It has already been explained that in connexion with each society there was a leaders' meeting, of which society stewards and poor stewards as well as leaders were members. It must here be added that each circuit had its quarterly meeting, of which, at first, only the society stewards and the general steward (or treasurer) for the circuit, in conjunction with the itinerant preachers, were necessary members. Leaders, however, in some circuits were very early, if not from the first, associated with the stewards in the quarterly meeting, or at least had liberty to attend. The quarterly meeting was not defined in Wesleyan Methodism until the year 1852. The leaders' meeting had no defined authority until some years after Wesley's death. Discipline, including the admission and expulsion of members, lay absolutely with the "assistant," subject only to appeal to Mr Wesley. Many years, however, before Wesley's death it had become the usage for the "assistant," or, in his absence, the "helper," his colleague, to consult the leaders' meeting as to important questions either of appointment to office or of discipline. As the consolidated "society" approached towards the character of a "church," the leaders' meeting began to acquire the character and functions of a church court, and private members to be treated, in regard to matters of discipline, as having a status and rights which might be pleaded before such a "court." The rights, indeed, which, soon after Wesley's death, were guaranteed to leaders' meetings and members of society had, there can be no doubt, so far grown up, before his death, as to be generally recognized as undeniable.

"Bands" were a marked feature in early Methodism, but in later years were allowed, at least in their original form, to fall out of use. There is no reference to them in the "Minutes of Conference" after 1768, although till after Wesley's death they held a place in the oldest and largest societies. Originally there were usually in each considerable society four bands, the members of which were collected from the various society classes—one band composed of married and another of unmarried men, one of married and another of unmarried women. All the members of society, however, were not of necessity members of bands. Some maturity of experience was expected, and it was the responsibility of the "assistant" to admit into band or to exclude from band. After Mr Wesley's death, where "bands" so called were kept up, they lost their private character, and became weekly fellowship meetings for the society.

The "love-feast" was a meeting the idea of which was borrowed from the Moravians, but which was also regarded as reviving the primitive institute of the *agape*. In the love-feast the members of different societies come together for a collective fellowship meeting. One feature of the meeting—a memory of the primitive *agape*—is that all present eat a small portion of bread or cake and drink of water in common.

It may be supposed that in such a system as Methodism a large number of preachers and exhorters, from all the social grades included within the societies, could not but be continually raised up. These, during Wesley's life, acted entirely under the directions of the assistant, and were by him admitted or excluded, subject to an appeal to Wesley. Once a quarter—often in conjunction with the circuit quarterly meeting—a meeting of these local lay helpers, called "local preachers," was held for mutual consultation and arrangement, and to examine and accredit candidates for the office.

3. Wesleyan Methodism after Wesley's Death (1791).

—When Wesley died the Conference remained as the bond of union and fountain of authority for the Connexion. But between the meetings of Conference Wesley had acted as patriarch and visitor with summary and supreme jurisdiction. The first need to be supplied after his death was an authority for the discharge of this particular function. In America Wesley had organized a system of bishops (presbyter-bishops), presbyters or elders, and deacons or ministers on probation. Among some of those preachers who had been most intimate with Wesley there was a conviction that his own judgment would have approved such a plan for England. No document, however, remains to show that such was his desire. The only request he left behind him for the Conference to respect was one which rather looked in another direction—the well-known letter produced before the Conference on its first meeting after his death by his friend and personal attendant, Mr Bradford, in which he begged the members of the legal hundred to assume no advantage over the other preachers in any respect. The preachers, accordingly, in their first Conference after Wesley's death, instead of appointing bishops, each with his diocese or province, divided the country into districts, and appointed district committees to have all power of discipline and direction within the districts, subject only to an appeal to the Conference, all the preachers exercising equal rights also in the Conference, the "legal hundred" merely confirming and validating *pro forma* the resolutions and decisions of the whole assembly.

At first the preachers stationed in the districts were instructed to elect their own chairmen, one for each district. But the plan was speedily changed, and the chairmen were elected each year by the whole Conference; and this method has been maintained ever since. The "district meetings"—as they are generally called—are still "committees" of the Conference, and have *ad interim* its power and responsibilities as to discipline and administration. Originally they were composed exclusively of preachers, but before many years had passed circuit stewards and district lay officers came to be associated with the preachers during the transaction of all the business except such as was regarded as properly pastoral.

The relation of the Conference to the government of the Connexion having thus been determined, the question which next arose, and which occupied and indeed convulsed the Connexion for several years (1792-95), was that of the administration of the sacraments, especially of the Lord's Supper, to the societies. The societies generally insisted on their right to have the sacraments from their own preachers. Many of the wealthier members, however, and in particular a large number of the trustees of chapels, opposed these demands. At length, between 1794 and 1795, after more than one attempt at compromise had been made by the Conference, the feeling of the societies as against the trustees became too strong to be longer resisted, and accordingly at the Conference of 1795 the "plan of pacification" was adopted, the leading provision being that, wherever the majority of the trustees of any chapel, on the one hand, and the majority of the stewards and leaders, on the other, consented to the administration of the sacraments, they should be administered, but not in opposition to either the one or the other of these authorities.

In England the Lord's Supper was always to be administered after the Episcopal form; in Scotland it might still, if necessary, be administered, as it had commonly been before, after the Presbyterian form. In any case, however, "full liberty was to be left to give out hymns and to use exhortation and extemporary prayer." The result was that within a generation the administration of the sacraments

to the societies came to be the universal rule. By this legislation the preachers assumed the powers of pastors, in accordance, however, only and always with the desire and choice of their flocks. No formal service or act of ordination was brought into use till forty years afterwards. All preachers on probation for the ministry, after the completion of their probation, were "received into full connexion" with the Conference, this reception implying investment with all pastoral prerogatives. Modern Methodism has developed more fully and conspicuously the pastoral idea.

No sooner was the sacramental controversy settled than the further question as to the position and rights of the laity came to the front in great force. A comparatively small party, led by Alexander Kilham, imported into the discussion ideas of a republican complexion, and demanded that the members in their individual capacity should be recognized as the direct basis of all power, that they should freely elect the leaders and stewards, that all distinction in Conference between ministers and laymen should be done away (elected laymen being sent as delegates from the circuits in equal number with the ministers), that the ministry should possess no official authority or pastoral prerogative, but should merely carry into effect the decisions of majorities in the different meetings. In the course of a very violent controversy which ensued, pamphlets and broadsheets, chiefly anonymous, from Kilham's pen, advocating his views and containing gross imputations on the ministers generally, and in particular on some not named but distinctly indicated, were disseminated through the societies. The writer was tried at the Conference of 1796, condemned for the publication of injurious and unjustifiable charges against his brethren, and by a unanimous vote expelled from the Conference. In the following year he founded the "New Connexion," the earliest of the organized secessions from Wesleyan Methodism.

Views much more moderate than Kilham's prevailed in the Connexion at large. At the Leeds Conference of 1797 the basis was laid of that system of balance between the prerogatives of the ministers and the rights of the laity which has been maintained in its principles ever since, and which, in reality, has governed the recent provisions (1877-78) for the admission of lay-representatives into the Conference not less than the former developments of Wesleyan Methodism. The admission of members into the society had, up to 1797, been entirely in the hands of the itinerant preachers,—that is, the "assistant," henceforth to be styled the "superintendent," and his "helpers." The new regulations, without interfering with the power of the ministers to admit members on trial, declared that "the leaders' meeting shall have a right to declare any person on trial improper to be received into society, and after such declaration the superintendent shall not admit such person into society"; also that "no person shall be expelled from the society for immorality till such immorality be proved at a leaders' meeting." For the appointment of church officers (leaders and stewards) the following regulations were made, the second based on recognized usage, the first on general but not invariable practice:—

¹ In this regulation it was assumed that the old rule of society by which a member disqualifies and virtually expels himself by continued absence from class, without reason for such absence, still held good. The case provides only for expulsions for "immorality." Subsequent legislation has introduced a provision which ensures to any member before he ceases to be recognized on account of non-attendance the right of having his case brought before a leaders' meeting if he desires it. This rule of 1797 has always been understood by the Conference as constituting the leaders' meeting in effect a jury, leaving the superintendent with his colleague or colleagues as advisers to act as judge. Appeal has always lain from the leaders' meeting to the district meeting, and, finally, to the Conference.

"1. No person shall be appointed a leader or steward, or be removed from his office, but in conjunction with the leaders' meeting, the nomination to be in the superintendent, and the approbation or disapprobation in the leaders' meeting.

"2. The former rule concerning local preachers is confirmed,—viz., that no man shall receive a plan as a local preacher, without the approbation of a local preachers' meeting."

The Conference at the same time made several provisions for carrying out the process, which had been going on for some years, of denuding itself of direct responsibility in regard to the disbursement of the Connexion funds. The principle was established that such matters were to be administered by the district committees acting in correspondence with the quarterly meetings of the circuits. It was also provided that circuits were not to be divided without the consent of the respective quarterly meetings; and, finally, it was resolved that, in the case of any new rule made by the Conference for the Connexion, its action within a circuit might be suspended for a year by the quarterly meeting, if it disapproved of the rule. If, however, the Conference, after twelve months' interval, still adhered to the new rule, it was to be binding on the whole Connexion.

The powers of district committees, as defined by former Conferences, were in 1797 confirmed and enhanced, special powers being given to special meetings of these committees convened when necessary to settle the affairs of a distracted circuit. In the same Conference all the principal rules of Methodism, in regard both to the ministers and the laity, were collected and (in a sense) codified, including the new regulations adopted that same year; and the whole, under the title "Large Minutes," was accepted as binding by the Conference, each minister being required to sign his acceptance individually. This compendium, itself based on one which had been prepared by Wesley, is still accepted by every Wesleyan minister on his ordination as containing the rules and principles to which he subscribes. During the sitting of this critical Conference at Leeds an assembly of delegates from bodies of trustees throughout the kingdom was simultaneously held. The form of the regulations enacted by the Conference was, to a considerable extent, determined by the nature and form of the requests made by this body of trustees. There was one request, however, which the Conference distinctly declined to grant—namely, that for lay delegation to the Conference. The Conference replied that they could not admit any but regular travelling preachers into their body, and preserve the system of Methodism entire, particularly the "itinerant plan." It was not until many years afterwards that anything was heard again as to this matter.

By the settlement now described the outlines of Methodism as an organized church were fairly completed. Many details have since been filled in, and many changes have been made in secondary arrangements, but the principles of development have remained unchanged. The Connexion after 1797 had a long unbroken period of peaceful progress. The effect of the "Kilhamite" separation, indeed, was after 1797 not greatly felt by the parent body. The number of Methodists in the United Kingdom in 1796, the year of Kilham's expulsion, was 95,226; in 1797 it was 99,519; in 1798 the New Connexion held its first Conference, and reported 5037 members, the number of the parent body being 101,682. Nor was it till 1806 that the New Connexion reached 6000.

During the period of quiet growth and development which followed 1797 the influence of one superior mind (Dr Jabez Bunting, 1779-1858) was to prevail with increasing sway. This was to be the period of the gradual development of lay co-operation in the administration of the various departments of Connexion extension and enterprise—a development which prepared the way for the important legislation of 1852 and following years, and for the ultimate settlement of the respective provinces and powers