

of the ministers and laity which was made in 1877-78. It was also to be the period of the gradual completion of the pastoral idea, in its practical application to the ministers of the body. This period may be defined as extending from the revolutionary epoch of 1791-97 to the epoch of political and municipal reform agitation, 1828-35, which coincides with a second period of politico-ecclesiastical agitation in Wesleyan Methodism.

In 1797 the Conference, as already mentioned, had refused to allow elected laymen—or lay delegates—any place either in the Conference or in district committees. Within a few years after 1800, however, the practice grew up for the circuit stewards to attend the district committees during the transaction of financial business, and in 1815 this usage was recognized in the Minutes of Conference as an established "rule," and it was enacted that no general increase of the income of the ministers should be sanctioned by the Conference until approved by a majority of the district committees during the attendance of the circuit stewards. Since the adoption of this rule the lay element in the district committees has steadily increased and developed. Another characteristic and important feature in the organization of Wesleyan Methodism, which grew into distinct form and prominence during the period now under review, was that of the administration of all the Connexional departments, except such as were regarded as properly pastoral, by means of mixed departmental committees, appointed at each successive Conference. These committees made recommendations to the Conference in regard to such new legislation as they thought desirable and to the appointment of the members of committee; and, for each department, a large committee of review, of which the members of the ordinary committee of management formed the nucleus, came to be held each year immediately before the Conference. In these committees the numbers of ministers and of laymen were equal. On this principle, between 1811 and 1835, provision had been made for the management of all the funds of the Connexion and their corresponding departments of administration. The first mixed committee appointed by the Conference was the committee of privileges in 1803.

The development of the pastoral position and character of the ministers of the body after 1797 could not but advance on a line parallel to the development of the position and claims of the laity. In 1818 the usage of the Conference was conformed to what had long been the ordinary unofficial custom, and the preachers began to be styled in the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* and in other official publications "Reverend," a fact which may seem trivial, but which in reality was of important significance.

In 1834, after the idea had been long entertained and the project had been repeatedly discussed, it was determined to establish a theological institution for the training of ministerial candidates. There are now four colleges, with two hundred and fifty students. In 1836 the practice of ordination by imposition of hands was adopted.

Such advances, however, as these in the general organization and development of the Connexion, and especially in the status and professional training of the ministers, could not be made in such a body without offence being given to some, whose tendencies were to disallow any official distinction between the ministry and the laity, and who also objected to the use of the organ. This levelling element was strong in the West Riding of Yorkshire, and in 1828, on the placing of an organ in Brunswick Chapel, Leeds, by the trustees, with the consent of the Conference, a violent agitation broke out. The consequence was a disruption, the first since 1793, under the title "Protestant Methodists." But this was absorbed, some years later, in a more considerable secession.

In fact, the Connexion was in 1828 entering on a period of agitation. The current of political affairs was approaching the rapids of which the Reform Act marked the centre and the point of maximum movement. A body like Wesleyan Methodism could not but feel in great force the sweep of this movement. It is true that Wesleyan Methodism as such has never been political, that few of its numbers cultivated extreme politics, and that the ministers and the better classes of the "Society" were strongly conservative in their general tone. Nevertheless the mass of the community shared in the general movement of the times, and the conservative tone of the ministers and of most of the well-to-do laity was not in full harmony with the sympathies of the people generally. Accordingly the elements of disturbance, which only partially exploded in the "Protestant Methodist" secession, continued to make themselves felt, in different parts of the Connexion, during the following years of political controversy. The decision of the Conference in 1834 to provide a college for the training of ministerial candidates gave special offence to the malcontents. Such an occasion was all that was wanting for the various discontents of the Connexion to gather to a head. The demands made by the agitators proceeded on a basis of democratic ecclesiasticism such as it is very difficult to apply successfully to a system of associated churches. The result was a third secession, based on the same general ground of ecclesiastical principles as the two preceding, which was organized in 1836, and with which the "Protestant Methodists" eventually coalesced. This

new secession was known first as the "Wesleyan Methodist Association"; but for a number of years past it has been merged in a still larger body of seceders designated "The Methodist Free Churches." Its leader at the first was the Rev. Dr Warren, who left it, however, not many months after it was formed, and took orders in the Church of England.¹

The controversies of 1835-36 left their mark on the legislation and official documents of the Connexion. The principles of 1797 remained intact, some farther guards only being added to prevent any danger of hasty or irresponsible action on the part of superintendents, and at the same time "minor district meetings" being organized in order to facilitate appeals. One error was, however, committed by the Conference. In 1797 no provision had been made for bringing the circuit, through its quarterly meeting, into direct relations with the Conference. In 1836 a right of direct memorial to the Conference was given to the circuit quarterly meeting; but it was so fenced round with conditions and limitations as to make it practically inoperative, and at the same time provocative of suspicion and irritation.

The effect of the secession of 1836 on the general progress of the Connexion was not great. The number of members reported in 1835 in Great Britain and Ireland was 371,251 (there being a decrease in England of 951), in 1836 381,369, in 1837 384,723. For the next ten years the advance of the Connexion in numbers and in general prosperity was apparently unprecedented. The Centenary Fund of 1839-40 amounted to £221,000. In the midst, however, of all the outward prosperity of Methodism—partly perhaps in consequence of it—very perilous elements were at work. The revolutionary ideas of the Chartist period (1840-48) and of Continental politics (1848-49) reacted on Wesleyan Methodism as the political ideas of 1791 and of 1831 had done at those epochs. The embers of old controversies—ecclesiastical, quasi-political, and personal—still smouldered, and at length burst into fresh flame. From 1844 a strong spirit of opposition to the leaders of the Connexion, and especially to Dr Bunting, was fanned by the circulation of anonymous "fly leaves" of a very scurrilous character. At the same time the policy of the Conference and of the ministers in their circuits had proceeded more than was wise on the old lines. The general administration relied too much on the footing of implicit confidence on the part of the people and on the power of official prerogative in the hands of the minister. The memorial law of 1836 was indicative of the too exclusive spirit of pastoral government which had prevailed. The wisdom of Dr Bunting had for five and twenty years led the way in gradually liberalizing both the polity and the policy of Methodism, and adapting them to the changing conditions of the times. But this wisdom seems to have found its limits before 1849, when the internal dissensions reached their climax. In that year James Everett, the chief author of the fly sheets, and two other ministers, Samuel Dunn and William Griffith, who had identified themselves with him, were expelled. A disastrous agitation followed. No distinct secession took place till after the Conference of 1850. The union of the "Methodist Free Churches," in which was incorporated the "Wesleyan Association" (of 1836), was formed by the seceders. The "New Connexion" also received some thousands of the seceders into its ranks. But by far the greatest part of those who left went with neither of these bodies.

Between 1850 and 1855 the Connexion in Great Britain and Ireland lost 100,000 members, and not till 1856 did it begin to recover. In that year the numbers were returned as 282,787, showing a small increase over the preceding year. Since then peace and unity have prevailed unbroken.

The convulsion of 1849-52 taught the Connexion, and in particular the Conference, lessons of the highest importance. In 1852 the quarterly meeting was so defined as to make it the great representative meeting of the circuit, including stewards, leaders, local preachers, and trustees. The right of memorial to the Conference was given to it in the widest and freest sense. These powerful bodies invite ministers to the circuits, or decline so to do, determine and pay their "allowances," as salaries to ministers are still called in the Connexion, and review all the interests of the circuits, spiritual or financial. They had also conferred upon them in 1852 the right to appoint a circuit jury of appeal from the verdict and findings of a leaders' meeting in certain cases of discipline. Since 1852 Conference legislation has still proceeded in the direction of recognizing and enlarging the functions and rights of the laity. The committee of review system, already spoken of, had been considerably developed between 1835 and 1849, and included every department of ordinary administration. In 1861, however, whilst a representation of the departmental executive committees formed still the leading element in each committee of review, a great improvement was made in their constitution by giving to each of the districts of British Methodism the right to send a lay representative

¹ This "Warrenite" secession, as at first it was commonly called, gave rise to a lawsuit which led to the judicial recognition by the Court of Chancery of the Conference Deed Poll of 1784, and the "Large Minutes" of 1797, as documents having the force of public law in the administration of Wesleyan Methodism.

to attend these preparatory Conference committees. In 1877 and 1878 the final and natural consummation of the whole course of advance since 1791 was effected in the constitution of the united Conference of ministers and lay representatives. The ministers meet by themselves to discharge the functions which belong to them as the common pastorate of the Connexion. As to all the points involved in their specific character and common responsibility, as the mutually exchanging and itinerating pastors in common of a vast common flock, they take mutual counsel in a separate assembly. The Conference, in its ministerial-and-lay or representative session, meets after the pastoral business is completed, and occupies a full week between Sundays in discussing and settling the business of all the funds and the general administrative departments of the body. The Conference in its pastoral session assembles on the last Tuesday in July, that session closing on the Friday or Saturday week following; the representative session occupies the following week. It is legally necessary that the decisions of the Conference in both its sessions should be confirmed and validated by the vote of the "legal hundred." This confirmation is, however, given as a matter of course.

The Conference in its pastoral session is not formally representative. To each district is assigned by the preceding Conference a certain amount of representation, there being at present thirty-five districts. The numbers allocated to the districts vary according to circumstances. The total number of ministers and laymen composing the Conference in its representative session is 480, or 240 ministers and 240 laymen. The basis of the lay representation in the Conference is the constituency of lay officials in the district committees. The Connexion at large is represented by the lay officials of the general Connexional departments. The business transacted in the Conference during its representative session relates to all the Connexional departments of general administration, viz., the committee of privileges, foreign missions, the maintenance and education fund (and the schools) for ministers' children, chapel affairs (general, metropolitan, and provincial), the home mission and contingent fund, district sustentation funds, army and navy evangelization, lay mission work, the worn-out ministers' and ministers' widows' fund, the theological institution with its four colleges, Sunday and day schools and the children's home and orphanage, higher education, the extension fund of Methodism, alterations and divisions of circuits and districts, and the Lord's Day observance and temperance questions.

The president of the Conference is chosen by the ministers by ballot on the opening of the pastoral session. After the election of president follows that of secretary. These elections, however, cannot take place until the vacancies in the hundred have been filled up. Such vacancies are caused by death, by absence for two years together without a dispensation, by expulsion, or by superannuation, which takes place ordinarily after two years' retirement from the full work of the ministry.

The principal statistics of the denomination at the last Conference (1882) were as follows:—

	Members.	On Trial.	Ministers.	On Trial.	Retired or Supernumerary Ministers.	Sunday Scholars.
Great Britain.....	393,754	40,653	1,549	81	279	829,666
Ireland.....	24,475	776	200	18	43	
Foreign missions. ¹	89,269	12,934	345	193	16	

Of the Sunday scholars in Great Britain, 177,965 were over fifteen years of age, and 93,127 were members of society or on trial as members.

Wesleyan Methodism in Ireland has always been part and parcel of British Methodism, but since 1782 it has had a branch Conference of its own. The acts of this Conference are, in accordance with a provision in the Conference Deed Poll, made valid by the concurrence with them of a delegate from the British Conference, who is to the Irish Conference what the legal Conference is to the British Conference. Ten ministers of the Irish Conference are members of the "legal hundred" of the British Conference. The "plan of pacification" of 1795 was not carried out at the time by the Irish Conference. In the year 1816, however, it was adopted in Ireland. The result was a secession which assumed the designation "Primitive Wesleyans," a very different body from the Primitive Methodists of England. In 1878 the Primitive Wesleyans were reunited to the parent Connexion. The number of members in Ireland has, owing to emigration, not increased of late years. The last return showed 24,475 members.

Affiliated Conferences.—For more than twenty years there were several "affiliated Conferences" of British Methodism. But there are now only two—the *French Methodist Conference*, and that of *South Africa*,—the latter constituted quite recently (1882). Since 1852 French Methodism has been under an affiliated Conference. The dimensions of the French Connexion, however, are very small, and it is dependent to a considerable extent on pecuniary aid fur-

¹ Chiefly in the West Indies, Africa, India, and China.

nished by the Wesleyan Missionary Society. The last statistical return showed 1769 members, 126 members on trial, 27 ministers, 1 minister on trial, and 3 supernumerary or retired ministers. The British Conference has a right of veto as to certain points of legislation in the case of affiliated Conferences.

Australasian Methodism was for more than twenty years under an affiliated Conference, dating from 1854. Since 1876, however, the Australasian Conference has been independent. The General Conference meets once in three years, having under it our annual Conferences—one for New South Wales and Queensland, another for Victoria and Tasmania, a third for South Australia, and a fourth for New Zealand. These Conferences—the general and the annual—are all mixed and representative after the same general pattern as the British Conference. They have also under their charge, and as part of their Connexion, the Wesleyan missions in Tonga and Fiji, which were begun by the parent body before the original affiliated yearly Conference for Australasia was organized. The numbers in 1881 were for the Methodism of Australia 23,310 members with 362 ministers, and for the South Sea missions 33,411 members with 16 missionaries of European blood and a very large number of native ministers and assistant ministers.

Canadian Methodism was also affiliated till 1873, when it became an independent Connexion. It includes six provincial annual Conferences and one General Conference which meets every three years. The General Conference is mixed and representative; the annual Conferences are purely ministerial. Canadian Methodism occupies a powerful position in the Dominion. It numbers as nearly as can be ascertained about 116,000 members, and is strongest in Upper Canada. It possesses a university—the Victoria University in Upper Canada.

The Doctrines of Methodism.—In doctrine all branches of Methodism are substantially identical. Wesley's doctrines are contained in fifty-three sermons known as the "four volumes" and in his *Notes on the New Testament*. The Conference has, however, published two catechisms, one for younger the other for older children, of which a new and carefully revised edition has lately been completed.² In general, Wesleyan theology is to be described as a system of evangelical Arminianism. In particular, Wesleyan divines insist on the doctrines of original sin, general redemption, repentance, justification by faith, the witness of the Spirit, and Christian perfection,—or, as it has been customary for Methodists to say, the doctrines of a "present, free, and full salvation." By the witness of the Spirit is meant a consciousness of the Divine favour through the atonement of Jesus Christ. Wesleyans have often been represented as holding the Calvinistic doctrine of "assurance." The word, however, is not a Wesleyan phrase, and assurance, so far as it may be said to be taught by Methodists, signifies, not any certainty of final salvation, but merely a "sense of sin forgiven."³

II. AMERICAN EPISCOPAL METHODISM.

The beginnings of American Methodism are traceable to the year 1766, when a few pious emigrants from Ireland introduced Methodism into New York. On receiving an appeal in 1768 from the New York Methodists, who were engaged in building a preaching-house, Wesley laid the case of America before the Conference at Leeds in 1769, and two preachers, Boardman and Pilmoor, volunteered to go to the colonies. Boardman went to New York, Pilmoor to Philadelphia. In 1771 two other Methodist itinerants, Francis Asbury—the most famous name in American Methodism—and Richard Wright, went out to America. In 1773 Thomas Rankin, a preacher of experience sent out

² Besides Wesley's *Sermons and Notes*, his *Appeals* and his treatise on *Original Sin*, in reply to Dr Taylor of Norwich, should be read in order to appreciate his theological views. After these may be particularly noted Joseph Benson's *Theological Commentary*, Watson's *Institutes* (3 vols.), Dr Pope's *Compendium of Theology* (3 vols.), the series of *Fernley Lectures*, especially that by the Rev. B. Gregory on "The Holy Catholic Church," and Dr Rigg's *Discourses and Addresses*.

³ For the history and constitution of Wesleyan Methodism the following works may be consulted:—Wesley's Works, especially his *Journals*; Southey's *Wesley*; Tyceman's *Wesley*; Rigg's *Living Wesley*, and *Churchmanship of John Wesley*; Dr Jackson's *Life of Charles Wesley*; *Minutes of Conference*, vol. 1, 1744-98; Dr George Smith, *History of Wesleyan Methodism*, 2 vols.; Dr Abel Stevens, *History of Methodism*, 3 vols.; Pierce, *Polity of Methodism*; Dr Williams, *Constitution and Polity of Wesleyan Methodism*; Rigg, *Connexional Economy*; and the *Minutes*, 1877 to 1881.

by Wesley, held the first Conference in Philadelphia, when there were 10 itinerant preachers and 1160 members. After the breaking out of the War of Independence the English Methodist preachers were unpopular, and all but Francis Asbury went back to England. At the end of the war, however, in 1784, Wesley sent out Dr Coke, and American Methodism was organized as an independent church, with Dr Coke and Francis Asbury as its presbyters-bishops. The history of American Methodism since that period is too vast and complicated for any attempt to be made to summarize it here. Methodism is more properly national in its character as an American church than any church in the States. In Massachusetts and some other of the New England States it is less powerful than Congregationalism, which still retains there much of its ancient predominance; in the city of New York it is less powerful than Presbyterianism, and, indeed, occupies a position less generally influential than might have been expected. But in Philadelphia it is very powerful; so also in Baltimore and in Cincinnati; if not strong in New York city, it is very strong in the State; and generally throughout the western and mid-western States it is the prevalent form of faith and worship. In the south, also, it is more powerful than any other church.

American Methodism is Episcopal. But its Episcopacy is neither prelatical nor diocesan. The bishops are superintending presbyters, and they visit the whole territory of Methodism in rotation, holding (presiding over) the annual Conferences. These Conferences are purely ministerial. But the General Conference, which meets once in four years, and which is the Conference of legislation and final appeal, is mixed and representative. The first General Conference was held in 1792, the first delegated or representative Conference in 1812, the first mixed or ministerial-and-lay General Conference in 1872. There were till lately no district assemblies in the Episcopal Methodism of America, and now there are but few. The bishops maintain the unity of the Connexion in the interval between the General-Conferences, by their visitation and by their conjoint council. A sub-episcopal class of ministers also, called presiding elders, supplement the action and superintendency of the bishops. These preside over districts, holding all the circuit quarterly meetings, and holding the district meetings, if any such meetings have been organized.

American Episcopal Methodism is distributed into five distinct sections or churches, which, however, differ from each other in no points of any importance as respects organization or discipline, still less doctrine. The American Methodist Episcopal Church South became a separate organization in 1847 by reason of the slavery controversy. The coloured churches, of which there are three, sprang up distinctly from local causes. The following are the latest available statistics:—

	Itinerant Ministers.	Local Preachers.	Lay Members.
Methodist Episcopal Church.....	12,142	12,323	1,717,567
African " " South.....	4,004	5,868	837,631
Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.....	1,832	3,760	391,044
Methodist Episcopal Church.....	1,650	3,750	300,000
Coloured Methodist Episcopal Church.....	638	683	112,000
	20,266	32,384	3,358,442

In the Methodist Episcopal Church alone there are one hundred annual Conferences, visited by twelve bishops. This church has more than twenty universities, of which some are distinguished schools of learning. Boston University is one of the most recent and one of the chief. The principal foreign missions are in India, China, and Japan. The Methodist Church South also has some influential universities, particularly that at Nashville, and has missions, in particular in Japan and China.

Besides these Methodist Episcopal churches, with their total of 3,358,000 church members, there are two other churches which do not assume the name at all, but are yet essentially Methodist in doctrine and discipline, not varying in any important particulars from the Episcopal Methodism of America. Of these one is called the United Brethren, with 157,000 members, the other the Evangelical Association, with 113,000 members.¹

Non-Episcopal American Methodism.—The bodies included under this head are chiefly secessions from the original stock of American Methodism, founded on principles of democratic church government, analogous to those of the English Methodist secessions. The only

¹ The best authority as to American Methodism is Dr Abel Stevens's *History*, in 6 vols. The statistics are given in the *Methodist Year Book*. New York, 1882.

considerable body, however, is the Methodist Protestant Church, with 125,000 members. The minor bodies, four in number, count altogether less than 60,000 members, the principal being the American Wesleyan Church, with 25,000 members.

III. OTHER METHODIST BODIES IN BRITAIN.

The bodies still to be noticed, while differing as to points of church government, agree as to doctrine and in general as to the means of grace and as to inner spiritual fellowship with the parent "Connexion." They all maintain class-meetings and love-feasts, have leaders' meetings and quarterly meetings, and largely employ local preachers.

The Methodist New Connexion was founded in 1797-98 by Alexander Kilham, who died in 1798. Its general principles are indicated above. Its statistics for 1881 were as follows:—183 ministers and 27,770 members (including those on mission stations, besides 3882 on trial), and 74,744 Sunday scholars.²

United Methodist Free Churches.—This organization in its original form must be identified with the Wesleyan Methodist Association of 1836. That body first absorbed into itself, in great part, the "Protestant Methodists" of 1828. It was afterwards greatly increased, and its organization in some points modified, when a large number of the seceders from the parent Connexion in 1850-52 joined its ranks. The main body of its Conference does not consist, like that of the New Connexion, of an equal number of circuit ministers and elected circuit lay delegates, but of circuit delegates, whether ministerial or lay, elected without any respect to office, ministerial or other. Its circuits also are independent of the control of the Conference. The Connexional bond, accordingly, in this denomination is weak, and the itinerancy is not universal or uniform in its rules or its operation. The amalgamation between the Wesleyan Methodist Association and the "Wesleyan Methodist Reformers" of 1850 took place in 1857. At that time the combined churches numbered 41,000. At present (1881-82) they number 72,839, including 7772 members on the mission stations, besides 7824 on trial. The number of ministers is 392, with 40 retired or "supernumerary" ministers. The number of Sunday scholars is 190,957.³

Primitive Methodism.—In this earnest and hard-working denomination the ministers, of whom some are women, are very literally "the servants of all." The Conference is composed, in addition to twelve permanent members, of four members appointed by the preceding Conference, and of delegates from district meetings. The principle of proportion is that there should be two laymen to one minister or "travelling preacher," and the "travelling preachers" have no pastoral prerogative whatever. The Conference is supreme, and the Connexional bond is strong. This body was founded by Hugh Bourne and William Clowes, local preachers who were separated from the Wesleyan Connexion, the former in 1808, the latter in 1810, because of their violation of Conference regulations as to camp meetings and other questions of order. The Conference had, in 1807, pronounced its judgment against camp meetings, which had been introduced into the country from America, whereas Bourne and Clowes were determined to hold such meetings. Founded thus by zealous and "irregular" lay preachers, "Primitive" Methodism, as the resulting new body called itself, bears still in its organization, its spirit, and its customs strong traces of its origin. It has been a very successful body, aiming simply at doing evangelistic work, and is now numerous and powerful, numbering among its ministers, not only many useful preachers, but some of marked originality and power and also of superior cultivation. There has for many years past, if not from the beginning, been a very friendly feeling between the old Wesleyan Connexion and the Primitive Methodists. Its latest statistics (1881-2) show 1149 travelling preachers, 185,312 members, and 383,350 Sunday scholars.⁴

Bible Christians.—The Primitive Methodists sprang up in the midland counties, the Bible Christians in Cornwall. These closely resemble the "Primitives" in their character and spirit. Their founder was a Cornish local preacher called O'Bryan. Hence the Connexion is often known as the Bryanites, and Cornish emigrants have propagated this denomination widely in the colonies. The Conference is composed of ten superintendents of districts, the president and secretary of the preceding Conference, lay delegates, one from each district meeting, and as many of the travelling preachers as are allowed by their respective district meetings to attend. In general it may be said that the ministerial and lay members of the Conference are about equal in number. The returns for 1881-82 showed in England (chiefly the west and south of Eng-

² See *Jubilee Volume of the New Connexion*; also the *General Rules and Minutes of Conference*, 1881, published at the New Connexion Book-Room.
³ See *Foundation Deed of the United Methodist Free Churches*; also *Minutes of Conference*, 1881, 119 Salisbury Square.
⁴ See John Pette, *History of the Primitive Methodist Connexion*; also *Minutes of Conference*, 1881, 6 Sutton Street, London, E.

land) and in the Channel Islands 136 itinerant preachers, 21,209 members (besides 690 on trial), and 36,335 Sunday scholars. In Canada the number of members was 6652, and in Australia and New Zealand 3671.¹

The Wesleyan Reform Union is an aggregate of local Methodist secession churches, loosely held together by a Conference, and is one of the results of the great Methodist disruption of 1851-52. The returns for 1881-82 showed 18 ministers and 7728 members.

Ecumenical Methodist Conference.—This Conference was held in City Road Chapel, London, in September 1881. Representatives were present from all the Methodist bodies throughout the world, and it was estimated that these represented not less than 5,000,000 of members and 20,000,000 of population. Whilst in church organization these bodies differed, as has been shown above, in doctrine and in respect of their purely spiritual discipline and means of grace, they were all agreed in principal matters. The Conference was entirely practical in character. The object was to promote zeal and union among the constituent bodies as to all practical points of Christian sympathy and activity, at home and abroad, and especially as to home mission work, general philanthropy, Christian education, and a Christian use of the press. There were 400 representatives present from the Methodist bodies in all parts of the world.²

Welsh Calvinistic Methodists.—Between the Methodism of Wales and that of England there was never any other than incidental connexion. Indeed, although the name of the Welsh movement was borrowed from the English, not only was Welsh Methodism quite independent in its origin, but in reality its beginning, as an evangelic movement, was earlier than that of English Methodism. From Wesleyan Methodism, furthermore, Welsh Methodism was throughout distinguished by the fact that it was Calvinistic in its doctrine. For some years Whitefield's name was placed by the leaders of Welsh Methodism at the head of their movement, but the connexion was not at any time much more than nominal, Whitefield being, indeed, too often and too long together in America to exercise any real presidency over the Methodism of the Principality.

Distinction, however, must be made between Welsh Methodism as an evangelistic movement and as an organization. In its later and distinctly organized form, its main elements date from 1811, while the actual unity and the final consolidation of the organization date from so recent a period as 1864. At that date we find the Calvinistic Methodism of North and of South Wales for the first time united in a common organization and government, and brought under the supreme control of one "General Assembly."

The spiritual awakening from which Welsh Calvinistic Methodism derived its earliest inspiration and impulse began in 1735 and 1736, almost contemporaneously and quite independently, in three different counties of South Wales. Howell Harris, a gentleman of some position, born and bred at Trevecca in the parish of Talgarth, county of Brecon, is the most prominent name connected with early Welsh Methodism. His first strong religious convictions and impulses date from 1735. He was sent to Oxford in the autumn of that year to "cure him of his fanaticism," but remained only one term. On his return to Wales he began to exhort and preach in private houses and in such buildings as he could obtain the use of, being then and throughout his life a simple layman. Of learning or theology he had but little; but he was an extemporaneous preacher of prodigious vehemence, and often of overwhelming power and pathos. While Harris was thus preaching in the county of Brecon, Daniel Rowlands had been spiritually awakened at Llangetho in Cardiganshire, the two men knowing nothing whatever of each other. Rowlands was an ordained clergyman, of some learning and of great eloquence. He was a pulpit orator, and carefully prepared his powerful discourses. In Pembrokeshire, again, in that same year 1735-36, Howell Davies began to preach the same doctrine in the same spirit as the other two preachers, and with effects scarcely, if at all, less remarkable. The work thus begun in three distinct centres within the space of one year was in strict connexion with the Established Church, and so continued to be throughout the last century. These single-minded preachers pursued their work in Wales knowing nothing of the parallel work which Whitefield had just begun in England. In 1738, however, Whitefield, in the west of England, heard of Howell Harris, and in that year the two revivalists met in Cardiff. In 1739 Howell Harris had begun to extend his preaching tours far and wide, visiting not only South but North Wales, and, wherever he went, founding religious societies in connexion with the Church of England, of a character resembling those called Dr Woodward's societies, which had long been in existence throughout England, the chief difference being that the Welsh societies were "evangelical," Calvinistic, and revivalist. It was in the same year that Wesley founded his society in England. In 1742 the clergymen connected with

the Welsh movement were ten in number, and there were labouring in concert with these forty lay "exhorters," as they were called. In that year the first "association" of Welsh Calvinistic Methodists was held at Waterford or Watford, in Glamorganshire. Whitefield consented to preside, and joined his preaching to that of the Welsh evangelists. The first Calvinistic Methodist Conference was held at Waterford, under Whitefield's presidency, on January 5, 1743, eighteen months earlier than Wesley's first Conference. For a short time the Calvinistic Methodism of Wales was linked to that of England. After 1748, however, Whitefield ceased to act as in any sense the official head of the Calvinistic Methodists of England, and their organization, always loose, was gradually dissolved.

There was no Wesley in Welsh Methodism, and accordingly there was no organic unity among the societies of earlier Welsh Methodism. Each local society was under the care of an "exhorter," an unpaid layman. A number of these local societies were grouped together into a district, over which an "overseer" had charge. He also was usually an unpaid layman, although exercising many of the functions of a spiritual pastor. Sometimes, however, as in the case of Rowlands, he was a parish clergyman. The societies attended their parish churches and there received the sacraments. The meeting- or preaching-houses for the societies were vaguely called "houses for religious purposes."

In 1751 Howell Harris ceased to itinerate and retired to Trevecca. From this time his leadership in the Methodist movement seems to have come to an end, and the movement languished for many years after. Not till 1762 is any "revival" chronicled. In 1763 Rowlands was obliged to quit his curacy at Llangetho and leave the Established Church. His people built him a chapel. He thus, after 1763, became a Dissenting minister; and, retaining his fame and much of his power to the end of his course, he died in 1790.

Fifty years had now passed since the first societies of Welsh Methodism had been established by Howell Harris, and the movement, instead of having grown to strength and maturity, appeared to have spent its force, almost in all directions, at least so far as any outward signs could show. But the Rev. Thomas Charles of Bala was to be one of the chief means of reviving it. He, like the earlier Methodists, was a churchman; he had taken his degree at Oxford and served a curacy in Somersetshire. The doors of the Established Church having been closed against him because of his style of preaching, he joined the Welsh Methodists in 1785, and his first sphere of marked influence was in North Wales. In 1791 he took a leading part in a great revival of which Bala was the centre. From this period may be dated the second spring of Welsh Calvinistic Methodism, from which its later successes were to grow. Charles zealously and successfully promoted the establishment of "circulating schools" and of Sabbath schools. He was, in fact, the soul of the great Christian educating movement in Wales which began in the last decade of the 18th century; and it was through his earnest zeal in seeking to provide Bibles for his Welsh schools, especially the Sunday schools, that the British and Foreign Bible Society was established. Though Methodism came then to be effectually rooted in the soil of the Principality, it was not till 1811 that the Welsh Calvinists took that step in the direction of ecclesiastical independence which the English Wesleyans had taken sixteen years before by calling their preachers to the official position of pastors and ordaining them to administer the sacraments.

From 1790 till almost the present time the work of gradually moulding the constitution of Welsh Calvinistic Methodism has proceeded. The "rules regarding the proper mode of conducting the quarterly association" were drawn up by Charles and agreed upon in 1790. In 1801 the *Order and Form of Church Government and Rules of Discipline* were published. In 1811, as has been shown, ministerial ordination was initiated. In 1823 the *Confession of Faith* was promulgated. And in 1864, as has been already mentioned, the first "General Assembly" was held, and the two associations of North and South Wales respectively were united into one body. The constitution is now a modified Presbyterianism, each church managing its own affairs subject to successive appeal to the monthly meeting of the county and the quarterly association of the province, while the latter body may refer the decision to the annual General Assembly.

The Welsh Methodists (or Welsh Presbyterians, as they are now often called) have two theological colleges, one at Bala and the other at Trevecca. They have also a foreign missionary society, with missions in Brittany, among their congeners of the Celtic race, and in Bengal.

In recent years this church has made great progress. In 1850 the number of members was 58,678, in 1870 it was 92,735, and in 1880 the returns showed 1174 churches, 118,979 communicants, 185,635 Sunday scholars. The number of ministers is not officially given, but is estimated at 600. The North and South Wales associations are now also known as synods.³ (J. H. R.L.)⁴

¹ See *Bible Christian Memorial Volume*, 1866; *Minutes of Conference*, 1881, Book-Room, 26 Paternoster Row.
² See *Proceedings of First Methodist Ecumenical Conference*, Wesleyan Book-Room, City Road.
³ See W. Williams, *Welsh Calvinistic Methodism, a Historical Sketch; The Life and Times of Howell Harris*; Tyerman, *Life of the Rev. George Whitefield*; *The Diary of the Calvinistic Methodists*, 1882.