

CHAPTER XI.

IN September, 1749, Whitefield preached thrice at Haworth. In a letter to a Mr. N., of Glasgow, he says, "At Haworth I met with William Davy (Darney) who has since been imprisoned for preaching. Though he is seemingly unqualified, yet I meet with many that date their awakening from their first hearing him. What shall we say to these things? Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in Thy sight! I think he belongs to our Lord's family, and therefore what is done for Him, He will take as done to Himself."*

The somewhat unfavourable opinion of Darney expressed by Whitefield was shared by Charles Wesley, as the following extracts from his journal will show. During his stay in Leeds, in 1751, he held a conference of preachers. It was the practice of both the brothers Wesley to send personal invitations to those whose presence they desired at the early conferences.† For some reason Darney was not invited, and although he came was not admitted. Mr. C. Wesley says, "Sept. 11th, 1751—Mr. Grimshaw came, and soon after Mr. Milner. At ten we began our conference, at which were present, John Nelson, Wm. Shent, Christopher Hopper, Thomas Colbeck (of Keighley), Jonathan Reeves, John Bennet, Paul Greenwood (of Haworth), Michael Fenwick, Titus Knight, from Halifax, Robt. Swindells, and Mathew Watson. All these I had invited and given them notes. Webb and Tratham came afterwards, but were not admitted. Brother Mortimer, also, and William Darney, whom I appointed to talk with before we met again in the afternoon. Had any one asked me the end of our Conference, I could not have told them; only that I came to make observations, and get acquainted with the preachers, and see if God had anything to do with us or by us. After prayer (in which I found much of the presence of God) I began, without design, to speak of the qualifications, work, and trials, of a preacher; and what I thought requisite in men who act in concert. As to the preliminaries and principles, we all agreed. This conversation lasted till one. At three we met again. But first I talked to Mortimer, whom I admitted; and to Darney, whom I rejected. Two hours more was spent in friendly, profit-

* Everett's Manchester, p. 128.

† Wesley's Works, 8-312.

able conference. I told them my heart, freely and fully, concerning the work of the workmen. We parted in the spirit of love."

At Ewood, on September 16th, Charles Wesley took leave of his friend Grimshaw, and of W. Shent, of Leeds, and of Darney; giving written instructions, that unless Darney would abstain from railing, begging, and printing nonsense, he should not be allowed to preach in any of the Methodist societies and meeting houses. William Shent was charged with the execution of this order. The indulgence conceded to Darney, with these limitations, was granted solely at the instance of Grimshaw, to whom it was difficult to deny anything.

It is evident from the remarks of the Rev. T. Jackson, that about the time of this Conference in Leeds, some of the preachers had embraced and were disseminating Calvinistic doctrines. Darney held similar views, which may—until he came in contact with other preachers of like mind,—have been kept in abeyance by the all-absorbing work of awakening sinners. As to the charge of begging, some excuse may be found in the fact that Darney had a wife, and perhaps a family, to maintain, and no fixed stipend with which to do it. It was not until that year (1752) that the magnificent sum of £12 per annum was ordered by Conference to be paid to the preachers, in order that they might provide themselves with necessaries. Not until 1757 was any fixed allowance made to preachers' wives. In that year £10 per annum was all that the circuits were considered to have power to provide. Articles of clothing were occasionally paid for out of the circuit funds, and Darney might be thought too importunate in asking for them, and complained of for it. I have already stated that Darney composed hymns. This year he went the length of printing. His book is entitled:

A COLLECTION OF HYMNS

BY

WILLIAM DARNEY,

in four parts.

Leeds, Printed by James Lister, 1751.

PART I.

Praise ye the Lord, etc. Psalm cxxxv., 1-3.

To men of such correct poetic taste as the Wesleys, these hymns must have been specially distasteful. The preface to the book reflected upon the poetry of the Wesleys as too high in sentiment and diction for the people of the northern circuits. No wonder, therefore, that the brothers Wesley greatly disliked

Darney's action in thrusting such a book upon these poor societies: hence the following Conference order: "Sing no hymns of your own composing. Print nothing without my approbation." We are very glad, however, that Darney had printed before this direction was given, because in a hymn of one hundred and four verses on the progress of Methodism, we have information which amply atones for the doggerel, as it indicates what places had been reached at that time, and what was their condition.

In the year 1752 we catch a glimpse of Darney in the northern part of the vast Leeds circuit, in which he was then stationed. He had evidently been labouring in the dales of the North Riding, for among his hymns is one entitled, "A Hymn first made for the little Societies in the north of Yorkshire." There is also an entry concerning him in an old society book kept at Osmotherly, an ancient village in the North Riding of Yorkshire, about six miles from North-allerton. He alone of the Methodist preachers who visited it appears to have excited the ire of the inhabitants, for after preaching in the village he was seized by a mob, who proceeded to daub him with tar, and ornament him with feathers. He does not however seem to have suffered any bodily injury. Knowing the lion-heartedness of the Rev. W. Grimshaw, he must have brought him to this part of the great Leeds circuit, for under the date of July 19th, 1752, there is this entry in the society book of Osmotherly. "For Wm. Grimshaw and Wm. Darney, 1/3." This was the sum paid for their entertainment, or given for travelling expenses. There are records of a similar kind in other places, from which we learn that Grimshaw occasionally visited the romantic dales and fells of North Yorkshire; but to what distance his visits extended in that direction, neither tradition nor history enables us to state with certainty.*

Though Darney was travelling in the Leeds circuit in 1752, there are two entries respecting him in the old society book, Todmorden. "April 20th, 1752, William Darney, foreside of his waistcoat, 7s. April 20th, 1752, trimming for his coat, 9/11½." Is it not possible that these were repairs rendered necessary by the rough treatment at Osmotherly, and obtained for him through his steadfast friend the vicar of Haworth?

In 1752, when Darney was stationed in Leeds, he extended his labours as far as Coventry, for the Rev. John Butterworth, a Dissenting minister in that town, gives us very interesting information concerning him. The father of this Mr. Butterworth resided at Goodshaw, and was a blacksmith by trade. His family

* Methodist Magazine, 1847, 142, 145 and Hardy's Grimshaw, 113.

consisted of one daughter and five sons. The first time John Wesley preached in Rossendale these five young men heard him. It was in the year 1745 at five o'clock in the morning, and his text was Romans, iii. 22. The brothers determined to embrace the truth, but there being no Methodist society in Goodshaw, they united themselves with the Baptists. Four of them became ministers of the gospel, and the fifth a Methodist local preacher. The Rev. Jno. Butterworth was the father of Jos. Butterworth, Esq., M.P., who for many years held a very influential position in Methodism, and rendered distinguished service to the Connexion.

In the earlier years of Mr. Jno. Butterworth's religious life he would no doubt frequently hear Darney, and the following extract from one of his letters reveals an intimate acquaintance with the man:—"Last week we have had a great noise and hurry about the Methodists in this town. William Darney came here Saturday wassen' night, and stayed till yesterday. He was at our house several times, still behaving in his old way, ready to censure and condemn all but the Methodists. However, many have run to hear till last Sabbath day night, in which there was such furious mobbing that some were almost afraid of their lives. Some damage was done in breaking of windows, &c. The constable was sent for to suppress the mob and guard Mr. Darney to his lodgings. Some who heard him told me that he kept himself pretty consistent and clear. But I find by his conversation that he is not quit of his old principles of universal redemption. I should be glad to know in your next letter what progress the Methodists make in Rossendale, and whether they are ever likely to come to anything or not."*

Others beside Mr. Butterworth contemplated the possibility of Methodism becoming extinct in their localities, and made provision for that and other contingencies in the first chapel deeds. A deed of Lowertown, in the Keighley circuit, dated May 14th, 1805, contains the following clauses:—The minister to be elected by the trustees. He was to preach the doctrines contained in Wesley's notes and the four volumes of sermons. They had power to mortgage or sell in case there should be no Methodist society; in which case the money arising from the sale, after paying the debt of the chapel, should be appropriated in promoting the work of God among the Methodists, without saying in what way. A similar clause is contained in the first chapel deed of Cullingworth.

Darney was the second Methodist preacher to visit Sheepshead, in Leicestershire, where he addressed a congregation

* Jessop's Rossendale, p. 46.

in the open street. He was plentifully bespattered with mud, and no one invited him to any house, or offered him the slightest refreshment.

In 1755 he was in Alnwick, where under his ministry, a considerable revival of religion took place. The wicked were roused to opposition, and, among the rest, a company of strolling players, who happened to be at Alnwick. These prepared a play against the Methodists, in which Darney and the leading members of the society were caricatured. The play, however,—though the bills were printed and circulated—for some reason unknown, was never acted. Soon after this, as Darney was riding past their temporary theatre (a barn), the players, who were lounging and basking in the sun, said, in a tone sufficiently loud for him to hear, "Here is Scotch Will; let us mob him." On hearing this, Darney, who was a man of great size, and, when he chose, of a terrific countenance, being mounted on a very spirited horse, immediately rode up to them, and, making his horse stand upon its hinder feet, at the same time elevating his whip, said, with a voice of thunder, "Ye sons of Belial, come on!" The poor actors were terror stricken, and were thankful to atone for their insolence by individually begging pardon and promising to behave better ever after. This they were careful to do, for no one after this ventured to insult him.

One day while in this circuit, as he travelled in company with some friends, the subject of temptation was discussed. Darney said, "I don't know what to think; for I have had no trouble from the wicked one for some time"; when suddenly his horse plunged into a bog, and threw to the ground both him and the female friend who rode on a pillion behind. Being rescued from the bog, his companions rode forward to the first farm-house in that neighbourhood and requested permission for two of their friends, who had met with an accident, to dry their clothes. Permission was readily granted; but, having arrived, Darney, instead of going near the fire, said, "Let us pray." They all kneeled down, and he prayed. After rising from his knees, he paced the room in silence for some time, when at length he again said, "Let us pray." After rising a second time, the farmer, addressing himself to Darney, said, "You shall not leave my house this night, for there is something in you which I never saw in any man before." "Say you so?" said Darney; "then go and invite all your neighbours, and I will preach to them." He did so, and the power of the Lord was manifested in the awakening of many souls. So greatly was this accident overruled for good.*

*Methodist Magazine, 1826, p. 401.

The following account is given by John Darney, the son of Wm. Darney, in a letter to the late Rev. James Everett:—
 “When my father was once preaching, in 1755, at Walmsley chapel, the enraged mob drove him into a pond of water, in the same way they would have done a beast. Also at Barrowford, the mob stripped him of his coat and took it to a dye-house, where they half dipped it in a working vat, literally making it a coat of many colours. At another time, at this place, they rode him through the deepest place of the river, which runs through the village, one of the mob riding upon his back with a bridle about his head. They then procured a rope, which they fastened about his waist, and then fastening the rope to each side of the river, they literally tied him in the middle of the stream.

“In Colne the mob stripped him of all his clothes unto his naked skin, daubed him all over with mire, and drove him through the town streets in this condition.

“A very singular occurrence took place when he was once preaching on Blackow Hill Side, which God mercifully overruled for the conversion of the chief of those sinners composing this mob. As the champion of the mob was violently attempting to pull him down from the place on which he stood to preach, he seized Darney by the cravat, which instantly broke in two, although it was a new one and went twice round his neck. When the man saw the cravat so easily torn asunder, he was struck with amazement, and this circumstance, in the hands of the Almighty Spirit, was the means of his immediate conviction of sin. He instantly desisted from further violence, and openly declared that he would lose his life in defending the preacher from the attacks of the mob. This quelled the disturbance, and Darney finished his discourse in peace. This ringleader of riot and sin dated his conversion to God from that hour; afterwards became a decided Methodist, and lived and died an eminent and exemplary Christian.

Whilst Darney was once preaching at New Church in Rossendale, he was attacked by an outrageous mob, the ringleader of which appeared infuriate for destruction. Darney attempted to reason with him on the folly and wickedness of his proceedings, but without avail. The preacher then boldly declared that if he persisted in molesting him the judgments of God would overtake him. Within two days he suddenly dropped down dead, an awful warning to persecutors.”

Having diverged to follow the careers of Lee and Darney, we must return to the year 1750, and some of the movements of the more important agents in the eighteenth century revival.

Doctrinal differences had for a time led to separation and

controversy between Whitefield and the Wesleys, but the year 1750 shows that eminent evangelist reconciled fully to the Wesleys, and not only preaching in their chapels, but also using all his great influence with the noble and powerful on behalf of their persecuted people in Cork. He says to one of them, January 28th, 1850: "On Monday your letter shall be read, and we will besiege the throne of grace once more, on our dear brethren's behalf. Surely we shall prevail. I will use all endeavours to extricate our friends out of their troubles. Enclosed you have a letter to the judge. I hope you will wait on Lord Harrington (the King's representative in Ireland) and let me hear what he says. The Duke (of Newcastle) was spoken to; and, last post, I wrote to Lady Huntingdon for the memorial, which, if sent, shall be put into the hands of some who are very near His Majesty. Some honourable women are much your friends. Jesus makes them so; and when His people are distressed, if needful, a thousand *Esthers* shall be raised up. I have now preached three times in Mr. Wesley's chapel; and each time the Lord was with us of a truth."

The history of Whitefield and the noble Countess of Huntingdon, studied alongside the life of Wesley, shows us how blessedly the leading spirits in the mighty work of God in the eighteenth century, were really one in soul and sympathy, though so widely divided on some doctrinal questions.

Thus Whitefield, writing to Lady Huntingdon, Feb. 12th, 1750, says: "Everything I meet with seems to carry this voice with it,—'Go thou and preach the gospel. Be a pilgrim on earth. Have no party, or certain dwelling place; but be continually preparing for, and labouring to prepare others for, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.' My heart echoes back, 'Lord Jesus help me to do or suffer Thy will! And when Thou seest me in danger of nestling, in pity put a thorn in my nest to preserve me from it.'"

While Grimshaw and his lay preachers were ever widening the borders of the Methodist circuit, the catholic-hearted Whitefield, in 1750, paid the centre another visit, on Whit-Sunday, June 3rd. Again Haworth Church was filled with communicants (almost thrice), whilst thousands upon thousands listened to the preacher's voice in the church-yard.

In connection with one of Whitefield's visits, a small boy, accompanying his father, heard him preach. That boy was the well-known and eminently useful Jonathan Saville, of Halifax. No sooner did Jonathan fix his eye upon the preacher than it became rivetted, and young as he was, no other object could divert the attention which he was thus constrained to give. Who the preacher was his father did not inform him, but the impres-

sion made by countenance, gesture, and general appearance, was so indelibly fixed upon his mind, that at the distance of sixty years from that time, on seeing a well-executed portrait of Whitefield, he immediately recognized it as the likeness of the one he heard preach in Bradford.

Jonathan Saville was born of poor, but industrious, parents, December 9th, 1759. His mother died when he was three years old, and at the age of seven he became an inmate of the poor-house. Against the entreaties and remonstrances of his poor father, he was put apprentice by the guardians, and became practically the slave of a coal owner near Denholme, a man without a spark of humanity in his nature. So heavy were his tasks that the lad would have died under them, had not the master, seeing this, caused him to be removed from the pit and placed at the spinning wheel in the house of his taskmaster.

Three or four years had thus rolled over his head, when, one winter's day, while sitting at his wheel in the passage of the house—the spot he usually occupied—he became chilled and very cold. The house, being situate on a bleak point of the hill, Jonathan might well shiver in the keenness of the northern blast. He spun the wheel with redoubled velocity, but all was of no avail. His fingers grew stiff, and, shaking with cold, he determined to risk all consequences and spend five minutes at the kitchen fire. Simple as all this may appear, it was a source of much consideration before he dare leave his work for such a purpose. While warming himself, one of his master's daughters came in. Thinking that he was neglecting his work, or prompted by the spirit of her father, she pushed Jonathan from the fire, accompanying her treatment with a heavy blow. Jonathan fell upon the floor with such violence, and in such a position, that his thigh bone was broken. For a while he lay upon the floor, trembling lest further violence should be experienced: at length, accompanied by threats and menaces from the brutal amazon, he managed to crawl with the greatest possible difficulty into an adjoining room, where he lay down on a bed, in the most excruciating pain.

Soon after Jonathan's master came home, and being told by his daughter that the lad had left his work in a fit of sulkingness and gone to bed, he went into Jonathan's room, and ordered the poor sufferer, with terrible threats, to arise and go to his work at the wheel. Jonathan's heart-rending entreaties and piteous moans were of no avail, and to use his own language, "I tumbled off the bed as well as I could." He then endeavoured to stand, with the support of a chair, but his thigh bent under him, and he fell prostrate on the ground. With

incredible inhumanity the monster seized Jonathan by the coat collar, dragged him into the passage, and forced him to sit and spin during the rest of the day. Although this cruel master knew full well the state of his charge, no surgeon was called in to set the thigh, and no attention paid the boy by any in the house; the very moans of the poor sufferer were laughed at, and had he not been blessed with a strong constitution, he must have sunk beneath the brutality heaped upon him. As he lay down at night to sleep, it was his practice to hold the bone as near in its proper place as he could imagine; but being obliged to rise early to his work, his recovery was protracted and tedious; in fact he never did properly recover, and the accident became the cause of his diminutive stature.

Thrown into Thornton workhouse by his unfeeling master, Jonathan Saville fortunately received kind attention there, and was taught to read by an old pensioner. In the house was an aged blind man, who had long expressed a desire to attend the church at Bradford, but being unable to obtain a guide, and too poor to purchase a dog, was utterly prevented. Jonathan, to his great joy, being able to walk with crutches, cheerfully volunteered to lead the blind pauper, and they thus for some time journeyed in company to the house of God.

The cripple learnt a trade, was able to earn his bread, and through the ministry of Mr. Benson found the bread of eternal life in Halifax; and then careless of the bitter frost the piercing winds, or the burning sun of summer, Jonathan was found travelling over hills and exploring valleys, calling the poor cottagers together, who lived far from any place of worship, giving them a word of exhortation, and then praying with and for them. It is not too much to say that no man living in the Halifax circuit was in labours more abundant than Jonathan Saville, even to an advanced age. Fourteen years as prayer leader, then entrusted with a society class, and in the year 1803, at the age of 43, he became a local preacher, and won esteem and veneration in that field of labour. He attained popularity at the commencement of his career, and held it for many years. Hundreds in his own and other circuits had indelible impressions produced upon their souls by the solemn admonitions, impressive cautions, and original and appropriate ideas of the erstwhile workhouse lad. On the missionary platform he spoke with acknowledged power, even as the companion of the most eminent ministers of the connexion, and his speeches were long remembered with pleasure and profit.

Some years after Saville became a preacher, he was invited to preach at Denholme on behalf of missions, and whilst there was requested to visit a sick woman. "When I got into the

house," he says, "I was taken with a fit of musing. The woman seeing me said, 'Did you once live here?' I gave a look back and inwardly exclaimed, 'What has God done for poor me!' And then I thought of my three or four years of suffering in that very house, for there it was that my thigh was broken, and I said, 'Is it possible that the Lord should have brought me to pray with that woman. O Lord, now thou hast paid me for all my suffering.'" Jonathan Saville died in 1842, aged 83 years.

Such a remarkable God-called instrument in the building of early Methodism in the old Haworth round could not be passed over in a history, the aim of which is to trace the hand of the Almighty in this particular field.

Until a recent period it was not known that letters of John Nelson were in existence. Several addressed to Charles Wesley were found among the treasures of the book room: these I had permission from the Rev. C. H. Kelly to copy. As they have not hitherto been published, and are very characteristic of that veteran evangelist, and shed light upon the history and methods of early Methodism, it is but due to his memory that they should appear, according to date, in this history.

The first is dated August 29th, 1750. John Nelson wrote to John Wesley describing three happy deaths within the Birstall round. He says of a Mr. Farrer, "He died in the 73rd year of his age. He had been a man of an unblemished character, and was looked upon by all who knew him to be one of the best Christians in that parish. He was intimate with the Minister who frequently lodged at his house, and took no small pains to prejudice him and his family against the Methodists. And he had prevailed so far, that Mr. Farrer would not come to the funeral of Mr. Ellison, although he was a near relation and his next door neighbour, because he heard that I was to preach on that occasion. But it pleased God to strike those of his family who were at the funeral, with convictions; so that his wife, two sons, and a daughter, prevailed upon him to hear for himself, as they had done. The first time he came, I was preaching upon our Lord's opening the eyes of blind Bartimaeus. When I had done, he cried out, 'I have been blind for threescore and ten years, and I knew it not; but have always thought I was right till this day.' From this time he and all his family attended the ministry of the Word at all opportunities, and he received a sense of the love of God two years before his decease, while Mr. Merrick was preaching. Since that time he was remarkably steady, full of good works, and ready to confess his former blindness on all occasions, and likewise to declare the riches of God's love to him and his

family, in all companies. He died of the gravel. He was confined about three weeks, so that I visited him several times, to the great satisfaction of my own soul. In the most racking pain he still continued to praise the Lord. At one of my visits two of his brothers were there. He declared to them, 'I have lived to old age before I was acquainted with the design of God in sending me into the world, or the reason why our blessed Lord took human nature upon him, and died upon the cross,' and added, 'The Lord called me after the eleventh hour, and has rewarded me as if I had borne the burden and heat of the day.' With tears of joy he cried out, 'What could the Lord have done more for me and my family than He hath done, for He hath not left one of us in Egyptian darkness, but hath made us all witnesses that He is a sin-forgiving God. O my brothers, seek, that ye may find Him to be such to you.'

"He desired me to preach at his funeral, and said, 'It may be a means of stirring up some to seek salvation. 'I fulfilled his request and preached upon these words, to a great multitude, 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.' We certainly had a glorious time; the Lord was powerfully present. O may we all praise God for such witnesses of His mercy and love, and so copy their example, that our last end may be like their's.

"We are now building our preaching house, so that I am employed all the day in hewing stone, and at night in calling upon sinners to repent and believe the gospel.

"I am, your unworthy son in the gospel,

JOHN NELSON."

The late Mr. C. D. Hardcastle copied an entry from an old pocket Bible formerly belonging to the family of Woods, of Birstall and Tingley. The following was evidently written at the time:—"August 18th, 1750. The first text that was taken in the new building of John Nelson. Preached by Mr. Grimshaw, the fifth chapter of Ephesians and the two first verses, 'Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children, and walk in love as Christ also hath loved us, and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet smelling savour.'

As on the 29th August, Nelson spoke of the chapel as still building, it may have been that Grimshaw visited Birstall in one of his evangelistic rounds and preached in the unfinished shell of the building. That it was opened in 1750, and not 1751, as stated in the Rev. W. W. Stamp's "Methodism in Bradford," is very probable, as in March, 1751, Nelson was at the Conference in Bristol, and after that in Scotland; and it is not likely he would leave Birstall before the completion of his chapel.

The first Methodist chapels were often monuments of intense faith and self-sacrifice on the part of those who built them. We have already seen the love of worship displayed by John Madin in going frequently from Rossendale to Haworth to hear the word of God from the lips of Grimshaw. As soon as he married he opened his home for preaching, and joyfully welcomed Grimshaw, Darney, Colbeck, and other early Methodist preachers to his table. But the house was too small, and a room afterwards hired in Bacup was unsuitable, and the purpose to build a house for God took possession of his mind.

He and two others were returning from a journey of some distance which they had undertaken to hear John Bennet preach. On their way home the subject of building a chapel became the theme of their conversation, but the difficulty was how to perform such a project with their slender means. Mr. Madin was quite a young man (about twenty-eight years of age), who, with very moderate means, had just become the tenant of a small farm in the valley. John Earnshaw, another of the trio, was probably no better circumstanced; while the third, Nicholas Slater, a very pious man, was only a poor tailor. In the course of the conversation Madin and Earnshaw engaged to give as much money between them as would purchase the chapel site, while poor Slater drew sixpence from his pocket, and in the simplicity of his heart presented it to his comrades with these words: "This is all that I have at present, but when I get more I will give it." It would be difficult to determine which of these three men displayed the most striking proof of ardent love to Christ. The ground for the first Methodist chapel in Rossendale was purchased; and the other members of the little society, eleven only in number, subscribed according to their ability. Mr. Madin, having some knowledge of building, in addition to his share of the money given for the site, agreed to perform for the chapel one hundred days' work, and also to collect money for the payment of the builders. He kept at the work until he had the joy of seeing it completed, free of debt, sometime between 1750 and 1752.

CHAPTER XII.

It has been my privilege to read a number of unpublished letters written by Grimshaw to Mrs. Gallatin, for whom he had the highest Christian regard. They so fully reveal the character of the superintendent of the Haworth round, and contain so many interesting references to persons and places in his large circuit, that I shall introduce them in full under the years when they were written. To explain who this correspondent was, it is necessary to go back a couple of years.

In 1749 we find mention in letters of Whitefield, of Captain and Mrs. Gallatin. They were residing in Manchester, and Whitefield who preached there with great power in the autumn of that year, appears to have been the instrument of their spiritual awakening; for he says, October 25th, 1749, "Mrs. Gallatin, at Manchester, goes on well, and is not ashamed to confess Him, Who, I trust, has called her out of darkness into marvellous light." On October 30th, 1749, he writes to the Countess of Huntingdon; "I forward your letter to Mrs. Gallatin, at Manchester. She seems to be quite in earnest. I conversed for about two hours with the captain and some other officers, upon the nature and necessity of the new birth. He was affected, and, I hope, the conversation was blessed." The hope was realised, for the captain and his wife showed the sincerest friendship to the Methodists to the end of life.

In the year 1751, Captain Gallatin was stationed at Musselburgh, in Scotland, and invited John Wesley to visit that place. He did so, and thus introduced Methodism into the Northern Kingdom. He was earnestly requested to stay, but only remained from the 24th to 26th of May. He however sent during the year Christopher Hopper, John Nelson, and William Shent. Hopper does not speak discouragingly of the mission he accomplished, but Nelson had quite another story to tell. Charles Wesley says, on July 21st, 1751, "I rode to Birstall, when John Nelson comforted our hearts with an account of the success of the gospel in every place where he had been preaching, except Scotland. There he has been beating the air for three weeks, and spending his strength in vain. Twice a day he preached at Musselburgh to some thousands of *mere* hearers, without converting one soul."

Again, on August 12th, Charles Wesley writes in reference probably to this mission of Nelson; "I had much discourse with a brother from Scotland, who has preached there many weeks, and not converted one soul. 'You may as well preach to the stones,' he added, 'as to the Scots.'" John Wesley did not abandon hope and effort, though he shrewdly remarked concerning the Scotch: "They hear much, know everything, and feel nothing." Whitefield thought it unwise of Wesley to attempt preaching in Scotland. He said to him, "You have no business in Scotland, for your principles are so well known, that if you spoke like an angel, none would hear you; and if they did, you would have nothing to do but to dispute with one and another from morning to night." To this Wesley gave an answer which ought to impress and guide all who desire to carry divine truth into places where it is sure to meet with opposition. He said, "If God sends me, people will hear. And I will give no provocation to dispute; for I will studiously avoid all controverted points, and keep to the fundamental truths of Christianity. And if any still begin to dispute, they may, but I will not dispute with them."

The first letter of Grimshaw to Mrs. Gallatin refers to this inroad into Scotland, and confirms the conjecture that it was Nelson to whom C. Wesley alluded.

"Haworth, August 31st, 1751.

MADAM,

Glory be to God, I have been so busied for some time in the gospel work, which flourishes wonderfully in these parts, that I have not had much leisure or thought about writing letters. Yours, therefore, which I received the favour of some time since, I hope you will excuse my not answering sooner. This morning I preached the sixtieth time since August came in. I have lately visited Derbyshire, Cheshire, and Lancashire, and various parts of the county. I preached in the latter end of July in the new house (which is now finished) at Manchester. The house was full, and many out of doors. At Chester also to a numerous audience out of doors. In short we have large congregations some scores of miles round, and new doors daily opening.

"Yesterday for the first time, John Nelson came to see me since his return out of Scotland. From the relation he gives, and the sentiments my dear friend, your spouse, in his letter to John Nelson, entertains, the Scots seem averse to all overtures of the gospel, especially as made to them by our English ambassadors of the Prince of Peace. For their precious souls' sake I pray God raise up such among themselves who may preach the gospel to them in demonstration of His Spirit and

of power. And would God one thing more, that you were both well from amongst them; yea I pray God ye may bring as much life (*i.e.*, spiritual) away, as you took with you into Scotland. One thing is well, and enough you can never bless God for it; that though you have spiritual company but little, yet you have Him, I am sure, continually in your very chamber, your books, your hearts, Who will never leave you nor forsake you;—who, were you among the Turks, or Arabs, will be your guardian, and portion for ever. Nay your own house is His church, His Bethel. Glory be to God for it; where two or three, says the dear Saviour, are met together in my name, there am I in the midst of them—and what they shall agree to ask it shall be done for them. 'Tis enough. These are the words, the promises of God. Keep close and constant to family prayer, I humbly beseech you, as I believe you do, and also to that of the closet. Ask what you will in faith, He heareth you. Ask for faith, for hope, for peace, for joy in the Holy Ghost, for divine love, for grace, for glory, for God. Christ gave Himself for you,—the Father also gave Him; and if so how will He not freely with Him give you all things? Yea, all things are yours, if you are Christ's. Ask and you shall have, seek and you shall find, etc. Make, with the psalmist, much of God's word. Converse much, not only with the books of orthodox, but experimental divines. Such are soul, food, and physic. They help to subdue and mortify the old man, and to quicken, enliven, and perfect the new. They are spirit and life to the soul. The less you converse with worldly and carnal men and matters, the more will you desire and delight in the mind and ways of God. For the more abstracted your mind is from earthly things, the more apt and susceptible will it be of heavenly and divine things. As on the other hand, the mind, how seriously and earnestly soever inclined once to the will and ways of God, will gradually decline therefrom, as it insensibly subsides into the things of earth and sense. May the God of all grace and truth be with you and in you both; and grant that you may so glorify Him in the Son of His love, in heart, lip, and life here, that you may sit together with Him in heavenly places in Christ Jesus hereafter. Pray for me and I will heartily pray for you. Read and apply closely 1 Cor. vi.-19, 20. 2 Cor. vi.-15, 16, 17, 18.

" Paul Greenwood, as also William Darney, John Nelson, William Shent, John Bennet, and Christopher Hopper, are fully employed, and I trust with good success. William Darney this moment is come to my house, and desires his service to be presented to you and yours. Remember me in the most cordial manner to my dear Captain. I suppose you have

your two Manchester maids—pray tell them, I pray God bless them. Write soon. I am your much obliged and very humble servant.

WM. GRIMSHAW."

At this time we find Charles Wesley, like his brother, actively itinerating among the Yorkshire societies. He says, "September 14th, 1751, I reached Keighley by noon; preached at four to about one thousand as well-behaved hearers as I have lately seen, on whom I called with an open mouth and heart; 'Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters!' Great life I also found in the society. September 15th, I bestowed an hour on the Leaders, a dozen steady, solid men. I left Paul Greenwood to preach, and hastened to Haworth. I never saw a church better filled; but after I had preached in the pulpit, the multitude in the church yard cried out they could not hear, and begged me to come forth. I did so, and preached on a tombstone. Between three and four thousand heard me gladly. At two I called again, to about double the number, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!' The church leads and steeple were filled with clusters of people, all still as night. If ever I preached gospel, I preached it then. The Lord take all the glory!

"I took horse immediately and followed our nimble guide, Johnnie Grimshaw, to Ewood. His father came panting after us. Sarah Perrin and her namesake met us from Birstall, and brought Mr. Shent. September 16th, I preached at nine in a convenient field, to about a thousand believers, all, or conscious unbelievers; and again at three, to about three thousand. Their spirit carried me beyond myself. Such a lively people I have not met with, so simple, loving, zealous. I could have gladly stayed to live and die with them."

"Mrs. C. Wesley took many extensive journeys with her husband, riding mostly behind him on horseback, enduring not a few inconveniences, and meeting with adventures which she was accustomed to relate, in the society of her friends, to the end of her very protracted life. In the gallery of the chapel at Leeds she found two rooms partitioned off, for the accommodation of the preachers in their regular visits to the town. In the evening they were expected to preach and meet the society, to resume their pulpit labours the next morning at five o'clock, and then pass on to their next appointment. To sleep in the chapel therefore was a convenience. When Mrs. Wesley visited Leeds, one of these rooms, to save expense, was occupied by a number of labouring men; and in going to her apartment in the evening she had to pass through the room where these weary unpolished men were sleeping. This un-

toward circumstance shocked her delicacy more than anything that she met with in her new mode of life."*

This incident enables us to realise the kind of provision made for the itinerant preacher at that time. Visiting the old Methodist chapel in the Horsefair, Bristol, in 1892, I saw rooms provided for the same purpose. They were prophets-chambers of the plainest description.

In a letter written at the close of the year 1751, John Wesley clearly states his views on what he believed to be the right method of preaching, and its results. The letter is important in its bearing upon the preaching of to-day. It is not known to whom it was addressed.

"London, December 20th, 1751.

My Dear Friend,

I think the right method of preaching is this. At our first beginning to preach at any place, after a general declaration of the love of God to sinners, and his willingness that they should be saved, to preach the law, in the strongest, the closest, the most searching manner possible.

After more and more persons are convinced of sin, we may mix more and more of the gospel, in order to beget faith, to raise into spiritual life those whom the law hath slain. I would not advise to preach the law without the gospel, any more than the gospel without the law. Undoubtedly both should be preached in their turns; yea both at once, or both in one. All the conditional promises are instances of this. They are law and gospel mixed together.

In this manner, not only my brother and I, but Mr. Maxfield, Nelson, James Jones, Westall, and Reeves, all preached at the beginning. By this preaching, it pleased God to work those mighty effects in London, Bristol, Kingswood, Yorkshire, and Newcastle. By means of this, twenty-nine persons received remission of sins in one day at Bristol only; most of them while I was opening and enforcing our Lord's Sermon on the Mount. In this manner John Downes, John Bennet, John Haughton, and all the other Methodists preached, till James Wheatley came among them, who never was clear, perhaps not sound, in the faith. According to his understanding was his preaching; an unconnected rhapsody of unmeaning words, like Sir John Suckling's verses,

'Smooth and soft as cream,

In which was neither depth nor stream.'

The change he has introduced has done great harm to David Trathem, Thomas Webb, Robert Swindells, and John Maddern; all of whom are but shadows of what they were. It has likewise done great harm to hearers as well as preachers, diffusing

*Jackson, Vol. 1-588.

among them a prejudice against the scriptural, Methodist manner of preaching Christ, so that they can no longer hear the plain old truth, with profit or pleasure, nay, hardly with patience. The 'gospel preachers,' so-called, corrupt their hearers, and they vitiate their taste. They feed them with sweatments, till the genuine wine of the Kingdom seems quite insipid to them. Meantime their appetite is destroyed, so that they can neither retain nor digest the pure milk of the word.

According to the constant observations I have made, in all parts of England and Ireland, preachers of this kind spread death, not life, among their hearers. This was the case when I went last into the North. For some time before my coming, John Downes had scarce been able to preach at all; the three others in the round were such as style themselves 'gospel preachers.' When I came to review the societies, with great expectation of finding a vast increase, I found most of them lessened by one third. Of those that remained, the far greater number in every place, were cold, weary, heartless, and dead. Such were the blessed effects of this new method of *preaching Christ*.

On the other hand, when, on my return, I took an account of the societies in Yorkshire, chiefly under the care of John Nelson, one of the *old* way, I found them all alive, strong, and vigorous of soul, believing, loving, and praising God their Saviour, and increased in number from eighteen hundred, or nineteen hundred, to upwards of three thousand. These had been continually fed with wholesome food. From the beginning they had been taught both the law and the gospel. 'God loves *you*; therefore love and obey *Him*. Christ died for *you*; therefore die to sin. Christ is risen; therefore rise in the image of God. Christ liveth evermore; therefore live to God, till you live with Him in glory!

So *we* preached; and so *you* believed. This is the scriptural way, the *Methodist* way, the true way. God grant we may never turn therefrom, to the right hand or to the left I am my dear friend, your

Ever affectionate brother,

JOHN WESLEY."

We find John Wesley visiting Heptonstall on April 8th, 1752. He says, "We rode to Heptonstall, a little town on the round top of a very high mountain, with a steep descent on every side. I preached in a vacant place, on the brow of the hill. A captain who came from the minister's house, laboured much to divert the attention of the people, but none regarded him at all. When we went away he followed us down the hill. One took him by the hand and spoke a few words, on which he

shook like a leaf, and said, he hoped this would be a happy day for him, and that he should think more than he had done in the time past."

If anyone wishes to see an old town of the eighteenth century, let him go to Heptonstall. He will find a considerable portion of it just as Wesley saw it, and may stand in the house where Wesley was entertained. It was evidently a favourite resort of the great evangelist, for it is mentioned twenty times in his journal. On June 8th he pays another visit. Accompanied by the Rev. John Milner, of Chipping, he rode to Rough Lee, and says that he found a large, serious, and quiet congregation. "There have been no tumults since Mr White was removed. He was for some years a Popish priest. Then he called himself a Protestant, and had the living of Colne. It was his manner, first to hire and then head the mob, when they and he were tolerably drunk. But he drank himself first into a gaol, and then into his grave. In the evening I preached at Heptonstall. An attorney, who happened to be in the town, endeavoured to interrupt, relating some low, threadbare stories, with a very audible voice. But some of the people cut him short in the midst by carrying him quietly away.

"Tuesday 9th, I preached at six to abundance of people near Ewood, and with an uncommon blessing. Hence we rode to Todmorden. The minister was slowly recovering from a violent fit of palsy, with which he was struck immediately after he had been preaching a virulent sermon against the Methodists. I preached, on the side of a mountain, to a large and earnest congregation, and then went on to Miller Barn. I preached at six in the town; and I suppose all the inhabitants, young and old, were present. Nor have I often seen so large a congregation so universally and deeply affected. My lodging was not such as I should have chosen; but what providence chooses is always good. My bed was considerably underground, the room serving both for a bed-chamber and a cellar. The closeness was more troublesome at first than the coolness; but I let in a little fresh air, by breaking a pane of paper (put by way of glass) in the window; and then slept sound till the morning."

The old church of Heptonstall, roofless, and slowly falling into ruin, stands in the middle of a large graveyard. Many of those sleeping within its bounds must have heard the voice of Wesley proclaiming the gospel to the people of the town. An octagon-shaped chapel, opened by the venerable man, still serves the Methodist people as their house of prayer.

A second letter of Grimshaw to Mrs. Gallatin clearly proves that the Haworth round extended as far as Bolton, in Lanca-

shire, since he held himself responsible for expenditure on the part of the poor and feeble society in that town.

"Leeds, June 23rd, 1752.

Dear Madam,

I am busy, but I snatch a few moments to write you a short, instead of a long letter. Yours I received and with much cordial satisfaction. I'm rejoiced to discover so much, as I trust I do, of a Christian spirit in your letter. Dear Madam, keep close to our dearest Saviour, in the word and prayer, and your dear heart shall continually experience greater things than these. Draw near to me, says He, and I will draw near to you. Yea, I will be found of them that diligently seek me; and to him that hath shall be given and he shall have abundance. To such, and consequently to you, Christ is made of God, wisdom, righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. I am glad to hear you have fallen into the happy acquaintance of a catholic spirited, orthodox, spiritual divine, and I trust you and your dear Captain will reap much good to your precious souls by his conversation. I purpose to write a long letter soon.

In these parts the gospel continues to flourish, glory be to God for it. All things go well at Manchester. I was there about twelve days ago. But at Bolton Mr. Bennet has lately made a great rupture upon account of some discord in principles. He has torn away sixty persons from about ninety. (Here the letter is mutilated and I must connect the parts by the general sense). There is some uneasiness between the divided parties, but God has all hearts in His hands, and I hope will bring good out of the evil. In relation to the few that still adhere to us, and in their behalf, I am a beggar to you and your friends. These few sheep are very nearly sixty pounds in debt by reason of a preaching house they are building, and not finished yet. They are not all of them worth (paper damaged) pounds. They are not able to make their creditors security for (damaged) or for many years, if even to pay the principal. I desire your benevolence, and your interest among your friends any time between now and Michaelmas. It's the first time I've turned beggar to you. And for my part I will look upon it as done to myself. For Christ Jesus' sake I beseech your best endeavours for them. My sincerest respects to my dear Captain. Pray for me and I will pray for you both. Sweet Jesus bless you. Pray excuse rambling writing. Pray write soon and often. Pray remember me to the Quarter Master's wife—I forget her name.

I'm your affectionate friend, and

Obliged Humble Servant,

W. GRIMSHAW."

From the next letter to Mrs. Gallatin it is evident that she had liberally responded to Grimshaw's appeal on behalf of Bolton:—

"Dear Mrs. Gallatin,

To-day, upon my coming out of the preaching room at Keighley, I noticed the favour of your very kind letter.

'Tis a pity my very dear friends should suffer so considerable a loss at the hand of the agent of the regiment: but the dear Saviour, in Whose hands you have reposed the care of your precious souls has only permitted this cross for a trial of your faith and patience. Therefore, patiently and thankfully bear it, and He will, someway or other as He sees best, make it redound to your benefit. He makes all things work together for the good of them that fear Him. That dear Lord Who freely delivered and gave Himself for us, how will He not freely with Himself give us all things?

"I most heartily thank you for your generous present: I must say I blame you for calling it your mite. 'Tis a very considerable token of your respect for poor, unworthy me, who am little deserving of the regard of so good a benefactor. 'Tis in my sincere conception a sufficient proof also of your love for God, and likewise of your sympathy for the exceeding poverty of our brethren at Bolton. You will, I dare say, present my grateful respects to dear Mrs. Hall, assuring her that I acknowledge myself extremely obliged to her for her kind contribution. I think it was this morning that I was wishing with myself, as I lay in bed, for nearly such a sum as your very kind benefaction and Mrs. Hall's amount to make up a sum which I must shortly pay in the Bolton affair. Nay I was questioning with myself, and fearing lest I should not be able to advance the intended payment in time,—therefore I am now amazingly engaged in praise to God and prayer for you both, to see my uneasiness so soon and so fully removed. The Lord be praised for all HIS goodness, and may He restore tenfold into both your bosoms for the loan you have given Him; for inasmuch as you have done it to His little ones, without doubt He will approve of it as done to HIMSELF.

"Thanks be to the Lord of the vineyard, the gospel work continually spreads round about us. I have the honour from my Lord to be fully employed. Nay, I bless God, I've more work than I can do. To-day I have preached four times to large congregations. All hands are full, and several more are wanted. You and Mrs. Hall will praise the Lord for this. I persuade myself also that whilst the Lord is so liberally replenishing these parts, my dear Captain and you are the tender care of the same common and most gracious Benefactor, and

that you daily drink of the same waters of life freely. Sweet Jesus bless you, bless you, bless you, both with all spiritual and temporal blessings in Christ Jesus. I wish you the happiness of a speedy and prosperous march southward and heavenward. Tender my sincerest respects to my dear Captain, and please to make the same acceptable to yourself from, Madam, your unfeigned, obliged, and very humble servant. Let me not forget your maids. W. M. GRIMSHAW."

Halifax also owed its first chapel largely to Mr Grimshaw. He made a liberal advance of money, which, together with a sum lent by Mr. Wm. Greenwood, of Mixenden, amounted to £300. A plot of ground, in Church Lane, was purchased of W. Prescott, Esq., of Clare Hall, and the chapel was opened in 1752. The preaching house was made over to six trustees,—Titus Knight, Thomas Dickenson, Richard Booth, Blakey Spencer, Jeremiah Swift, and John Hallowell. For a certain time the chapel was consigned to those who had advanced the money, by way of security. A small gallery was erected on one side of the chapel, and the whole formed a comfortable place of worship, measuring on the outside, fourteen yards by ten. The funds did not allow of the structure being underdrawn, which occasionally put the congregation to inconvenience. This chapel was afterwards converted into cottages, in one of which the well-known Jonathan Saville lived. On the east side of the chapel was a dwelling house, which for some time was occupied by Titus Knight. As yet a travelling preacher did not reside at Halifax, but accommodation was afforded for one, while he remained a night in the town, on his circuit round. John Hallowell lived in the house for several years, that the wants of the preacher might be properly attended to.

An heroic act connected with this chapel is worth recording. In February, 1786, about midnight, it was found to be on fire. A fire engine was brought, but owing to the violence of the flames, near approach seemed impossible. After a painful suspense of several minutes, Mr. Joseph Bramley, a woollen draper in the town, stepped forward, and seizing the hose of the fire engine, rushed into the chapel, and ascended the pulpit. A general feeling of apprehension pervaded the crowd, the roof at the east end being apparently ready to give way. Mr. Bramley, however, maintained his post and the engine was worked. Thinking he could better subdue the fire, he passed from the pulpit to the front of the side gallery, where he stood enveloped in smoke, the flames well-nigh enclosing him. A shudder passed through the crowd when at intervals they beheld his dark form delineated by the bright

blaze; but there he stood! His shoes were burnt from his feet, his toes were even scorched by the intense heat, but the dauntless hero shrunk not. His perilous situation gave him good command of the flames, and after they were reduced, others ventured into the chapel, and the fire was quenched; not, however, before the greater part of the gallery had been consumed, many of the windows burnt out, and the chapel otherwise materially injured.

Mr. Bramley was neither a member of society, nor an attendant at the chapel; nay, he was a relative of the man who struck Wesley on the face as previously narrated. Many of the inhabitants also, whose prejudices against the cause were strong, rendered the most timely assistance, and were among the first to prevent the destruction of the chapel. Nor did they rest here, but voluntarily joined in subscribing for its restoration, and a sum of money more than sufficient for the purpose was speedily realised.

Liturgical controversy, in this early period of Methodist history, disturbed the peace of Yorkshire Methodists; but owing to their sturdy resistance it was of brief continuance. Wesley's abridgment of the Book of Common Prayer was introduced into all the chapels in the Halifax circuit in 1786. The congregation in the town had always shown an attachment to the establishment, but this could not be said with regard to the country, the congregations there being unused to attend church, and therefore unacquainted with the prayers. Thus, while their adoption was hailed with delight in the town, the country places were generally averse to them, and especially when read by Mr. Allen, in surplice and bands. At the close of the year the use of this abridgment was discontinued.

On October 16th, 1752, the ninth Conference was held in Bristol. At this time it was agreed that the preachers should receive a stipend of £12 per annum, in order to provide themselves with necessaries. Before this period, the stewards of each society supplied the preachers with what they wanted, so that they received no money save voluntary gifts from individuals, and a little from the stewards to pay for turnpikes and other travelling expenses. The consequence was, some popular preachers had abundance, while others were comparatively destitute. By this regulation the evil was remedied. But it was some time before this rule was universally adopted. In the year 1762 there was no such allowance in the York circuit. In the year 1764, in the Norwich circuit, the practice was to divide the love-feast money among the preachers, which was very little indeed. And in the year 1765, a deputation from the York circuit attended at Manchester, in order to plead

against the *large* sum of twelve pounds a year; but they were over-ruled, and it was finally and universally established. At the Conference of 1800 the following Minute was passed: "We recommend it to every Quarterly Meeting, where it is not done, to raise the preacher's stipend to four pounds a quarter."

To some of the preachers who travelled in the Haworth round, the application for clothing to the stewards was very distasteful. One of these was Benjamin Beanland, who, when he had nearly worn out the clothes in which he had set out, would not condescend to ask for more. He made this a pretext for leaving the work, and returned home again, saying, "Sooner than be damned for debt, he would work hard, and thus provide himself with what he wanted." On one occasion, after he had preached in Mr. Grimshaw's kitchen, the vicar of Haworth embraced him and said, "The Lord bless thee, Ben; this is worth a hundred of my sermons." This agrees with the statement of Atmore, that "He was a very sensible man, and possessed of uncommon ministerial gifts, so that he was a most delightful preacher. He was called to endure grievous sufferings for the truth's sake. He had many narrow escapes and wonderful deliverances; but at that time had such firm confidence in God, that the wicked were never permitted to do him any harm." For such a man to leave the work greatly displeased the Lord, and that which he so much feared, and by human prudence endeavoured to prevent, came awfully upon him, for after all his industry and economy, he was actually *cast into prison for debt!* He lived for many years afterwards in a state of extreme poverty and distress; and what was still worse, there is too much reason to fear that he also became vain in his imagination, followed the evil example of Demas, and lost that sweet savour of religion which he had once so happily enjoyed. It is remarkable that he frequently attempted to rise, and shake himself from the dust; that he often endeavoured to recover his ministerial gifts; but that God Whom he had so greatly dishonoured, would not permit this; and he ended his days very suddenly, in great obscurity, a monument of the just displeasure of Almighty God against those who desert the path of duty.

I could relate more recent cases where, for business reasons, increase of wealth, and political considerations, preaching was first partially discontinued, and then given up entirely; with the result of lamentable spiritual decline, loss of interest in sacred themes, and of influence in the church of God and over the ungodly. No calling is so high, no theme so grand, as that of the gospel preacher; and whatever he may

substitute for it, he must live on a much lower level than the man who is being constantly inspired by the study and exposition of Holy Scripture.

In the month of October, 1752, Whitefield again visited Haworth in connection with a Yorkshire preaching tour, and thousands flocked twice and thrice a day to hear the word of life, so that sometimes he scarcely knew whether he was on earth or in heaven. He says, "A gale of Divine influence has everywhere attended the word. God favours us with weather, and I would fain make hay while the sun shines. It is a pity to go into winter quarters, so long as the work can be done in the fields. Fain would I spend and be spent for the good of souls. This is my meat and drink."

On February 19th, 1753, Whitefield wrote to Grimshaw, "Rev. and very dear Sir, At present I have a cold and fever upon me; but I preach on, hoping one day or another to die in my work. We have had a blessed winter. Many have been added to our flock. Next week I intend to lay the first brick of our new Tabernacle. I am looking up for direction about my removal. Which are the best seasons for the North? I should be glad to know speedily. Have you the first account you wrote of your conversion? Or have you leisure to draw up a short narrative of the rise and progress of the work of God in your parts? A dear Christian minister in Scotland is about to publish two volumes relative to the late awakenings in various places. Such things should be transmitted to posterity; in heaven all will be known. Thanks be to God that there is such a rest remaining for His people! I am too impatient to get at it; but who can help longing to see Jesus? I wish you much, yea, very much prosperity."

The minister to whom allusion is made was the Rev. John Gillies, D.D., minister of the College Church, Glasgow, who in 1754 published "Historical Collections relating to Remarkable periods of the Success of the Gospel." In 1761, Gillies published an appendix in which a letter from Grimshaw appears, dated July 19th, 1754, which had arrived too late for the original volume; probably in response to Whitefield's request.

Another letter of Grimshaw's to Mrs. Gallatin, full of interesting detail respecting places and persons, must now be given. It is written from Smith House, Lightcliffe, the residence of a Mrs. Holmes. Mrs. Holmes was a lady of property, and of deep piety, whose house and purse were always open to all servants of the Lord, without regard to sect or party;—especially the Moravians, for whose comfort she built

a house. From this letter, and Wesley's Journal, it is evident that Grimshaw and Wesley were welcome visitors. In 1824 this house was still standing.

"Smith House, April 12th, 1753.

Dear Madam,

It was with much pleasure that I met with the favour of your kind letter the last Lord's Day. As I had heard nothing from you, nor concerning you, by anyone, since I wrote my last to you; or otherwise you had heard from me before now. Last week I was at Manchester and Bolton, with Mr. and Mrs. Wesley. In both places the work of God prospers greatly, especially in Manchester; they are two hundred and fifty in society there, and this summer must enlarge the preaching house as much again as it is. In Bolton differences heal, unity is a restoring, several revolvers in the rupture occasioned by Mr. Bennet are returned to us; but he himself has quite left us. In Chester there is a wonderful stirring up. All around us in general we have numerous congregations. New doors are frequently opening. Lately many souls in our societies are gone rejoicing home to Jesus.

Mr. John is gone round through Whitehaven, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Berwick, Newcastle, etc.; and purposes to be at York the 9th of May. I brought Mrs. Wesley and her daughter with me from Bolton to Leeds, where I left them at Miss Norton's the day before yesterday. My hands are too full to wait upon you in less time than a month, conveniently; but I purpose, if our dear Lord permit, to wait upon you at Mr. Wesley's coming to York, or shortly after. I hear also, and I am glad to hear it, from dear Mrs. Fanshaw (with whom I had almost forgot to tell you I lodged, and whose soul I trust prospers well in the Lord) that you purpose to spend a month, perhaps, at Manchester, in a little time. Pray be so kind as to let me know when you go thither, and I will meet you; nay, if possible, let me know if you pass through either Halifax or Rochdale on your way thither, and I will endeavour to go along with you to Manchester—I'll be your chaplain. Mrs. Wesley was with me when I received yours; I let her read it and she rejoiced, having told me that she had seen (I think she said) the letter I wrote to you in London.

"But after all, dear Madam, I hope your dear soul experiences not a little of the riches of the grace and goodness of our Heavenly Father towards us poor sinners, thro' the blood, righteousness, and Spirit of His dear Son, our dear Saviour. I believe He has begun a good work in you, and I trust He will carry it on and accomplish it. Only, I beseech you, watch unto

prayer, and continue in the same, yea, pray, read, meditate, self-examine; pray and contemplate continually. O you have glorious leisure for it. And where our Lord gives He requires. Sweet Jesus bless my Captain. Sweet Jesus bless you both. Remember me kindly to him. Excuse bad writing and bad paper, for 'tis the best I have here, I am travelling.

WM. GRIMSHAW.

17th Dragoons are joined with us at Manchester. Dear Mrs. Holmes, of whom you may have heard, with whom I now am, desires to be kindly remembered by you, and begs you will favour her with your company in your way to Manchester."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE Conference of 1753 was held in Leeds from the 22nd to the 24th of May. Grimshaw was present, as also these preachers who had gone out of the Haworth round into the itinerant ministry;—Jonathan Maskew, Thomas Mitchell, and Jonathan Catlow. Among the local preachers attending that Conference were three from the Haworth round; Thomas Colbeck, Thomas Lee, and Wm. Greenwood. The case of married preachers had to be seriously considered. The following questions and answers will show the position, and what was done to meet it.

“May 24th. Q. 4. What are those hardships upon the preachers which it is in our power to remove?

A. One of the greatest is that which lies on the married preachers. There is no provision for their wives.

Q. 5. Ought they not to be careful how they bring this upon themselves by marrying hand over head?

A. Undoubtedly they ought. Therefore any preacher who marries without consulting his ministers, or his brethren, should not take it amiss that he is then left to himself to provide for his wife how he can.

Q. 6. But if a preacher do consult them first, and still if he marry one that has nothing?

A. He must be content to return to his temporal business, and so commence as local preacher.

Q. 7. That the societies may the more readily assist the married preachers, ought not their wives to be as exemplary as possible?

A. Certainly they ought. In particular, they ought never to be idle, and constantly to attend the morning preaching.

Q. 8. But how may they have what is needful with the least trouble?

A. 1. Let the assistant inquire what each preacher's wife wants at every quarterly meeting. 2. Let those wants be supplied, first of all, out of the common stock. 3. Let a letter be wrote to all the societies on this head.”

The circuits, including Wales and Ireland, were twelve, and the preachers appointed to them were thirty-nine. Haworth was number eight, and had as its preachers, Jonathan Maskew, John Whitford, Enoch Williams, Joseph Jones, William Shent,

and John Edwards. Jonathan Maskew and William Shent have already been noticed at length. Of Messrs. Whitford and Williams little can be gleaned.

John Whitford is once incidentally mentioned in John Wesley's Journal. Charles names him thrice as a separatist, dividing societies, and setting up an independent congregation, which gave him similar trouble to that which he had created among the Methodists. This division was made while in the Haworth round, or immediately after, as he left the connexion, according to Myles, in 1754, and C. Wesley met him at Bolton, in Lancashire, where probably he was located. See J. Wesley's Journal, April 21st, 1755.

Of Enoch Williams, Atmore says,—“He was very pious, and deeply devoted to God, and was a faithful and successful preacher of the gospel; but the hardships he was called to endure proved too much for his constitution, and soon brought him to the house appointed for all living.” Memorial 508

Joseph Jones began to travel as an itinerant preacher in 1744. Very little can be learnt respecting him save that he was eminent for piety, and in such favour with Wesley as to be made his travelling companion for several years. In the course of his ministry he was taken very ill, at Bradford, and it was generally expected that he would die. He was so unspeakably happy in God, that many persons visited him that they might hear him speak of the things of God, and were greatly edified by his heavenly conversation. About 1760 he settled in Somersetshire, where he became a farmer, but retained his piety, and continued to exercise his talent as a local preacher for several years, and died in peace, rejoicing in hope of the glory of God.

Of the fifth preacher in the Haworth round in 1753, we have more information. John Edwards was a native of Ireland, and at an early period of his life became a partaker of the great salvation. Myles tells us that he commenced to travel in 1747. He was a very pious man, and an acceptable preacher; and his ministry was blessed to the people among whom he laboured. In the course of his itinerant labours he visited various parts of England, Wales, and Ireland. At one time while he was residing in Dublin, a party of rude fellows, called the Ormond Boys, seized him as he was returning from preaching at a village, and declared they would throw him over the bridge into the Liffey. This was observed by an opposite party, who had assumed the appellation of Liberty Boys, and resided on the other side of the river. They encountered his assailants and rescued Edwards out of their hands. Thus God preserved his life and made the wrath of man to praise Him.

At another time, after preaching out of doors, a furious mob of the White Boys beset the house into which he had entered, and threatened to burn it to the ground. There was but one way of escape, and that was through a window opening upon the garden belonging to a justice of the peace, who was a bitter persecutor of the Methodists. Through this window Edwards was let down into the garden. Here he stood for some time in great apprehension that, if observed, he would be charged with having broken into the garden for bad purposes, and thereby both religion and himself might be injured. At length he ventured to knock at the door, asked for the magistrate, and being introduced, ingenuously stated the circumstances of his distressed condition. This had such an effect upon the gentleman's mind that he protected and entertained him at his house two days in a hospitable manner.

Some time after, a number of soldiers brought to the knowledge of God under the ministry of Edwards, who had been removed to another town, requested him to come and preach there. On his way thither he was met by some of them and informed that the people of the place threatened to take his life, and they could not answer for his safety. Edwards, however, was not to be dissuaded from his purpose; for, on his arrival, he immediately preached in the street in the presence of the Mayor and other important persons, who prevented any disturbance. After the service the Mayor invited him to breakfast, with several of the principal inhabitants, who told him they were glad he had come, and hoped the Methodists would succeed in their endeavours to reform the town. They also subscribed to the support of regular preaching in a room, and soon a society was formed, to the great joy of the poor soldiers.

About the year 1755, Edwards, having embraced Calvinistic doctrines, left the Methodists, and built the White Chapel, in Leeds, where he ministered for more than thirty years. The Rev. John Berridge heard him preach in Whitefield's Tabernacle on September 2nd, 1763, and describes him as "a sensible man, who seems alive, but a wonderful admirer of method, and one who has swallowed John Calvin whole at a mouthful." He was very useful, universally respected, and at his death, about 1784, was greatly lamented by his flock.

In 1753 we have Charles Wesley's distinct testimony to the pre-eminence of his brother as the leader of the Methodists; but it also exhibits his inability to see the permanence, and far-reaching issues, of the Methodist revival. John Wesley, at the end of 1753, was supposed to be dying of consumption. Charles had been hastily summoned from Bristol to see him

before he died. In view of that event he says, Dec. 4th, 1753, "I told the society on Sunday night that I neither could nor would stand in my brother's place if God took him to Himself; for I had neither a body, nor a mind, nor talents, nor grace for it." His real disposition and conviction was toward the settled ministry and ecclesiastical order of the Established Church.

After the close of the Conference of 1753, John Wesley remained in Yorkshire, and on Tuesday, June 29th, says: "I preached at Keighley, where the loving spirit and exemplary behaviour of one young man, has been the means of convincing all the town, except those of his own household. Wednesday, 30th, I rode to Haworth, where Mr. Grimshaw read prayers, and I preached to a crowded congregation. But having preached ten or eleven times in three days, besides meeting the societies, my voice began to fail. Not that I was hoarse at all, but I had not strength to speak. However, it was restored at Heptonstall in the afternoon, so that the whole congregation could hear. When shall we learn to take thought only for the present hour? Is it not enough, that God gives help when we want it?"

Thursday, 31st. I rode through a delightful vale to General Wood, near Todmorden. The sun was burning hot, but they set up a little tent for me, resembling that I had at Glasgow. The people stood or sat on the grass round about. The afternoon was the hottest I can remember in England, so that by the time we came to Bolton, I was fit for nothing but to lie down. However, in the evening my strength was renewed, and we rejoiced together in God our Saviour."

The young man in Keighley, to whom Mr. Wesley alludes, accords closely in character with Mr. Thomas Colbeck. Mr. Booth, one of the early travelling preachers, says "that Mr. Colbeck was one of the most amiable characters in the county of Yorkshire." Such also was the testimony of Mr. Grimshaw, given in a very characteristic way. Edward Sunderland, a leader in the first society, and barber to the preachers in those days, related the following anecdote. He was one day shaving Mr. Grimshaw and several preachers at Mr. Colbeck's house. As he rubbed the lather on Mr. Colbeck's face, Mr. Grimshaw said, "I tell thee what Tommy, an ounce of grace on thy face will shine as much as a pound on mine." Mr. Grimshaw was certainly no beauty. He had a plain, rugged face, which doubtless could light up under the influence of his genial nature, but was quite in harmony with his determined and zealous character. This anecdote, in conjunction with the one respecting Grimshaw's

defence of Colbeck at Roughlee, confirm the report that the latter was a mild and gentle man of benignant aspect. Mr. Colbeck was held in great esteem by his neighbours for his kindness, honesty, and uprightness in all his dealings; hence he could face his townsmen, and frequently preached to large congregations in the open air in Keighley.

Wesley had so high an opinion of Colbeck's talents and character as to place him on the list of itinerants at the London Conference of 1748. He did not however take a circuit. We find him attending the Bristol Conference of 1758 as a local preacher, or half itinerant, a phrase used at the time to designate a class of helpers who sometimes itinerated several months together, supplying in any circuit at Wesley's pleasure.

Although Colbeck did not go out to travel through the kingdom, he had a wide field of usefulness in the old Haworth round. Samuel Botts, a Methodist preacher in close connection with the Colbeck family, writing twenty-two years after his death, says, "For many years he was a faithful and indefatigable local preacher, and it pleased God to crown his labours with great success. His memory is still precious to many in those parts, who speak of him with the greatest respect, and bless God that ever they heard the truth of the gospel from his lips."

In company with a few like-minded men, he was the means of introducing Methodism into the villages and towns for many miles round; and he was one of the principal trustees for most of the early chapels in a very extensive tract of country. He was also a frequent companion of the Rev. W. Grimshaw in his evangelistic tours. No other member of the Keighley society did so much for the Methodists, in providing for public worship, as will be seen later in this history. Also as the successor of Mr. Grimshaw in the stewardship of the round, from the time of Grimshaw's death, he deserves a premier place among the laymen who have held that office. Mr. Colbeck's entries in the circuit book cease with October 7th, 1779.

His successor makes one with reference to Mr. Colbeck's son, as follows. "Mr. Hindmarsh's expenses to Conference, being at Bristol, something interfering he was obliged to go in the carriage £4 14s." This is explained in a marginal note:—"T. Colbeck being to carry to Kingswood School was reason of Mr. H. going in carriage." A journey to Bristol by coach on the part of a Methodist preacher would be thought such an extravagance as to need careful explanation.

Mr. Colbeck died on November 5th in that year, having caught a fever through visiting a fever-stricken person. He was warned not to go near the bed as the case was a very bad one. He therefore knelt down and prayed in the doorway, the worst position he could have taken,—his physician afterwards told him—caught the fever, went home, and on the 5th November, 1779, died at the age of fifty-six. In a corner of the Keighley Parish church-yard, where the members of several Methodist preachers families rest, I once saw part of a tombstone inscribed with the good man's name. It has disappeared and no memorial is found even in the pages of the Methodist Magazine, where contemporaries have a record. No sketch has appeared in print, but his place in the great revival is that of the first who gave to Methodism a local habitation in Keighley, and I trust this collection of fragments regarding him will preserve him permanently from oblivion.

As a class leader Mr. Colbeck occupied a prominent place. He had two large classes under his care, one of which was held in the house of Mary Denbigh, an unmarried woman living in Waggon Fold, south-east of the market place. She kept a school and numbered among her scholars (when a boy) the Rev. Thos. Bartholomew. Mary Denbigh was a remarkably pious woman, and very zealous for the prosperity of Zion. Her assistance was invaluable to Mr. Colbeck, whom, at his death, she succeeded as leader. She visited people who had no concern for religion, reasoning with them on the necessity of giving themselves to God, and endeavouring to persuade both men and women to join the class.

In the list of members of the Keighley society from 1777 to 1792, the name of Mrs. Knowlton appears as meeting in class, first with Mr. Colbeck, and afterward with Mr. Illingworth his successor in the second class. The Rector of Keighley at that time was the Rev. C. Knowlton, inducted 1753, and it is probable that this was his wife, as she is distinguished from the other members by the designation of *Mrs.* whereas only their christian names are given. It is evident that the relations of the Established Church and Methodism were very friendly during the rectorate of Mr. Knowlton for the Methodist Sunday School was the only one, and was attended by children of all denominations. Mr. Knowlton was rector from 1753 to 1814, sixty-one years.

Mr. Colbeck was also of great spiritual service to John Whitaker, who was afterwards circuit steward, and a very eminent Methodist in the Keighley and Otley circuits for about sixty-eight years. When about twelve years of age John Whitaker was deeply con-

vinced of sin, and at sixteen cast in his lot with the Methodists. He was put apprentice to a wealthy man at Rishworth Hall. Here he suffered great persecution and every effort was made, both by threat and promise, to sever him from the Society. Young Whitaker frequently got out of a window and came to Keighley that he might talk with Mr. Colbeck. Their place of meeting was the road between Keighley and Stockbridge, where they walked backward and forward in earnest conversation. Mr. Colbeck advised him to get a certain tract and place it where his master would find it. This he did; the tract was read, and his master and mistress became favourable to Methodism, and allowed him to attend the meetings.* It was no small thing thus to help a man of whom an intimate friend, the Rev. James Wood, could say at the close of life, "I am aware of some difficulty in giving a fair representation of a departed friend; yet I must say, whatever defects were found in Mr. J. Whitaker, they were not known to me; nor did I ever know a more spotless character, as a husband, a parent, a master, a man of business, or a friend, in all the circle of my acquaintances."

In the autumn of 1753 Mr. Whitefield paid a visit to Haworth, in connection with a preaching tour, which he thus describes in a letter dated London, Sept. 26th: "During the last three months I have been enabled to travel about 1200 miles, and to preach about 180 sermons to many, very many, thousands of souls. More glorious seasons I never saw. My last excursion has been to York, Lincolnshire, Rotherham, Sheffield, Nottingham, and Northampton, where, I believe, near 10,000 came to hear last Lord's-day."†

Whitefield's allusion to Haworth is extremely brief, but in a letter to Mrs. Gallatin, dated Sept. 19th, 1753, Grimshaw thus refers to the event:

"Haworth, Sept. 19th, 1753.

Dear Madam,

I wonder I have not heard from you once since I took leave of you at Manchester. Mrs. Holmes told me you was in good health when there, and I hope these lines will visit you in the same. We have lately had Mr. Whitefield in these parts, and since, I suppose, you have had him at York. Here, and in general everywhere about us, he had more numerous congregations than ever before. In my church he assisted me in administering the Lord's Supper to as many communicants as sipped away 35 bottles of wine within a gill. It was a high day indeed.

*Probably related to Mr. C. D. Hardcastle by my father.

†Whitefield, 2-315.

A Sabbath of Sabbaths. I think shortly of waiting upon you and fulfilling the last part of my promise to you at York.

The day is far spent, the night is at hand; and yet this is our accepted time. Now let us freely part with all, that we may freely have all in Christ. His Spirit, His blood, His righteousness, His love, His grace, His glory, and that for evermore in faith, in hope, in union, communion, and divine assurance,—this is heaven begun on earth; this is the Kingdom of God within us. In comparison of the very least perception and glimpse whereof, all the glories of this world, all the imaginable treasures and pleasures of it, are mere dung and dross. To us to live, O let it be Christ, and then to die will be our everlasting gain. Then we shall never grudge our having pluck'd out a right eye, or cut off a right hand or right foot. Let us then determine to know nothing, possess and follow nothing, in heart, lip, and life, but Jesus. Jesus, Jesus and Him crucified. 'Tis true we may, nay, are sure to be, exposed to the contempt and reproach of the world. But no matter, a day is at hand, when those that laugh at us now shall mourn unpitied then. Watch unto prayer and continue therein. I hope the dear Captain is well; I suppose he is at Leeds, though I've not heard of him lately. Pray for me, and I'll pray for you.

WM. GRIMSHAW."

I have several times seen the two large pewter flagons, holding about two quarts, used on these great sacramental occasions. They were kept in the vestry of the old church. Grimshaw bought them for the use of the church, in the year 1750. Immediately under the rim of the cup the following lines are engraved:—

" In *Jesus* we live, in *Jesus* we rest,
And thankful receive His dying bequest,
The Cup of *Salvation* His mercy bestows,
All, all from *His* passion our happiness flows."

On the flagon are these lines:—

" Blest *Jesus* what delicious fare,
How sweet *Thine* entertainments are;
Never did *Angels* taste above,
Redeeming grace or dying *Love*.

A.D. 1750."

The correspondence of Grimshaw with Mrs. Gallatin is continued in 1754 by another highly spiritual letter:—

"Haworth, May 10th, 1754.

Dear Sister,

For (think of it as you please) so I trust I may call you; this is the long letter I promised you. If any blessing occur to your precious soul from my pen or prayer, to us be the joy

and to our Saviour be the praise. Might grace be suspended, which God forbid, and nature indulged, I can never be better disposed that at present to sympathise with you, and condole your loss. For since the Lord called home your dear brother, He has called home my dear father. To be sure, the sadness of your brother's death is a circumstance extremely moving and regretting; but is it not the Lord? Let Him, therefore, do what seemeth Him good. Our loss I trust is their everlasting gain. Yet a little while, a few pulses more, and we shall overtake them again, and share with them and the rest of the Church triumphant in the eternal glories of heaven. I doubt not your brother's happiness. The Lord's arm is not shortened, neither can His truth or mercy fail. What He hath begun He will accomplish, and He can do great things in a moment.

"Come then, rather than sorrow as men without hope for them that sleep in Him, let us hail their happy change, and prepare with all speed to follow them. But you say, you are no sister in Christ. Why so? Surely, to go as low as I can with you, you have the seed of Divine life in you; your life is hid with Christ in God. If you are not a sensible born child of God (which I think you are), yet, surely, you are a child in embryo. The grain of mustard shall become a large tree. Christ is glorious, gracious soil to plant and grow in. Pray apply that excellent truth in your letter concerning your brother's state to yourself. 'If,' say you, 'the Lord had prepared him to receive it' (meaning the gospel) He would accomplish His own work before He called him hence.' Very true, and so I will warrant you, will He do with you. Do you believe, 'All things are possible to them that believe'? Believe and be saved. True, this is the Lord our Redeemer's work; and as He is the author, so is He the finisher of our faith.

"Permit me to give you the following advice, some of it extracted from the writings of a truly spiritual and worthy divine of the last century. In prosperity or adversity; in comforts or crosses; in consolations or terrors of conscience; in life or death, of yourself or your friends, &c., extract an unconquerable patience, resignation, and peace of soul from—Rom. viii., 18, 28, 32, 35, 37 and 39. Dear sister, treasure up in your bosom, and store these words as a jewel inestimable and infinitely surpassing all the glory and grandeur of this world. Pray tell dear Lady Huntingdon to do so too.

"Next I beseech, through the help of our dear Immanuel, which is ever at hand to them that call upon Him, labour to settle in your breast a true estimate of the sum, substance, life and marrow of the gospel of our dear Redeemer; that it con-

sisteth not in speculation, notion, opinion, form or mode of religion; but in the hidden man of the heart, Christ formed in us, the only hope of glory; the life and fire of God in our soul; a Kingdom within us, which is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, naturally and necessarily producing love, meekness, tender-heartedness, bowels of compassion, contentedness, moderation of passion, holy conduct of the tongue, abounding in works of mercy, special benevolence and bounty to God's people, love of our enemies, &c. . . . O happy are such souls as these, (I know all this in some measure, blessed be the Lord, by several years' sweet experience) yea blessed are the people that have thus the Lord for their God. Glory, glory, glory be to our dear Saviour for free grace.

"Again, dear sister, the more effectually to inforce my last advice, let me desire you to be mindful of your heavenly origin, your new birth, that you are born from above, and that your native home is the New Jerusalem, the City of God. That your glory is His face, and your company Himself and all the glorified host of heaven. The worldling's happiness, were all the globe his own and all the glories of it, is but a mere chimera, but yours is a most inestimable, immeasurable, eternal weight of glory.

"I bless the Lord His work still spreads and flourishes on all sides of us, and I also receive good accounts from various parts. You will favour me with an account how it goes at Norwich. Please to present my respects heartily to dear Mr. Gallatin; how glad could I be to see you both—when will that happy day come? Surely, if not here, eternally in heaven.

WM. GRIMSHAW."

On July 25th, 1754, entries again commence in the circuit book, and Mixenden pays £1 12s. 6d.

On October 24th, the first contribution, £2 5s. 10d., is brought from Keighley to the quarter board by Thos. Colbeck. He disbursed £10 8s. 1d., and from the following entry seems to have then become responsible for the first circuit debt. "Due this day (which is all we owe) to Mr. Thos. Colbeck £6 os. 2½d."

On July 25th, the names of two local preachers occur, who during following years took an active part in ministering the word in the Round:—Wm. Greenwood, of Mixenden, and Parson Greenwood, of Heptonstall. The former was invited by Wesley to attend the Leeds Conference of 1753; and the latter subsequently entered the itinerant ministry.

On January 23rd, 1755, Simonstone, near Padiham, sends 6s. 10d to the quarter board by Paul Greenwood, and Burley 3s. 6d This probably is Burnley, but it may be Burley-in-Wharfedale.

April 24th, Otley 5s., by Paul Greenwood. July 24th, Ludderden Dean, 7s. 6d., by John Coates. October 23rd, Haslingden, £2 os. 7d., by George Ramsbottom.

Grimshaw and Colbeck appear to have exercised a joint stewardship, for the balances remain sometimes with one, and sometimes with the other.

October 23rd. For Quarter Day Dinners, 3s. 6d. As at least six preachers and stewards were present, they spent the modest sum of sevenpence each. From subsequent entries this appears to have been the usual charge.

To three preachers, Jonathan Maskew, J. Hacking, and Parson Greenwood, 5s. each was paid; and for Jonathan Maskew's shirts and stockings, 14s. 10d.

Of John Hacking we have no account beyond the statement of Myles, that he became an itinerant in 1754, and retired from the work in 1760. His name appears in the Todmorden book, June 4th, 1751, with a charge of 1s. for a "night." Again, September 3rd, Night 1s. As this seems to have been the common charge for board and lodging, I take it that he was then preaching in the circuit. Oct. 12th, 1752, there is a saddle for John Hacking, 15s. Feb. 15th, 1753, waistcoat 3s., and "some cloth toward a riding coat, 5s." March 14th, coat making, 2s. 6d. August 28th, shoes, 5s. 3d.

In April 1755, John Wesley is again found in the Haworth Round. April 25th he says, "I preached near Todmorden. The people stood, row upon row, on the side of the mountain. They were rough enough in outward appearance, but their hearts were as melting wax.

"One can hardly conceive anything more delightful than the vale through which we rode from hence. The river ran through the green meadows on the right. The fruitful hills and woods rose on either hand. Yet here and there a rock hung over. At three in the afternoon I preached at Heptonstall, on the brow of the mountain. The rain began almost as soon as I began to speak. I prayed that, if God saw best, it might be stayed till I had delivered His word. It was so, and then began again. But we had only a short stage to Ewood.

"Saturday, 26th, I preached, at seven, to a large and serious congregation, and again at four in the afternoon. When I began, in a meadow near the house, the wind was so high I could hardly speak. But the winds too are in God's hands; in a few minutes that inconvenience ceased, and we found the Spirit of God breathing in the midst of us, so that great was our rejoicing in the Lord.

"Sunday, 27th. A little before I took horse, I looked into a room as I walked by, and saw a good old man bleeding almost

to death. I desired him immediately to snuff vinegar up his nose, and apply it to his neck, face, and temples. It was done, and the blood entirely stopped in less than two minutes.

“The rain began about five and did not intermit till we came to Haworth; notwithstanding which, a multitude of people were gathered together at ten. In the afternoon I was obliged to go out of the church, abundance of people not being able to get in. The rain ceased from the moment I came out, till I had finished my discourse. How many proofs must we have that there is no petition too little, any more than too great, for God to grant.

“ Monday 28th, I preached at Keighley”

From thence Wesley went on Tuesday to Bradford, and in the afternoon to Birstall.

CHAPTER XIV.

In 1755, the question of attending church, and receiving the sacrament of the Lord's Supper at the hands of the clergy alone, had reached an acute stage in the case of many of the lay preachers and members of society. They could not see the reasonableness of being exhorted to listen to careless and ungodly ministers; of receiving the emblems of Christ's passion at their unworthy hands, or of being entirely debarred from the ordinance where it was—as in some cases—absolutely refused them.

John Wesley saw their position, and honestly admitted their difficulties, and the conscientious nature of their scruples; but he was a staunch churchman, and extremely anxious not to form a new sect. Charles Wesley had altogether less charity and reasonableness, and was an ultra churchman in his whole treatment of the question; but for the firmness, tact, and Christian charity of his brother, he would have wrecked Methodism in this time of crisis. We are now sufficiently distant from the period to see how God, in His providence, guided and restrained all parties, until the inevitable separation was gradually brought about, and the Methodist preachers came to the performance of all the rites of a true section of Christ's Church. We can now see that the long restraint was one of the wisest means used by the Head of the Church to prevent the concentration of time and thought on questions of orders and organisation. The delay gave the world more than fifty years' experience of a ministry strictly designated *lay*, and confined to lines recognised as such. The results that followed, in conjunction with the ever increasing numbers and work of the local preachers, are a standing protest against all future ecclesiastical claims of an exclusive sacerdotal character. Reasonable as the position of the lay preachers may seem to us, yet an earlier bestowal of full ministerial status and functions would doubtless have caused severance between them and the clergy favourable to Methodism, who certainly had some weighty reasons to urge from the standpoint of their time.

The good vicar of Haworth, in a letter immediately before the Conference of 1755, held in Leeds, opens his mind fully on the question of separation from the establishment, to his friend, Mrs. Gallatin.

“Haworth, May 2nd, 1755.

Dear Madam,

I am both sorry and ashamed that you should have wrote thrice to me, and I so dilatory and ungrateful as not to have wrote once to you, tho' I only remember the reception of two letters since my last to you. The former I received a little before the Assizes at York,—permit me, however, to beg your pardon, and presume to obtain it.

“As to the Lay Preachers' new scheme, I've no relish for it, nor is it expedient, but rather evidently clogging our Connection with several grievous difficulties. Their main design, as I understand, is to take upon them the office of administering the Lord's Supper. But this, as I conceive, is not expedient; because few of the clergy deny this sacrament to our people. Nor is the reception of it from a carnal minister's hand any objection thereto, or any obstruction to the communicant's blessing, provided he receives in faith.

As to the difficulties attending their design—such an attempt cannot be countenanced without a manifest rupture with the established Church. We must then be declared Dissenters. The clamour and resentment of the clergy, etc., will then, and deservedly, be great against us; the work of God which has hitherto been greatly blessed in our hands, I fear, will then be greatly impeded. Moreover, such a design will be irreconcilable with various of Mr. Wesley's writings: and, for my part, should this scheme take place, I must leave the Methodists; for I am determined to live and die in close communion, a member and minister of the Church of England; for altho' I can by no means endure the doctrines and deportment of the clergy in general, yet I have no reason to quarrel with our Church. Her Articles, Homilies, Catechism, Liturgy, etc., for the main are orthodox and good. Methodism in substance is the same. I can harmoniously, as matters have hitherto been carried on, be a minister of our church and a Methodist preacher, and thus I could wish to live and die. But if my fellow labourers will needs be innovating, I must adhere to the former capacity, and decline the latter. Mr. John Wesley is now among us, I have conferred with him upon this affair, and he is as much against it as I am. Upon the whole I am apt to believe the event will be that the expounders of this scheme will be obliged to drop it, or be cast out by us. The matter, however, will be discussed in the Conference, and that begins on Tuesday next, at Leeds, you shall hear the result of it, God willing, in my next.

“I was at York in the Assize week, dined with Br. Baldock, and saw nothing but love and sincerity in him, tho' I think a

little unsettled in his mind. He does not constantly, as I was told, attend his class; and sometimes speaks in favour of Mr. Ingham's scheme, but truly an Antinomian I dare not call him. Dr. Cockburn and his lady, Mrs. Dawson, and Miss Hudson are apparently staunch Methodists. Mr. Williams, one of the vicars of the Minster, constantly in his gown attends preaching, and associates indiscriminately and unreservedly with all the lay preachers. He is a bold champion of the truth. There is a numerous congregation there. The work greatly flourishes in the city, and in preaching I found great liberty among them.

"And does my much esteemed friend expect to be encamped soon, and are there great preparations for war with you, and would you have me pray for peace? Oh, that God would hear me in this matter; but I believe or fear He will not. God has a controversy with this nation! The plague is begun, this preparation for war, the beginning of sorrows. The nation has nearly filled up the measure of her iniquities, and the Lord, I am bold to tell you, will shortly pour out the vials of His wrath upon a guilty land. Half an eye (as the saying is) will let you see this. Within these seven years, wars, rumours of wars, noises, lights, sights in the air, pestilence of cattle, earthquakes in divers places of the kingdom (O what havoc has one lately made near Thirsk in this county) and last, the wonderful progress the gospel still makes in the nation, all portend the approach of grievous calamities to our country. I desire you will make the man Christ Jesus your only hiding-place. This I am resolved to do. Here alone will be our only safety. All that shelter themselves here shall be safe from the approaching troubles. Could I persuade my dear friend to dispose of his commission? I could heartily wish it, were it not to deprive our gracious Sovereign of an experienced and useful officer at this dangerous juncture. But the will of the Lord be done! Pray present my unfeigned cordial respects to him. I'll remember you both before my Lord. All things go well with our societies. Congregations are numerous, new doors are opened. I can preach, or prate, or something, with pleasure twenty times a week. Glory be ascribed to my Lord for it.

I doubt not but you keep close to a crucified Saviour—that 'tis your care and prayer that He may be your only wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, and that He may be a Christ in you the hope of glory. May He of His infinite mercy grant it. Pray for me and I'll pray for you. I am your affectionate but ungrateful friend.—WM. GRIMSHAW."

Grimshaw was present at the Conference which met four days later. Charles Wesley and sixty-three preachers were also in attendance. John Wesley thus summarises the result. "The

point on which we desired all the preachers to speak their minds at large was, whether we ought to separate from the Church. Whatever was advanced on one side or the other, was sincerely and calmly considered; and on the third day we were all fully agreed in the general conclusion, that, whether it was lawful or not, it was no ways expedient."

In notes of the Conference of 1755, made by John Jones, one of the early preachers, there is a list of twelve half-itinerants, in which we find the names of Wm. Shent, Jonathan Maskew, and Enoch Williams. Also of "our chief local preachers," fifteen in number, two of whom are Thos. Colbeck and Titus Knight of this round.

The searching nature of Wesley's enquiries at these early Conferences, may be gathered from the following notes. Says Wesley, "At the close of the Conference I spoke thus: It has been affirmed that none of our itinerant preachers are so much alive as they were seven years ago. I fear many are not. But if so, they are unfit for the work, which requires much life. Otherwise your labour will be tiresome to yourself, and of little use to others. . . . I have several reasons to fear it is so with many of you; but let your own conscience be the judge. Who of you is exemplarily alive to God, so as to carry fire with him wherever he goes? Who of you is a pattern of self-denial, even in little things? Who of you drinks water? Why not? Who rises at four? Why not? Who fasts on Friday? Why not? Who has not four meals a day? Who goes through his work willingly and diligently? Who never on any account disappoints a congregation? &c."

The position toward the Church question will be further seen by the following letter. The Rev. W. Baddiley, a devoted minister at Hayfield, in Derbyshire, thus wrote to Wesley on June 7th, 1755. "Dear Sir, I would speak with regard to the case debated in your Conference at Leeds. . . . What can the event be, but settling in such places as seem most commodious to them, and then settling upon their lees? Has not this been the general bane of Scriptural Christianity? Has it not eaten out the life of religion, and caused the power of godliness to dwindle in Dissenters of every denomination? For who— who can bear ease and fulness of bread? I query much, if upon dissenting from the Established Church, the divisions and subdivisions of the Methodists among themselves would not exceed those of the Anabaptists in Germany."*

In the next letter to Mrs. Gallatin, we have Grimshaw in the character of medical adviser for the body, as well as pro-

*Methodist Magazine, 1779, p. 320.

found physician to the soul of his patient. In the latter capacity at any rate, from a sentence in brackets, he does not delineate experience he has not personally felt. He refers again to the topic debated in Conference,—separation from the Church, and indicates steps in that direction being taken in Leeds.

“Haworth, September 15th, 1755.

Madam,

Last Monday I received the favour of your kind letter. I think myself greatly obliged to you that you so willingly will give yourself the trouble to write to such a poor unworthy worm as I am; for such am I in God’s sight, however I am in yours. I am viler than the vilest of creatures. It likewise affords me pleasure, but O let my Lord have the praise of it, that my letters are in anywise profitable to your soul; it is indeed my desire they should be so, tho’ I am amazed when you tell me they are so.

“I am sorry and not sorry for your nervous complaint. As it is an affliction I am sorry for you, but as to some of its effects I am not sorry for you. Would you remove it? I dare say there is no such a thing. It will rather grow worse as you grow older. Your best helps however will be to abstain from all laxative and windy diet, particularly tea, coffee, and roots, and bath frequently for a season in a cold well, drinking chalybeates, especially the German spa waters. These will help you but not cure you. No, shall your life be shorter for your complaint? Nay verily—the Lord, as His word tells us, can bring good out of every evil, and so will He out of this: but because nervous cases have something in them peculiarly tending to promote religious impressions upon the mind. They naturally destroy all gaiety of disposition, all relish for the pleasures of the world, they fill the mind with pensive concern for the things of another world; they greatly befriend the soul in its desires and pursuits after holiness, grace, and glory eternal, and all the blessed means and exercises thereof. Such are some of the effects arising from relaxed and languid nerves. And therefore for this I am not sorry. My dear Lord has laid this clog to your foot to save you from rambling away from His fold, into a conformity with the world, and that your heart and affections may be wholly set (in the midst of an opulent fortune) on things above where He sits at the right hand of God.

“I could have wished to have seen in your last a few words relating to the present state of your soul that I might the better have adopted a paragraph to your case in this. Perhaps I may obtain that favour of you in your next. Otherwise, I fear I shall lose one great and main design of my conversation

by letters with you. In the meanwhile are we in Christ Jesus, new creatures, vessels of grace, temples of the living God, sons of God and heirs of eternal glory. This is a grand and glorious state. How should our faith, hope, confidence, and experimental assurance of such glorious privileges in the dear Emmanuel inspire our souls with a fervent love for Him, an unquenchable zeal for the illustration of His glory, the prosperity of His church, and the salvation of souls. To us it also belongs, yea, our dear Redeemer, as our reasonable service, most justly requires that without delay and reserve we should give up our bodies, souls, and spirits, a living sacrifice unto Him. God grant we may.

"Blessed be the Lord, His work still prospers and spreads in these parts. At York I hope the church flourishes. Mr. Cockburn is a champion in our Lord's cause—so is his lady. Mr. Johnson is lately and agreeably married and has left his master. Mr. Baldock and Mr. Elswick, I suppose, are almost Inghamites. The former lately got poisoned, but I hear recovered again.

"The design of administering the Ordinances, &c., by our preachers got seemingly quite quashed at the Leeds Conference, though since there appears an intention of resuming it there—insomuch that a rupture is expected in these societies in a little time. Miss Norton is said to be at the head of the separation, and she is building another place for preaching in, and Mr. Edwards is expected to be the minister there.

Paul Greenwood is in Cornwall, and I trust God is with him. He retains his old simplicity, and I hope is blessed in his labours. May the Lord send you more labourers into your part of His vineyard. My sincere respects pray present to Mr. Gallatin. Pray for me and I'll pray for you.

I am, your ever obliged and humble servant,

WM. GRIMSHAW.

P.S.—Pray to what post is Mr. Gallatin lately advanced? and will not this render a new form of directing my letters to you requisite?"

The above letter of Grimshaw shows that he was satisfied with the result of the Conference, but not that the question was finally settled. Charles Wesley had left Leeds with uncourtous abruptness, and the following fine letters from John Wesley cause us to thank God that the elder brother was the real leader of the Methodist revival.

"London, June 20th, 1755.

Dear Brother,

Did not you understand that they all promised, by Thomas

Walsh, not to administer even among themselves? I think that a huge point given up; perhaps more than they could give up with a clear conscience. They showed an excellent spirit. When I (not to say you) spoke once and again—spoke *satis pro imperio* (with sufficient authority), when I reflected on their answers, I admired their spirit and was ashamed of my own. The practical conclusion was, 'Not to separate from the Church! Did we not all agree in this? Surely, either you or I must have been asleep, or we could not differ so widely on a matter of fact! Here is Charles Perronet raving because his friends have given up all; and Charles Wesley because they have given up nothing; and I, in the midst, staring and wondering both at one and the other. I do not want to do anything more, unless I could bring them over to my opinion; and I am not in haste for that. Joseph Cownley says, 'For such and such reasons, I dare not hear a drunkard preach, or read prayers,' I answer, 'I dare'—but I cannot answer his reasons. Adieu!

J. WESLEY.*

What splendid toleration, and candid admission of another possible view, truer than his own, on a great question! O! like spirit is the next letter.

"London, June 28th, 1755.

Dear Brother,

Go to Ireland, if you think so, and save Ireland. Wherever I have been in England the societies are far more firmly and rationally attached to the Church than ever they were before. I have no fear about this matter. I only fear the preachers', or the peoples, leaving, not the Church, but the love of God, and inward or outward holiness. To this I press them forward continually. I dare not, in conscience, spend my time or strength on externals. If, as my lady says, all outward establishments are Babel, so is this establishment. Let it stand for me, I neither set it up nor put it down. But let you and I build up the city of God. . . . Thomas Walsh (I will declare it on the house top) has given me all the satisfaction I desire, and all that an honest man could give. I love, admire, and honour him; and wish we had six preachers in all England of his spirit. But enough of this. Let us draw the saw no longer but use all our talents to promote the mind that was in Christ. We have not one preacher, who either proposed, or desires, or designs (that I know) to separate from the Church at all. Their principles, in this single point of ordination, I do not approve; but I pray for more and more of their spirit (in general) and practice. Driving me may make me fluctuate; though I do not yet. 'When the preachers in Ireland set up

*Works, xii-111.

for themselves, must you not disown them?' I answer, 'When! Adieu. JOHN WESLEY.

These letters must have drawn from Charles some reply remarkably objectionable to his elder brother, for he administers the following severe rebuke:

"You are by no means free from temptation. You are as positive as if you had never seen either Stillingfleet, or Baxter I am very calm and cool, determining nothing, but to do nothing rashly. Now which is more in the temptation? To my thought, you are in it, and over head and ears. Your gross bigotry lies here, in putting a man on a level with an adulterer, because he differs from you as to church government. What miserable confounding the degrees of good and evil is this!"

What were the reasons for separation urged by some of the most godly lay preachers? John Wesley gives them in a letter to the Rev. S. Walker, of Truro, dated September 24th, 1755. "With regard to the Liturgy itself: though they allow it is, in general, one of the most excellent human compositions that ever was, yet they think it both absurd and sinful, to declare such an assent and consent as is required, to any merely human composition. Again, though they do not object to forms, yet they dare not confine themselves to them. And in this form (the book of Common Prayer) there are several things which they apprehend to be contrary to Scripture. Secondly, as to the laws of the Church, if they include the Canons and Decretals (both which are received as such in our courts), they think 'the latter are the very dregs of Popery, and that many of the former, the Canons of 1603, are as grossly wicked as absurd.' And over and above the objections which they have to several particular ones, they think, '1. That the spirit which they breathe is throughout truly Papist and anti-christian. 2. That nothing can be more diabolical than the *ipso facto* excommunication so often denounced therein. 3. That the whole method of executing these Canons, the process used in our spiritual courts, is too bad to be tolerated (not in a Christian, but) in a Moham-medan or Pagan nation.'

"Thirdly, with respect to the ministers, they doubt 'Whether there are not many of them whom God hath not sent, inasmuch as they neither live the gospel, nor teach it; neither indeed can, seeing they do not know it.' They doubt the more, 'because themselves disclaim that inward call to the ministry, which is at least as necessary as the outward.' And they are not clear 'whether it be lawful to attend the ministrations of those whom God has not sent to minister?'

"Fourthly. The doctrines actually taught by these, and

indeed by a great majority of the Church-ministers, they think 'are not only wrong, but fundamentally so, and subversive of the whole gospel.' They, therefore, doubt 'whether it be lawful to bid them God speed, or to have any fellowship with them "

On these objections Wesley candidly says to Rev. S. Walker, of Truro, "I freely acknowledge that I cannot answer these arguments to my own satisfaction. So that my conclusion, which I cannot give up, 'That it is lawful to continue in the Church,' stands, I know not, almost without any premisses that are able to bear its weight. My difficulty is very much increased by one of your observations. I know the original doctrines of the Church are sound: I know her worship is, in the main, pure and scriptural. But if 'the Essence of the Church of England, considered as such, consists in her Orders and Laws (many of which I myself can say nothing for) and not in her Worship and Doctrines,' those who separate from her have a far stronger plea than I was ever sensible of. At present I apprehend those, and those only, to separate from the Church, who either renounce her fundamental doctrines, or refuse to join in her public worship. As yet we have done neither: nor have we taken one step further than we were convinced was our bounden duty. It is from a full conviction of this that we have, 1. Preached abroad; 2. Prayed extempore; 3. Formed societies; and 4. Permitted preachers, who were not episcopally ordained. And were we pushed on this side; were there no alternative allowed, we should judge it our bounden duty, rather wholly to separate from the Church than to give up any one of these points. Therefore, if we cannot stop a separation without stopping lay preachers, the case is clear: we cannot stop it at all."

The foregoing letters show that grasp of absolutely fundamental points in debated questions, which is so marked a characteristic of Wesley. Was he not specially guided by God in this as a leader of men in religious thought and action?

A letter equally forcible in defence of lay preachers to Rev. T. Adam, dated Oct. 31st, 1755, will be found in the Methodist Magazine, 1779 p. 373. See also important letters to Rev. J. Clark, Methodist Magazine, 1779 p. 599, &c.

A letter of John Nelson, previously unpublished, dated March 4th, 1755, and written from Birstall, gives an account of his labours in the Newcastle round. It reveals the servant of God neglecting no duty, though afflicted with a most painful disease. The home life of a travelling preacher is brought into view, and Nelson's opinions on preaching and separation from the Church are candidly stated.

" To Rt. Mr. Charles Wesley, at ——— Esq., Lloyd's, in
Devonshire Square, London.

Birstall, March 4th, 1755.

Dear Sir,

I received yours this morning, and it affords me great consolation, for I thought both you and your brother had forgotten me. I have been at Newcastle and in the Round 16 weeks, and the hand of God is stretched out for good both in town and country, but more especially at Alnwick, Gateside Fell, and Sunderland. I took nine fresh members into the society in one day, and there hath hardly been one week this winter but some one hath stepped into the pool in the North Riding. Several of the colliers at the Fell hath felt the precious blood of Christ applied this winter, and I never preached there since I went, but I took one or more into the society. They have enlarged the house, but they may pull down and build again if they increase as they have done lately. Br. Downes is weak in body, but I believe his heart is right with God, and that he is no weathercock. My soul hath been blessed in the North, but I have had two sore bouts of the gravel, yet, when I could neither eat nor sleep for near a fortnight together, I could preach as well as ever I could in my life, so that I never neglected preaching once for my affliction. I got home last Wednesday, but happened to a hurt on my knee by a horse running against me, near Leeds, so that I cannot bear to ride at present, but God orders all things well, for on Sunday his arm was bared amongst us in such a manner that some was struck to the ground, and one Magdalene that night was allowed to kiss the feet of Jesus. O Sir, join in prayer with us for her that she may stand, for such a brand was never plucked out of the burning in Birstall before. The work prospers in all our rounds, and many hath been converted here since I went, and others are stirred up to seek for mercy, for Br. Thos. Lee is a faithful labourer. He is a right old Methodist preacher, and the power of God attends his word, and I will assure you no other preaching will do in Yorkshire but the old sort, that comes like thunder-claps upon the conscience, for fine preaching doth more harm than good here. Br. Jones is here, he is very weak so that he is to attend to both day and night, and Williams is but poorly yet, so that my wife is hurried beyond her strength, for we have not had the house free from sick preachers these fifteen months; and without death, or a miracle of healing, I know not when it will be free. My wife hath lately had a pluriatic fever, but is much better, and our house is so taken up with sick preachers, and nurses to wait on them, that we have not room for the labouring preachers and our

own family, so that it is impossible for us to have any one to board with us, for when we had no sickness in the house, we had but just room for the preachers and the family. If we had had room we should be glad to oblige you and the gentleman, by receiving his brother into our house.

“Sir, I will assure you my heart is as your heart as concerning the Church, for by the help of God I hope to continue in the way wherein I was called. I heard some words dropped at Newcastle that made me uneasy, that some of our preachers had taken upon them to administer the sacrament in the South that was laymen, and they seemed to justify it, but I replied that if you and your brother allowed it, I would turn my back on you and all that join in that covenant; then I heard no more about it as long as I stayed in the North. Brother Shent told me about them as I came through Leeds, but he is entirely in my mind, that if we separate from the Church God will leave us, as He hath done all that hath separated before us. The work seems to be at a stand at Leeds, I hear, at present. Brother Jones is very strong in grace, though weak in body; he joins in love to you, so doth my wife. This with my best love to you and your dear wife; I beg an interest in your prayers, as you have in mine daily. From your unworthy brother in Christ, and son to serve in the gospel,

JOHN NELSON.”

At the Conference of 1755, the appointment to the Haworth round was Wm. Grimshaw, John Nelson, and John Scholefield. Of the last we can find no record. Myles has the name of a James Scholefield, who that year commenced to travel, and was expelled in 1757. A letter to Charles Wesley, from Mixenden, shows Nelson rejoicing over souls safely garnered home.

“To the Rt. Mr. Charles Wesley, at the New Room, in the Horse Fair, in the City of Bristol.

4, Mixenden, in Haworth Round, June 26th, 1755.

Dear Sir,

I was from home when yours came to Birstall, but when I got it I went to Dewsbury and asked the questions you desired me, and her answer was, ‘Give my duty to Mr. Wesley, and tell him that I am not engaged to any man by promise in the world’ She hath been out of health since you was here, but is got much better.

“We have had four triumphant deaths since you left Birstall. The first was Joseph Mann, who had been about six years in

the faith, and was very constant in all the means of grace as long as his health endured. But he had been in a consumption near two years, and he finished his race with joy. Brother Walker preached over his corpse, and many was stirred up by the word, that I hope will not rest till they are made partakers of the same grace that carried Brother Mann to the realms of light: The next day a woman, that lived about a mile off, that had but heard a little while, and scarce ever returned home from hearing the word but her husband beat her severely. In the time of sickness the Lord made himself known to her, so that she bore a noble testimony to all that came to see her as long as she lived. She desired a sermon to be preached over her corpse, under which her bloody husband was struck, and is become a constant hearer of the word ever since. The next was my own aunt, which had been in the faith near fourteen years. She was converted almost at my first coming into Yorkshire, and walked steadfastly in the ordinances, and was greatly supported under all her trials. She had a cruel husband to live with for ten years of the time, but God heard her prayer for him, so that he began to seek the Lord in the last year of his life, and we had great hope in his death. But she hath been a daughter of affliction, for she hath scarcely had one week's health these three years; so she hath endured both sickness, pain, and poverty, yet with so much patience to all outward appearance as if she had had neither pain nor want, and she finished her course with joy. I found the Lord present when I preached over her, and I believe there was a blessing among the people. The next was Brother Samuel Snell, the class leader of Churle, who was awakened at your first coming to preach at my house, and hath followed on ever since, and hath been zealous for the cause of God to his latest hour. Brother Tucker preached over his corpse. I think that we seldom bury one that dies in the faith, but we get two or three by preaching over them.

I am now in Mr. Grimshaw's Round, and I find my soul blessed in speaking to the people. All the preachers that I conversed with seemed to be more united in love than ever I saw them before, and I cannot say that I heard one of them speak one word in a contending way, but I hear that someone hath been contending with Mr. Baddiley, of Hayfield, in Derbyshire, since the Conference, and it hath given him great uneasiness, and I hear that there is great uneasiness amongst them of the Dissenting in Leeds, and that they are for separating from us and building a place for themselves. This is what I hear, but I have not been there lately. My kind love to your dear wife, and tell her

I hope she will have an interest in my prayers at all times, and my wife's too. I am glad to hear that my boy goes on well at the school. I desire you to give my kind love to Mrs. Anger and all her sisters, and all friends in that place. This with my best love and earnest prayers for you and yours, and all the Church of God, from yours, to service as a son in the gospel.

JOHN NELSON."

CHAPTER XV.

It is now necessary to deal with the provision made for public worship in Keighley.

The cottage of John Wilkinson was superseded by a chamber on Scott's premises in Low Street, which was rented and served as the Methodist preaching room until 1753. It was at the end of an old farm house with a large porch, and was reached by a flight of outside steps. When Scott's room was required by its owner, preaching services were held in the cottages of Jeremiah Carrodus and others: also in the barn of a Mr Binns.

In 1753 Mr. Colbeck purchased part of the site on which Temple Street Chapel now stands, and appropriated a barn upon it to the use of the society, until the first chapel could be opened. During 1754 subscriptions were raised, and a preaching house was built, but held as private property by Mr. Colbeck until 1763, when it was conveyed by him to the following persons for the use of the Methodists for the sum of 5s., viz.:

Thos. Colbeck, of Keighley, Mercer and Grocer.
James Greenwood, of Braithwaite, Yeoman.
Jno. Horsfall, of Holme House, Yeoman.
John Booth, of Keighley, Innkeeper.
Samuel Sharpe, of Keighley, Mercer and Grocer.
Samuel Lawson, of Keighley, Clock Maker.
John Wilkinson, of Keighley, Shoe Maker.
Thos. Middlebrough, of Castle Field, Farmer.
Wm. Smith, of Keighley, Yeoman.
John Laycock, of Keighley, Stuff Maker.*

During the revival of 1764 this chapel was enlarged, and the adjoining premises fitted up as a residence for the ministers; or rather, perhaps, for the preacher's wife; the husband being engaged most of the year travelling the extensive round, of which Keighley was really the head. I remember that old house well. It was of the same form and size as the

* This last on the list of trustees was not a member of my family. This is definitely stated by the Rev. Jonathan Edmondson in a memoir of Rev. Thos. Laycock, in the magazine for 1835. He was a shaloon manufacturer, and a highly respected leader in society for many years. The chapel of 1755 was probably the fourth built in Yorkshire. Those having precedence were Birstall, 1750; Leeds, 1751; and Halifax, 1752.

present houses in Temple Row, adjoining the road leading from that street to the school. It had a door opening into the first chapel, and was occupied by the chapel keeper, James Sugden. James was a great stammerer in conversation, but when he prayed was as fluent as any ordinary man.

In 1777 the chapel was enlarged and continued in use until Eden Chapel was erected in 1810. After that date it was used for Sunday and day school purposes until 1846, when it was taken down that Temple Street Chapel might be built. I have distinct recollection of it, as one of the first day schools I attended was taught in it by Mr. John Gardiner, a former head master at Woodhouse Grove. A portion of its pulpit is used as the reading desk of Victoria Park Infant School-room.

One remarkable thing about this chapel was that it contained an organ. Mr. James Greenwood lent money for its purchase, and several items of payment in connection with it are found in the circuit book. It has been generally understood that no Methodist chapel was furnished with an organ during Mr. Wesley's life time, but as this organ was in the chapel from 1777 and Mr. Wesley preached in it so late as 1782, he must personally, and through his assistants, have known of its existence. I have reason to believe that it was the organ for many years in Temple Street Sunday School-room, and was sold to the Baptists of Cononley when the present Sunday school organ was built.

Thus half-a-century before the disruption caused by the Leeds organ, Mr. Wesley had sanctioned the use of such an instrument, and no record of disturbance has come down to us.

In the year 1756 the work of the round appears to have been largely done by Mr. Grimshaw, Jonathan Maskew, Wm. Greenwood, and Parson Greenwood. At the quarterly meeting on January 22nd, expenses connected with the Conference at Leeds of the previous year were paid, amounting to £2 2s. Jonathan Maskew receives for food and physic for his horse, one week, 7s. On April 22nd, horse charges £3 10s. 9d., and a new hat 5s. He appears to have been the only preacher clothed at the expense of the round. July 22nd, we have charged two shirts 13s., three cravats, 3s., pumps, 6s., stockings 3s. 6d. October 21st, coat £1 12s. 6d., stocks 4s. 9d., coat making 4s. 6d., gamashes 7s. 6d., charges to Sheffield, 2s. 6d.

Another letter of Grimshaw's to Mrs. Gallatin, belonging to this year, exhibits the warm friendship and practical sense of this man of God.

“Haworth, June 3rd, 1756.

Madam,

Mr. Charles tells me you complain that I have forgotten

you. I hope not. God forbid it. My long silence may induce you to think so, but I hope I can sincerely say, I never forgot you one day this five years or more in my poor addresses at the footstool of grace, neither will I so long as we are both on this side the grave. The truth is business and negligence have been the cause of my delay in writing. You'll excuse the one and pardon the other.

"I've your two last letters by me, I've this day looked them over again. In the former you give me an account of a nervous disorder which, at that time, you laboured under, and also an horrible dread overwhelming you, and the fear of death taking fast hold of you. This letter I think I've already answered. What I shall say more to it is said by this. It is no difficulty to judge of those terrors, as to the cause of them. They are not as you fear, of the Lord, any further than that He permits them for your good. The truth is their cause is partly corporeal and partly Satanical. Too great a relaxation of the nerves affects the mind with heaviness and pensiveness. Besides, such a relaxation is frequently attended with much wind in the stomach, costiveness, and dizziness in the head—all which, as it frequently happens, tends to the said heaviness of mind. Satan, who has doubtlessly great power over the body, fails not to improve such disorders to the purpose of exciting in the soul, doubts, fears, terrors, and sometimes despair. This I've frequently found true amongst religious people. But so soon as the nerves are restored to their natural tone, the wind dispelled, and the body kept open, the devil loses the materials he should work with, and all these horrors and terrors soon after vanish. I hope you have found it so before now, that you may know how to disappoint and manage the devil another time. Abstain from all diet that is hard of digestion, creates wind, and binds the body; use moderate exercise, drink no tea, rise early, sup early, watch and pray, and you will find your soul more drawn to God, faith and hope strengthened, and the whole frame of your soul cheerful and happy.

"Your other letter informs me that, blessed be the Lord, 'you are much better in your health than when you wrote the foregoing letter.' I am glad to hear it. May it long continue so to the glory of the Lord and the comfort of your soul. Take my simple but sincere advice above, together with such things as corroborate the same, and you shall be rarely troubled with these horrible thoughts. They will but be momentary,—appear and disappear like a flash of lightning. But you always receive and repel them with the deepest abhorrence and detestation, which, as it evidences the non-compliance of

the will, you are guilty of no sin thereby. God will never blame you. He will make the devil suffer for it. These horrid thoughts are his fiery darts, some of the effects of his malice. But they are marks, blessed be the Lord, of your belonging to the Lord. They will be apt to perplex you most in your religious exercises, in public or private prayer, or reading, and especially at the Lord's Table. But never regard them, never be discouraged. Receive the bread and wine into your mouth though it be in the very moment you feel a most blasphemous thought, or most heavy curse of God in your tongue—there is no danger or evil at all in it. A thousand such hellish injections in a day, or an hour, are not worth your notice. You say they are a burden to you, and so they are. But, dear madam, we must have a burden one way or another: and this the Lord permissively, but graciously, the devil actually, but maliciously, makes yours. We must go through manifold tribulations into the kingdom of glory—count it all joy. The Lord will outshoot the devil in his own bow at last. He's an excellent chemist. He can extract good out of every evil for the benefit of His saints. What is now grievous, says the Apostle, shall hereafter be joyous. I dare say, and that you shall one day own, to God's praise, that you had better (all things considered) bear them, than be without them. All things are made to work together for the good—says the Apostle—of them that love God. In patience, therefore, dear sister, possess your soul. Only keep close to every means of grace, fast, watch and pray diligently, and my Master will make you more than conqueror at the last.

“I wish my dear Major all health, much happiness of his new commission, and at the end a glorious heaven. My sincere respects to him. Times are likely to be perilous. No wonder, for iniquity abounds. The sword is drawn. O that, seeing God's judgments are out in the earth, the inhabitants of it may learn righteousness!

“In these parts, I hope, the Lord's work prospers. The harvest truly is great, but truly the labourers are few. Pray ye the Lord of this harvest to send forth more labourers therewith. I keep preaching as usual, glory be to my Lord, and I hope not without a blessing to souls. Lord grant I may never faint. I hope I shall never let weakness, old age, or death invalidate me. By the grace of God, I'm resolved never to flag while I can ride, walk, creep, or crawl. I hope I shall not be long before I write again to you. Write soon. Sweet Jesus, my dear, dear, dear, very dear Master, bless you and my Major. Pray for me and I'll pray for you. I'm your sincere and very humble servant,

W. GRIMSHAW.

Excuse my rough hand if it be legible.”

The wide radius affected by Whitefield's popularity is seen from an entry in C. Wesley's Journal of October 10th, 1756. "I came to Birstall before noon. My congregation was less by a thousand or two, through George Whitefield's preaching to-day at Haworth. Between four and five thousand were left to receive my warning from Luke xxi."

On Monday, 11th, a watch-night was held, which must have been a notable service, as C. Wesley, Whitefield, and Grimshaw, were all present. Wesley says, "It rained so hard that Mr. Whitefield was agreeably surprised at eight to find our house as full as it could cram. They forced me to preach first, which I did from Zech. xiii. 'The third part I will bring through the fire.' My brother George seconded me in the words of our Lord. 'I say unto all, Watch!' The prayers and hymns were all attended with a solemn power. Few, if any, I hope, went unawakened away.*

In a letter to the Countess of Huntingdon, dated Oct. 27th, 1756, Whitefield briefly refers to the occasion.

"I wrote you a few lines, not long ago, from Leeds. Since then, I have been in honest Mr. Grimshaw's and Mr. Ingham's rounds, preaching upon the mountains to many thousands. The sacrament at Mr. Grimshaw's was awful, and the watch-night at Leeds exceeding solemn."†

The Holy Spirit was at that time influencing the soul of a young man, Samuel Whitaker, who for sixty years, as a local preacher in the Keighley round, preached and lived the gospel. Through the preaching of the pioneers of Methodism, he tells us, that from the age of seventeen he had deep religious convictions, but that his "life was a compendium of sin and repentance, hope and fear." About the age of twenty-one, he says, "I was out of my apprenticeship, and promised myself much happiness in the common amusements of the place. There was to be a horse race on Harden Moor, near Bingley. My desire of participating in the pleasure was so very strong that I paid a poor man his wages to accompany me to the place, rather than miss the pastime. But on reaching the ground my disappointment was great. It is true I beheld three horses urged round the course in a cruel manner by their mad riders, and I felt stung with remorse for my sin and folly in attending such a scene of dissipation. On returning home I met a funeral, and heard the passing bell. The solemn knell vibrated through my guilty conscience, as if a voice from the eternal world had addressed me.

* Journal, ii-125.

† Tyerman's Whitefield, ii-384.

"A few weeks after this, I heard a young man, a Methodist preacher, was to preach in a field near Bradford. This attracted my curiosity, and I went, in company with others, to hear. On reaching the place we found a large company assembled, and the young man read for his text, Jno. ix., 33-34. I remember very little of the manner in which he treated his subject, but the Lord made a deep impression on my mind while hearing the discourse; and in returning home I was confounded with a view of my crimes and depravity. These humbling views led me, through grace, to break off all my sinful companions, and to resign myself to the service of the Lord, which resolution I have been enabled to keep unto the present period.

"The Sunday following it was published that the Rev. George Whitefield was expected to preach at Haworth Church, but the place being too small, a scaffold was set up in the yard, and he preached from Zech. ix., 12: 'Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope; even to-day do I declare that I will render double unto you.' I got among the crowd, nearly under the scaffold, and it was the most affecting time I ever experienced. He spoke as if he had been privy to all my thoughts, words, and actions, from the tenth year of my age. At the conclusion of this service he published his preaching at Leeds the day following, where I heard him; and the day after I attended his ministry at Bradford; after which I returned home on the Tuesday evening."

Then follows the relation of experiences which well illustrate the trials of those who at that time decided for Christ. "On reaching home, I met with a trying circumstance. My mother and sister wept over me incessantly, and used every argument in their power to withdraw me from this gloomy fit of melancholy into which they supposed me fallen. And as I was just entering on the world, they concluded that my being connected with the Methodists, whom they regarded as the filth and offscouring of all things, my ruin was inevitable, and I should be a vagrant in the earth. And on reaching my master's, he met me with a frown, and discharged me from his house and employment, having supplied my place with another man. Thus I had to go in search of work. While in pursuit of labour I met with a darling pleasure, viz., an otter hunt, nor could I refrain from the sport for some time. But the Divine hand interposed, and I was enabled to abandon the folly, and returned home, being unsuccessful in obtaining work. On going to my master's for the purpose of removing my tools and clothes, he was more friendly, and said that if I would promise to settle and attend my labour, and not leave without proper notice, I might go to work. I gladly embraced the offer.

I could not say that my sins were forgiven till February in 1758, when I was working at a certain place, and by a tempest of rain was obliged to take shelter in the house of a neighbour, and as I sat musing I felt a strong desire to withdraw to the stable for the purpose of prayer. Here I wrestled with God in a sort of agony, and before I rose from my knees I felt a degree of blessed comfort and peace in my heart which, till that moment, I had never experienced; and that Jesus Christ shed His love abroad in my heart, as certainly as ever He was born of the virgin, by applying this passage of the Sacred Word, 'Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.' "

A year following, S. Whitaker began to preach, and continued to do so with great acceptance until near the conclusion of his long life.

At the age of twenty-six he married and settled in Keighley. He brought up a family of seven children in the fear of the Lord, was the leader of flourishing classes, and maintained an unblemished character until the year 1816, when, in great peace, he passed away in the eighty-second year of his age.

The grace of God and his guiding hand on John Wesley saved lay preaching, as the following letters will show. Conference was approaching, and Charles wrote from Bristol to the Rev. S. Walker, of Truro, on August 2nd, 1756:—

"Rev. and Dear Sir,

My brother is coming hither to a Conference with his preachers. Another letter from you might, by the blessing of God, confirm him in his calling. He seems resolved to temporise with them no longer. Mr. Grimshaw is coming to strengthen his hands. We shall have a private Conference before the general one.

"I should have broken off from the Methodists and my brother in 1752 but for the agreement." (This was a document signed March 16th, 1752, by John and Charles Wesley, John Downes, William Shent, John Jones, and Jno. Nelson, one clause of which was, 'Never to leave the Communion of the Church of England without the consent of all whose names are subjoined.')

"I think every preacher should sign that agreement, or leave us. What I desire of my brother is: 1. That the unsound, unrecoverable preachers should be let depart just now. 2. That the wavering should be confirmed, if possible, and established in their calling. 3. That the sound ones should be received into the strictest union and confidence, and, as soon as may be, prepared for orders."

To this letter Mr. Walker replied, August 16th, 1756. He

saw, as John Wesley saw, that lay preaching could not be made to harmonise with the ecclesiastical claims of an Episcopal Church, and good man though he was, like Charles Wesley, felt prepared to advise and act in a manner that would have destroyed such a ministry.

He says, "Lay preachers, being contrary to the constitution of the Church of England, are, as far as that point goes, a separation from it. It is quite another question whether lay preachers be agreeable to the appointment of the Spirit respecting the ministry. The matter is not whether lay preachers be needful, or what their calling may be. Be the one and the other as it will, the thing is plainly inconsistent with the discipline of the Church of England; and so, in one essential point, setting up a church within her, which cannot be of her. When, therefore, it is asked, shall we separate from the Church of England? it should rather be asked, shall we make the separation we have begun a separation in all forms? And if we do not think ourselves allowed to do this, shall we unite with her? We do not, unless lay preaching is laid aside."

He then proposes a scheme, the result of which would be the ordination of such as might be thought fit for orders, and the reduction of the rest to overseers of the societies, not allowed to preach.

To this Charles replied, August 21st, 1756: "Lay preaching, it is allowed, is a partial separation, and may, but *need* not, end in a total one. The probability of it has made me tremble for years past, and kept me from leaving the Methodists. I stay not so much to do good, as to prevent evil. I stand in the way of my brother's violent counsellors, the object of both their fear and hate.

"The regulations you propose are the same in substance which I have long been contending for in vain. I know my brother will not hear of laying aside his lay preachers in so many words."

When John Wesley arrived, Mr. Walker's letter was considered, and he wrote a wise reply, which may be found at full length in the *Methodist Magazine*, 1799, p. 644. The substance of his answer to Mr. Walker's plan of locating preachers is contained in the following quotation: "Be their talents ever so great, they will, ere long, grow dead themselves, and so will most of those that hear them. I know, were I myself to preach one whole year in one place, I should preach both myself and most of my congregation asleep. Nor can I ever believe it was ever the will of our Lord, that any congregation should have one teacher only. We have found, by long and constant experience, that a frequent change of teachers is best. This

preacher has one talent, that another. No one, whom I ever knew, has all the talents which are needed for beginning, continuing, and perfecting the work of grace in a whole congregation.

"And here is another difficulty still: What authority have I to forbid their doing what I believe God has called them to do? I apprehend, indeed, that there ought, if possible, to be both an outward and inward call to this work; yet, if one of the two be supposed wanting, I had rather want the outward than the inward call. I rejoice that I am called to preach the gospel both by God and man. Yet, I acknowledge, I had rather have the Divine without the human, than the human without the Divine call."*

On October 16th, 1756, Charles Wesley concluded a visit to Bradford, and tells us that he "rode with faithful Thomas Colbeck to Keighley. I found at four a large, handsome room well filled. I did my office as a watchman, and delivered my own soul. Mr. Grimshaw assisted at the society. I recommended family religion with all my might. For near an hour and a half the cloud stayed on the assembly.

"Sunday, October 17th. We had no room to spare at six in the morning, while I commended them to God, and to the word of His grace. I preached a second time at Haworth (Mr. Grimshaw reading prayers) from Psalm xlvii., 8: 'O come hither, and behold the works of the Lord, what destruction He hath wrought in the earth. He maketh wars to cease in all the world, &c.' My mouth was open to declare the approaching judgments, and the glory which shall follow, when the Lord is exalted in all the earth. The church, which hath lately been enlarged, could scarce contain the congregation, who seemed all to tremble at the threatenings, or rejoice in the promises of God.

"We had a blessed number of communicants, and the Master of the feast in the midst. I prayed and exhorted afterwards. Our hearts were lifted up to meet Him in His glorious Kingdom.

"After an hour's interval we met again, as many as the church walls could contain; but twice the number stood without, till the prayers were over. Then I mounted a scaffold, and, lifting up my eyes, saw the fields white unto the harvest. We had prayed for a fair day, and had the petitions we asked. The churchyard, which will hold thousands, was quite covered. God gave me a voice to reach them all. I warned them of those things which shall come to pass, and warmly pressed them to private, family, and public prayer; enlarged on the glorious

* *Methodist Magazine*, 1779-644.

consequences thereof, even deliverance from the last plagues, and standing before the Son of Man. I concluded, and began again, for it was an accepted time. I do not remember when my mouth has been more opened, or my heart more enlarged.

"A young preacher of Mr. Ingham's (Mr. Allen) came to spend the evening with me at Mr. Grimshaw's. I found great love for him, and wished all *our* sons in the gospel were equally modest and discreet.

"Monday, October 18th. He accompanied us to Heptonstall, where I preached at ten, on Isa. xlv, 5, 'In these is continuance, and we shall be saved.' I was very faint when I began: the more plainly did it appear that the power was not of man, but of God. I warned them of the wiles of the devil, whereby he would draw them away from the Church, and the other means of grace. I spake as the oracles of God, and God gave testimony, bowing the hearts of all present, except a few bigoted Baptists. We went on our way rejoicing to Ewood. There the rain cut short my discourse on Ezek. ix. Mr. Allen could not leave us yet, but rode with us next morning (Tuesday, October 19th) as far as Gawksholm. I stood on a scaffold at the foot of a *Welsh* mountain, having all the people in front, and called, 'Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world!' The word was as a two-edged sword. I talked largely with Mr. Grimshaw how to remedy the evil wrought by separatists. We agreed: 1. That nothing can save the Methodists from falling a prey to every seducer but close walking with God, in all the commandments and ordinances, especially the word and prayer, private, family, and public; 2. That the preachers should be allowed more time in every place, to visit from house to house, after Mr. Baxter's manner; 3. That a small treatise be written, to ground and preserve them against seducers, and lodged in every family."*

The last remedy was provided in part by John Wesley that year in "*Reasons against a Separation from the Church of England*," but not published until 1758, in which year also Jno. Wesley issued a larger collection of tracts dealing with all the controversies that had disturbed his people under the title of "*A Preservative against Unsettled Notions in Religion*."

Grimshaw accompanied Charles Wesley to Bolton, in Lancashire, but returned on the 21st. He says, "I parted with my right hand, my brother and bosom-friend Mr. Grimshaw."

On October 21st, 1756, Sowerby (Bridge) first appears in the accounts as contributing 12s. 2d. by John Barnes, who receives at the same meeting for goods 4s. 5d., and for four dinners 2s. 6d. From this we may infer there was no one at

*C. W. Journal, 2-128.

Sowerby able, or willing, to provide the preachers with dinner.

The following places appear in 1757 in the Circuit Book:—

| | |
|--|----------|
| "Apr. 21st Carr, &c., by John Heape | 10s. 6d. |
| ,, Stainland, &c., by Jas. Oddie | 7s. 6d. |
| Oct. 20th Hoylden Water, &c. | 1 1 0 |
| ,, Haworth, &c. | 16 0 |
| ,, Broad Clough, &c. | 5 7" |

At the Bristol Conference of 1756, James Oddie was appointed to the Haworth round. Jonathan Maskew was the other preacher chiefly chargeable to the round. It provided him with a waistcoat 21s. 3d., stockings 12s. 9d. necessaries 21s. and toward buying a horse £4 0 0.

Of the state of the Circuit then, we have information in Grimshaw's letter to Lee of July 21st, 1757. "Here, I hope, things go pretty well. How go they where you have been? Our congregations have been for some time, and still are in several places of this round, large. Several souls are added, and some are seemingly just awaking. James Oddie and Jonathan Maskew have been our preachers for some time. James is gone to Conference, and Jonathan, if he recover not, will shortly go to heaven."

CHAPTER XVI.

JAMES ODDIE, like Darney and the two Greenwoods, is one of the very earliest preachers, of whom only a brief biography in Atmore's *Memorial* remains. Yet, as we shall see, he was a man worthy to be remembered, and very closely connected with the Keighley round in the later years of his life. He was born in 1730 or 1731, at a farm-house named Dudland, in the parish of Gisburn, in the West Riding of Yorkshire. It is not known when or how he became acquainted with the Methodists, but it is said that he was converted to God in early life, and soon began to preach the gospel. Mr. Myles enters him in his list as a preacher from 1746 to 1771. This is a mistake, as he would then be only sixteen years of age, and his name is not mentioned in any of the Minutes of Conference or other Methodist books until 1755. The Rev. Jon. Edmondson says he was a preacher about nineteen years, and as he retired in 1771, it is therefore probable that he became a local preacher in 1752.

Mr. Atmore says, "Oddie came out to travel in the Methodist Connection when the work was in its infancy," and he undoubtedly had to do with the formation of early rounds, such as those of Leeds and Haworth. "He was a remarkably sensible man of deep piety, and of considerable talents for the work of the ministry. For many years he was a burning and shining light, and seemed wholly devoted to God and the service of the sanctuary. He appeared at that time a very serious, heavenly, and spiritual man, and was eminently useful in the hand of the Lord."

While in the Haworth round Oddie was the instrument, under God, of inducing John Pawson to join the Methodist society, who afterward became one of the most holy and eminent of the early preachers, and was elected President of the Conference in 1793. In his autobiography Pawson says, "In June of 1758 I went to a feast at Askwith, with no other design but to get an opportunity to hear the Methodists. It happened to be the yearly meeting of the Quakers that day, and I went and heard a woman speak for more than an hour, but could not understand her at all. This was the first time I ever was in a Dissenting meeting of any kind. I went the same evening to Otley, and heard Mr. James Oddie preach an excellent sermon

from Acts xiii., 38, 'Be it known unto you men and brethren that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins.' I was very much surprised to observe the serious and devout behaviour of the people, whom I had so much despised, and was highly delighted with the singing. But the discourse delivered from the pulpit with such a heavenly solemnity, quite astonished me. I was permitted to stay the society meeting, and was obliged to conclude that if the people paid any regard to the excellent instructions given them, they must be patterns of piety and godliness. Here it was that the Lord fixed a resolution in my heart, to seek and to serve Him, which, through His infinite mercy and love, has continued to this day, and which, I doubt not, will abide with me for ever."

Oddie attended the Conference held in London, 1757, at a cost to the Haworth round of £2 2s. We have no account of this Conference save the brief sentence in Mr. Wesley's Journal, August 4 to 11, "From the first hour to the last there was no jarring string, but all was harmony and love."

On October 19th, 1758, there is a joint charge upon the round, by Messrs. Coates and Oddies, of £2 17s. 10³d., doubtless their Conference expenses. It was held that year in Bristol, and both were present, as also Mr. Colbeck, so that Keighley had three representatives.

About 1755 John Nelson visited the neighbourhood of Lower Darwen, and made a deep and permanent impression. Among his converts were a farmer, named Haworth, and his three brothers. James Oddie followed, and in 1758 commenced a class, consisting of the four just mentioned and eight others. They met in a house at a place called "Th' top o'th' Coal Pits," the first leader being James Clegg. This was the beginning of the Methodist society in that part of Lancashire.*

As Nelson, in a letter already given, tells us that he was in 1755 labouring in Mr. Grimshaw's round, and James Oddie was certainly one of its preachers in 1758, it is proved that Darwen was included at that time in the circuit.

When travelling in the Leeds circuit in 1760, after leaving the Haworth round, where he had laboured two years, Oddie wrote thus to John Wesley, May 4th, "The Lord Jesus is the desire of my heart and the object of my affections at all times. He many times carries my spirit, all my powers and affections, up unto Himself without any sensible effort of my own, and fixeth them in God, their proper centre. Sometimes I find a silent stillness, the region of the soul inconceivably calm, and all attention to an indwelling and inspeaking God: then I could keep always at the feet of Christ, and weep my life away. . . ."

* Jessop's *Rossendale*, p 140.

The mediatorial undertaking of my Lord is never so precious unto me as at such seasons. Though there is not a power in my soul, nor a thought in my heart, as far as I know, which thwarts the will of God, yet I never see so clearly as then what need I have of the death of Jesus. My obedience is not, by far, as broad as the commandment; for this I need His precious blood. I feel my soul as helpless as an infant of days; for this I need His power. I conceive an infinite number of snares laid for me, for the avoiding of which I need His wisdom. I find myself a tender and weakly branch, far from maturity, for which I need the sap and nourishment of the blessed vine, into which I feel myself engrafted; yea Christ is all in all to me. I only desire, that I and others may be more and more conformed unto, and dependent upon, Christ."

After the Conference of 1757 Oddie was joined in the round by Alex. Coates. Mr. Coates was born in North Britain, and made a partaker of the grace of God when very young. He entered the ranks of the Methodist Itinerancy in the year 1741.

Coates appears to have had some doubts respecting Christian perfection, possibly through Darney, who on this subject did not agree with the Wesleys, and influenced Grimshaw and others. He received from Wesley, July 7th, 1761, a characteristic letter, which reveals to us Wesley's estimate of the man, and his faithful and wise treatment of the early preachers. Wesley says, "I advise you, 1st. If you are willing to labour with us, preach no doctrine contrary to ours. I have preached twenty times in some of Mr. Whitefield's societies; yet, to this day, I never contradicted him among his own people. I did not think it honest, neither necessary at all. I could preach salvation by faith, and leave all controversy untouched. I advise you, 2. Avoid all those strong rhetorical exclamations, 'O horrid! O dreadful!' and the like, unless you are strongly exhorting sinners to renounce the devil and all his works. 3. Acquaint yourself better with the doctrine we preach, and you will find it not dreadful, but altogether lovely. 4. Observe, that if forty persons think and speak wrong, either about justification or sanctification (and perhaps fancy they have attained both) this is no objection to the doctrines themselves. They must bear their own burden. But this does not at all affect the point in question. 5. Remember, as sure as you are, that 'believers cannot fall from grace,' others (wise and holy men too) are equally sure they can; and you are as much obliged to bear with them as they are to bear with you. 6. Abstain from all controversy in public. Indeed, you have not a talent for it. You have an honest heart, but not a clear head. Practical

religion is your point; therefore, 7. Keep to this: repentance toward God, faith in Christ, holiness of heart and life, a growing in grace and in the knowledge of Christ, the continual need of His atoning blood, a constant confidence in Him, and all these every moment to our life's end. In none of these will any of our preachers contradict you, or you them. When you leave this plain path, and get into controversy, then they think you 'invade the glories of our adorable King, and the unspeakable rights, and privileges, and comforts of His children;' and can they then tamely hold their peace? O, Sander, know the value of peace and love!

I am, your affectionate Brother,

J. WESLEY."

Coates did not allow Wesley's letter to settle his scruples. He wrote to his father in the gospel again on July 14th and September 29th, 1761, expressing his belief that he would be sanctified just before death; and that meanwhile it was his "duty and privilege to persevere in grace;" and confesses that the believers in Perfection gave him small satisfaction. He had also been tempted by offers in Leeds and London to leave the Methodists, but had no intention of doing so. Coates, as his letters show, was a good man, with great courage and independency of thought; but though he read several languages, he was without mental discipline.*

The account, which was transmitted to Mr. Wesley, of the death of the good man, by one who was in the house when he died, is as follows:—"I had the opportunity the last evening of seeing our dear aged brother Coates (at that time the oldest preacher in the Connexion). A few days before he was sorely tempted by the enemy, but near the close he had perfect peace. His faith was clear, and he found Christ precious,—his portion and his eternal all. I asked him a little before he expired if he had followed cunningly devised fables?" He answered, 'No, no, no!' I then asked him 'whether he saw land?' He said, 'Yes, I do.' And after waiting a few minutes at anchor, he put into the quiet harbour."

John Wesley was among the societies of this round in the year 1757. He says: "May 18th, I rode in the afternoon from Halifax over the huge, but extremely pleasant and fruitful, mountain to Heptonstall. A large congregation was waiting for us, not only on the ground, but on the tops of the neighbouring houses. But no scoffer or trifler was seen among them. It rained in the adjoining valley all or most of the time that I was preaching; but it was fair with us on the

*Tyerman's *Wesley*, 2-414.

top of the mountain. What an emblem of God's taking up His people into a place of safety while the storm falls on all below!

"Here I was informed of the earthquake the day before. On Tuesday, May 17th, many persons in several parts, within five or six miles, heard a strange noise under the ground, which some compared to thunder, others to the rumbling of carts. Quickly after they felt the earth rock under them, and wave to and fro. Many who were within doors heard their pewter and glass clatter, and all agreed as to the time, though they knew nothing of each other's account. Thursday, 19th, I preached at Ewood about seven, not intending to preach again till the evening; but Mr. Grimshaw begged I would give them one sermon at Gawksham, after which we climbed up the enormous mountain, I think equal to any I saw in Germany, on the brow of which we were saluted by a severe shower, which a high wind drove full in our faces, almost till we came to Haslingden. Here I learned that the earthquake observed near Heptonstall had been sensibly felt by many persons from Bingley to the neighbourhood of Preston. Friday, 20th, I preached near Padiham at eight to a large wild congregation; about noon at Roughlee, where those who stood firm in the storm had melted away in the calm. At Keighley I had neither voice nor strength left, but while I was preaching my strength returned."

The next day, Saturday, 21st, Wesley says:—"I had a little conference with our preachers." This must have been a gathering of such as could be brought together from the North for spiritual intercourse and stimulus. Such was largely the character of the conferences of that period. It would probably have nothing to do with stationing or organisation. On this occasion Wesley appears to have paid his first visit to Bingley. He says respecting the afternoon of May 21st:—"I preached at Bingley. I have not lately seen so genteel a congregation: yet the word of God fell heavy upon them." This indicates that Methodism had been introduced into that town and awakened interest there. Certainly the warm-hearted local preachers of Keighley could not neglect a town which at that time was the most populous place in the round after Keighley, on its Yorkshire side. The conversion of Jonathan Maskew, a Bingley man, and of Thos. Mitchell, a supposed native of Morton Banks, shows that Methodism was at work in the neighbourhood; and they were not the men to allow Bingley to remain outside the places visited by the preachers in the round, and their zealous superintendent, Grimshaw.

Richard Burdsall, of York, tells us that being at Eldwick on a visit, he was invited to hear Mr. Grimshaw at Bingley next

day. He says, "At this invitation my heart glowed within me, and burned with desire until the time came. The next day happened to be New Year's Day, new style, and a very stormy, snowy day it proved. When we got to the place I trembled so much with the cold, that I thought it would be impossible for me to bear it long. The place of worship was a barn, which had been fitted up for the purpose, with deal seats and pulpit. The very appearance of the congregation was pleasing to me. After waiting for a short time, a broad-set, sharp-looking little man appeared, habited as a layman, and buttoned up from the storm. Having quickly loosed his garments, in a moment he was in the pulpit, and giving out a hymn; the people sung like thunder. His voice in prayer seemed to me as it had been the voice of an angel. After prayer, he took a little bible out of his pocket, and read the following words for his text: 'Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will toward men.'"¹ The precise date of this visit is not given, but from other statements in Burdsall's Journal, it appears to have been about 1753. It is not known in what barn Grimshaw preached.*

The first Methodist meeting place in Bingley was a blacksmith's shop which stood on Elm Tree Hill. The next place was a large room over a block of buildings which occupied the site where the first chapel was erected. David Walbank, a well-known old Methodist, related that while fitting up this room, he overheard some of the members express great anxiety as to how the rent was to be raised, although only 30s. a year.

Methodism prospered, and we find that after a few years' occupation, the property was purchased, and the whole turned into a chapel, probably about 1790.† Bingley is not mentioned in the circuit book until 1764. From this it would appear that the society was either too poor to contribute to the circuit funds, or used the class money for rent and other local purposes.

Mary Wilkinson, another old Methodist, stated that her great grandfather, Jonathan Gott, who lived in a house under the preaching room, prior to the building of the first chapel, had a room in his house set apart for the use of the preachers when they came to this town. This statement is supported by an entry in the circuit book, October 22nd, 1767. "To Bingley society for eight yards of drill that was bought for a bed, 8s. 6d." From an old plan of 1802, it appears that the preacher took service at Keighley and Bingley on the same day, and slept at the latter place.

*Ward's *Bingley*.

† See Myles.

In the first Bingley chapel would worship several old Methodists, worthy to be had in remembrance;—such as Benj. Wilkinson, a simple-hearted, zealous, good old pilgrim, who died in the parish workhouse, and found a pauper's grave; but at whose funeral the streets were crowded by those who wished to do him honour; while the singers of the chapel sang a solemn hymn of praise, until they entered the precincts of the parish church, where, as Methodists, they were allowed to sing no longer. Another Bingley Methodist, belonging to about the same period, was Joseph Pickles, who died at the age of ninety-five, in 1829, after being a Methodist sixty-five years; leaving behind him seven children, seventy-three grand-children, one hundred and seventy-nine great-grand-children, and fifty-three great-great-grand-children, in all three hundred and nine surviving descendants, exclusive of one hundred and one others who died before him, a total progeny of four hundred and ten.*

Sunday, May 22nd, Wesley says, "After preaching at five (probably in Keighley), I took horse for Haworth. A December storm met us upon the mountain; but this did not hinder such a congregation as the church could not contain. I suppose we had near a thousand communicants, and scarce a trifler among them. In the afternoon, the church not containing more than a third of the people, I was constrained to be in the church-yard. The rain began as soon as I began to speak; but they regarded it not; for God sent into their hearts

' The former and the latter rain,
The love of God, and love of man.' "

During the next two days, Wesley reached the northern extremity of the round. His rides illustrate the heavy strain of his labours. "Monday, 23rd, I took horse at four. It rained till noon without any intermission, and we had heavy showers in the afternoon; however, we reached Ambleside in the evening. Tuesday, 24th, we rode by Keswick to Whitehaven. Within a few miles of the town, I was so tired that I could scarce either ride or walk; but all weariness was gone before I had preached a quarter of an hour."

In the year 1758, the following places for the first time contributed to the funds of the round:

"Elland, 10s. 9d; Colne, 5s; Lawnde, near Burnley, by Wm. Parker, 10s. 6d.; Warley Clough, by James Crosby, 8s. 6d; Gisburn, by Parson Greenwood, 4s.; Longwood Edge, by Jas. Oddie, 19s." The payments of this year are peculiar. For the first time we find definite sums given to preachers, without dis-

* Tyerman, 2-411.

inction made between travelling and local preachers, in the first three quarters. In the fourth, five preachers receive exactly the same sum as the two travelling preachers, Messrs Coates and Oddie.

“Jany. 19th, 1758

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|---|---|
| 7 Preachers, 18s. a piece | 6 | 6 | 0 |
| and John Coates 2s. 3d. | | | |

April 20th, 1758

| | | | |
|------------------------------|---|----|---|
| Paid to the Preachers | 7 | 10 | 7 |
|------------------------------|---|----|---|

July 20th 1758

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|
| To the 7 preachers 18s. Ea.... .. | 6 | 6 | 2 |
| The two pence added. | | | |

Oct. 19th 1758

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|----|------------------|
| To 5 Preachers equally | 2 | 17 | 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ |
| „ Alex. Coates and Jas. Oddie | 2 | 17 | 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ |

Who the seven preachers were we may to some extent conjecture. Certainly the following were of the number:

Alexander Coates, James Oddie, Jonathan Maskew, Parson Greenwood, John Wilkinson. Titus Knight and Thomas Colbeck might complete the number, but the last was probably too generous to take money for service rendered to his Lord. The labours of the local preachers in those days, when their number was so small, were very great. In general they were employed every Lord's Day; on which they occasionally rode, but more frequently walked, from twenty to thirty miles, and preached two or three times; with very poor fare from friends, and occasionally much opposition and insult from enemies. Yet, animated by the love of Christ and souls, they cheerfully sacrificed ease, and domestic enjoyments, and were comparatively regardless of either wind, rain, snow, or hail. One of these men of God, who for sixty-five years had laboured as a local preacher, was never known to disappoint a congregation on account of weather, unless the waters were unfordable, or the roads absolutely impassable. His faithfulness was so universally known, that no congregation ever feared a disappointment when he was expected.

In the Minutes of Conference for 1758, we are brought again face to face with Wm. Darney, by the following question: “Can we receive W. Darney?” The answer given was: “Not till we are fully assured that he does not rail, print, or sell wares without a license.”

To understand this matter it will be necessary to look at Darney's publications, and the circumstances arising out of their issue.

In 1755, Darney published a book, entitled, “The Fundamental Doctrines which are contained in the Holy Scriptures.”

Printed by Archibald McLean, of Glasgow. The book certainly furnishes abundant ground for complaint as to illiteracy, railing, and doubtful doctrine. It is very evident that Darney leaned towards Calvinism, and wished to teach some of its tenets privately. He also exhibits divergence of opinion from Wesley, on holiness, and contends in his book vehemently for liberty to propagate his views, and associate with those holding them. He evidently could not see that Wesley was in duty bound to defend the truths he held, and to preserve the peace of his societies by discouraging controversy, and at times putting it down with a firm hand.

Darney's preaching and his book combined, appear to have subjected him to discipline, probably at the Conference of 1755, for his name does not occur in the list of itinerant and local preachers from that date to 1758. He did not submit without remonstrance, as we gather from a letter which John Wesley wrote on September 3rd, 1756, to a Mr. Norton.

He says, "Last week I had a long letter from Wm. Darney, who likewise wonders we should be of so persecuting a spirit, as to deny him the liberty of thinking and speaking in our societies according to his own conscience. How will you answer him and excuse Ted and Charles Perronet from the charge of persecuting their brother? They then said (as did all), 'Let him preach Calvinism elsewhere (we have no right to hinder him); but not among us, because we are persuaded it would do much hurt.'"

Later in the same letter he quotes Darney as saying, "My crime is that I would preach Christ, as His word, His Spirit, and my own conscience teach me.' But he has far more ground for complaint than you; for we ourselves separated him from us.*"

During the interval of his suspension, it is very probable that he would resume his calling of a pedlar, on the ground where he was best known,—the borders of Lancashire and West Yorkshire. He might fail to obtain a licence from the hope of early reinstatement in the ranks of Wesley's preachers. Grimshaw felt kindly toward him, and his letter to Newcastle implies that he did not silence him. Also a payment of 2s. 3d. which he receives on April 20th, 1758, for horse-shoeing in the Haworth round, shows that he was there in the early part of that year.

In a letter from Haworth, October 18th, 1758, addressed to "The Christian Brethren in Newcastle-upon-Tyne and elsewhere in the North," Grimshaw says concerning Darney,—
"Brother Darney's labours have been useful in these parts; may

they be blessed among you." Darney left the Haworth round in 1758, and it is highly probable that in the year 1759 he was labouring in the Dales circuit, which was formed in 1757 out of the Leeds circuit, which up to that time took in the whole of Yorkshire east of Leeds, and extended north to Newcastle. Barnard Castle was the circuit town of the Dales, and Swaledale, Wensleydale, Teesdale, Weardale, Allandale, Alston, and Halhamshire, formed the new circuit. Darney seems to have been assisting Jacob Rothwell in the formation of the circuit.

Darney was well remembered and spoken of by the old Methodists of the circuit as one that occupied a prominent position in the early days of Methodism in the locality. The probabilities are strengthened by the fact that the Rev. W. Grimshaw preached at Barnard Castle about this time, which coincides exactly with what he had said in the letter of October 18th, 1758, addressed to brethren "elsewhere in the North." "I understand by Brother Darney, the bearer hereof, that you entertained an expectation of my visiting your parts this summer; and indeed, for some time, I warmly purposed the same: but may I not say, that though man purposes, yet the Lord disposes. It has so fallen out that I could not conveniently come. The same ardent desire, that at times, for years past, I have had of visiting the North, still abides; and therefore who knows, but I may see you, the Lord willing, next summer?"

The difficulties were so far removed as to enable Grimshaw to reach Barnard Castle, and probably the other places he wished to visit. Writing to Mr. G. Merryweather, of Yarm, on June 22nd, 1759, he says:
"Dear Brother,

Grace, mercy, and peace, be to you from our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ. I am sorry I have no more leisure to write a longer letter to you, being in haste to set out to meet Mr. Whitefield, who, God willing, preaches here both forenoon and afternoon of Sunday next. My journey into the North was quite agreeable to myself; may it prove profitable to the souls of many! To the Lord be the glory! Whether I may have the pleasure to visit you again this season, I dare not certainly say, as I have various parts to visit this summer. This, however, I shall be better able to determine at the Conference." No particulars of this visit can be ascertained beyond the fact that he proclaimed his message in the open air, very near the old meeting-house, on what was then a common, and called the Crook. It would, we are sure, be a great occasion for Darney. His friend, so steadfast, so devoted,

now known throughout the kingdom, and held in such high esteem by the Wesleys, would be welcomed as an apostle by him, and by the people who had received the word. This visit also shows the vast field of Grimshaw's labours. The Dales circuit involved immense toil, requiring the travelling of about four hundred miles to complete the round.

That Darney did go to Newcastle, despite Wesley's adverse opinion of him, shielded by Grimshaw's testimonial, is evident from the following letter written by Wesley to Matthew Lowes, at the Orphan House, Newcastle.

" London, September 8th, 1761.

My Dear Brother,

If local preachers who differ from us will keep their opinions to themselves, then they may preach in our societies; otherwise they must not. And upon this condition, we are all willing to receive William Darney into connection with us."

Wesley evidently intended Matthew Lowes to travel in the Haworth round, as the remainder of the letter shows. The circuit book however has no entry of payment made to him. He might go to Whitehaven and be supported by that section of the round, or fail to comply with Wesley's wishes, as was the case in several instances of conference appointments being changed; thus causing the circuit records to be the only reliable authority. It will also be found later in the history, that Whitehaven strongly resented the appointment of married preachers. The letter goes on to say: "The sooner you set out for Whitehaven the better. The society there need not be frightened at a married preacher, considering we have paid forty pounds of their debt out of the collection. And if the expense for wives be too heavy, I will help them out. Do all you can to propagate the books in that circuit, and to fulfil the office of an assistant.

I am, with love to sister Lowes,

Your affectionate friend and brother,

J. WESLEY."*

The following, taken from an old Moravian document, refers to this period of the circuit's history.

"The Methodists began to preach in Baildon. The Rev. Mr. Highton, at that time curate of Baildon, was hostile to both Brethren and Methodists. He once invited the colliers to seize the preachers under the bank, as they were coming (by the old road to Shipley), and to put them into the pond. The Methodist preacher (W. Darney), known by the name of

* Wesley Historical Society, Vol. 2-125.

Scotch Will, experienced violence at their hands, but Bro. J. Isles escaped uninjured.* Baidon appears in the circuit book for the first time in 1760, confirming the supposition that Methodism was introduced from 1758 to 1760.

However defective in language and delivery some of the first Methodist preachers might be, in the choice of pulpit themes they have scarcely been equalled in any age. To convert sinners was their business, and they kept it in view with singular steadiness of purpose. They were equally zealous in building up the souls saved through their instrumentality.

What are only doctrines, or debateable opinions, with many modern preachers, were realities in the beliefs of our fathers, and powerfully influenced their own lives, and their treatment of men and public questions.

Mr. Wesley, in a letter to Lady Huntingdon, written in March, 1759, bears this testimony to the first labourers in the great revival. "I have found great satisfaction in conversing with those instruments whom God has lately raised up. But still there is I know not what in them whom we have known from the beginning, and who have borne the burden and heat of the day, which we do not find in those who have risen up since, though they are upright of heart. Perhaps, too, those who have but lately come into the harvest are led to think and speak more largely of justification, and the other first principles of the doctrine of Christ. And it may be proper for *them* to do so. But *we* find a thirst after something farther." †

Was it that the first preachers were more directly called by the Spirit of God, and tested by the persecution to which they were subjected?

I insert a letter written this year to Mr. Charles Wesley, by John Nelson, containing an account of happy deaths, and a vivid picture of a Methodist preacher's straightened circumstances most bravely borne.

" Birstall, March 17th, 1758.

Dear Sir,

This is with my best love to you and your dear companion, and earnest prayer for you and your son. May God make him His son and raise him up to stand in the gap when you are called to take up your place above. I am glad to hear from you, but I have been abroad two months. I have been quite through Manchester round, and several received the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins, while I was in the round, and some just before I went; and I have received a letter from Congleton that tells me that two found peace soon after I left

*December 9th, 1781, letter from T. H. Hines, Baidon, to W. Jessop.

† Life of Lady Huntingdon, 1-399.

the town. I believe the work goes on about Birstall by what I hear, but I have not been in the round yet. I met your brother at Epworth, and the people flocked to hear from every quarter. There hath been a great famine of the word in these parts. We have had four that died in the Lord since I wrote to you before. One of them lies dead now, and I am to preach over her corpse to-morrow. It is about fifteen years since she first knew the Lord, and I have had much acquaintance with her ever since. In the former part of her illness she 'rode in the chariot of love'; but toward the middle the enemy was let loose on her, and she was tempted to think she should faint at last; but I visited her on Monday last week, and as I prayed with her the cloud broke, and she said she never had so much of God's love in her life before, and she continued to praise Him for ten days together; then she said to her husband and daughter (who both know the Lord), 'I am going to my dear Jesus, O do not shed one tear for me, for why should you weep when I am going to eternal happiness?' Then she gave a smile and departed.

"There is one that hath been acquainted with the Lord twelve years, that lies a-dying of a mortification in her foot; but God is with her in exquisite pain, and I trust she will come out of the furnace as gold refined in the fire. My wife joins in love to you and all friends there, and we desire an interest in your prayers. Our daughter is very poorly, I think much as Miss Burnel was. I have never been at Leeds since I came home, but I hear Brother Shent is hard used after all he has done and suffered for the gospel.

"I pray you tell my friends in Stokescroft, and the Square, that their old friend that told them of Mr. Yates is gone to God as a shock of corn fully ripe. I was with him a few days before he died, and he said, 'John, God is good to me, and He will take me to Himself, and I would have thee go on, and do all the good thou can for time is short here.' This is with my earnest prayer for you, and them, and all the church of God in that place. From yours to serve as a son in the gospel.

JOHN NELSON.

"This part I would have you to keep to yourself, for if I be hurt, I would not have any one be hurt with me. I think you will sympathise with me and pray for me, for I am cut off from ever coming to Bristol or London again, without God work a miracle; for that I had towards supporting my family is taken off, and the stewards have sent me a letter that I must expect no more help from them; and we have but ten shillings per week in all, and that is to keep a servant out of, and wages

to pay her, which takes four shillings at least out of it, and we have coals and candles for the house, and soap to find, which will take two more, and all the goods in the house to keep in repair; and my meat when in the round, and in my absence another preacher for it; so that my family hath not one shilling a week to find them both meat and clothes, so that I am going to hew stone again; and I think to quit the house, for after near eighteen years' labour, I find it will not be meat and clothes. O sir, pray for me that I faint not at last. This keeps my head above water, to see that God continues to convert sinners by my word, and that so many finisheth their course with joy, so that I think He will either provide or take us to Himself. I desire that none may know of this but yourself till I see how matters will turn."

A proof of the thorough and close connection of Grimshaw with Methodism was the part he took in the erection, in 1758, of a chapel in Haworth, for the use of the Methodists after his death. His own kitchen had been, and continued to be during his lifetime, the Methodist preaching-room. In the circuit book there is the following entry relating to the above chapel. January 18th, 1759. "It was this day resolved by the preachers and the stewards of this round, that the sum of £2 16s. 8½d at the foot of this quarter's account, and lodged in the hands of Wm. Grimshaw, minister of Haworth, shall be disposed of by the said Wm. Grimshaw, in defraying the charges of building the preaching house at Haworth; as witness our hands the day and year above said:—Alexander Coates, James Oddie, Thomas Colbeck, William Greenwood, Parson Greenwood, Samuel Fielden.

One who knew this chapel, the late Mr. William Thomas, of Haworth, said it was twelve yards in length, by nine in width. Attached to it was a house, still standing, for the use of the preachers when at Haworth. The chapel was built by subscription, as we shall see in an unpublished letter from Grimshaw to Mrs. Gallatin. In conjunction with Grimshaw, the other trustees were thus described:—"John Wesley, of the city of Bristol, clerk; Charles Wesley, of the city of Bristol, clerk; Thomas Colbeck, of Keighley, grocer; John Nelson, of Bir-stall, gentleman; Paul Greenwood, of Stanbury, gentleman; Jonathan Maskew." To thee, Joseph Midgley, of Oldfield, then Lord of the Manor of Haworth, conveyed the site for 999 years, at a yearly rent of 13s. 6d., by a deed dated May 1st, 1758.

I now give Grimshaw's letter to Mrs. Gallatin, relative to this chapel, a letter showing how admirably he could meet spiritual difficulties, and also informing us of the very curious

expedient, adopted by three eminently godly men, for the removal of the first circuit chapel debt. In another letter, Grimshaw, without mentioning the names of his colleagues in this affair, says that one was in Birstall, and the other in Barnard Castle; and as John Nelson was then stationed at Birstall, and Darney was in the Dales circuit, we conclude they were the men. There is no room to doubt that the motives of all three were perfectly pure, and if they erred it was in ignorance, springing out of the lower standard of morality in their day, and the childlike simplicity of the men. It will be seen that all of them had scruples, and eventually resolved to tread that path no more.

“ Ewood, November 2nd, 1758.

Dear Mrs. Gallatin,

Grace, mercy, and peace be with you. The letter you wrote to me in answer to my request to you about the books, notwithstanding the Yorkshire mail was robbed, came safe to hand. In this I return sincere thanks to you for the trouble I gave you and the favour you did me on that account. I heartily thank you for the joy you express for the continued goodness of God to my poor unworthy soul. Indeed, to His eternal honour be it spoken, He has been amazingly gracious to me now near thrice seven years; but never more so than of late, and even at the present. Praise the Lord, O my soul! Tho' I've borne many heavy crosses and gone through many grievous trials and troubles since I saw you, yet the Lord was with me in them all, and has sanctified them all unto me. He who delivers out of six troubles, I know, can, does, and will deliver out of seven. I can truly say I never, that I remember, lost His presence for a moment this twelve years or upwards. O, dear madam, were I at your fireside, as formerly, I could give you a long and wonderful relation of my dear Lord's inward and outward dealings with me. But when shall that be? Perhaps I may do it in my future letters in some measure, and in relating such particulars of them as may be, through the Divine blessing, profitable for you. But no more of myself to you at this time; I desire rather to take notice of what relates to yourself in the sequel.

I won't dissemble with you. You rejoice to hear that God continues to bless me. Strange, and not be a child of God yourself, *not know what to say about the state of your own precious soul*. This rejoicing is an incontestable indication of the grace of God in your own soul. To rejoice with them that do rejoice ever will be a token of a child of God. Let the devil and unbelief object to it what

they will. I often think what a blessing it is that one may see another a child of God before he can see it himself. But say you, *I've more unbelief than any other in the world.* So says Satan, so you see, and you fear. But how come you to know this? By the light of the Holy Spirit. Light comprehends darkness, not darkness light. Do carnal men complain of unbelief? Blind men of the night? No! No! *But various are your doubts and fears, nay, you are ready to give it up, think all in vain.* This is just what the Devil wants you to be at. Give up all profession and all pretension is it? Fie upon him, old sophister; for tho' it is said that Michael, the archangel, durst not bring against him railing accusation, with the help of God I will. Yea, and the Lord rebuke thee, fiend! But the Lord, notwithstanding, is evidently in at your doubts and fears—and for proof let your own words speak. 'I cannot,' say you, 'rest in this state.' No, I hope the Lord will never let you, for blessed be His name, say I, this restlessness is His work. Your very next words are, 'I then think if I perish it shall be seeking mercy.' O amazing, glaring grace. Here is manifest God's hand. Here is the language of the Spirit. And here is Satan nonplussed. '*I am free,*' say you '*from my old doubts*' (I know what you mean) '*for months, then it returns again.*' Will the Devil never cease to scare you with old bugbears? This is Satan wholly. O how ready is he to play upon your weak side. O I dare say if ever you come to lie on a dying bed he will try you with your old doubts. When Satan wants tools of his own, I often find he makes use of ours to plague us with. And thus I see he deals with you, but never heed him; your old doubts will never hurt you in time or eternity. I am glad if any letter of mine be in this case of service to you. To the Lord be the praise. I wish I could dissuade you from one thing which methinks I discerned in some of your former letters and your last; it is poring too intently upon the worse side of your estate, and looking too remissly on the better. By this means your heart is amused with little to encourage you, but everything to discourage you from closing in with Jesus, in all or any of His offices. Thus, though your state is evidently and really good, you're held off from real and solid communion and consolation with God in Christ Jesus. Can you but once look in all, and through all at Him, how happy, lastingly happy would you be.

"What you say of *being afraid I have spoke to you not from the good Spirit*, as also of the contrary doctines you hear of perfection, perfect people, and imputed righteousness, I reserve for my next letter. I'll deal honestly and freely with you about them all. I'll write my best to you about them, and endeavor

our what I can to remove your uneasiness. Sweet Jesus bless you and be with you. Read, watch, pray. God bless the Major. I hope to write soon. I am your much obliged and very affectionate

WM. GRIMSHAW.

P.S.—I wish my letter may be legible to you

P.S.—Permit me to desire a favour of you as being the only person we could apply to in London. A few days ago observing in one of the public papers an advertisement of one J. Hasard, Stock Broker, at his State Lottery office, near the Royal Exchange, at his house also on Ludgate Hill, &c., that a State lottery would begin drawing November 13th, which is Monday-sennight, and that tickets are sold in parts, and not seeing any harm in the nature of the thing, I and two preachers more would be willing to desire you to buy us two quarters of shares, and two quarters of chances, of that Mr. Hasard, or where you please else, and we will take care to remit the money to whom you shall direct us. If Divine Providence give us nothing we are contented. If He give us anything we intend it for some laudable pious uses. We chose smaller parts of tickets that we may have a chance in more numbers, tho' our dividend be less. But if you think any other way of purchasing better, we submit to your judgment. Negotiate as you please for us. We would have nothing said of it. I'm your most constant friend. W.G.

P.S.—If you know any sin in the offering to buy any part of a ticket, or tickets, we are open to conviction. We are willing to decline the request and design. If there be no harm in it, as indeed we see none, we desire the favour of the purchase, as above."

In Grimshaw's next letter to Mrs. Gallatin we have a dissertation on satanic temptation, showing that he, like Wesley, had a vivid sense of the presence of powers of darkness to be resisted by the godly.

"Haworth, November 18th, 1758.

Dear Sister in the Lord,

Your answer to my last I received yesterday, but was not in leisure to write again till this morning. I am greatly obliged to you, but ashamed in myself, that you should rejoice at my renewal of our correspondence. I sincerely confess that I ought much rather to rejoice. However, may the Lord make it a mutual blessing to our precious and never dying souls. Whatsoever satisfaction and benefit the Lord may afford you from my letters—I will not say, if any,—to Him solely be the praise. What mean sentiments soever you may entertain of your own, hitherto they have always been a blessing to me, and I doubt not ever will be.

"I desire now to answer, as I promised, the unanswered part of your former letter. "I'm afraid," say you, "lest when you have spoke to me, that it has not been from the good Spirit." God forbid; then indeed both I and you consequently must be deceived. For such as I had, whencesoever I had it, notwithstanding in the integrity of my heart, I gave unto you. 'I was deluded by a lying spirit sent forth from the Lord to delude. And this, I further suppose you imagine, the Lord has done in an intentional, judicial, angry way against you. This I discern is your suspicion and mistrust. And to support you in this distressing imagination you refer to God's judicial dealing with Ahab. 1 Kings, xxii 20 to 28. But how does that extraordinary relation quadrate with your suspicion? Ahab was abominably wicked, devoted to idolatry, set up Baal in Israel, slew near all the Lord's prophets, and ran all the irreligious, impious, and wicked lengths of Jezebel's counsels. And now this wretched King, abandoned of the Lord, was come to the end of his hour, and Divine justice was determined to give him up to the delusion, not of the Lord's, but of his own false prophets, that they might betray him into battle, that he might fall, as by and by he did, by the hand of the Syrians at Ramoth Gilead. The spirit that begged leave to deceive his prophets was the devil, but nevertheless Micaiah, tho' he ironically promises the King victory (at the fifteenth verse), yet as being a true prophet of the Lord, foretells him his overthrow and death; as it exactly, you see, came to pass.

"So that from aught I can see from this story,—as the Lord Who can by no means be the author of delusion, error, or sin, permitted the prophets of Baal to deceive that wicked King to his utter ruin, so unto his own prophet Micaiah He gave the Spirit of Truth to tell the King honestly what would be his fate. But how foreign is all this to your case. Does it appear from this, or any passage of His blessed word, that the Lord suffers His servants to be possessed with an evil spirit to delude and destroy His penitent, salvation seeking, God fearing children? God forbid!

"And as to that passage in Ezek. xiv., 9. Compare it with verses three, and four, and you will quickly and clearly see that the case of Israel was the same with that of Ahab. They were given also to idolatry, and put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their faces, and yet would, as the manner and privilege in those days was, enquire of the prophet (true or false) concerning Himself, as though they would serve and obey Him. Horrid prevarication! Therefore would the Lord, as a just judgment upon them, and the prophet too, to work either repentance or ruin, deceive the prophet that he might

deceive them. This should terminate in the destruction of both if repentance prevented not (verses 9-11). But what have either of these Scriptures to do with you or me? These cases only affect the condition of such as are desperately abandoned to all iniquity, and no inclination to repentance appears in them. But does it appear, either from these or any other part of God's word, that the Lord puts a lying spirit into any of His true servants, to deceive such as are sincerely, penitentially, and piously seeking Him? By no means. Here again the Devil is busy with you, but, I hope, he shall never harm you. At times he may thus attempt to present Scriptures to you to foil and perplex you, but this and the like shall do you good. It shall exercise you to pray in watchfulness and closer application to the word which God gives.

"As to Mr. Wesley's writing and preaching against imputed righteousness, I'm surprised and sorry to hear it. What I, however, think of this, as also of sinless perfection, and Mr. Wesley's preaching against it, you shall, God willing, hear in my next. I had designed to have done it in this, but company and other engagements will not allow me. Your last letter shall also be answered. Sweet Jesus bless your good spouse and self. Perhaps it will be well to get the tickets registered. How am I obliged to you for the trouble I have given you on that account? To the Lord I would leave the issue. I hope to write again soon. Excuse haste, interlineations, and other blunders. Deal openly and frankly with me, and suffer me as occasion may require so far.

I'm your affectionate Brother in the Lord.

WM. GRIMSHAW."

A reference to the lottery shares is found in a letter of Grimshaw, written to Mrs. Gallatin on December 19th, 1758. "In my last I desired the shares and chances might be registered. My two friends who join with me in them are desirous to hear whether they are blanks or prizes. We suppose the drawing is near an end. We leave the issue to the Lord, in whose hands is the lot."

The next letter breathes resignation at the small success of this strange adventure.

"Haworth, January 19th, 1759.

Dear Sister in the Lord,

Grace, mercy, and peace be with you and your dear partner. As one house, through the special and gracious providence of our very dear Saviour, amidst this long and perilous season of war and bloodshed, has hitherto held you both, so may one mansion in your heavenly Father's house be your everlasting habitation after the dissolution of your earthly tabernacle. Amen, Lord Jesus, Amen.

"One day this week I received the favour of yours. As to the small success it has pleased our Lord to allow us in the lottery, I am well content with it, and so I hope will my two partners be when they hear of it. They are two fellow labourers. One of them is preaching in Birstall Round, and the other in the Newcastle or Barnard Castle Round. One intent of venturing a little money in the lottery was, if any material success had attended it, to help us to reduce a debt which is occasioned by building, a while ago, a preaching house in this town. A gentlewoman, late of Leeds, now I trust with God, was so kind as to leave us about five years ago, one hundred and forty pounds for the purpose, which we have expended, and near seventy pounds more; which by reason of the low circumstances and poverty of our societies we are not able to pay without some further providential help. However, I hope, nay I doubt not, but by some way or other most agreeable to Himself, the Lord will make a way for us to discharge it—to Him therefore I leave it. Suffer me here, I humbly beg of you to put in a word. May I beg for the Lord and His poor people's sake a mite of you for this pious purpose. It is not the first time you have been pleased to favour me on the like occasion. Probably it may be the last. And if it be but the gift of five shillings, I doubt not but you will have the hearty thanks not only, but fervent prayers of myself and many more.

"I will take care to remit your money to your own hand by some one of my neighbouring tradesmen, who will be coming to London in March, or the beginning of April, as usual about business; and I hereby, for myself, and in the name of my partners, take the opportunity of returning you our cordial thanks for the trouble we gave you about the lottery. I could have rejoiced if better success had attended your own tickets. But we know the lot is of the Lord; He, blessed be His name, hath done what seemed Him good. I think, as you do, it is much if I ever venture again, though thanks be to the Lord for that small prize. Thanks be to the Lord; thanks be to the Lord for ever. O that we may never suffer the least of His benefits, as David speaks, to slip out of our mind!

"In your last letter before this, you desired an account in a long letter of the Lord's dealings with me, and, I think in my reply, I made you a promise of it. But alas, when I began to reflect upon it, I have not a heart to begin. One hundred sheets would not hold it. I might give you a relation of experiences of twenty years' long. However, if it may but be profitable for your precious soul, whose spiritual and eternal welfare, I assure you I have much at heart, and if my very dear Lord but spare me life, health, light, and leisure, I'll give it you in parcels, as well as I can in my future letters.

"At present, tho' I thank God I am pretty happy in soul, yet I am not very well in body, nor have not been, blessed be the name of the Lord, for near a week, and therefore am not in good order for writing letters. However, I hope I shall shortly write again. In the meanwhile I commend yourself and my dear Major to the sovereign care and gracious protection of our dear Redeemer. Sweet Jesus, Jesus, Jesus bless you abundantly with all temporal, spiritual, and eternal blessings. I think I can truly say I never neglected to pray for you one day since I first saw you at Manchester. O that I may ever pray for you, and that my poor prayers may be heard. I wish an happy new year in soul, body, and estate, to both the Major and you, and desire to subscribe myself both his and your most obliged and humble servant,

WILLIAM GRIMSHAW.

"P.S.—Write I pray you often as you conveniently can; and let me hear chiefly of the estate of your soul. Watch and pray. I was in pain lest my two last letters had not got safe to your hand. If there be any defect in the manner I direct to you, pray let me know it."

We deeply regret that Grimshaw did not carry out the purpose expressed in this letter, as the autobiographical matter would have been most valuable.

"Haworth, May 5th, 1759.

Dear Sister in the Lord,

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ. I had designed to have wrote sooner, but have been much busied at home and abroad for near a month, which has been the main impediment to my writing. I hope you received my last, wherein among other things, I desired my sincere and hearty thanks to yourself and my other benefactors, by your means, for their generous contributions to our preaching house. I hope both you and they will have the prayers of many poor, but precious souls, and tho' they can no otherwise recompense you now, yet our dear Lord assures you, that you shall be recompensed at the resurrection of the just. The building is nearly finished; several friends have contributed cheerfully and handsomely to it, but it is still immersed (in debt). The burden lies chiefly, I may say solely (which is considerable) upon myself; but I hope, through the blessing of God, I shall ere long get extricated out of it, and see every penny paid. I hope you will not take it amiss, if I deduct the five guineas from the lottery money I owe, and send you the balance by Mr. John Wesley in August. He purposes to be here on the 22nd of July in his return out of the North to London.

“But yet would I write upon a more excellent subject,—Faith and Hope, such I mean as is not only properly Christian, or saving, but feeling, such as I experience by the grace of God. I experimentally find that this faith discovers what God hath prepared for them that love Him. And Hope still lays hold and sticks fast to that which faith discovers. Faith informs and hope possesses. I can never hope faster, nor further, than I believe. Faith walks foremost, and Hope follows. By this means, I find, to the praise of our dear Redeemer be it spoken, that reading, hearing, and meditation, are made unspeakably profitable and precious to my soul. By this means I am enabled to appropriate and apply to myself in a suitable and serviceable manner the promises of God, to acquire all grace attainable in this life, and to assure myself of that exceeding and eternal weight of glory that shall be revealed and enjoyed in the next. And so shall you. And as an unquestionable and comfortable consequence of all this, we shall wait diligently upon God in every means and ordinance of grace, and press unweariedly forward towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. In that small progress that I pretend to have made through grace, I find it daily expedient to try what principle every thought, word, and deed, proceeds from, and to what end it tends. If it proceed immediately from the Spirit, life, and love of God in my soul, and directly aims at His glory,—this is genuine sterling grace. If not, then how good and virtuous soever the same may appear to be, 'tis all but dross. We cannot be too wary and watchful over our hearts and ways, as touching this matter. This exercise is not difficult. Custom will make it familiar and easy, and the satisfaction and comfort naturally and necessarily resulting from it is unspeakable.

“I find this also always observable and true in the progress of grace, that one main way to grow in grace is copying sweet and precious Jesus in all His offices; to keep what I have by keeping it in exercise. This I take to be what He means when He says, ‘To him that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance.’ For sweet Jesus’ sake, and for our own sake, let us mind this. This observation will not fail to excite to zeal and diligence, a diligence unconceivably profitable and pleasant to the soul.

“Let me hear from you soon. It shall not, God willing, be long before I write again. You will please to excuse bad writing. My eyes are of late grown so dim, that I can scarcely see to write or read, and the other day I broke my spectacles. I often think my letters are not worth loosing, and so I think of this, and really should be quite uneasy about it, but that I

know I write to one who can loose them without any sensible hurt to her substance. I think of you daily in my prayers. God bless the Major. I am your very obliged and affectionate brother in the Lord,

WM. GRIMSHAW."

The Rev. C. Atmore, in his *Methodist Memorial*, published in 1801, says of Mr. Grimshaw, "He received the itinerant preachers into his own house, and erected a chapel for them in Haworth, where they regularly preached during his life, and for many years after his death." The statement is quite correct as to the hospitality shown by Mr. Grimshaw to the preachers. From his letters however we find that he only bore part of the expense of the erection of the chapel, and we also learn that Mr. Atmore's statement respecting the use of the chapel is not strictly accurate. In a letter to Mr. George Marsden, dated Birstall, January 9th, 1802, Mr. John Pawson says, "I have wrote to C. Atmore and have pointed out to him a great variety of mistakes in his book, but I have missed one. Be so kind as to desire him to look in page 167. There he tells us the late Mr. Grimshaw erected a chapel for us where we regularly preached during his life, and for many years after his death. He did indeed build us a chapel, lest he should be succeeded by a carnal minister, and so his flock be scattered, but it never was preached in, no not a single time, till after his death, and is preached in to this day by our preachers. He also built a dwelling house for the preachers which joins to the chapel, but the preaching was in his own house as long as he lived. I was present soon after his death, on a Haworth feast day. when I heard in that chapel Peter Jaco and Paul Greenwood preach, and Thos Colbeck and John Pawson prayed &c., so that I know the truth of the above."^{*}

On April 16th, 1773, the preaching house was let to William Riddihah, of Bingley, with liberty to teach a school in the chapel. Shortly afterwards the Haworth Methodist society diminished in numbers, and the chapel fell into such a dilapidated state that it was propped with timbers, and grass grew between the flags of the floor. The schoolmaster was obliged to teach in the dwelling house, and the religious services were conducted in the house of Mr. Abraham Sharp. The house he occupied is at the extremity of Haworth fronting down Mytholmes Lane. The members at that time, 1789 and 1790, had dwindled to five, viz, Abraham Sharp, Sarah Sharp, Henry Hey, Mary Whitaker, and Mary Hudson. In 1788, Haworth

^{*}Letter in the possession of Mr. G. Stampe, Grimsby.

had actually ceased to appear on the circuit plan. So desolate had this once flourishing hill of Zion become. In 1789, it was thought by the preachers of the Keighley circuit, that it would be a lasting reproach if some effort were not made to restore this historic chapel. Jonathan Maskew, now seventy-six years of age, was the only surviving trustee; and he was willing to convey the premises to a new trust. A subscription was commenced, and the appeal being readily responded to, the old chapel resumed its sacred character, as to its upper storey, whilst the lower part was converted into a cottage.

In 1791-2, a revival of religion took place in the circuit, and the numbers were increased four-fold. Haworth society in 1805 had progressed to one hundred and thirty-four members, consequently the upper floor of the chapel was taken out, and a gallery erected to afford accommodation to the increased congregation. Another enlargement took place in 1822, the chapel front being brought forward to the road. The Rev. David Stoner preached the opening sermon on the evening of July 7th, 1822. The chapel was much crowded, and thirteen hundred persons were counted as they left the doors. On Monday the 8th, the Rev. Joseph Entwistle preached, and on the following Sunday the Revs. William Theobald and David Stoner. We can imagine how the souls of these eminently holy Methodist preachers would be fired as they stood on such sacred ground, especially after a survey of the old church in the condition in which it was left by Grimshaw. Our forefathers were much better informed concerning their sainted predecessors than are the men of to day, and the memory of their deeds filled them with admiration and gratitude to God.

In the wall of the present chapel there is inserted a slab from the old sanctuary, with the inscription, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Another stone from the same edifice, placed over the window of the vestry, records, "The first chapel was erected by William Grimshaw, A.B., minister of Haworth Church, A.D. 1758." The inscription was originally, "This chapel, &c." It shows that even then the word *chapel* was superseding *preaching house*.

CHAPTER XVII.

ON JANUARY 18th, 1759, Bentley Wood Green, near Burnley, contributed to the Round, by Jonathan Wood, 14s.

The income of the quarter was £14 16s. 5d., and the expenses £9 3s. 4d. Having a surplus of £5 3s. 1d. the meeting made the following gifts :—

| | | £ | s. | d. |
|--------------------------|-----|---|----|----|
| To Jonathan Maskew | ... | 0 | 12 | 0 |
| „ Messrs. Oddie & Coates | ... | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| „ Paul Greenwood | ... | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| „ Parson Greenwood | ... | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| „ John Coates | ... | 0 | 5 | 0 |

April 19th, Booth, &c., contribute 4s. 6d. by John Coates; Bankhouse, by Jonathan Maskew, 11s. 6d.

Grimshaw, in a letter Nov. 27th, 1747, says, “I accidentally met with Br. Bennet at Bank, near Heptonstall, where I went to meet all the Heptonstall parish classes.” This was probably the same place.

July 12th, Brimicroft contributes 10s. 6d. by Wm. Grimshaw; Rodwell End, 3s. by Jonathan Maskew; Gawkhholme, 2s. 6d. by Jonathan Maskew; Paper Mill, 8s. 6d. by Alexander Coates; Dunnokshaw, 4s. by Dionysins, Haworth.

Messrs. Coates & Oddie attended the Conference in London, August 8th to 11th, at a cost to the round of £4 4s. 0d., and left the circuit, being succeeded by John Nelson, John Hacking, and James Wild.

On Oct. 18th, the round paid for John Hacking's riding coat, 22s. 6d., and James Wild wife's pillion cloth, 22s.

Craggs Errington contributes 2s. 2d. by Samuel Fielden.

On the 20th of April, 1759, Grimshaw met Wesley in Leeds, and next day rode with him to Stainland, where the society had grown sufficiently to be able to erect what Wesley describes as “a handsome building, near the top of a mountain, surrounded with mountains on all sides. The house was filled from end to end. Mr. Grimshaw read prayers, and I preached on part of the second lesson.”

Again, on the 17th of July, 1759, Wesley was in the Haworth round, preaching to an immense congregation at the foot of a high mountain near Otley, probably the Chevin. Wednesday, 18th, he says, “I rode on to Mr. Marshall's, at Guiseley, the

Capua of Yorkshire. In this delightful place are shady woods, cool fountains, and smooth and pleasant meadows. It is well God is here, or who could bear it?" Despite the spread of manufactories in the district, the vale of Esholt still answers well to Wesley's description. Mr. Jonathan Marshall resided at Parkgate, and with his wife had joined the Methodist society, and for many years continued steadfast to the cause. They rejoiced to receive Wesley as their guest when passing from Otley to Bingley and Keighley.

On the same day he rode to Keighley, "where," he says, "is a loving, earnest, well-established people." During the intervening years this high character has been well sustained, as the history of the circuit bears testimony.

On the 19th, another small Conference was held in Keighley, and was evidently a season to be had in remembrance by all who took part. Wesley says of it: "Here many of our preachers met, and many of our brethren; and God was with us in all our assemblies."

Grimshaw attended Wesley during the rest of the preaching tour in his round, and on Friday, the 20th, they rode from Keighley to Colne, when Wesley recalled the experience of 1748, which we have recorded. He says, "I preached at eleven in an open space, not far from the main street; I have seldom seen a more attentive or decently behaved congregation. How is the scene changed, since the drunken mob of this town used to be a terror to all the country! We rode to Broad Clough in the afternoon, a lone house in the midst of the Lancashire mountains. The people came in from all quarters, and it was a season of great refreshment."

Saturday, 21st: "Mr. Grimshaw led us to Gawksham, another lone house on the side of an enormous mountain. The congregation stood and sat, row above row, in the sylvan theatre. I believe nothing on the postdiluvian earth can be more pleasant than the road from hence, between huge, steep mountains, clothed with wood to the top, and washed at the bottom by a clear, winding stream."

Even now, with mills and growing towns defiling the air and polluting the river, and the rush of trains and noise of manufactures disturbing the valley, it is possible to picture a loveliness in the days of Wesley, little, if any, inferior to some of the best portions of the valley of the Wharfe. It is evident, from his frequent allusions to it, that the beauty of this West Yorkshire scenery fascinated Wesley.

At four on the same day he preached to a large congregation at Heptonstall, and thence rode on to Haworth. On the

following day, Sunday, the 22nd, Mr. Milner, the rector of Chipping, near Preston, read prayers, and Wesley preached twice to enormous congregations from a scaffold erected in the churchyard. Wesley says of the crowd, "Most of these were not curious hearers, but men fearing God. The communicants alone filled the church." They were doubtless the Methodists from great distances all round Haworth, who were in the habit of walking there frequently to hear Grimshaw and take the Communion. The Haworth round was so large and loosely connected as to render a survey of its parts difficult. Following the links afforded by entries in the circuit book, we are carried as far as Preston in the Fylde district of North Lancashire, and, fortunately, are able to give the story of the first Methodist in that important town.

The case of Martha Thompson, born 1731, illustrates the difficulties of converts to the faith in the early days of the society. She was compelled, about 1750, to seek the position of a domestic servant in the family of a lady formerly living in Preston, but then resident in London. Industrious, contented, and happy, she won the esteem of her employers, and was on good terms with the four or five fellow-servants resident in the house. Sent by her mistress one day, about 1755, into the city to make purchases, she saw a vast crowd of people in Moorfields, and soon found herself an absorbed listener to John Wesley. The arrow of conviction sank deep into her soul, and when she returned home she ingenuously told all that had passed to her mistress. The lady, a good churchwoman, solemnly warned Martha; but the anguish of her soul caused her to visit Moorfields again, and the way of salvation was pointed out so clearly in Wesley's sermon that her soul was set fully at liberty. In a transport of joy she joined the great congregation in song:—

"And will this sovereign King
Of glory condescend?
And will He write His name
My Father and my Friend?
I love His name, I love His word,
Join all my powers to praise the Lord!"

This triumphant song of joy echoed in the house. For a few days the servants endured it, and then, alarmed and annoyed, complained to the mistress. A doctor was called in, who declared that Martha was stark mad, and the same day the lady she served, with deep regrets, consigned her to a lunatic asylum. Even here the old song was still sung—

"I love His name, I love His word,
Join all my powers to praise the Lord!"

God touched the heart of her keeper, and she was at length permitted to go into the kitchen and make herself useful. Here she contrived to secure ink and paper and write a letter to Wesley soliciting his help to regain her freedom. A gentleman visiting his wife, who was an inmate of the asylum, kindly took the letter to Wesley, and that man of God soon procured Martha's release.

He did more—he carried her part of the way to Preston behind himself on horseback. Martha commenced business about 1757, as a milliner, and prospered in it very remarkably.

She was the only Methodist in the town of Preston, and her love for the communion of saints prompted her to search the country round for some kindred spirits. There was a poor weaver at Cockshott House, in the Ribble valley, named William Livesey, who joined the Methodists about this time (1759), and who became a spiritual magnet of considerable power. He attracted fifteen other persons to himself, and became leader of a society class at Brimicroft. It was six miles from Preston, but Martha Thompson counted it a privilege to walk twelve miles every Sunday for spiritual counsel and help.

She had a neighbour named Mrs. Walmsley, who kept an inn in Church Street, and who went with her one Sunday and joined the little band of Methodists. Shortly afterwards Mrs. Walmsley's son William was converted and joined them. There were now three Methodists in Preston, and they earnestly desired a visit from one of the travelling preachers. These itinerants had a circuit one hundred and twenty miles long by sixty miles broad, so that they were only able to visit the societies occasionally. At first they came to Preston once in six weeks and preached in Mrs. Walmsley's alehouse. She entertained them, and her son William became the first leader of the little society, which numbered five members—two other females having joined them.

When Colne was separated from Keighley and became the head of a circuit, Preston had a preacher once a fortnight, and later still service was held on Sunday at noon.

Martha Thompson married Mr. J. B. Whitehead, a brass founder and button manufacturer from Birmingham. Her new home was one of comfort and affluence. She was hospitable to the preachers, and did her utmost to promote the work of God in the district.

A very remarkable story is told of one of her efforts to win her friends to Christ. Wesley was announced to preach at Chorley one week-day, and she thought it would be a good opportunity for making Methodism known among her friends. So she hired a horse and conveyance at one of the inns in Preston,

and invited her friends to go with her to Chorley. She packed up a hamper of provisions, and prayed that God would save her unconverted friends at Chorley. The innkeeper who owned the horse and carriage employed a young man named Christopher Briggs, who was ordered to drive the party that day. Now Briggs had a fierce hatred of Methodism, common to all the Fylde people at that time, and when he heard they were a party of Methodists going to hear John Wesley, he positively refused to drive them. The innkeeper told him that as Mrs. Whitehead was a neighbour of his and a good customer, he must either drive her to Chorley or he must quit his service at once. After a long parley Briggs promised to go, but he inwardly swore that he would upset the coach and break their necks. The party filled the conveyance and drove merrily out of Preston. They were soon in the country, and Briggs began to look out for his opportunity of upsetting them all. That seemed not far to seek for it was a wretched road—full of holes and ruts and stone-heaps. On he drove at a fearful pace, expecting every moment to be overturned, and prepared to jump for his life and leave them to their fate. But this coach had a charmed life that day. It would not upset, and it did not break down, but drove triumphantly into Chorley. Briggs could not understand it. He did not know that Mrs. Whitehead had been praying for him, and that God's providence was watching over him. The hamper was unpacked, and Mrs. Whitehead entertained her friends to a good dinner. Briggs was persuaded to join them, and under the influence of the good things provided he began to think these Methodists were not such bad people after all. He went with them to the service, and under Wesley's sermon was led to seek and find mercy. He joined the society and became a very devout and sincere Christian. For some years he rendered valuable service to the cause in Preston.

Years afterwards he was travelling by coach from Staffordshire to Manchester, when the vehicle was upset, and he was thrown violently to the ground. His leg was badly crushed and had to be amputated. After the surgeons had finished their work he said "I thank you, gentlemen, for all the pains and trouble you have taken. Then turning to the Rev. Thos. Taylor, who stood by his side, he said, "Glory be to God, Who has gathered me unto Himself!" Then he was seized with convulsions and died.

Mrs. Whitehead lived to be nearly eighty-nine years of age, and her declining years were passed in great peace. She visited the sick and ministered to the poor, and occupied her place in the Sanctuary till the Master called her to the better and. She died at Preston in 1820.

When, in age and feebleness extreme, she was waiting for the end, she gathered her children and grandchildren round her bed, and begged them to sing her old song :—

And will this Sovereign King

Of glory condescend ?

And will He write His name

My Father and my Friend ?

I love His name, I love His word,

Join all my powers to praise the Lord.*

January 17th, 1760, Baildon contributes 4s. by James Wild ; Fewston 6s. 6d. ; Asquith 6s. ; Guiseley, etc., 6s. by Mr. Colbeck ; Hawksworth 7s. by Mr. Colbeck.

April 17th, New Mill, &c., 7s. 2d. by Jno. Hacking.

July 24th, Wadsworth, &c., 9s. 5d. by Wm. Parker ; Haworth, Oakes, &c., 18s. by W. Grimshaw.

Oct. 16th, Denholme, &c., 6s. by W. Grimshaw ; Barcroft, &c., 4s. by W. Grimshaw ; Mixenden, &c., 10s. by W. Grimshaw.

The preachers appointed to the round at the Conference of 1760 were John Oliver and John Gibbs.

John Oliver's early history illustrates the strange conceptions formed respecting the early Methodists, and the persecution they had to endure from their relatives for Christ's sake. He says : " My father was fond of me to excess." Under conviction of sin " I read, prayed, fasted, went to Church, and seemed more and more resolved ; till, after a few months, several young men of my acquaintance came from Manchester to Stockport (his home), on the Lord's Day, to an inn opposite to our house, and sent over for me. My father pressing me to go, I went." The result was a debauch followed by remorse and melancholy. " A neighbour, who was a hearer of the Methodists, sent me word there was to be preaching that night. My father declared that if I went he would knock my brains out, though he should be hanged for it ! However, I stole away. The preacher was John Appleton, who invited all who were weary and heavy-laden to come to Jesus. It was balm to my soul. Till now I had thought of saving *myself*. My cry now was, ' Lord, save, or I perish.' As soon as I got home, I went to prayer, and pleaded the merits of Christ. Suddenly, I thought I heard a clear voice, saying, ' Son ! thy sins, which are many, are forgiven.' I cried out, ' Lord, if this be from thy Spirit, let the words be applied with power.' Instantly I heard a second time, ' Son, thy sins, which are many, are forgiven thee.' In that instant all my load was gone, and I felt such a change as cannot be expressed. I loved God : I loved all mankind. I could not tell whether I was in the body or out of it. Prayer was turned into wonder, love and praise."

* Fylde Methodism by I. Taylor.

Oliver immediately joined the Methodists, in the year 1748, being then in his seventeenth year. He goes on to say: "I was now tried in a manner I had not been before. My father was a man of violent temper; and as much as he loved me, his anger quickly overcame his natural affection. He sent to all the Methodists threatening what he would do if any of them dared to receive me into their houses. Several gentlemen of the town advised him to proceed to more severe methods. He did so, frequently breaking sticks, and sometimes chairs upon me. When all this did not move me, he tried another way, charging me with disobedience, and telling me I had broke his heart, and would bring down his grey hairs with sorrow to the grave.

"Several clergymen then called upon me, and strove to show me the Methodists were wrong. One of them was Mr. Dale, lately my master, who called me his child, prayed for me, wept over me, and conjured me, if I loved my own soul not to go near those people any more. My father promised, before Mr. Dale, I should go to Church-prayers every day, and would have every indulgence I could wish, 'provided I would come no more near those d—d villains.' I told him I would do everything in my power as a child to oblige him; but this was a thing that affected my conscience, which, therefore, I could not give up. Our Society was now much united together, and did indeed love as brethren."

After-experiences were trying in the extreme, a fall from grace resulted in such remorse as to lead to two attempts at suicide. The father called in a doctor who bled, blistered, and drugged young Oliver after the brutal fashion of the time. Three clergymen visited him in turn, using every argument to induce him to think no more of the Methodists. When able to go out he fled to Manchester, but was followed by his mother, who found him listening to a Methodist preacher. Calling him out, she said, "Your father is dying and wants to see you before he dies." "Being exceedingly struck," he says, "I went with her. She took me to an acquaintance, Mr. Hibbert's, in Deans-Gate. But they knew not what to do with me, being afraid the Methodists would come and take me away. At length they shut me up in a room with strong doors, and a person to guard me all night. In the morning I was guarded home, where I found my father as well as usual. He did everything he could to extort a promise that I would leave the Methodists. But not prevailing, he gave the matter up, and from that time I gained my freedom."

Oliver obtained spiritual as well as physical liberty, and in the year 1759, after having for eight years laboured as a local preacher, Wesley appointed him as a preacher on trial to the

Sheffield circuit. This was done without consultation, or warning, on the recommendation of James Wild, who so abruptly left the Haworth round in 1760.

His second appointment was as successor to Wild in this round, where he also appears to have been discouraged to such an extent as to write to Wesley desiring he might go home. Wesley replied, "You have set your hand to the gospel plough; therefore never look back. I would have you come up to London this winter. Here is everything to make the man of God perfect." He says that Grimshaw shewed him great kindness, and did not let him go without much reluctance.

Of his colleague, John Gibbs, we can learn nothing, save that, according to Myles, he entered the ministry this year, and retired from it in 1766. The circuit book also shows that he was a married man, and the first to receive the allowance of £12 os. od. per annum in this round.

John Nelson was also appointed in 1760 to travel in the Haworth round. No traditions or records in his Journal refer to his work in this region. But he would certainly find congenial spiritual society, and be more generously treated than in the Manchester round. It was a year of great revival, and Nelson's soul would be fully in the work of building up societies. The revival spread first through various parts of Yorkshire, afterwards in London, then through most parts of England, and through the centre, South, and West of Ireland. Many persons, men and women, professed to be cleansed from all unrighteousness, and made perfect in love, in a moment; often while hearing the word, but more frequently while at prayer, or while others were praying for them. Wesley thus speaks of it, "Here began that glorious work of sanctification, which had been nearly at a standstill for twenty years; and wherever the work of sanctification increased, the whole work of God increased in all its branches. Many were convinced of sin, many justified, and many backsliders healed."*

Wesley had received the following letter from Otley, then one of the principal places in the Haworth round. "On Friday, March 13th, about thirty persons were met together at Otley, about eight o'clock in the evening, in order (as usual) to pray, and sing hymns, and provoke one another to love and good works. After prayer was ended, when they proceeded to speak of the several states of their souls, some, with deep sighs and groans, complained of the burden they felt for the remains of indwelling sin; seeing in a clearer light than ever before, the necessity of a deliverance from it.

*Myles, 85

"When they had spent the usual time together, a few went to their own houses ; but the rest remained upon their knees, groaning for the fulfilment of the great and precious promises of God. One being desired to pray, he no sooner began to lift up his voice to God, than the Holy Ghost made intercession in all that were present, with groanings that could not be uttered. At length the travail of their souls burst out into loud and ardent cries. They had no doubt of the favour of God, but they could not rest, while there was anything in them contrary to His nature. One cried out, in an exceeding great agony, 'Lord deliver me from my sinful nature !' then a second, a third, and fourth. And while the person who prayed first, was calling upon God in these words, 'Thou God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, hear us for the sake of thy Son Jesus !' one was heard to say, 'Blessed be the Lord God for ever, for He hath cleansed my heart.' " Another and another spoke the like experience, and the writer thus concludes :—" Thus they continued for the space of two hours ; some praising and magnifying God, some crying to Him for pardon or purity of heart, with the greatest agony of spirit.

"The next evening they met again ; and the Lord was again present to heal the broken in heart. One received remission of sins ; and three more believed God had cleansed them from all sin. And it is observable, these are all poor, illiterate creatures, of all others most incapable of counterfeiting, and most unlikely to attempt it. But 'when his word goeth forth, it giveth light and understanding to the simple.' "*

To this work at Otley Grimshaw alludes in his letter to C. Wesley, March 31st, 1760. He evidently thought that "sinless perfection" was being taught and professed, and from this and other letters we gather that Grimshaw's views on this "perfection" were felt by himself to be not quite in harmony with what he looked upon as Methodist teaching on this experience. He says :—

"The doctrine of perfection runs very high, just now, in these parts. About Otley and Leeds, I am told, not fewer than thirty profess sinless perfection ; and thirty more, I expect, will pretend thereto shortly. If it be of God, it is well. Time will prove it. I wish they knew their own hearts. My perfection is, to see my own imperfection ; my comfort, to feel that I have the world, flesh, and devil to overthrow through the Spirit and merits of my dear Saviour ; and my desire and hope is, to love God with all my heart, mind, soul, and strength, to the last gasp of my life. This is my perfection. I know no other, excepting to lay down my life and my sword together."

*Wesley's Journal. 2-524.

John Wesley at this time defined it in other but not contradictory words. "Constant communion with God the Father and the Son fills their hearts with humble love. Now this is what I always did, and do now, mean by perfection. And this I believe many have attained, on the same evidence that I believe many are justified. May God increase their number a thousand-fold."*

Grimshaw lived in closest friendship with the lay-preachers. They were entertained in his house and preached in his kitchen, of which services he constantly gave notice in the church. Newton, of Olney, in a letter to Wesley, of Nov. 14th, 1760, says "I forgot to tell you in my last, that I had the honour to appear as a Methodist preacher. I was at Haworth; Mr. Grimshaw was pressing and prevailed. I spoke in his house to about 150 persons. A difficult auditory in my circumstance, about half Methodists and half Baptists."† I have several times stood in that kitchen, and for such a large audience to assemble, the parlour and staircase of the house must also have been utilised.

The persecution to which Methodist preachers were subjected, and the damage done to their houses and preaching rooms, caused some of them to obtain licenses under the Act of Toleration, a law passed for the protection of Dissenters. Charles Wesley beheld this action with great suspicion, because he regarded it as a declaration of Dissent, and leading on to separation from the Church. John Wesley for a time opposed the obtaining of licenses, but at length directed his preachers, in case of necessity, to put themselves under the protection of this Statute. These facts explain allusions in the correspondence which took place in 1760 between Charles Wesley and John Nelson.

At that time also two others of the preachers, called out of the Haworth round, had incurred C. Wesley's grave displeasure. Thomas Mitchell and Paul Greenwood were stationed in Norwich, and had presumed to dispense the Lord's Supper there along with John Murlin. When this came to Charles Wesley's knowledge he wrote to his brother, who was probably at that time in Staffordshire.

"Dear Brother,

We are come to the Rubicon. Shall we pass, or shall we not? In the fear of God (which we both have) and in the name of Jesus Christ, let us ask, 'Lord what wouldest *Thou* have us to do?'

"The case stands thus. Three Preachers, whom we thought we could have depended upon, have taken upon them to ad-

*Journal 2-528.

†Myles 22.

minister the sacrament, without any ordination, and without acquainting us (or even yourself) of it beforehand. Why may not all the other Preachers do the same, if each is judge of his own right to do it? And every one is left to act as he pleases, if we take no notice of them that have so despised their brethren.

"Upon the whole, I am fully persuaded, almost all our preachers are corrupted already. More and more will give the Sacrament, and set up for themselves, even before we die, and all, except the few that get orders, will turn Dissenters before or after our death.

"You must wink very hard not to see all this. You have connived at it too, too long. But I now call upon you to consider with me what is to be done; 1 To prevent a separation; 2 To save the few uncorrupted Preachers; 3 To make the best of those that are corrupted."

Charles took prompt measures. John Murlin and Paul Greenwood were summoned to London to answer for their conduct. Thos. Mitchell was probably excused the journey that he might take care of the Norwich flock, which was certainly composed of unruly sheep. Charles Wesley also wrote to various preachers in terms which convey his intense regard for the Church of England, and the extremes to which he would go in preventing any separation from her or encroachment on the supposed rights of her clergy by Methodist lay preachers. The term *corrupt* is not used as conveying any reflection either upon their doctrinal or moral integrity, but as descriptive of alienation from the Establishment.

His views are very completely set forth in a letter to Grimshaw, which also gives us the substance of John Wesley's reply to the letter of Charles, showing that he did not think so serious a crime had arisen as his younger brother apprehended.

"London, March 27th, 1760.

My dear Brother,

I write while able. The gout threatens my hand: therefore I make haste to summon you to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

"Is there not cause for reprinting the enclosed? Our preaching-houses are mostly licensed, and so are proper meeting-houses. Our preachers are mostly licensed, and so are dissenting ministers. They took out their licenses as 'Protestant Dissenters'" (they could not get them under any other name, and without them were unprotected against persecuting laws and mob violence.) "Three of our steadiest preachers give the Sacrament at Norwich, with no other ordination or authority than a six-

penny license. My brother approves of it. All the rest will most probably follow their example. What then must be the consequence? Not only separation, but general confusion, and the destruction of the work so far as it depends on the Methodists.

"I publish the enclosed with my brother's concurrence. He persuades himself that none of the other preachers will do like those at Norwich; that they may all license themselves and give the Sacrament, yet continue true members of the Church of England; that no confusion or inconvenience will follow from these things; that we should let them do as they please till the Conference: where, I suppose, it must be put to the vote whether they have not a right to administer the Sacraments; and they themselves shall be the judges.

"I cannot get leave of my conscience to do nothing in the meantime towards guarding our children against the approaching evil. They shall not be trepanned into a meeting-house if I, with God's help, can hinder it. Every man ought to choose for himself; and every man shall see with his own eyes and know what he does before he does it. I am convinced things are come to a crisis. We must now resolve either to separate from the Church or to continue in it the rest of our days.

"If pride and the enemy did not precipitate them our preachers would infallibly find the door into the outward ministry opened to them soon. Such as addict themselves to the service of the Dissenters we shall let depart in peace. Such as dare trust God and venture themselves in the same bottoms with us, we shall cherish them as sons, and do our utmost for them as to soul, body and estate.

"But this I insist upon: every preacher must know his own mind and his brethren's; must be able to answer, what will become of me after our fathers are gone? Must not I become either a Dissenting or Church minister? Which would I choose? To have them and things as they are is to betray our charge; to undermine the Church; and, as far as in us lies, to destroy the work of God.

"I have read the "Reasons" to the Society here, and their hearts are as the heart of one man. Will you not join hand and heart with us in confirming the souls of the disciples? I anticipate your answer, for I know that you pray for the peace of our Jerusalem; and you prosper because you love her.

"Direct to me at the Foundery, and strengthen my hands by your counsel and your prayers, if you count me worthy to be called

Your affectionate and faithful brother,
C. WESLEY."*

*Jackson 2-187.

To this letter of Charles Wesley, Grimshaw immediately replied, sending his answer by Thomas Colbeck, who doubtless had business in London. As we shall see, he did not carry out the purpose declared in the letter, but remained a Methodist to the day of his death.

“Haworth, March 31st, 1760.

My very dear Sir,

Having an opportunity of sending you a letter by dear brother Colbeck, who sets out for London to-morrow, I was just sitting down to write to you when yours, as if Divine Providence had some special design in it, came to hand. I write but seldom indeed, because I have seldom much to write to you about. But now, upon my word, you have furnished me with matter to write upon. The preachers and preaching-houses are mostly licensed, you say. The evil that may follow upon this perhaps may be worse than anything that you or your brother could have any cause to apprehend from William Darney.

“This of licensing the preachers and preaching-houses is a matter that I never expected to have seen or heard of among the Methodists. If I had I dare say I had never entered in connexion with them. I am in connexion and desire to keep so, but how can I do it consistently with my relation to the Church of England? For as it is with you, so it is with us. Since the last Conference (what encouragement was then given the preachers to license themselves God and you best know) many of the preachers have got licensed at the Quarter Sessions. Several of the preaching-houses have got licensed. To be sure the Methodists are no longer members of the Church of England. They are as real a body of Dissenters from her as the Presbyterians, Baptists, Quakers, or any body of Independents. How I have complained of this all the last winter to our brethren Mr. Colbeck can tell you.

“I speak of my situation. Can I justify before my provincial, or a Consistorial Court, my preaching in a meeting-house, or my connexion with a body of dissenting ministers? Am I not liable to suspension *ab officio*, as well as *beneficio*? About twelve years ago, when Archbishop Hutton was Archbishop of York, amongst other arguments to stop me from preaching abroad he made this one—that I preached in a licensed meeting-house (meaning the Boggard-House, at Leeds). And if his Grace could have proved it (as he, upon inquiry into that thing, could not) it is not improbable that he had suspended me. I promised his Grace at that time that I never would (though determined to preach abroad) preach in a licensed house; no, not even that at Leeds, if it should appear to be licensed. And not many months

ago, it being reported that I was to preach at a fixed time in a licensed building, the minister and churchwardens of the parish had determined to prevent me, but it turned out providentially that I preached in a barn near to it, and so no more was said of it. I have indeed preached now and then in a licensed house where I was a stranger, or thought no notice would be taken of it. But at the rate we go on all the nation must be alarmed at our present proceedings, and no doubt the Spiritual Courts will shortly animadvert upon our doings, and perhaps other powers too, so soon as the war ceases. At present they have something else to do.

“I little thought that your brother approved or connived at the Preachers’ doings at Norwich. If it be so, ‘to your tents, O Israel!’ It is time for me to shift for myself; and disown all connexion with the Methodists; and stay at home, and take care of my parish; or to preach abroad in such places as are unlicensed, and to such people as are in connexion with me. I have no intention to preach the less; but to exert myself, as far as I am able, for the salvation of sinners. I hereby, therefore, assure you, that I disclaim all further and future connexion with the Methodists. I will quietly recede without noise or tumult. No one mindful to continue with them, shall be either directly or indirectly hindered by me. I have other reasons, Sir, for leaving the Methodists, besides the above, which I shall not mention now.

“In general, as to the licensing of Preachers and places, I know no expedient to prevent it. The thing is gone too far. It is become inveterate. It has been gradually growing to this ever since erecting preaching-houses was first encouraged in the land; and if you can stem the torrent by dint of persuasion, or some other influence you may have over some of the Preachers, it will be only during your own lives. So soon as you are dead, all the Preachers will do as many have already done; and even while you live, the licensed preachers, though they continue with you, will do worse than after your death. For now, even upon their sixpenny license, they will dare to administer the Sacrament; whereas then they will qualify themselves further for it by obtaining Presbyterian ordination. Dissenters the Methodists will all shortly be; it cannot, I am fully satisfied, be prevented.

“Nor is this spirit merely in the Preachers. It is in the people also. There are so many inconveniences attend the people, that in most places they all plead for a settled ministry. They cannot, they say, in conscience, receive the Sacraments as administered in our Church. They cannot attend preaching at eight, twelve, and four o’clock, on Lord’s days, and go to church. They reason these things with the Preachers, and urge them upon ordination

and residence. They can object little against it, how little so ever their minds are inclined to it. Therefore they license. For my part, though I do not approve of everything in our liturgy, yet I see nothing so materially amiss in it, or our Church constitution, as to disturb my conscience to that degree, as to justify my separation from her. No; where shall I go to mend myself? I believe the Church of England to be the soundest, purest, and most apostolical, well-constituted national Christian Church in the world. Therefore I can, in good conscience, (as I am determined, God willing, to do) live and die in her. But my conscience is not another man's. I believe the Methodists (Preachers and members) have so much to say for their separation from our Church, as will not easily, in a Conference or otherwise, be obviated."

On this controversy the Rev. T. Jackson remarks:—

"The view which Charles Wesley and Grimshaw took of "licenses" was partial, and unworthy of their superior sense. They were Clergymen, and their gowns generally secured them respect, and protection from violence. Not so with the lay-Preachers. They could only secure protection from mobs and ill-minded individuals by the provisions of the law of Toleration. They *must* take the prescribed oaths and be licensed. Also the preaching-houses and their congregations could only by a similar provision be protected from the operation of persecuting statutes, enacted in a former age. Without licenses both the Preachers and their hearers would have been at the mercy of every ruffian in the land, and many of them must have been ruined by imprisonment and heavy fines."*

"When these excellent men contended that the Methodist Preachers must either be Clergymen or Dissenting Ministers they were not aware of the design of Providence to raise up in the nation a middle party, not directly identified with either, but exerting a salutary influence on both. In these times, indeed, no human sagacity could see how the Methodist succession could be secured. God, however, has taken care for this."†

John Wesley shared not his brother's fears. Writing to him after the Conference, he says: "I do not at all think, to tell you a secret, that the work will ever be destroyed, Church or no Church. What has been done to prevent the Methodists leaving the Church, you will see in the Minutes of the Conference. I told you before, with regard to Norwich, *dixi*. I have done at the last Conference all I can or dare do. Allow me liberty of conscience, as I allow you."‡

*Jackson 2-193.

†Jackson 2-193.

‡Jackson 2-197.

Joseph Cownley, one of the ablest of the early preachers, wrote thus to C. Wesley on separation, exhibiting its complete futility. "There are several of my brethren, who have no thoughts of fleeing to the gown or cloak for succour, unless they could do it, and be Methodist preachers still. I can easily believe that many, if not most, of those who shall survive you, will separate from the Church, except, as my friend Hopper says, you get them fastened where they are by prevailing on one or more of the bishops to ordain them. But then what bishop, either in England or Ireland, will ever do this? Will ordain a Methodist preacher to be a Methodist preacher? For my part, as poor and worthless a wretch as I am, I could not submit to it on the terms on which most of my brethren have got it."

This correspondence is given to show how great were the difficulties John Wesley had to cope with, and how marvellous was that Divine Providence which rescued lay-preaching in this eventful year of its history. These men were all good and gracious, or with their strong views they might have wrecked Methodism.

Charles Wesley wrote to Nelson, then travelling in the Haworth round, but it will be seen he makes no suggestion as to honest John taking orders in the Church.

"London, Mar. 27th, 1760.

My dear Brother,

I think you are no weathercock. What think you then of licensing yourself as a Protestant Dissenter, and baptizing and administering the Lord's Supper, and all the while calling yourself a Church of England man? Is this honest, consistent, just? Yet this is the practice of several of our sons in the Gospel, even of some I most loved, and most depended upon. Who would have thought that Paul Greenwood could be carried away with such dissimulation? He, and Thos. Mitchell, and John Murlin, and now, I suppose, Isaac Brown, give the Sacrament at Norwich. My brother suffers them. Will not all the rest follow their example? And will not separation, yea, and general separation, ensue? And must not the work of God, so far as we are concerned, be thereby destroyed?

"John, I love thee from my heart: yet rather than see thee a Dissenting Minister, I wish to see thee smiling in thy coffin.

"What can be done to save our Preachers? Let all things be done in love, and meekness, and the spirit of prayer."

An unpublished letter of Nelson's is his reply, which must have been like healing oil to C. Wesley's troubled spirit.

“ To the Revd. Mr. Charles Wesley at Foundery, near Moorfields, London. (Seal a lion, or griffin rampant).

Heptonstall, April 21st, 1760.

Dear Sir,

This is with my duty to you and earnest prayer for you and yours and all the Church of God. I was not at home when you came to Birstall, for I have been near six months in Mr. Grimshaw's round, where I am yet, and likely to stay longer. It is a hard round for man and beast, but God hath given strength for the day, so that I can say He hath not sent me a warfare at my own charge, and His right hand is visibly stretched out in many parts of the round, so that sinners is struck to the heart, and sometimes four or five crying out under one sermon as a woman in her throes. Since I wrote to your brother before, there is thirteen that professes to have received faith in the blood of Jesus that I have an account of, and there is an extraordinary work amongst the old steady believers. God doth visibly appear in the congregations, and strangers flock to hear daily more and more. The harvest truly is great in these parts, but the labourers are few, for James Wild hath taken his wife and is gone we know not where, nor for what reason. Mr. Grimshaw labours abundantly, but we want more help. O pray for us as we do for you. Among those that is lately converted God hath taken the highest twig and the lowest bough, for one of them is fourscore and three years old, and another eleven years old. There is several that hath finished their course with joy lately in this round. One woman eighty-two years old that had had a work upon her several years. We preached in the house where she lived, and she said a few years before she died, 'I have had many a conflict with Satan since I first set out for heaven, but God hath bruised him under my feet, and Jesus hath made me as He would have me to be, and He will shortly take me to Himself, where I shall reign with Him in glory for ever.' And one was Paul Greenwood's cousin, a single woman that had professed faith ten years, and was a pattern to all the class, and a reprovor of the ungodly both by her words and works. About ten days before she died she sent for several of her neighbours to come to her, and told them how she had delivered her soul of them, and that she hoped that they would remember her words when she was laid in the grave. 'You know that I told you ten years ago, and many times since, that God doth justify the ungodly that turns at His reproof and believes in the Lord Jesus, and now I can testify that He doth sanctify the unholy that continues to believe in Him'; and she continued to praise God and to exhort

all that came near her till she fell asleep in the arms of God. And there was a woman in Netherdall that is gone in peace after professing to know the Lord for eight years. And old Rose Mortimer, of Birstall, is gone as a shock of corn full ripe. She had known the Lord to be her God and Saviour nineteen years and some days, and now she is gone to sing praises to God and the Lamb for ever. She is the first of that family that hath died in triumph, and makes up 238 that hath died so in Birstall Round; O praise the Lord with us for all His wonderful works, and pray for us that we may not stop His hand by our unfaithfulness.

"I can rejoice at the deliverance of your wife and children and all our other friends that escaped the flames. I suppose you saw the account I sent to your brother of Sister Harrison's death. This from your unworthy brother and as a son to service in the gospel.

JOHN NELSON.

"I should be glad to disperse them books, but how must I come at them? If you write to me I should be glad if you could send by my good friend, Mr. Greenwood, the bearer of this. He inns at the Swan with two necks in Lad Lane, or to direct to me at Mr. Colbeck's in Keighley.

"I have showed your letter to Mr. Grimshaw, and we are both in one mind, that is, we cannot in conscience agree that anyone that is in connexion with us should act as a dissenting Minister, either to baptise or to deliver the Sacrament. If it be allowed we must openly declare that they are no longer of us; as for my part I think I would rather die to-day than live till to-morrow and break our covenant, and I have no more desire to license myself as a dissenting Minister than I have to rob on the highway, for hitherto God hath delivered me from the hands of wicked men, and I trust He will deliver to the end. I believe that some of our brethren hath been drawn into it by others, and had no design in it but to protect themselves from the press and the Militia Act; but I could not do so for my part, and I pray God that the enemy may get no advantage over any of them by it. I think I love them all, and can pray for them as for myself, and that God may purge us all that we may bring forth more fruit to His praise and glory.

"You speak of Mr. Grimshaw being at the Conference. You may be sure he will if he can, and if it be at Leeds, and that woman come there she will do a deal of mischief. She hath spread a deal of poison into the mind of Br. Colbeck while he was in London, but I trust it is all expelled, and he will know how to guard against her for the time to come. Your brother did not say that it would be at Leeds when he was there, or would not be there. Sir, if it is fixed where it is to be, I pray you let

me know in your next. My kind love to your wife and all friends at Bristol."

In this letter Nelson refers to James Wild leaving the round. He was a married man, and Charles Wesley graphically describes the outlook of such at that time. "Here is a poor Methodist Preacher who has given up his business (his little all) for the sake of preaching the gospel. Perhaps he has got a wife and children, and nothing to keep them. By labouring like a horse, and travelling like a post-boy, for ten or a dozen years, his strength is exhausted; yet he is able and quite willing to do what he can still. But how shall he get bread for his family? That Mr. Superintendent (J. Wesley) will look to. Well; be it so. Suppose neither he nor his children are starved while my brother and I live, what must he do when we depart."* These may in part have been J. Wilde's thoughts.

What Nelson could not account for in the conduct of James Wild is explained by James Oddie in a letter written to Mr. Wesley from Leeds, May 6th, 1760. "James Wild has left the Round very abruptly, and is gone to Sheffield, intending to keep shop there. No reasonable offence was *given* to occasion so sudden a departure. He has *taken* offence at me. Some time since we dined together at Mr J. Kins. After dinner he declared there was no freedom from sin before death. I gave my reasons, in as few and mild words as I could, why I thought it might be. This he took as a great offence. I have wrote to him since, and told him *from my heart*, though I intended no offence, nor thought I had given any; yet I would lay my hands under his feet if it would do him any good. The Lord knoweth I would rather suffer anything than designedly offend or needlessly grieve any creature in the world! I cannot think of it without tears flowing from my eyes."†

The doctrine of Christian Perfection was at this time much discussed. By some of Wesley's preachers it was not fully accepted in consequence of the fear that it might be held to mean *sinless* perfection. Darney, in this district, was one of them, and evidently Wild also. In Grimshaw's letter to Charles Wesley, of May 31st, 1760, respecting separation from the Church, he complains himself concerning Darney: "All I desired was only a year's probation for him, and then, as his behaviour should deserve, to be accepted by us or rejected.

"Whatever John Nelson (for him I suppose you meant) wrote to you, I am well assured that the people in Birstall circuit were much blessed under his preaching." To this statement Mr.

*C. Wesley's Life, 2-185.

†Methodists Magazine, May 1780—336.

Thomas Jackson appends a foot-note : " Darney was a favourite with Mr. Grimshaw, but disowned by Charles Wesley and most of the preachers. There is more point in this allusion than at first appears. Mr. Charles Wesley was very fastidious as to the preachers whom he would employ in the itinerancy ; and Darney was one of the men whom he discountenanced, so that even Mr. Grimshaw could not obtain for him what he thought a fair trial."*

John Nelson, in the year 1760, was travelling in the Keighley circuit, and seems to have had ground for complaint, not only then, but of old standing, for if Darney preached in Birstall it would probably be in 1751, when he was stationed in Leeds.

The only other item of information we can gather respecting Darney in 1760 is an entry in the Keighley circuit book of 21s., as paid to him on the 17th January.

We infer that Wesley had been again compelled to silence him on account of doctrinal opinions advanced in his sermons. In an unpublished letter, dated London, Sept. 8th, 1761, and addressed to Mr. Lowes at the Orphan House, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Wesley says : " If local preachers who differ from us will keep their opinions to themselves then they may preach in our Societies, otherwise they may not ; and upon this condition we are all willing to receive Mr. Darney into connection with us." From this it is evident that he was regarded at that time as a local preacher, and was neither an assistant nor a helper. It is of interest to note that itinerant preachers, who had for years been put in charge of circuits, when, through sickness or discipline, they retired from full duty, were spoken of, and regarded themselves, as local preachers. Matthew Lowes, although he had been in the work of the early ministry from 1758 to 1771, says, " Since the year 1771 I have resided at Newcastle as a local preacher ; though generally once a year, while I was able, I visited the Dales, &c."†

On Feb. 7th, 1761, Grimshaw again writes to Mrs. Gallatin. The letter is in his usual fervently pious strain, and thus concludes : " I follow my old calling, and in the old way. I know of no better one. Nor would I exchange it. 'Tis quite contrary to the worldly ones. 'Tis a shameful one, a painful one, and a penniless one ; but I look to my dear Jesus for so much more of what He has to give in heaven. And as I am, I am quite happy in the Lord. I've wrote by this post to dear Mrs. Romaine. That's a precious soul."

*Jackson's C. Wesley, 2-189.

†See Minutes 1, vol. 715.