

John Wesley the Methodist

Chapter XVII - Traveler, Preacher, and Philanthropist

Wesley's Travels.--His Preaching Power.--The Last University Sermon.--A Pioneer of Benevolence.--Temperance.--Sunday Schools.--The Press.--Hymns and Tunes.

At seventy-two John Wesley could truthfully say to Lord North that he traveled four thousand or fivethousand miles a year and conversed with more persons of every sort than anyone else in the three kingdoms.

Bad as the roads were he was a sturdy pedestrian, good for his five and twenty miles a day, reading as he walked. Before 1773 he made most of his long journeys on horseback, and, regardless of grace, rode with loose rein, reading history, poetry, or philosophy from the book in his uplifted hand. One June day in 1750 he rode ninety miles and was twenty hours in the saddle, using two horses. He rode with a slack rein for above one hundred thousand miles, and except with two horses, that he says would fall "head over heels" anyway, he had surprisingly few falls; and he recommends the use of a loose rein to all travelers.

When his friends insisted on providing him with a chaise he showed the same determination to fulfill every appointment. The old Cornish sexton, Peter Martin, of Helstone, used to tell how, when he was ostler, he had driven Wesley to St. Ives. When they reached Hayle the sands which separated them from St. Ives were covered by the rising tide. A captain of a vessel came up and begged them to go back at once. Wesley said he must go on as he had to preach at a certain hour. Looking out of the window, he shouted, "Take the sea! Take the sea!" Soon the horses were swimming, and the poor ostler expected every moment to be drowned; but Wesley put his head out of the window--his long white hair was dripping with the salt water.

"What is your name, driver " he asked.

"Peter," said the man.

"Peter," he said, "fear not; thou shalt not sink."

At last the driver got his carriage safely over. Wesley's first care, he says, was "to see me comfortably lodged at the tavern;" he secured warm clothing, good fire, and refreshment for his driver, then, totally unmindful of himself, and drenched as he was with the dashing waves, he proceeded to the chapel, where he preached according to appointment. He was then in his eighty-third year.

Although he read as he traveled, nothing seemed to escape his observation. His journals are alive with critical notes on men and manners, nature and art.

Wesley's headquarters for England were London, where he spent several months every year; Bristol, in the west, with the neighboring Kingswood School as his home in later life; and Newcastle, with the hospitable Orphanage House, in the north. He itinerated by a careful plan, to avoid all waste of labor. He concentrated his preaching on the most thickly populated parts of England, though he visited many villages by the way. Miners and colliers, weavers and spinners, artisans and laborers, formed the backbone of his societies, with a strong contingent of commercial men and a few doctors and lawyers.

Wesley as a preacher possessed many natural advantages, as the accounts of him by John Nelson and Dr. Kennicott have shown us. His expressive features, his vivid eye, his clear voice, and manly, graceful carriage made his hearers either forget his small stature or wonder that a frame so slight should enshrine a manhood so sturdy. When he preached at Hull in his old age, in the largest parish church in England, he was well heard. In the open air his voice reached the outskirts of the vast crowds. One of his favorite preaching places was in Cornwall, the natural amphitheater at Gwennap--" the finest I know in the kingdom." At one of his early annual services there it is supposed there were ten thousand people. The service continued until the darkness of night covered the vast assembly, yet there was "the deepest attention; none speaking, stirring, or scarce looking aside."

Wesley's extraordinary power as a preacher was due to his simplicity, his force of argument, his grip upon the reason and conscience, his transparent sincerity, his spirituality. He was not an impassioned and dramatic orator, like Whitefield He did not, like his brother Charles, melt his hearers by his deep emotion and pathetic appeals. He "reasoned of sin and righteousness and judgment." John Nelson witnesses to his power of making the "heart beat like the pendulum of a clock: I thought he spoke to no one but me." "This man can tell the secrets of my heart; he hath not left me there, for he hath shown the remedy, even the blood of Jesus." After his "day of Pentecost" his whole man was "kindled and inspired by a divine conviction and force, and he preached as one inspired, with solemn intensity and perfect self-control, to crowds swayed by feelings which found expression in sobs and tears and outcries of prayer or praise St. John's First Epistle was his model of style. "Here," he says, "are simplicity and sublimity together, the strongest sense and the plainest language. How can anyone that would speak as the oracles of God use harder words than are found here" He advised all his

young preachers to make St. John their master.

His first extempore sermon was preached in All Hallows Church, Lombard Street, London. In 1788 he told the attendant, as he was putting on his gown to preach again in the same place, "Sir, it is above fifty years since I first preached in this church; I remember it from a particular circumstance. I came without a sermon, and going up the pulpit stairs I hesitated, and returned into the vestry under much mental confusion and agitation. A woman who stood by noticed my concern, and said, 'Pray, sir, what is the matter?' I replied, 'I have not brought a sermon with me.' Putting her hand on my shoulder, she said, 'Is that all? Cannot you trust God for a sermon?'" Her question went home; he spoke with freedom, and from that time he was independent of manuscript.

Sometimes, as we have seen, he preached at great length to hearers who never wearied. Sometimes he brought forth the treasures of ancient philosophy and interwove classical passages of point and beauty into his sermons, as in his sermon on The Great Assize preached before the Judges of the Common Pleas at Bedford.

But his printed sermons as a rule do not represent the energy and directness of his extempore preaching when vast crowds hung upon his lips. How he preached in the open air, face to face with a raging mob, is better suggested by one of the many entries in his Journal: "I called for a chair. The winds were hushed, and all was calm and still. My heart was filled with love and my mouth with arguments. They were amazed; they were ashamed; they were melted; they devoured every word."

On St. Bartholomew's Day, August 24, 1744, Wesley was called to Oxford to take his turn as university preacher. According to the terms of his fellowship he must deliver a sermon in St. Mary's Church once in three years or forfeit three guineas. He had preached in 1738 and 1741 but now he had become a notable figure, and great interest was felt in what he would say. The church is filled with university dignitaries and townspeople. William Blackstone, an old Charterhouse boy, like the preacher, listens and makes note and comment as he did later on the Common Law. An observant undergraduate in the gallery remembers that "his black hair, quite smooth and parted very exactly, added to a peculiar composure in his countenance, showed him to be an uncommon man. His prayer was short, soft, and conformable to the rules of the university. His text (Acts iv, 31), 'And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.' He spoke the text very slowly and with an agreeable emphasis."

Then followed the beautiful description of scriptural Christianity, and afterward the practical application which gave such dire offense. The dignitaries in the body of the church grew angry and restless, although the touching appeal to "the venerable men" who were responsible for the guidance of the young life of Oxford was based on facts to which every leading Oxford man of that century bears painful witness.

John Wesley notes in his Journal that it was St. Bartholomew's Day, and, of course, the anniversary of the ejection of two thousand ministers from the National Church by the Act of Uniformity. He adds: "I preached, I suppose, the last time at St. Mary's. Be it so. I am now clear of the blood of these men. I have delivered my own soul. The beadle came to me afterward and told me the vice chancellor had sent him for my notes. I sent them without delay, not without admiring the wise providence of God. Perhaps few men of note would have given a sermon of mine the reading if I had put it into their hands; but by this means it came to be read, probably more than once, by every man of eminence in the university."

Blackstone also wrote of the service in a letter dated August 28, 1744: "We were yesterday entertained at Oxford by a Curious Sermon from Wesley Ye Methodist. Among other equally modest particulars, He informed us: 1st. That there was not one Christian among all ye heads of Houses. 2ndly. That Pride, Gluttony, Avarice, Luxury, Sensuality and Drunkenness were ye General Characteristics of all Fellows of Colleges, who were useless to a proverbial uselessness. Lastly, that ye younger part of ye University were a generation of triflers, all of them perjured, and not one of them of any Religion at all. His notes were demanded by ye Vice Chancellor, but on mature deliberation, it has been thought proper to punish him by a mortifying neglect."

Wesley visited Oxford many times afterward, preaching only in a room or chapel, the authorities preferring to pay for a substitute rather than sit again under his searching preaching.

He went up to vote for a member of Parliament on a bitter day in January, 1751, at the request of the rector of his college, for whom he cherished warm affection. The university now was changing its attitude toward Wesley, and he says: "I was much surprised wherever I went at the civility of the people, gentlemen as well as others. There was no pointing, no calling of names, no, not even laughter. What can this mean? Am I become the servant of men? Or is the scandal of the cross ceased?" In the same year, on Friday, June 1, after enjoying his fellowship for twenty-six years, he resigned it of his own free will.

This severed his official connection with the university, but he loved it to the last, and wrote in 1778: "Having an hour to spare, I walked to Christ Church, for which I cannot but still retain a peculiar affection. What lovely mansions are these! What is wanting to make the inhabitants happy? That with out which no rational creature can be happy, the experimental knowledge of God." Two years later he said, "I love the very sight of Oxford;" and when he was eighty he walked through the city, which was "swiftly improving in everything but religion." The hall at Christ Church, the Meadow, Magdalen Walks, and the White Walk still filled the old man with admiration, and he

declared them finer than anything he had seen in Europe.

In 1744 and 1745 England was panic-stricken over the rumors of a French invasion to place the exiled Stuart "pretender" on the throne. "Papists" were proclaimed as especially pernicious foes of the king, and the Methodists fell under such suspicion of popery that John Wesley had to go before a magistrate and take the oath of loyalty--as no one could do with better conscience. Even in this period of unrest he did not cease from his journeyings up and down the kingdom from Cornwall to Newcastle

John Wesley was a pioneer on more than one line of philanthropy. The colliers' school at Kingswood and the orphan house at Newcastle were early manifestations of his love for his fellows. The activities which centered in the Foundry remind the modern reader of that very modern thing "the institutional church."

At the Foundry clothes were received from all who could spare them, and were distributed among the poor. The society room was actually turned into a workshop for four months, where the poorest members were employed in carding and spinning cotton. Soon after, all the women who were out of work were employed in knitting, for which they were paid the ordinary price. A gratuity was added to the earnings in cases where the family need was great. Twelve persons were appointed to inspect the work and to visit the sick. In 1743, in the great London society, Wesley appointed forty-six visitors whom he judged to be sympathetic and capable for this delicate work. They were selected from a company of volunteers. Dividing the metropolis into twenty-three districts, they went two by two into the homes of the sick three times a week, relieving their wants and inquiring concerning their souls. Their accounts were presented weekly to the stewards. Four plain rules were laid down: 1. Be plain and open in dealing with souls. 2. Be mild, tender, and patient. 3. Be clean in all you do for the sick. 4. Be not nice. Here was the golden law: "If you cannot relieve, do not grieve the poor; give them soft words, if nothing else; abstain from either sour looks or harsh words. Let them be glad to come, even though they should go empty away. Put yourself in the place of every poor man, and deal with him as you would God should deal with you." Wesley showed characteristic prudence in handling none of the funds himself. The Newcastle Orphan House, begun in 1742, and built by faith and prayer, became a preaching house, a children's home, a place of rest for workers, a school where Wesley taught rhetoric, moral philosophy, and logic to his young preachers, and a center of evangelism for the North of England. The West Street Chapel in London was another center of philanthropic effort. A Friendly Union Benefit Society was formed. The front parlor of the house was used as a soup kitchen. There was also a charity school similar to that of which Silas Told was master at the Foundry. Methodist women prepared linen for the children to wear, and formed what would be called to-day "a household salvage corps," collecting cast-off clothing and food for the poor. There are touching stories of outcast women rescued by the early Methodists.

But the boldest step was the founding of Wesley's medical dispensaries at the Foundry, West Street, and Bristol. The sufferings of the sick poor stirred his heart, and "I thought," says Wesley, "of a kind of desperate expedient; I will prepare and give them physic myself." For six or seven and twenty years he had made anatomy and physic the diversion of his leisure hours. When preparing for the mission to Georgia he studied medicine; now he applied himself again. "I took into my assistance an apothecary and an experienced surgeon; resolving not to go out of my depth, but to leave all difficult and complicated cases to such physicians as the patients should choose." In six months six hundred cases were treated in London. The Bristol dispensary soon had two hundred patients. In 1780 we find a medical man in attendance twice a week, for three hours each day, at the chapel house of West Street. Between 1746 and 1780 medical science and surgery in England had made more advance than in all the previous part of the century, but when Wesley commenced both were in a very poor condition. A twenty-third edition of his *Primitive Physic* was published in the year of his death, in which many of the early prescriptions were discarded, but some of the remedies appear very "primitive" and amusing in the present day. Quick to perceive the practical usefulness of electricity as a therapeutic agent, he gave electric treatments to many as early as 1756. We can hardly claim for him the honor of founding aseptic practice, but certainly the man who said "cleanliness is next to godliness" was not far from it.

In a dram-drinking age he was an enemy of alcohol. Even of the medicinal value of liquors he said: "They may be of use in some bodily disorders, although there would rarely be occasion for them were it not for the unskillfulness of the practitioner." In general his condemnation of the use of beer, ale, wines, and spirits was far in advance of public opinion. Of the traffickers in liquor he said: "All who sell spirituous liquors in the common way, to any that will buy, are poisoners general. They murder his majesty's subjects by wholesale. They drive them to hell, like sheep. And what is their gain Is it not the blood of these men?" He advocated prohibition of the spirit traffic. In 1773, when bread was at famine price, and great poverty prevailed, one remedy he suggested was "prohibiting forever, by making a full end of distilling." "What will become of the revenue" shrieked economists. Wesley wrote: "True, the traffic brings in a large revenue to the king, but is this an equivalent for the lives of his subjects Would his majesty sell one hundred thousand of his subjects yearly to Algiers for 400,000 Surely, no. Will he, then, sell them for that sum to be butchered by their own countrymen O tell it not in Constantinople that the English raise the royal revenue by selling the flesh and blood of their countrymen!"

In 1746 John Wesley established a "poor man's bank," collecting by public appeal a small capital to lend out to the industrious poor. He started with some 30, out of which he made loans of twenty shillings each to two hundred and fifty-five persons in eighteen months. The loans ran three months, and were repaid by weekly installments. One, Lackington, who was thus enabled to stock a book stall, worked up to a business of 5,000 a year in London.

Prison work had been begun by Wesley in his Oxford days. His Foundry schoolmaster, Silas Told, carried it nobly forward in London.

Before there was an antislavery society Wesley had described the trade in men as "that execrable sum of all villainies." It was the burden of his letter to Wilberforce, the last he ever penned. Personally Wesley was the most liberal of givers. In his lifetime he lived on some 30 a year, and gave away the 30,000 profits of the book business. When the excise men supposing him to be wealthy--as he might have been--demanded that he "make due entry" of his plate, that duty might be levied on it, he wrote: "Sir, I have two silver teaspoons here in London and two at Bristol. This is all which I have at present; and I shall not buy any more while so many round me want bread."

Some of the wealthy men of Manchester told Wesley that he did not know the value of money. He took no notice, but bit his lip and let them talk on. When he was preaching he recollected it, and began to talk of it immediately. "I have heard to-day," said he, "that I do not know the value of money. What! don't I know that twelve pence make a shilling, and twenty-one shillings a guinea Don't I know that if given to God, it's worth heaven--through Christ And don't I know that if hoarded and kept, it's worth damnation to the man who hoards it"

Wesley's doctrine of Christian stewardship is summed up in his sermon on The Use of Money, with its three points: "Gain all you can; save all you can; give all you can;" and he practiced what he preached.

"I reverence the young," said John Wesley, "because they may be useful after I am dead," and at his last Conference, when asked what he would recommend for perpetuating that revival of religion which he had commenced he said, "Take care of the rising generation." He had encouraged Methodist Sunday schools before Robert Raikes made his conspicuous success at Gloucester. His presses gave Raikes's experiment the widest publicity. His Journal entry at Bingley in July, 1784, remarks; 'I stepped into the Sunday school, which contains two hundred and forty children, taught every Sunday by several masters, and superintended by the curate. So, many children in one parish are restrained from open sin, and taught a little good manners at least, as well as to read the Bible. I find these schools springing up wherever I go. Perhaps God may have a deeper end therein than men are aware of. Who knows but some of these schools may become nurseries for Christians"

"Though I am always in haste," said Wesley, "I am never in a hurry, because I never undertake more work than I can go through with perfect calmness of spirit." This perfect self-control, and the ability to turn to advantage every minute of spare time enabled him, in addition to his travels of five thousand miles a year and his forty thousand sermons, to edit and write four hundred books, and become the pioneer in publishing cheap and good books for the people. His style bears no trace of "hurry." He has described it: "What is it constitutes a good style Perspicuity, purity, propriety, strength, and easiness joined together As for me, I never think of my style at all, but just set down the words that come first.....Clearness in particular is necessary for you and meWhen I had been a member of the university for about ten years I wrote and talked much as you do now; but when I talked to plain people in the castle or town I observed they gaped and stared. This obliged me to alter my style And yet there is dignity in this simplicity which is not disagreeable to those of highest rank." That Journal which flows on with such copiousness, variety, and interest to the end of his life is, says Birrell, "the most amazing record of human exertion ever penned by man." Social historians have learned to go to it for observation and comment of the rarest value.

As a pioneer of popular literature Wesley holds a high place in national history. The traveling peddlers, or "chapmen," were the only purveyors of cheap books before Wesley did his work, and their "cheap books," sold for a few pence, were of little or no value from an educational standpoint, as our facsimiles of some of the most harmless show. Wesley stored his preachers' saddlebags with penny books of a wholesome sort. "Two and forty years ago," he writes, "having a desire to furnish poor people with cheaper, shorter, and plainer books than any I have seen, I wrote many small tracts, generally a penny apiece, and afterward several larger. Some of these have such a sale as I never thought of; and by this means I became unawares rich." What he did with the wealth we shall learn later. He created an appetite for reading among the people. His cheap books had an enormous circulation, and Watson justly observes that "he was probably the first to use on any extensive scale this means of popular reformation."

Wesley and Coke formed the first tract society in 1782, seventeen years before the formation of the Religious Tract Society of London, and forty years before this thousands of copies of Wesley's Word to a Smuggler, Word to a Sabbath-breaker, Word to a Swearer, and other tracts were circulated broadcast. He did much by his cheap abridgments to bring stores of useful literature within the reach of those who were short of money to buy and time to read the ponderous folios and quartos in which much of the best writing was entombed. His Christian Library, in fifty volumes (1749-1755), was his greatest effort in this direction, but by this he suffered a loss of 200. Milton's Paradise Lost, Young's Night Thoughts, and even the Pilgrim's Progress were mercilessly condensed, and though to-day this may be regarded as vandalism, the needs of the poverty stricken multitudes whose intellects were awakened by the revival condone the deed.

The list of Wesley's original works, from the first of 1733--a Collection of Forms of Prayer, for the use of his pupils into the last revision of his Notes on the New Testament, fifty-seven years later, would fill a volume.

Wesley's Notes on the New Testament (constituting with his first fifty-three sermons the doctrinal standards of Methodism) appeared in 1755. The notes he made "as short as possible, that the comment may not obscure or swallow up the text, and as plain as possible, in pursuance of the main design." His brother Charles, who was an excellent critic, assisted him. He took great pains to secure a correct

Greek text, using chiefly the Gnomon Novi Testamenti of Bengel--" that great light of the Christian world." He anticipated the revision of 1881 in his use of paragraphs, the omission of chapter headings, and in a large number of renderings.

His first fifty-three sermons, referred to as part of the doctrinal standards of Methodism, were published in 1746 and 1760. Henry Moore states that Wesley felt the need of preparing some concise, clear, and full body of divinity to guide his preachers and people. Retiring to the house of his friends, the Blackwells, at Lewisham, and taking only his Hebrew Bible and Greek Testament with him, "My design," he says in his preface, "is in some sense to forget all that I have ever read in my life." One portion of this preface is so characteristic of the man and his methods that no review of his work would be complete without it. He writes: "To candid, reasonable men I am not afraid to lay open what have been the inmost thoughts of my heart. I have thought, I am a creature of the day, passing through life as an arrow through the air. I am a spirit come from God, and returning to God; just hovering over the great gulf, till, a few moments hence, I am no more seen; I drop into an unchangeable eternity; I want to know one thing: the way to heaven; how to land safe on that happy shore. God himself has condescended to teach the way; for this very end he came down from heaven. He hath written it down in a book. O give me that book! at any price, give me the book of God! I have it; here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be homo unius libri. Here, then, I am far from the busy ways of men. I sit down alone; only God is here. In his presence I open, I read his book, for this end--to find the way to heaven.' Is there a doubt concerning the meaning of what I read Does anything appear dark or intricate I lift up my heart to the Father of lights. "' Lord, is it not thy word, If any man lack wisdom, let him ask it of God Thou givest liberally and upbraidest not. Thou hast said if any man be willing to do thy will, he shall know. I am willing to do; let me know thy will.' I then search after and consider parallel passages of Scripture, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. I meditate thereon with all the attention and earnestness of which my mind is capable. If any doubt still remains, I consult those who are experienced in the things of God, and then the writings whereby, being dead, they yet speak. And what I thus learn that I teach."

These written and printed sermons, as we have noted, do not represent his preaching, and must be regarded rather as careful statements of his doctrines intended for thoughtful reading. His later sermons were prepared for his magazine, and are more varied in style and literary illustration.

His Earnest Appeals to Men of Reason and Religion (1743 and 1745) contain some of his most trenchant and powerful work. They were not only a vindication of Methodism, but of the Christian religion, and answered their purpose to a remarkable degree. They were fruitful, as we have seen, in the conversion of deists like Lampe, and Wesley tells of several like "Dr. W_____, a steady, rational infidel," whom "it pleased God to touch" as they read. They did more to melt the hearts of the more reasonable of Wesley's clerical opponents than anything else he wrote.

Wesley wrote or compiled or edited schoolbooks, histories, condensations of great literary works, in great number and variety. His Collected Works, in thirty-two volumes, were published 1771-1774. All this work was done from what Dr. Osborne describes as his "intense determination to popularize literature, and by means of cheap extracts and abridgments to bring good books within reach of his societies, most of whom had neither time to read nor money to buy much more than he supplied to them."

In 1778 he put forth the first number of the Arminian Magazine, which is still issued under another title. It was aimed to counteract the effect of the Calvinist magazines.

Wesley declared in a letter to Thomas Taylor that his object was, "not to get money," but "to counteract the poison of other periodicals." But it also supplied, by means of lives and letters, "the marrow of experimental and practical religion." For forty years Wesley had a store, "The Book-Room," at the Foundry. In 1777 the business was removed to the new chapel in City Road.

Thus began the great Book Concerns of world-wide Methodism, which have done so much for the circulation of its literature and the assistance of its funds.

Music had a powerful charm for all the Wesleys, and John was no exception. Scarcely less than his brother, whose poetical gift surpassed his, was his fondness for good singing. He heard the Messiah sung in Bristol Cathedral in 1758, and frequently met the composer Handel in London. His tune books caught the popular ear, and the good singing of the Methodists became proverbial.

John Wesley's knowledge of the German language, acquired on his first Atlantic voyage, opened up to him the splendid treasury of German hymnody; for, as Dr. Philip Schaff has well said in Julian's Dictionary of Hymnology, the "church hymn, in the strict sense of the term, as a popular religious lyric in praise of God, to be sung by the congregation in public worship, was born with the German Reformation." Ten thousand German hymns have become more or less popular, and have enriched the hymn books of Churches of other tongues, and nearly a thousand are "classical and immortal." "John Wesley," says Dr. Schaff, "was one of the first English divines who appreciated their value." He translated at least thirty hymns, five of which appeared in his first hymn book. He translated Psalm lxxiii from the Spanish version, and at least revised Mme. Bourignon's French hymn, "Come, Saviour, Jesus, from above."

John Wesley's modesty has made it difficult to distinguish his original hymns from those of his brother. His paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer, to which his name is attached, is one of the finest in the English language. His severer taste pruned his brother's hymns of

luxuriances, and on comparing those which John edited with the originals it will be found that they gained much by his unsparing censorship. John Wesley strongly objected to any "mending" of his own hymns, but he mended the hymns of others with a clear conscience, and with what success one example of his handling of the famous hymn writer, Watts, will suffice to show:

AS WRITTEN BY WATTS,	AS REVISED BY WESLEY
The God that rules on high,	The God that rules on high,
And thunders when he please,	And all the earth surveys,
That rides upon the stormy sky,	That rides upon the stormy sky,
And manages the seas.	And calms the roaring seas.

After their spiritual Pentecost of 1738 the two brothers cooperated, both as authors and editors, and issued fifty-four hymnal publications, making on an average one every year until the death of John. The year after City Road Chapel was opened the Large Book was advertised in the Arminian Magazine, and it was published in 1780. It was entitled A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People called Methodists, and contained five hundred and twenty-five hymns selected from twenty-one previous publications.

John Wesley calls the hymns "a body of experimental and practical divinity." They were not only intended for congregational use, they were a compendium of theology and a manual of private devotion; and when the voices of the preachers were stilled the hymns remained for the deepening of the spiritual life of the people, the elevation of their worship, and the development of their character. "It is a great recommendation to the hymns of both Wesleys," says an Anglican historian, "that, although they are often mystical in tone, and appeal persistently to the feelings, they are thoroughly practical, never losing sight of active Christian morality."

But, after all, the Poet of the Revival was Charles Wesley, whose hymns are now sung in every branch of Christianity. Charles, though younger than John, died before him. He had been residing in London for nearly a score of years, preaching frequently in City Road, and living in happiness with his good wife and his musically remarkable children. The friendship of the brothers was not broken by their differences of opinion on ecclesiastical policy.

A few days before his death Charles Wesley called to his wife and requested her to write down the following lines: In age and feebleness extreme, Who shall a sinful worm redeem Jesus, my only hope thou art, Strength of my failing flesh and heart: O could I catch a smile from thee, And drop into eternity!

This was the last verse he wrote.

Samuel Bradburn, then stationed in London, who sat up with him the last night of his life but one, says, "His mind was as calm as a summer evening." He told his wife that no fiend was permitted to approach him, and that he had a good hope. When asked if he wanted anything, he replied, "Nothing but Christ." Some one said that the valley of the shadow of death was hard to be crossed. He exclaimed, "Not with Christ." All his family was present. He pressed his wife's hand, when too feeble to speak, to assure her that he knew her. After his last words, "Lord--my heart--my God!" he quietly fell asleep, on Saturday, March 29, 1788.

A fortnight later, when at Bolton, John Wesley attempted to give out as his second hymn, "Come, O thou Traveler unknown," but when he came to the lines, My company before is gone, And I am left alone with Thee,

he sank beneath the sorrow of his bereavement, burst into a flood of tears, sat down in the pulpit, and hid his face with his hands. The crowded congregation well knew the cause of his speechless sorrow; singing ceased, and "the chapel became a Bochim." At length the aged preacher recovered, and went through a service which was never forgotten by those who were present. His love for his brother is expressed in his own words: "I have a brother who is as my own soul."