

# “ONE IS YOUR MASTER”

THE STORY OF ONE HUNDRED YEARS

of the

## Wesleyan Reform Union



According to this time it shall be said, "What hath God wrought!"

—Numbers xxiii, 23.



SHEFFIELD :

Wesleyan Reform Church House,

87/89, West Bar,

Sheffield, 3.

Thou shalt remember all the way which the  
Lord thy God led thee . . . to humble thee and to  
prove thee, to know what was in thine heart.

Deut. viii. 2.

One family we dwell in Him  
One Church, above, beneath.

For all the saints who from their labours rest,  
Who Thee by faith before the world confessed,  
Thy Name, O Jesu, be forever blest,  
Alleluia !



JOHN WESLEY

## ***Foreword***

**D**URING the past one hundred years in this country vast changes, political, social, industrial and religious, have taken place. Especially in the mid-nineteenth century was there considerable growth in democratic sentiment and power. Democracy became the watchword of the political reformer and it was accepted that the Gospel of Christ had social implications. The nineteenth century, too, was an epoch of marked individualism in British social and religious history. In philanthropic and evangelical enterprise no less than in empire building and in industrial discovery and expansion there was "a riot of personality."

In this context the Wesleyan Reform Union was born, and has made its witness and contribution to the living faith of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In commending this story of the Wesleyan Reform Union of Churches we can only comment: "What hath God wrought!" The early Reformers were proud of Wesleyan Methodism and did not seek or desire secession, and in this recital of history we have no wish to revive old antagonisms. Methodism has moved closer together during the last fifty years and though we have preferred to retain our separate identity we are still one in hope, doctrine and charity, and desire only what is best for the Methodist Church, and that the essential unity of Methodism as a brotherhood of believers may be made more evident and effective in the redemptive work of the Gospel throughout the world.

The Editorial Board has, of necessity, been compelled to be selective in the material at its disposal, and much that we would have wished to include has unhappily been omitted. We have aimed at the most comprehensive inclusion of relevant data, but recognise that much more could be written concerning the Churches and individuals. Such calls for yet another volume.

The task of preparing this Souvenir may be deemed incidental to the duties of a Connexional Secretary, yet that in no



way diminishes the deep sense of honour and privilege, and as Editor, I acknowledge the immense and valuable service rendered by those who have assisted me in the task. Appreciation is also shown of the help rendered by many friends in the Union in placing so much data at our disposal. Nor should I omit to mention my indebtedness to my daughter, the Bookroom assistant, who has kindly read the proofs.

It is our sincere hope that "One Is Your Master" will help many to realise the wealth of our spiritual inheritance and re-kindle our zeal for the service of Christ in the coming days.

W. Harold Jones.

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**Addendum.**—The major part of this brochure, from the facile pen of Dr. Jones was all but ready for press at the time of the Centenary Conference of 1949. Our brother was not to see the fulfilment of one of fondest hopes with the ultimate fruitage of much devoted labour. Preaching in Sharrow Vale Church, Sheffield, on Sunday, February 14th, 1954, he entered into rest the following day.

By the passing of Dr. Jones the Union suffered an almost irreparable loss. He was so closely bound up with every phase of connexional life and activity. His presence, personality and contribution will be greatly missed. His clarity of vision, distinctive witness and fervent faithfulness will long be remembered. He adorned the post he so ably filled and was greatly esteemed in National Assemblies. The Union thanks God for the loan of his life and the measure of his great gifts.

It has fallen to my lot to complete the task he here began—Naturally, there has been need for revision. So much has happened since 1949 and one has deemed it advisable to bring the Union Story as far as possible within limits up to date. It will readily be realised that further alteration to the format already set could only be attained at considerable cost. We pray that this issue may serve a worthy purpose.—G.A.M.

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## ***The Historic Background***

Who shall say where the history of a great movement begins? Our life has its roots deep down in the very distant past. I find it necessary for my purpose to go back to the beginning of the XVIII Century. How different was the England of that time. Her chief wealth was in her rural industries and country people were the important folk. The class distinctions amongst these was very marked. On the one hand was the ruling class - the land-owners, the Squire and the Church with its clergy; on the other, and very much in subjection, were the working people. This distinction was accepted by rich and poor alike and looked upon as being Divinely appointed. Even the catechism was *made to read* that "a man should do his duty in that state of life unto which it had pleased God to call him." This was almost a part of the constitution of the country.

John Wesley, by home training and by personal conviction, was a true son of this age. He preached a glorious gospel free to all - even to the least and the lowest; but he never conceived that religion would affect a man's social status. For over forty wonderful years, in his statesmanlike way, he organised and established the new churches which by God's grace he had inaugurated. He never separated himself from the Established Church and he built up the constitution of the new church in the fashion of the old. Authority and government were vested solely in the Ministry. While Wesley lived he administered this order chiefly by virtue of one indisputable advantage: the very high esteem and affection in which he was universally held made his expressed desire to be law sufficient. It was with the passing of this great man of God that the situation began to change. The established order must necessarily be continued and Conference remained as autocratic as ever. But that which had been acceptable under the constraint of love was not so tolerable under authority. This change of attitude was inevitable with the passing of so great and beloved a leader, and had things remained as they had been

fifty years before no great protest would have been made. But a new and wholly underestimated spirit had entered into social life.

Before the death of Wesley, there had begun what we now call the Industrial Revolution - and what a revolution it was. Bloodless, it changed the whole life of England. New industries sprang up all over the Midlands and the North. New and populous towns grew up to become dominant factors in national life. The country people soon became an almost unimportant minority. The glaring anomaly of parliamentary representation was too great to be overlooked and men began to clamour for Reform. The Duke of Wellington and his government resisted this disturbing movement; but the new power was too great for them and a new government took their place. Lord Grey introduced and passed into law his great Reform Act of 1832. Now the people's representatives appeared in parliament. Manchester sent John Bright and Richard Cobden to Westminster with the result that the iniquitous Corn Laws were abolished. No longer might the people's food be taxed for the benefit of the corn growers. Reform was in the air. There had come an irresistible upward surge of the Common People.

Nowhere was this resurgence more felt than amongst the people of the Wesleyan Churches. Here men, who had been regenerated by the Grace of God, found a new dignity of personality. Sunday Schools had taught them to read and their one text-book was the Bible - particularly the New Testament. Was anything more calculated to produce a sense of personal responsibility and importance? The realisation of the Fatherhood of God brought its corollary—the Brotherhood of men. The common Masterhood of Christ brought the inescapable sense of co-partnership in service. Times had indeed changed; but there was no corresponding change in the administration of the Churches. Conference was still entirely Ministerial and frowned upon every effort for Reform. What distress might have been avoided if the leaders had but recognised the changing conditions. Did those worthy ministers of the Gospel never consider the Master's words, "Neither do men put new wine into old bottles.

else the bottles break and the wine runneth out?" Already had taken place events that should have warned of the future. Rev. Alexander Kilham, expelled in 1795, had built up the Methodist New Connexion. In 1811 came the Primitive Methodist movement following the Mow Cop Meetings. In far away Devon the expelled Rev. William O'Bryan inaugurated the Bible Christian movement in 1815. Still Conference was obdurate till in 1848 came a greater break than ever. In that one year, under the leadership of Revs. Everett, Griffith and Dunn, over one hundred thousand souls seceded or were expelled from the Wesleyan Church. These were true children of Reform, born in the travail of those distressing events.

Men of such sturdy independence would not suffer themselves to be lost and so it was that 1849 saw a great gathering in London - the first Conference of the Reformers. The future was prayerfully faced and one result was that in 1857 a great number of them formed the United Methodist Free Church. There were many, however, too close up to unhappy experiences for them ever to bind themselves again by a Connexional Government. They had won liberty too dearly to risk losing it again. However, to remain isolated and scattered was to court disaster. Wise counsels prevailed and in 1859 those churches and circuits, assembled in Conference, formed themselves into a Union of Free Churches under the appropriate title :

"THE WESLEYAN REFORM UNION"

N. S. Lobb.

Chapter II

***Founders of Reform***



JAMES EVERETT



WILLIAM GRIFFITH



SAMUEL DUNN

### **James Everett.**

James Everett, the foremost of the three ministers who were expelled, was born in Alnwick in 1784, and entered the Wesleyan ministry in 1804. Quite early in his ministry, after spending some time at the Bookroom in London, he was compelled by ill-health to seek superannuation. He then decided to commence a business in Sheffield as a bookseller. He, however, returned to circuit work for a short time when he retired in 1834, residing in the city of York. Strongly attached to Methodism, he was known as a preacher of exceptional ability as well as being the author of several books. Apart from this he was singularly clever as a caricaturist and employed his gifts in pen portraits which showed a mingling of humour and satire. Those who knew him were ready to appraise his sincerity, his unselfishness and unquestioned loyalty, though they often expressed disapproval of his methods.

### **Samuel Dunn.**

Samuel Dunn was a Cornishman, born at Mevagissey, entering the ministry in the year 1816. He, too, was a writer of considerable merit, but his passionate evangelism early gave him prominence and he was appointed as the first missionary to the Shetland Isles. Adam Clarke, the theologian, was among his friends. After his expulsion, Dunn laboured for nine years in Camborne, Cornwall, but instead of linking up with the Reformers, he went to America. His ministry in New York was short-lived and returning to his native county he spent his time serving the Churches in that area at their wish.

### **William Griffith.**

William Griffith was the youngest of the three ministers to be expelled at the Conference of 1849. The son of a Wesleyan minister he was educated at Kingswood and entered the teaching profession, becoming a schoolmaster. Feeling a call to devote himself more fully to the work of evangelism he entered the ministry in 1828. His passionate love of justice and civil and religious liberty led him to champion the case of Methodist Reform. To this end he frequently contributed to the "Wesleyan Times" giving much stimulus and support to those who were agitating for a more democratic system within Methodism.

Resolutions of the Reform Meeting held  
at Mr Wm Butler on November 20<sup>th</sup> 1851

Resolved 1<sup>st</sup> That the Members constituting this  
Meeting are of opinion that it would be <sup>the</sup> most  
advantageous to ourselves, and more honorable  
as objections to discontinue the arbitrary  
and unrighteous proceedings of Congress by  
withdrawing ourselves peacefully from their Society.

Resolved 2<sup>d</sup>

That we immediately establish a Reform  
Club to be held at Mr Wm Butler, begotten  
on the Sabbath morning.

Resolved 3<sup>d</sup>

That Joseph Ewerick be appointed the Leader  
of the Reform Club

Resolved 4<sup>th</sup>

That we constitute ourselves a Reform  
Committee by Joseph Ewerick Secretary

John Turner Treasurer

Thos Turner

Wm Ewerick

Wm Butler

Robert Rogers

Wm Laidley

John Ford

Facsimile of Resolution adopted at Oxford Road, Mexborough.



### ***Birth of a Connexion***

The birth of a Connexion, like any other birth, is not without travail. Any account of the beginning of the Wesleyan Reform movement cannot be given without reference to the labour and sorrow which were part of the birth-pangs of its origin. As has been stated, arbitrary rule was followed by agitation and agitation led to expulsions and the setting up of other Methodist bodies long before 1849. But in the early 1840's the agitation grew in intensity, and bitterness was caused by the publication and circulation of "The Fly-sheets" - anonymously written documents which sought to expose the arbitrary rule of the Wesleyan Conference, and in particular, made a strong attack upon certain well-known leaders. Those who were suspected of being responsible for their publication, Dunn, Everett and Griffiths were penalised and eventually expelled. These had a host of sympathisers, who, in turn, were expelled for their sympathies. Desiring strongly to remain within Wesleyan Methodism those who were expelled made their protests affirming that they were still Methodists, and when these protests were unavailing they found themselves separated from a Church with which they had endearing associations and holy memories, much bitterness and sorrow being caused as a consequence. As grieved in heart were they with this severance from a Church beloved as with the knowledge of the infringement upon their liberties and rights and the conduct of Conference. Conciliatory effort proved fruitless and holding the conviction that liberty, equality and fraternity were righteous demands, no other course seemed open than that of complete independence. It was in this atmosphere that the Connexion was born.

The climax was reached at the Wesleyan Conference of 1849. Early in 1850, four hundred delegates representing the "Reformers" met in the Albion Street Chapel, Moorfields, London, and a document, outlining a Constitution was drawn up. This embraced sixteen points and was in conformity with the "Reform" proposals. It was at the "Delegate" Meeting (the word "Conference" was not used for some years) in 1852, however, that the

first step was taken towards independence, and the establishment of the Union as a denomination. A declaration of principles was unanimously adopted as the foundation principles upon which the "Reformers" should build. Setting out the causes which gave rise to the controversy and in order to secure the rights and liberties which had been denied them, the Declaration was in the following terms :

"That Christ is Head over all things to His Church, and His Word the only sufficient rule both of its faith and practice.

That no rules or regulations should be adopted, but such as are in accordance with the Holy Scriptures, and have received the full concurrence of the Church.

That the admission of members into the Church, the exercise of discipline upon them, and their exclusion from the Church are rights vested solely in the hands of the Church members, to be exercised by them either directly or representatively, and that it is the right of members to be present at all meetings for the transaction of the general business of the Church.

That the nomination and election of all office-bearers is the inalienable right of the Church.

That whilst desirous of maintaining the Connexional principle, we hold that all local courts should be independent and their decisions affecting internal economy final.

That any restriction upon discussion and free interchange of opinion on matters affecting the interest of the Church is an unwarranted interference with its liberties and with the right of private judgement.

"That Christ is Head over all things to His Church, and His heritage," for "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren."

Believing these principles to be in harmony with the Word of God, a solemn demand is now made on behalf of the Methodist societies for the complete and immediate repeal of all rules and regulations whereby the rights and liberties of

the people in the particulars above specified have been restricted, or the aforesaid principles directly or indirectly violated ; and that all future deliberations affecting the interests of the Church, in the Annual Conference and in the minor connexional courts, be conducted in the presence of the people who shall, in every such Conference or Court, be fully and fairly represented."

This Declaration of Principles was regarded by the new adherents as the Magna Charta of the Reform Movement. By it a clear and definite line of action was laid down and pursued. Meetings were arranged in different parts of the country at which the Declaration was read and fully considered and later adopted. With its adoption the "Reformers" were welded into a religious body with a distinctive position and status of their own. The name "Wesleyan Reform Union" was afterwards assigned to it and the year 1849 placed on record, not specifically as the year of its formation, but as the year which witnessed the climax of a long drawn-out struggle for liberty and the right of private judgement in religious matters and the inauguration of plans to fructify in a separate existence as a denomination a few years later.

The year 1853, the Delegate meeting met in Bradford at the same time as the Wesleyan Conference was assembled in that city. Steps were taken to consolidate the success already achieved and to secure a more efficient diffusion of the principles of Wesleyan Reform.

A year later negotiations were opened up with a view to a great amalgamation of the more democratic bodies in Methodism and as a result a large section of the "Reformers" joined with the Wesleyan Association and in 1857 became known as the United Methodist Free Church. The non-amalgamating Reformers, however, re-affirmed their independence, emphasizing the right of members themselves to choose their own ministers and appoint their local preachers without the interference of any other authority. In the matter of circuit arrangement the voluntary principle was upheld.

The Delegate Meeting of 1859 revised its Constitution, embodying the old former Declaration of Principles, but framed explicitly to give prominence to the fundamental principle that every Church is autonomous and self-governing, and has within itself the power and authority to exercise all ecclesiastical discipline, rule and government, and to put into execution all the laws of Christ necessary to its own edification, including the appointment and removal of its own Ministers.

The declared objects of the Wesleyan Reform Union were :

"To extend brotherly love and increase fraternal intercourse among the Churches comprising the Union.

To promote unity of exertion in whatever may best serve the cause of Christ."

The Constitution provided for an Executive Committee consisting of Officials and twenty members elected annually by the Conference, the composition of the Conference, and its powers. Rules for the guidance of Circuits, the method of electing Leaders and Stewards, and their respective duties were also outlined.

The test of membership was in conformity with New Testament teaching :

"Any person who is convinced of sin and danger, and who desires to flee for refuge to the Saviour, is eligible as a candidate for membership with the Church, but he shall not be a member until he becomes a believer in Christ: and we earnestly recommend all our members to meet in class."

Their conception of the "Church" was simply defined : "A Christian Church is a company of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ the Saviour of the World, who meet together for the worship of God, the preaching of the Gospel, and for mutual counsel."

The first annual meeting of the newly-constituted Union met in Bradford in 1860, the membership being 17,000. Thus was born the Wesleyan Reform Union of Churches. Who shall say what has been the contribution to the Kingdom of Christ ?

W. H. Jones.

## Chapter IV

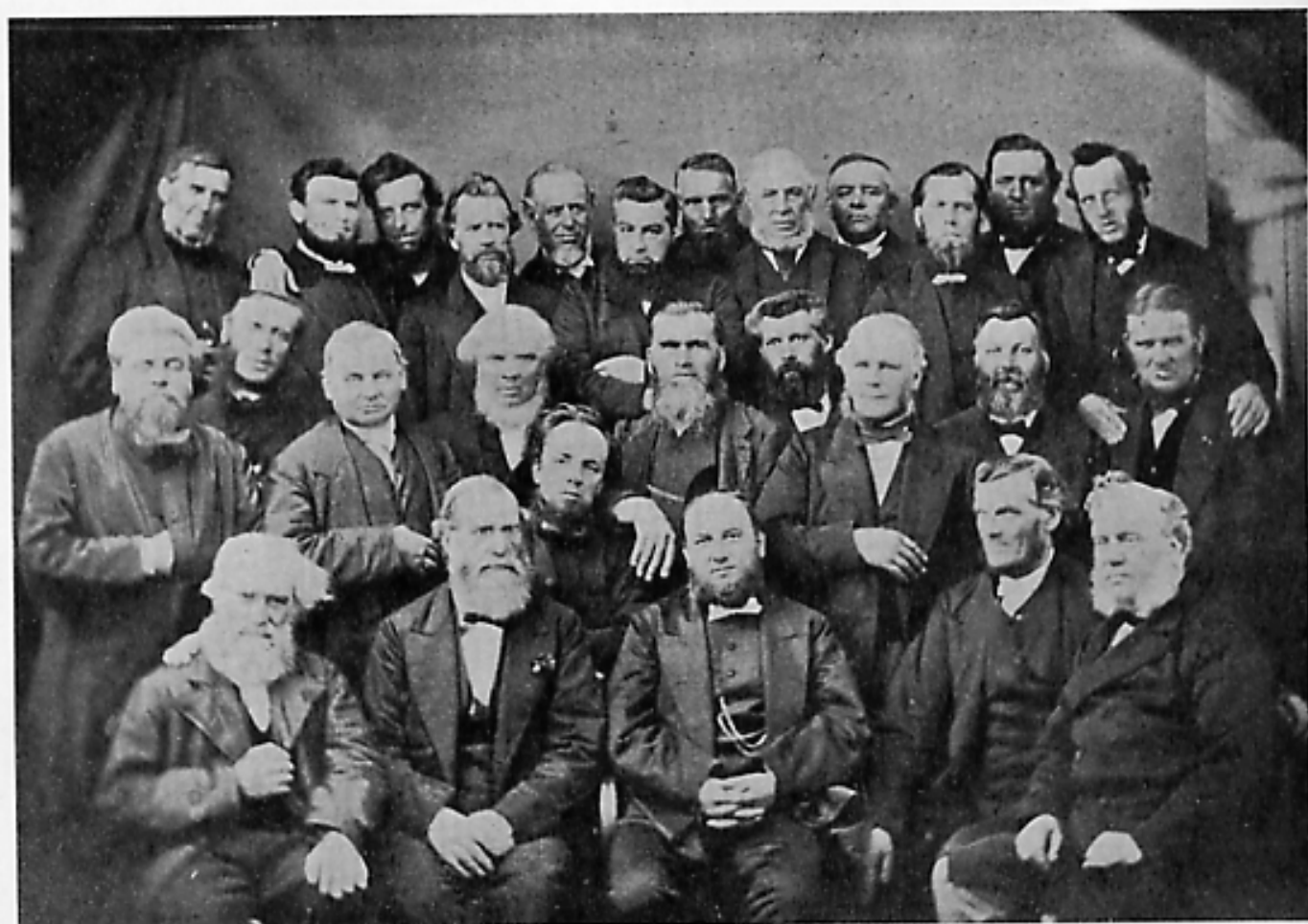
### ***Pioneers***

They marked the footsteps that He trod,  
His zeal inspired their breast ;  
And following their incarnate God,  
Possess the promised rest.

Pioneers there have been in all realms of thought and action through the centuries of man's habitation on this earth. From Abram who "went out not knowing whither he went" unto the present there have not been wanting men and women who, feeling the call of the unknown, were ready to risk even life itself in search of adventure. Men, who, having 'counted the cost', were nevertheless impelled by conviction to take a certain action, pursued that course regardless of consequence and blazed a trail which successive generations have been content to follow. Thus the pioneers have opened new continents, discovered unknown territories, explored vast regions hitherto untouched, and in the realms of science, art, medicine, literature and religion, have made immense benefactions to the human race.

In our story of the Wesleyan Reform Union's origin and early history we are grateful for the work of the pioneers. Their task was to open up a new area of evangelical enterprise, to produce a democratic constitution based on a New Testament conception of the Church, to venture upon a new pathway linking all who felt the desire for liberty of thought and equality of opportunity in spiritual matters, to go out in quest of a Fellowship, venturing all upon God, with our Lord Jesus Christ as the supreme Head.

Being separated from the Church with which they had shared so much, having little financial resources, and their field of activity almost entirely artisan and bereft of many of the advantages accruing to the larger Methodist societies, they faced their task with indomitable courage and high resolve.



GROUP OF EARLY REFORMERS

With faith in God to sustain them, accepting the Lordship of Christ and the Priesthood of all believers as their charter, with a sanctified democracy and an evangelical message as their watchword, they strove to lay the foundations of a free Church, and pioneered its building, handing on to others the immense task of its fulfilment.

What men of vision, courage and faith, not to say skill, those early pioneers were! "Achilles absent is Achilles still," so wrote Homer, who was a keen appraiser of men and knew what he was talking about. We can still profit not a little from the example of those early "Reform" pioneers, whom we know only by name. Achilles, now may be 'absent' in time as well as in space, but the men who have made history in our denomination, are living powers today, 'who 'being dead, yet speak.'

Whilst Everett who associated himself with the amalgamating body, together with a section of the Reformers, and Griffiths later, though on two occasions he presided over the sessions of the Conference, the custom then being that the same persons did not - with one or two exceptions - preside over the sittings of Conference, and Dunn who afterwards went to America, there were notable personalities among the 'continuing' Reformers who carried on the task of pioneering the movement. To name but a few : W. Gandy, W. H. Cozens-Hardy, J. Chipchase, J. Massingham, R. S. Stanley, J. Benson, J. Cutts, J. Andrew, T. Chamberlain, E. Courtneall, E. Benson, E. Hibberd, S. Hereman, J. Neal and Rev. J. Lord. These men, with others, all presided at the Delegate Meetings during the first twenty years and were the recognised leaders of the Reform movement, helping to establish the cause of religious freedom which they had espoused.

W. H. Jones.



Mr. JOHN NEAL  
(Sheffield)  
Three times President:  
1868; 1872; 1883



Mr. JOSHUA WILKINSON  
(Sheffield)



Rev. JOHN LORD  
President, 1870.



Mr. WALTER WILKINSON  
President, 1874.



## Chapter V

### **Builders**

The growth of the work from the time of the inception of the Wesleyan Reform Union was largely the result of missionary enterprise, revivals adding to the membership, whilst Sunday Schools became an integral part of the Union's activities. Where Churches were already in existence these became centres of spiritual power. Among the many activities, as part of their extension programme, the Reformers instituted cottage meetings and these in turn led to the formation of new societies. These people soon wanted a building of their own in which to worship and new churches were erected, the generosity of the people, many of them poor, hard-working labourers, revealing the reality of their experience of Christ. By giving magnificently from their small earnings, or in some cases helping in the actual work of building, they showed their determination to erect and maintain their own chapels, giving their own distinctive witness in both town and village.

Thus in the early 1860's it is on record that new Chapels - in some cases Sunday Schools - were built at Wycombe Marsh, Park Lane, Bradford (new Sunday School), Connon (Liskeard) "300 sitting down to tea, Mr. T. Tamblyn presiding." This was in the year 1866. In 1872 Rotherham also built both a new chapel and Sunday School. Previously Greenhead (Chapelton) erected its new chapel, Mr. S. H. Burrows and Mr. John Neal being present, and it is said, "arrangements were made with the Midland Railway Company to convey passengers from Sheffield and return for a single fare." Slackside was opened in 1865, Revs. J. Hanson and J. Innes conducting the opening services, £60 being raised. Carbrook (Sheffield) and Mountain (in the Wibsey Circuit) were both opened in 1867, new schools being erected at Bakewell and Foolow. A little cause was started at Farnham Common and a new chapel was opened. At the foundation stone-laying ceremony in Cricket Road, Sheffield, copies of the daily papers and several coins were placed underneath the stones. It is interesting to note that at the stone-laying ceremony at Alysham, Norfolk, in

1869, Samuel Jarrold, of Norwich, was present. Subscribing £5 he promised to give a further £15 if the building was made larger. A little boy gave £1. Various documents were also placed in a cavity underneath. The Deddington circuit was received into the Union in this same year, and this co-incided with the building of a new chapel at Souldern in the same circuit. Soon afterwards, Wibsey embarked upon an enlargement scheme costing £1,000, the chapel having been built in 1837 and being one of those sympathetic to the Reformers was transferred in 1849. At this time (1869), connexionally the number of members returned showed 8659 and there were 284 chapels and preaching places registered. In 1873, Muff Field Chapel, Bradford, carried through an extension programme. The little school which was in existence several years before 1849 was found inadequate for the growing number of scholars attending and a new school was built. The foundation stone-laying ceremony was well supported - Mr. Jabez Cole who laid one of the principal stones was presented with an ebony mallet and silver trowel to mark the occasion. The sum of £800 was expended on this project. Supporting Dr. Russell, who preached, were the Revs. E. Barley and J. Packett, the circuit ministers. Denholme, also in the same year, embarked upon a scheme of enlargement costing £1,200, and in the Midlands, Oldbury built a new chapel. Thus progress continued and in the first quarter of a century membership figures showed 7440, with 249 preaching places, and scholars in attendance as 17,684. Micklethwaite, having decided to build, obtained a new site. "We are worth £170," they declared.

Evidence that education was a matter of concern is shown by the action of the Wibsey chapel which, in 1878, ventured upon a day school project and, as was then stated, "owing to the stringent requirements of the Educational Department," an expense of £1,200 was incurred, provision being made for the appointment of a certified master and mistress. Owlerton, Sheffield, was reopened in 1880, after being closed for twelve months, Mr. Walter Wilkinson being appointed treasurer of a scheme to pay off a £2,000 mortgage, and Jump (Mount Pleasant) opened its new chapel in January, 1881.



Rev. E. BARLEY  
(Bradford)  
President, 1875.



Mr. JOHN PARKER  
(Finedon)  
President, 1884.



Mr. GEORGE CARR  
(Sheffield)  
President, 1889,  
and Jubilee Conference, 1889.



Rev. GEORGE GREEN  
(Bradford)  
President, 1890.



Mr. THOMAS JOHNSON  
(Barnsley)  
President, 1894.



Mr. HENRY HEATON  
(Bradford)  
President, 1896.

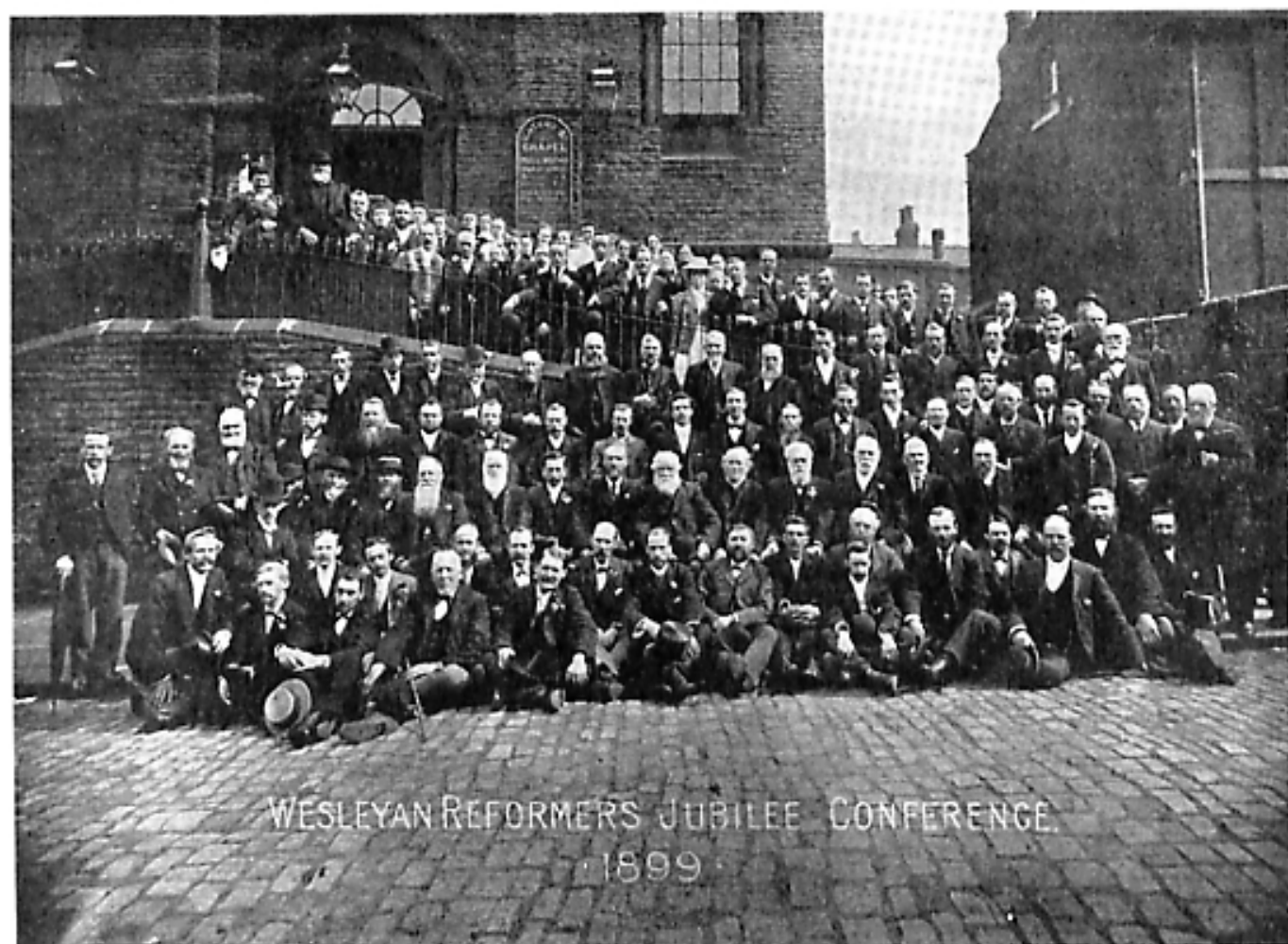
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And so the story proceeds. Newlands, in the High Wycombe circuit, built a new chapel which was described as a 'Chapel of ease' to the Oxford Road Church, High Wycombe. Belvoir Street, Norwich, felt the necessity for additional premises and laid the stone of a new Sunday school. Ellistown opened a new chapel in 1882, and Hunningley Lane, Stairfoot, responding to the need of a growing district built their commodious premises, a silver trowel and mahogany mallet being presented to Mr. Amos Kay, one of the leaders of the cause, the opening taking place later in the year. Commencing a fund in 1879, Stanton, in the Bakewell circuit, achieved their ambition in 1883 by building a Sunday school with chapel alterations at a cost of £300. Away in Lincolnshire, Ruskington opened their new chapel. The year 1885 was a notable one for the little cause at Darley Dale, in Derbyshire, and for the little band of people at Carnyorth, in the far West, both taking in hand building schemes, to result later in well-established causes. At a cost of £1,000 Annesley Woodhouse completed the building of a new chapel in 1888, one lady remarking on the occasion of the

opening : "It must have been the Lord's will for them to have a new chapel as He had given them a fine day." New buildings followed at Old Mill, Barnsley, and Grimesthorpe, Sheffield, the latter place costing £1,600, towards which, £959 was raised in the first twelve months. A small mission having been begun in the Attercliffe district of Woodbourn Road in 1879, two years later a new building was commenced and opened as the Woodbourn Road Chapel - a monument to the zeal and devotion of Mr. William Brookes, who became our Honorary Secretary. On the other side of Sheffield, Hampden View, a small cause was built. Before the century closed, Rushden (High Street) had erected its spacious new school in Queen Street (1890), Rev. T. Bromage preaching 'an excellent sermon on Job 28, 7-8.' Attercliffe opened its large chapel a year later, Mitchell's Terrace (1893), Alderman's Green, Glossop, Stanton Lees also celebrating new openings. Rushden Mission (1896), sponsored by the High Street chapel and under the leadership of Mr. John Clark and others, made considerable progress in a developing area of the town, a beautiful school-chapel being opened in 1900, the site having a large frontage.

In 1899 Jubilee celebrations were held in Sheffield, the gatherings being held in Watery Street chapel, the President for that year being Mr. George Carr. Dr. Mackennal (President of the Free Church Council) preached the Conference sermon in Norfolk Street Wesleyan Chapel, a great demonstration taking place in the Montgomery Hall when six branches of Methodism were represented, including the Rev. C. H. Kelly, (ex-President of the Wesleyan Conference), who said Methodists might differ in polity but not in doctrine.

Towards the close of the Jubilee year a new chapel was opened at Beaconsfield and with the commencement of the new century, Oxford Road, High Wycombe, erected their new Sunday school and Finedon, Wellingborough, laid the foundation stone of a new building. The Local Preachers' Mutual Aid Association met in Sheffield in this year and at one of the gatherings it was stated that Mr. W. Marsden's father was one of its founders along with a Mr. Pearson.



So far, our story of the first fifty years has been mainly concerned with buildings. Now we retrace our steps in order to mention some of the "builders." Their names are many, and includes a long list of Presidents from Mr. T. H. Richard (1871) to 1899, the Jubilee year, when Mr. George Carr, of Sheffield, was appointed at the Conference held in Watery Street, Sheffield, he having previously been appointed in 1889. A full list of Presidents will be included elsewhere, but there were outstanding personalities of whom brief mention must be made. Men like Mr. John Neal who occupied the Presidential office on two occasions - 1868, and again in 1883; Mr. Walter Wilkinson (1874), who in 1882, was appointed honorary secretary, and until his death in 1891 was abundant in labours throughout the Connexion, being welcomed as a preacher and speaker on numerous special occasions in many of the churches. Mr. S. H. Burrows, also of Sheffield, Mr. E. Benson who died during his year of office, and Mr. John Parker, of Finedon, the latter being appointed Treasurer of the Union at the Jubilee Conference, each exercising profound influence among the churches. Mr. William Marsden, thrice elected President (1881, 1888, and again at Rushden in 1903) was in 1890 appointed General Secretary, and later on in a re-distribution of official work he was elected Agent. For some years he was also Home Missions Secretary. He represented the Union at two Ecumenical Conferences, in 1891 and 1901. Mr. J. T. Law, President in 1893, was also prominent in the Union for a number of years. During his presidency the window placed in Wesley's Chapel, London, the gift of the Wesleyan Reform Union, was unveiled by him on behalf of the Union. From 1892 to 1901 laymen successively occupied the Chair of the Union—for what reason we know not—and include such names as Mr. H. Turner, Mr. Thomas Johnson (also Honorary Secretary in 1891); Mr. J. T. Beale, whose philanthropic service on behalf of invalid children led to the setting up of a convalescent home, was honoured by being elected President in 1895; Mr. Henry Heaton, well-known in religious circles in Bradford; Mr. W. Shirley, whose work in the Foleshill circuit of Coventry was recognised in many parts of the connexion; Mr. William Brookes, who passed away in 1950, being the last link of a long line of



worthy men. Of him we may say that he was most actively associated with the Union for over half a century. His knowledge of the Union, its principles and policy, was as wide as the range of his service and was matched by a devotion and zeal undiminished with the passing of the years. Included in this connection is Mr. J. H. Freeborough, whom the Union honoured three times by electing him President. He was a most capable man, possessing abilities as administrator, debater and preacher, all of which made him a statesman in the Wesleyan Reform Union. As the financial secretary he gave devoted service.

Moreover, the Union has been well served by distinguished and devoted ministers whose sincerity of purpose has been matched with a fervent zeal for the Kingdom of God. In addition to the responsibilities of shepherding the flock of Christ they have given magnificent service in connexional administration, promoting the welfare of the churches as they sought to serve the Union in a wider sphere. These men were honoured for their evangelical fervour as well as their ability, character and service. The Rev. E. Barley twice occupied the Presidency, in 1875 and again in 1882. The Rev. R. Nicholls was honoured in 1878, and the Rev. T. Bromage in 1886 and again in 1891. Unhappily, before his term of office had ended, he had passed away. His son, the Rev. Edmund Bromage, and grandson, the Rev. Ernest E. Bromage, have each in turn been elected to the Presidency, thus completing a noble succession. At the Wombwell Conference of 1890, the Rev. George Green was elected President. An able preacher, a beloved pastor, his ministry at High Wycombe and at Muff Field, Bradford, where he laboured with such devotion and zeal for 23 years, has borne fruit in cherished associations and fragrant memories. Representing the Union at the centenary of Wesley's death, when a statue to the Founder of Methodism was unveiled in City Road Chapel, London, his address on that occasion was a worthy utterance. He, too, was a delegate to the Ecumenical Conference of Methodists when it met in Washington, U.S.A., in 1891.

There are other names too numerous to mention in this brief survey. These, though unmentioned, have in their respective



spheres builded worthily on the foundation prepared by the early Reformers. These believed in the principles and polity of the Wesleyan Reform Union as intensely as did their fathers who had experienced the hardships which followed expulsion. In their hearts burned the flame of liberty as fiercely, but whose devotion to Christ and love for His Church had given them a wider outlook and the desire for a fraternity of spirit which, at the close of the last century included a closer approach to Methodism in co-operative service and even to consider concerted action. These all builded better than they knew and the edifice erected is left as a legacy to succeeding generations to maintain, and it is of their contribution to this task we must now write.

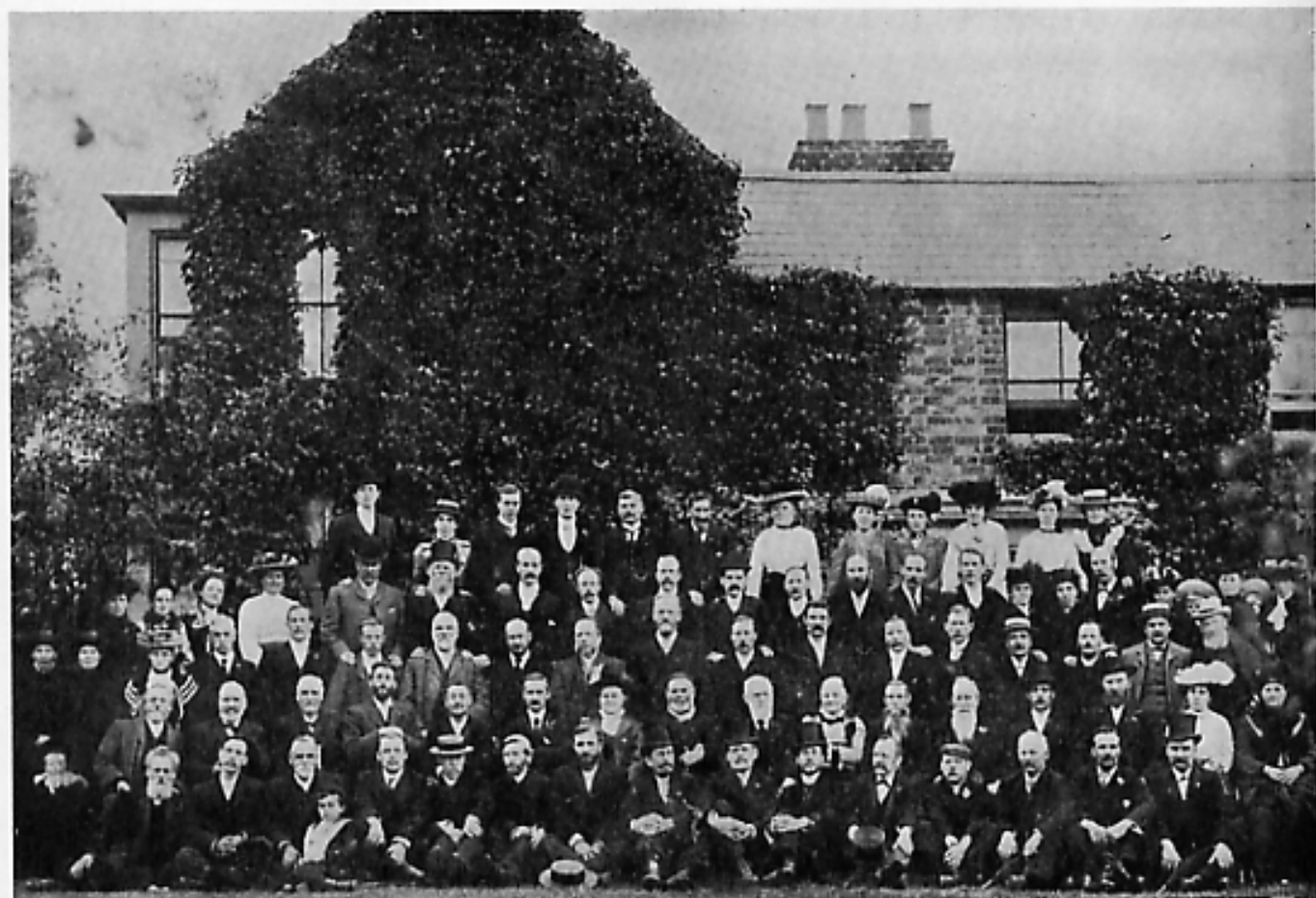
### **The Next Fifty Years.**

Consolidation and expansion in several directions marked the opening years of the second half of the century of connexional history. Whilst the erection of new places of worship slowed down, and membership figures varied slightly from year to year, signs were not wanting that a spirit of aggressiveness in spiritual things was manifest in the Union. "The opportunities of the new century," so the General Committee Report said, "provided ample room for the development of a denomination with its Scriptural basis of faith and a church polity which appeals to the aspirations of democracy." The larger outlook was seen in the share taken in the Ecumenical Conference held in London in 1901, and the acceptance of an invitation by the Wesleyan Conference to be associated in the preparation of a new Hymn Book. The proposed simultaneous mission, too, was supported wholeheartedly by ministers and laymen alike. In national matters a new interest was shown when such controversial issues as the then Education and Licensing Bills were being debated, the Conference of 1903, held at Rushden, being notable for the fact that Dr. Clifford addressed the Assembly as well as preached the official sermon later. Four things contributed to this consolidation it was reported to the Conference of 1905, held that year in Barnsley, viz., the beneficial results of the Connexional Plan interchange, the integrating effect of the Reference Deed, renewed missionary enterprise, and the dissemination of Connexional information through the Year Book. Then the

growing interest in and support of Foreign Missions helped to weld the Union into a greater and more co-operative whole as new fields of venture were opened up and new conquests for Christ envisaged.

The formation of the Young People's Department in 1908 was a definite advance and constitutional changes which enlarged the General Committee were designed to link up all parts of the Union in a representative capacity. Democracy was on test; the Conference retaining the power of electing the General Committee, despite an attempt by resolution to introduce the system of 'direct representation.' Another integrating effect was the inception of the Women's Auxiliary Movement which has brought incalculable blessing to the Union, especially in its missionary emphasis. The Union had from the beginning realised the need of Temperance and Social Welfare and the growing advocacy of these allied principles, especially their inculcation among the young by the aid of Bands of Hope, marked the first decade of the twentieth century.

The drawing together and ultimate union of the various branches of Methodism were significant, first in 1907, when the Methodist Church was formed by the union of the Bible Christians, Methodist New Connexion and United Methodist Free Church, and later in 1932, when the Wesleyan Church, the Primitive Methodists and the United Methodists united. In each of these "unions" invitations were extended to join, but were declined. These events have, however, had their repercussions upon the Wesleyan Reformers' denomination. Declining to accept organic union has not prevented our working together and in such movements as the Methodist Concerted Action, the preparation and usage of the Methodist Hymn Books of 1904 and 1934, or a very active participation in Ecumenical Methodism, have created a spirit of unity and co-operation of immense value. This ecumenicity of spirit and outlook has been further augmented by our association first with the National Free Church Council and the Federal Free Church Council, now merged into the Free Church Federal Council, and latterly the British Council of Churches, in which the Church of England also is represented and which is a part of the



CONFERENCE GROUP, RUSHDEN 1903.

World Council of Churches. The recognition given to a small denomination has undoubtedly strengthened our connexional bond and increased our witness as a denomination. Not less in influence or service has been our representation upon such bodies as the National Christian Endeavour Union, which Union in 1942 honoured the Rev. E. E. Bromage by electing him its President—and incidentally honoured Wesleyan Reformers—the British Lessons Council, and other National Youth movements, including the National Sunday School Union in its work throughout the country, and the British and Foreign Bible Society. Added to this list must be the Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work which met in Stockholm in 1925, when we were ably represented by Mr. J. H. Freeborough, who also took an active part in 'C.O.P.E.C.'

Our relationships with the Independent Methodist Connexion have always been most cordial and though protracted consultations have been held and interchanges of personnel, mutually appreciated, have been carried out with a view to amalgamation, no positive union has been found possible.

All this has meant a greater need for connexional cohesiveness and a measure of centralisation within the limits of our independency. From 1931 onwards steps have been taken to 'present a more substantial order' and a Commission thoroughly investigated our internal polity and practice and the Constitution modified to meet the changed times. The General Committee has been enlarged giving Departmental representation, the principle of co-optation being conceded to give a wider share in administration, whilst to retain the services of older brethren Guardian representatives or Trustees who are life members, to the number of eight, now form part of the Constitution. This power of election and appointment Conference still retains, efforts to change this procedure by introducing a system of 'Direct Representation' being decisively rejected.

In this attempt towards consolidation much attention has been devoted to the Ministry. Autonomous government has revealed a weakness in this respect, and whilst it has not been found possible yet to institute a Connexional Ministry with all the safe-

guards and security which some other denominations possess, certain measures have been taken to give the Ministry greater security. As the result of a Commission set up to enquire into the whole position a statement was produced, and which Conference accepted, which embodied proposals regarding entry into the ministry, the setting up of an executive for consultation and advice in respect of ministerial changes, the principle of ministerial security being incorporated later, with the establishment of a Sustentation Fund. The Ministers' Provident Society has been of incalculable benefit in this endeavour. Its resetting up in 1924, following several former attempts, was largely on the initiative of the Rev. A. Wortley, who has consistently and with untiring devotion worked for its establishment. Now with the additional benefits accruing from the new National Health Scheme, provision is made for retirement and superannuation. During this period widows of deceased ministers have been assisted in addition to the annuitants. Thus progress has been made and whilst much remains to be implemented, given the co-operation of Churches and ministers, more can be accomplished without the surrender of freedom of action on the part of either.

Two other factors must be brought into consideration. The value of the Chapel Loan Fund in this context was soon realised and gave impetus to a number of extensions and new building projects. The other factor was the introduction of a scheme of Insurance for church property. Gradually churches have availed themselves of the facilities offered and here again connexional interest has been created.

Whilst, as has been stated, extensions and new buildings were fewer during this period, there were a number worthy of notice. Darnall opened its new building in 1901. The cause was started in 1849, and now needed a new church to replace the old one damaged by a gale. Wombwell had just prior to this opened a new school and Worsbro' Dale replaced its old chapel by the erection of a beautiful structure at a cost of £1,900, the opening taking place in 1903. Doncaster found new premises and opened the St. James' Church. In 1900 Arnold, previously a mission,

joined the Union, and Hucknall, which had commenced in the year 1880, meeting in a barn, had become a vigorous society and in 1902 associated itself with the Union. Their great venture culminated in 1906 when the present Church was built, and by 1931, a debt of £3,000 had been cleared. Podington, formerly meeting in a cottage launched a new building programme. Sharrow Vale, Sheffield, worshipping in an iron building for 40 years, embarked upon a new building scheme and at a cost of £2,750 built the present beautiful chapel in which the Conference of 1922 met. Norwich made structural alterations and Bramall Lane extended its premises in 1903 by adding new vestries to accommodate a growing Sunday School and Bible Class, the membership of which at that time was 109. The year 1904 was eventful for the little cause at Chilvers Coton, which embarked upon a new scheme resulting in the opening of their new chapel which was described as 'an adaptation of late Gothic architecture.' New Swannington (Leicestershire) and Hazelmere (High Wycombe), followed later with new buildings. In 1906 several members removed from Annesley Woodhouse to Mansfield and started a cause at Skerry Hill, linking up with the Union at the same time. Moira opened its new school-chapel the same year, and Shipley installed electric light. Woodseats, Staincross and Bedworth (Nuneaton) also undertook building schemes. Muff Field, Bradford, launched a great enterprise and in 1908 erected a new Sunday School with accommodation for 900 people at a cost of £5,000. Central Avenue, Bradford (formerly Park Lane) opened their new chapel in 1908, and at Birchover, Derbyshire, a little band of people saw their hopes realised. During the next few years Dalton, Rotherham—having been given a site by the Rt. Hon. F. J. S. Foljambe—Upper Denby, Dodworth, Smithies, Oulton Street (Cawston) and Ibstock, all carried out building plans. In 1925 the Dickens Memorial Hall, Wellingborough, was built. Skelmanthorpe re-opened its chapel in 1926, an effort in reconstruction both of beauty and dignity. Russell Street, Liskeard, formerly belonging to the United Methodists, was accepted into the Union, the circuit now having a church in the town of Liskeard. The little band of workers at Bethany (Liskeard) where a chapel has been since

1821, fulfilled their long-cherished hopes and opened a new chapel in 1927. A great venture was made by the members of Carnyorth (St. Just), who, having no other accommodation than the chapel, decided to build a Sunday School. Their hopes were realised in 1928. Extensions or alterations followed in a number of places including Syresham (Deddington), Ibstock, High Thorne and St. Keyne, now unhappily closed. In 1926 Choppington was received into the Union, Attleborough (Nuneaton), a vigorous cause, joining the Union in 1930, whilst in 1932, Broom Street Mission, Sheffield, now St. Mary's Road, was accepted. In 1937, friends from Clydebank linked up with the Union and thus for the first time the Union was represented in Scotland. Enterprisingly they embarked upon a building scheme and in 1938 opened their new premises. Connexionally, the year 1938 was important. After considerable difficulties had been overcome, new Headquarters were secured in West Bar, Sheffield, the opening taking place amid much rejoicing on December 10th. Wath opened its new church in 1939, the Rev. W. S. Goodwin performing the opening ceremony. In 1945 Macefields Mission, Old Hill, was received into the Union and the last of a long line, Cusworth, opened a small school-chapel in a new and growing area on the outskirts of Doncaster. This is by no means the full story, but how shall it be fully told?

And returning to the 'builders' of this period! How may we recount the full story of men like Mr. J. H. Freeborough, J.P., a denominational statesman, who was thrice honoured as President? Or Mr. W. Brookes, J.P., a beloved Honorary Secretary, the last link in a succession of men whose loyalty to the Union has only been second to their loyalty to Christ. In between we think of Mr. T. R. Green, whose long association with the Union, as a member of the General Committee and Chairman of the Home Missionary Committee—a position he held for the long space of 30 years—being elected President on two occasions. Other names are remembered: Mr. T. Pears, Mr. T. Barron, treasurer of the Foreign Mission Funds for some time; Mr. J. Jacques; Mr. John Clark, for 24 years the esteemed treasurer of the Union and twice President; Mr. Solomon Bastow, also treasurer of the Union for



12 years and twice successively President. His wisdom and guidance was a tremendous asset on all occasions. And Mr. W. Robinson, a worthy treasurer in the initial stages of the M.P.S.: Mr. W. H. Vaughan, Mr. G. Clamp, Coun. J. T. Waterhouse, Mr. F. G. Nuttall, also treasurer of Overseas Funds for some years: Mr. C. Fowler, all of whom have passed to their reward. This long list would be incomplete without a reference here to the sterling Christian character and able service of Mr. Edgar Butterfield, who was appointed treasurer in succession to Mr. Solomon Bastow. His knowledge of finance and his devotion to the Union led him to regard the position of treasurer as a sacred trust and worthily he filled this office. On his passing to Higher Service in 1947, he was succeeded by Mr. E. G. Nagle, the present treasurer. Of the laymen still happily with us we would mention Ald. L. F. Milner, O.B.E., J.P. His outstanding service to the denomination as treasurer of the Y.P.D. for a great number of years, President in 1933, and now a Guardian Representative, have revealed his qualities of mind and heart. His honour at the hand of His Majesty King George VI was shared by the Connexion and his election as Lord Mayor of Sheffield was a tribute to his long and devoted service to the city, the duties of which, in one of the most trying years of the war, were carried out with commendable dignity and charm. Mr. A. Brown, the present treasurer of the Overseas Fund, who was elected President in 1941, has for many years faithfully served the Union. Another outstanding personality is Sir Thomas Tomlinson, B.E.M., J.P., knighted during the Wombwell Conference of 1954—thrice Chairman of the Yorkshire West Riding County Council. The presence of Earl Fitzwilliam at his induction as President at Wombwell in 1945 was a striking testimony to the esteem in which he is held by those in high places. This long list of laymen closes with the names of Mr. P. Johnson, the present secretary of the Overseas Committee, and President in 1946, and our worthy and honoured President for the year 1948-49, Mr. E. Grant, whose work on behalf of Home Missions both connexionally and in his own church at Chapeltown is beyond praise. And of those our ministers, who have been honoured as Presidents it is even more difficult to write. The Rev. W. Clough,



beloved pastor and friend, whose establishment of our Overseas Missionary policy as a Connexion will always be his memorial, written in living stones of devotion and sacrifice. The Rev. T. G. Harper, a faithful pastor and teacher, whose memory is fragrant. An appraisal of the Rev. Edmund Bromage is not easy within the limits of this brief survey. Twice President, connexional Editor and General Secretary for 12 years, a great hymnologist, a peer in the realm of preaching, his mark upon the pages of our Union's history will never be effaced. Of him it may be said he laid the foundation of a higher standard of intellectual and spiritual requirements in respect of our Ministry by his service on the Examination Committee. With him stands the Rev. G. E. Stone, whose ministry at Norwich extending to 47 years testifies to his rich gifts of intellect and heart. Three times, in 1908, 1923 and 1934, he occupied the Presidential chair with distinction, his statesmanlike leadership giving him pre-eminence. Notwithstanding, his sympathies were intensely revealed towards his brethren in the ministry, especially among the younger men for whom his example was a constant inspiration. The Rev. W. C. Smith, again a beloved pastor and friend and a fine Temperance advocate; he, too, served his day and generation. Taking up the task laid down by the Rev. W. Clough, the Rev. S. J. Smith carried forward the work of Overseas Missions making it integral to our witness as a Christian Church. His vision was a world potentially the Kingdom of God and he strove towards its realisation with unselfish devotion, coupled with a knowledge of missionary activity in fields Overseas of amazing breadth and understanding. Not until he had reached the 'sere and yellow leaf' did the Rev. W. S. Goodwin come to the Presidential office in 1939, but with powers unabated he filled that position to the utmost. It was a recognition, too long delayed, for in connexional affairs, in the Temperance cause, in assisting young people in their studies, and as a pastor and preacher, he was revered in many hearts and homes.

Of the ministers still active in our midst we proudly acclaim the long and faithful service of the Rev. E. Dennis. Again three times President, in 1915, and successively 1943 and 1944, we respectfully term him the 'father' of our present company of

ministers, so beloved is he for his breadth of compassion and understanding, his humility and endearing charm. As a guide and friend he still has a real place in our affection and from his intimate knowledge of the Connexion over a period of 51 years in the active ministry we are repeatedly obligated to him. Perhaps it is true to say of the Rev. A. Wortley, President in 1927, that apart from his reputation as a preacher and pastor, and his long association with connexional administration, his consistent advocacy of the Ministers' Provident Society, from its inception in 1924 until 1954—when it is recognised as one of the greatest material boons the ministry possesses—is a tribute to his indefatigable labours on behalf of his brethren who deeply appreciate this service so freely given. It is not given to many to occupy both the Presidential chair and the General Secretaryship at the same time. That distinction was given to the Rev. G. A. Metcalfe, D.D., in 1932, and was a recognition of the incomparable service he had rendered to the denomination as evangelist, minister, pastor, Young People's Secretary for seventeen years, General Secretary (for 20 years), and connexional editor for almost that period. In diverse ways and with the rich gifts at his disposal he served the Union representatively on national and inter-denominational councils, raising the prestige of the Union in every way. For a number of years the Rev. E. E. Bromage fulfilled the office of Secretary of the Y.P.D., and on national councils represented the Union. His election to the Presidency in 1938 preceded only a few years a further honour when he was elected President of the National Christian Endeavour Union. Rev. W. T. Burkitt, D.D., has been twice President, in 1940 and again in 1947. His wide experience, deep convictions, coupled with a philosophy of life that embraces the essentialness of Christ in all things has given him a place pre-eminently befitting one whose clear thinking and powerful utterance commands the attention of both young and old. A frequent contributor to "Christian Words", his literary ability is matched by his earnestness and sincerity of purpose. The Rev. W. H. Jones, D.D., (President in 1943) succeeded the Rev. G. A. Metcalfe as General Secretary, serving with distinction till his home-call in 1954. No more fitting choice as President for

Centenary Year could have been made than that of the Rev. Norman S. Lobb. Previously President in 1936, his charm of manner and graciousness of spirit, added to the originality and presentation of his message, has for many years given him a place of honour in the affection of his own people. His friendliness has made him great; his unmistakeable evangelical passion, the influence of an able ministry, which has extended far beyond the confines of his own denomination, and the possession of distinctive gifts qualified him for leadership in this unique and historic year.

There are other names we could mention, men like Mr. L. S. Peace of Upper Denby, Mr. J. Pallister Squire, Mr. J. W. Fairhurst, Mr. J. Ford, treasurer of the Y.P.D. for some time, Mr. A. E. Fullelove, of Chapeltown - these all served on the General Committee - and we remember them with gratitude to God for their devotion and faithfulness. In no less degree do we honour those younger men, who assuming responsibility in the Union, have already shown their devotion to Christ and their passion for His Church. The Rev. A. Halladay, keenly interested in the Y.P.D., and now its Chairman, was honoured by his call to the Presidency in 1952. Temperance and Social Service work was zealously carried out by the Rev. W. Kendrick (with Mr. T. Roberts as treasurer), until Conference 1954, when he became M.P.S. Secretary. In a quiet way but with characteristic ability and carefulness, Mr. J. Bates—member of the General Committee for several years—safeguarded the interests of the M.P.S. Fund until his sudden passing during the Muff Field Conference of 1950, came as a shock. Mr. Clifford Race is now worthy Treasurer and an ardent Y.P.D. worker.

Projected into this picture of our connexional life and witness during the last 50 years must be the briefest reference to two World Wars, though their repercussions have been tremendous. The years 1914 to 1918 saw a fierce conflict between the nations which sapped the life of the churches in respect of its young manhood, and almost before its aftermath had been cleared away we were again in the throes of a life and death struggle in the years 1939-1945. The terrible toll of human life in this last

bitter struggle which involved civilians too, has left us bereft of many young people who were potential leaders in our churches and Sunday schools, whilst the disintegrating effects and material devastation in the last instance did not leave the churches immune. Many churches were damaged by enemy action, Watery Street, Sheffield being closed in consequence, and the whole work of the Church was disorganised, evacuation of children in the early stages accounting for the serious disintegration of Sunday school work, at a time when, as the result of a Forward Movement, we had begun to re-establish this aspect of our connexional life. Recovery is slow and only the future will reveal how far our own branch of the Christian Church, in unison with the Church of Christ everywhere, can transfigure the tragedy of those years and help to make 'the years to be' an era of peace and prosperity.

W. H. Jones.

***The Widening Range***

"What God wants of us, is that out-reaching bigness which exceeds all littleness of aims and loves and creeds, and grasps all heaven and earth in its embrace."



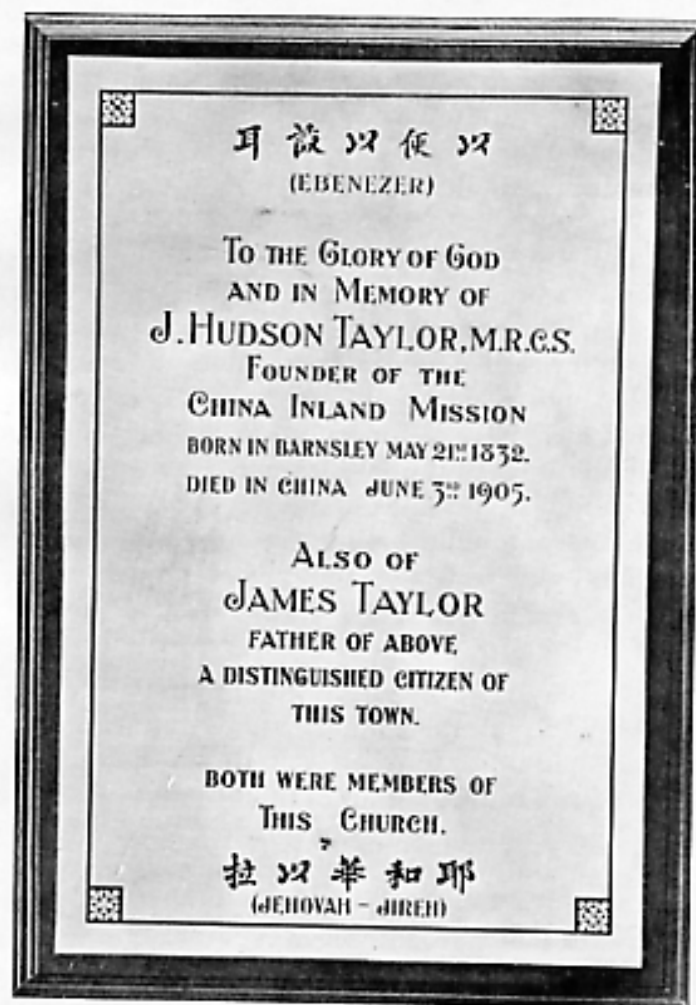
HILDSON TAYLOR

No history of the Wesleyan Reform Union would ever be wholly faithful in its expression or complete in its telling, which failed to recognise the seed-time of the formative years that was destined in a wonderful way to bring forth precious fruit in an ever widening of world-evangelism . . . "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth" might well be written of the early days of Reform. Measuring connexional life statistically, one might easily lose heart in comparison and contrast between things as they are and things as they presented themselves in the formative years. We are so prone to forget the incalculable element in the life of men and movements - the phase beyond all mere human understanding and reckoning. In this process we have had no small part to play in the early shaping of forces which, in the Divine order of things,

must inevitably exceed all the littleness of aims and loves and creeds, with a flaming evangel as its passion and the wider world as its parish.

In one of our very first causes in the Reform Movement, the Rev. Samuel Dunn - one of the expelled in 1849 - builded better than he knew in the shaping of the living stones in the tabernacle of his congregation. Especially was he used of God in the shepherding and counselling of two of his flock who were surely ordained in their beginnings for mighty things. They were William Booth and Catherine Mumford. It was following Samuel Dunn's spiritual discernment and earnest entreaty that William became one of our very first lay preachers, and, at a later stage one of our first ministers. It was not to be that Wesleyan Reform could hold him, nor hold the one who became his devoted and distinguished helpmeet. The place wherein they dwelt was too straight for them. Aspiring always, dynamic natures ever breaking bonds, William and Catherine Booth allied themselves to the Methodist New Connexion as offering wider ministerial scope. Still they yearned for what was denied them : liberty to evangelise a lost world as and how and where the Spirit guided . . . The Christian Mission was born, out of which evolved in 1877, the Salvation Army - destined to become one of the most potent forces in world evangelism . . . It began in Wesleyan Reform.

Reformers had yet another vital link with William Booth, and even with the shaping of the Salvation Army. A close personal friend was the Rev. Thomas Whitehouse, minister for many years in the Oldbury, Old Hill and Lye Circuit, where he faithfully laboured to the time of his home-call in 1901. Being a flaming evangelist himself, he was the means of starting a great religious movement which became a revival so mighty that it was known as "the great awakening of the Black Country". He organised at that time a mission band of outdoor workers as lively as himself—a band which became known as the "Hallelujah Band". Wherever they went, God gave them great favour with the common people who "heard them gladly," with mighty soul-saving results.



Tablet in "Salem" Church, Barnsley.

William Booth was so impressed by the methods of his friend Whitehouse that he founded his mightier movement upon the same plan.

Still another remarkable youth joined the ranks of the early Reformers. His grandfather decided for Christ under the ministry of John Wesley, a cause afterwards being founded in his humble home. His father, James Taylor, sprang from that consecrated stock, his mother being also a dedicated child of the Manse. Hudson Taylor, the son, was but a youth when the disastrous expulsion of Everett, Griffiths and Dunn took place. The sympathy of the Taylors was with the Reformers. They linked themselves up with the Barnsley Salem Wesleyan Reform Church where a tablet stands to their revered memory. Hudson Taylor referred to this connection when stating his own soul's case for missionary work in China in 1851: "With regard to denominational views," he wrote, "at first I joined the Wesleyan Methodists as my parents and friends were also members of that body. Not being able to reconcile the late proceedings with the doctrines and precepts of Holy Scripture, I withdrew, and am at present united to the branch Society . . . ."

Hudson Taylor, even then, was predestined for a mighty work transcending all denominationalism. With China heavily laid upon his heart, he set sail for the Celestial Empire with only three persons to bid him farewell. Out of that venture, with £10 in trust for Missions the China Inland Mission was born. "The greatest missionary since the Apostle Paul," Bishop Montgomery styled him. "We can be thankful for the one deep lesson taught to this generation by the China Inland Mission . . . The power of the pure flame of passionate belief . . . There is nothing like it in the world, and from it have come the great miracles of action in history." On the unveiling of the Memorial Tablet in the Salem Church, Dr. F. Howard Taylor - Hudson Taylor's gifted son - feelingly said: "May the Lord keep us all as full of the love of God and of determination to serve Him faithfully, as were those early Reformers among whom my dear father and grandfather came out





Rev. W. CLOUGH  
First Foreign Missionary Secretary  
Appointed 1894.



Mrs. F. SKERRITT  
(nee Florrie Carter)



Mrs. MABEL HANSON  
(nee Mabel Smith)

two-thirds of a century ago." Again, through that consecrated man of God the Union must needs yield up of its best for the widening range of missionary enterprise.

And still, spiritual toll must be taken within the bounds of Wesleyan Reform. In 1873, a lad was born in Addingham on the fringe of the Ilkley moors. Early he became allied to our Mount Hermon Church and Sunday School, where his first deep spiritual impressions were received. Here again the lad was destined for a wider sphere and a greater work. As a young man he was accepted as a student in Hackney College, London, becoming pastor of the Crookes Congregational Church in 1901. In 1908 he was accepted by the London Missionary Society for work in Madagascar. The story of the Rev. W. Kendall Gale's exploits in Madagascar is one of the great thrilling epics of missionary enterprise. Strange were his adventures among a people notorious for savagery. He discovered the Marafotsy tribe which ruled over 45,000 square miles. Multitudes were won for Christ and by Gale's untiring zeal; with the aid of his loved wife, he was enabled by the grace of God to establish over 200 churches in Madagascar. "Truly there is that scattereth yet increaseth."

How challenged we are as Reformers by the hallowed memory of the spirits of the just made perfect! What celebration of a Centenary could suffice, save as it led every member of the Union to consecration such as moved an old negro to kneel upon the spot where William Booth was converted, to cry from the depths of his stirred heart: "Do it again, Lord! Do it again! And begin with me." Oh, that such might be our plea at the Throne of Grace! Who shall say that history cannot repeat itself?

One day in the tiny village of Stoney Middleton, in Derbyshire, in the year 1879, a little girl of four was sent to the Sunday School connected with the Established Church, but as they had a rule that no child should be admitted under the age of five she was sent home again. The young mother was annoyed and sent the child to the Wesleyan Reform Sunday School, then later, the family came. This little girl was called Florence Carter. At sixteen years of age she was soundly converted during a mission

conducted by Mr. C. Coopland, of Sheffield, and after a period of unhappy domestic service and work in a cotton mill and a boot factory, she answered the call to devote her whole life to the service of God. The door opened when she was accepted as a student at Doric Lodge, London, a college founded for women only by Dr. and Mrs. Gratton Guinness. From the time of her conversion her greatest desire was to become a missionary. As a student her success surprised her friends and as a nurse the hard work required to gain a diploma of the London Obstetrical Society made for her a warm place in many a mother's heart in East London. She offered herself for work on the Congo under the auspices of the Regions Beyond Missionary Union and at the Conference of 1904 at Foleshill, Coventry, she was accepted as the first Overseas Missionary to be sent from the Wesleyan Reform Union. On August 26th, 1904, she set sail for the Congo and on the 22nd of June in the following year she was married to the Rev. J. F. Skerritt of the Congo Balolo Mission, Ikau. Her life was suddenly cut short for she succumbed to an attack of fever at the early age of 30. We know that the testimony of her grief-stricken husband was abundantly true : "she was a choice spirit."

The memory of Mrs. Skerritt and her work in the Congo was not allowed to die. Twenty years after another consecrated soul heard the call to give her life to missionary work, and in 1930 Miss Mabel Smith, a member of Bodmin Street Church, Attercliffe, left home and friends and joined that noble band of workers on the Congo. Serving under the Regions Beyond Missionary Union, which missionary society has been supported by our Union many years, she has given twenty five years of her life to missionary work overseas. Her devotion to Christ has been the mainspring of that service, and we rejoice with her and her husband, the Rev. Leonard Hanson, that health and strength have been given them to carry on the work of the Bible School at Mompona with conspicuous success. In the Centenary year we sent our prayerful greetings that God's blessing might be with them abundantly and with their three children.

The year 1930 was indeed an "Overseas Missionary" year. It was in this year that the Rev. A. G. Mappin was accepted for work overseas and proceeded to Manchester College for training, being accepted by the London Missionary Society three years later. On being ordained in 1934, he was appointed to Madagascar and, in 1935, along with Miss Nellie Mason (his fiancée) better known as Sister Gertrude, who for six years was on the Home Missions Staff of the Union, proceeded to that far distant land. They were married soon after their entry upon the work, but within the space of two years they were compelled to return to England owing to the breakdown of Mrs. Mappin's health.

The Conference of 1933, held at Grimesthorpe, Sheffield, listened to a stirring account of faith and venture. The Overseas Missions Report told how Mr. and Mrs. H. Booth (nee Mary Joplin), both members of Gower Street Church, Sheffield, had offered themselves for work in West Africa. After long and successful training in college they proceeded to Angola, where their work prospered, new churches being built and Sunday schools erected in a number of places, many turning to the Christian faith as a result of their preaching. But in 1936, they were compelled to return home by reason of Mrs. Booth's ill-health. Angola had left its mark upon her weakened constitution and after a prolonged illness, during which she suffered greatly, she entered into rest leaving behind a testimony that will ever be an inspiration to those who desire to serve the Lord and to be found doing His will whatever it may cost.

In 1934, after training at the Bible College, Swansea, the Rev. Arthur Downing, of Nuneaton, responded to the call and left England for Tibet. Those who took part in his ordination service at the Rushden Conference remember his enthusiasm and since, assisted by his wife, together they laboured to spread the Gospel in Kashmir, taking the news of the Saviour to men and women in many unevangelised areas in that corner of the world.

The tiny chapel at Bethany in the Liskeard circuit has been instrumental in exercising an influence far beyond the bounds of

the small hamlet in which it is situated. Trained in the Sunday school during the 128 years since the cause was first established have been those who have gone out into the wide world as ambassadors for Christ. It seems a long way from Bethany to Nagpur, India, but in 1928, the Rev. Reggie Courts, who was converted in the tiny chapel at Bethany, under the ministry of the Rev. Norman S. Lobb—Centenary President—has made that link a reality, and he and his wife have done noble service in India.

The Overseas Mission report for the year 1947 gave the welcome news that Mr. Richard A. T. Wakefield, who had been at Moody Bible Institute for special training, had been accepted for service by the South American Indian Missionary Society. A member of the High Street Church, Rushden, he, too, felt the call for service overseas and sought to equip himself for the task to which he felt called. In this vast region in South America where he has laboured, the need of the Gospel of redeeming love in Christ is great, but he and his wife, whom he married in America, have shared the task. Our prayers and gifts will be offered on their behalf that they may be used by Christ to widen the bounds of His Kingdom across the seas.

The story of "The Widening Range" could not be told except for the incalculable service rendered at home. Our Overseas Committee has been composed of people with wide vision and generous hearts ever since its inception. But the inspiration for this magnificent record of service has come mainly from those who have filled the position of Secretary during the past fifty-five years.

G.A.M.



Rev. J. S. SMITH  
Past Overseas Secretary  
President, 1929.



Mr. P. JOHNSON  
Present Overseas Secretary  
President, 1946



Mr. A. BROWN  
Overseas Treasurer  
President, 1941

## Chapter VII

### ***Overseas Missions***

One of the first acts of the inaugural Conference of the Wesleyan Reform Union was to set up a Foreign Missions Committee and in implementation of this a movement was soon started to send a man to work amongst the rapidly increasing immigrants in Australia. After this early enthusiasm however there came a period of inactivity which lasted over thirty years.

We, of the Wesleyan Reform Union, find that the success of a new movement depends very largely upon the vision and energy of one person. This certainly proved the case in the resuscitation of the missionary effort.

While still only a lad, William Clough of Muff Field Church, Bradford, felt the call to follow Hudson Taylor to China. To this end he prepared himself for the Christian Ministry. His disappointment was deep indeed when he found his health would not permit him to undertake the work. Once again a man was to prove that what seemed misfortune could be used of God for His own all-wise purpose. Whatever William Clough might have accomplished in personal service in China was definitely exceeded by what he actually accomplished in the cause of missions. Unable to go abroad, he entered the ministry and served a life-long pastorate in Stairfoot, Barnsley. Here, at the home of Hudson Taylor, his interest in the China Inland Mission was established. At the Barnsley Conference, 1894, he was appointed Secretary to the Foreign Missions Committee. How dead the missionary spirit was at that time is shown by the fact that he was unable to give any financial report until 1896 and even then only the meagre sum of £15 was shown. Persistently Mr. Clough pursued his efforts, becoming a missionary advocate wherever he went.

The year 1904 brought his greatest reward. From the Stoney Middleton Church in Derbyshire, Miss Florrie Carter came forward for service abroad. Under the auspices of the Regions Beyond Missionary Union she was sent to Baringa on the Congo.

Now amongst our people the appeal for missions took on a different aspect. No longer were they called to support the principle of missions in the abstract; but were actually contributing to the support of a person they knew and whose work they realised. So all unpremeditatedly the form of the Wesleyan Reform missionary effort was determined.

At first, because of the strong personal interest of the Secretary, the whole of the money raised was sent to the C.I.M. Now contributions came in for the R.B.M.U. in support of Miss Florrie Carter. Hence it is in the Wesleyan Reform Union we have no mission stations of our own. We feel that what help we can give is spent to better purpose in the support of existing missions than in an endeavour to establish and maintain stations of our own.

The untimely death of Florrie Carter (by this time Mrs. Skerritt) brought an early close to her labours; but she too had accomplished a greater purpose. The story of her death deeply stirred the churches and bore fruit in other lives being dedicated to this splendid service. Miss Mabel Smith (now Mrs. L. Hanson) from the Attercliffe Church, Sheffield, volunteered for work on the Congo and in 1930 went out. Rev. and Mrs. L. Hanson are still at Mompona and are doing great work there.

The year following Mr. and Mrs. H. Booth of Sheffield went out to take up work in the Angola Mission in Portuguese West Africa.

Mr. Arthur Downing of the Nuneaton Church, Warwickshire, was the next of our young people to respond to the call of missions. After training he linked up with the World Evangelistic Crusade and in 1934, went to Tibet to be joined by the one who became faithful companion, both doing good work amongst pilgrims passing into and out of the country. The story of their medical work amongst the men of opposing forces is a thrilling one. These earnest servants of God won high praise and admiration amongst the leaders of those forces. After 20



years of devoted service they are now in the home field. Ministering in the Clydebank Church, Scotland.

In the same year Rev. and Mrs. A. G. Mappin went to Madagascar under the London Missionary Society. Unfortunately Mrs. Mappin's health broke down and they were compelled to return home after only two years.

Four years later Reginald T. Courts of our little Bethany Church in Cornwall went to India with Rev. F. A. Simon to be his assistant in the Nagpur Mission in the Central Provinces. During the war Mr. and Mrs. Courts did a good work amongst our own men stationed in that part of India. The story of their absolute self sacrifice and devotion always stirs our hearts. Home for a brief furlough they shortly return to India where the work is sponsored by the American section of the Assemblies of God. We wish them God-speed.

Later, the Rev. and Mrs. Wakefield took up work amongst the Indians of South America.

So our interest and support have broadened and the very small beginnings have grown to considerable dimensions. Our Overseas Committee today sends contributions to London Missionary Society; C.I.M., R.M.B.U., Nagpur Mission, Angola Mission, Mission for Lepers, World Evangelistic Crusade, South American Indian Mission and the Evangelistic Union of South America. To complete this helpful service we contribute as generously as possible to the British and Foreign Bible Society.

We owe our beginning to Rev. W. Clough. God in His wisdom has given us men of like spirit to continue the work. Rev. S. J. Smith for over a quarter of a century maintained and developed the work. Mr. P. Johnson followed him and continues to serve. He has brought the power of a strong personality and a devoted life to this great cause. He has been successful not only in bringing our Missionary contributions to a record figure; but by his tireless correspondence and persistent efforts he has established a missionary fellowship that has become a great Spiritual asset.

N. S. Lobb.



Mr. J. W. TOFT



Mr. A. BAILEY



Rev. JAMES MORRIS  
Wesleyan Reform Connexional  
Evangelist.



Mr. T. R. GREEN  
(For many years Chairman of the  
H.M. Committee)  
President in 1904, 1930.

### ***Home Missions***

For half a century John Wesley, according to one of his letters, had but . . . "one point in view - to promote so far as I am able, vital, practical religion, and by the grace of God to beget, preserve, and increase the life of God in the souls of men." That ideal was not lost sight of by his followers, who more than fifty years after his death were constrained to find a new spiritual home, and though designating themselves "Wesleyan Reformers" still felt they were members of the great Methodist family.

The story we are now relating is one which has much of pain and sorrow associated with its early beginnings, but 'aye the dews of sorrow were lusted by His Love' as soon manifestations that Divine blessing rested upon the new movement were witnessed in remarkable outpourings of the Holy Spirit, issuing in revival in the churches and conversions on a large scale. The Wesleys' conversion hymn: "Where shall my wandering soul begin," was made experimental in the lives of large numbers who felt they were 'brands plucked from the burning', but who had the assurance that they were freely forgiven and had become new creatures in Christ, "who loved them and gave Himself" for them.

The efforts of the early 'Reformers' to unite their scattered forces were accompanied by revival in many parts of the country and the churches grew both in spiritual power and numerical strength. Not only in their chapels and preaching places, but in the open-air and in 'cottage meetings' there were those "who were being added to the church daily." The flame of missionary zeal so characteristic of early Methodism was seen as the 'torch-bearers' went out into the world to preach and reveal the 'Light of Life.' Of them it could be said, "One loving heart sets another on fire."

For purposes of policy Home and Overseas Missions were for some time combined, though the latter was not so largely

supported at first. It was home evangelism which found priority. Early records show a revival breaking out on Christmas Day at Mexborough, somewhere in the 'sixties,' and at High Wycombe following a mission by the Rev. J. Devine "there was a demand for more missionary boxes." The great revival at Ilteringham in 1860 is annually commemorated by 'Birthday' services so profound and widespread was the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in that tiny Norfolk cause. As early as 1865 some £270 was subscribed for mission work. It was in 1859, however, that mention was made of support given to the London Missionary Society, and the Committee were urged "to send a missionary to Australia" so that along with Home missionary activity the Foreign field was not overlooked. Home and Colonial Missions were established in 1860 and functioned jointly for some years. At the Delegate meeting of 1862 many churches reported that their membership had doubled. The active co-operation of young people in raising the necessary money was encouraged and the method of juvenile collecting by means of Christmas cards was early introduced. As a centre of missionary enterprise, Sheffield exerted much influence and contacts were made with Rotherham, Doncaster and Bakewell in consequence.

Typical of the experience of many was the one at St. Just where a young man was heard to say, "Friends, I can't keep still any longer! I must tell you what the Lord has done for me." It was reported from that church in 1866 that "in consequence of declensions and emigration and scarcely any soul-saving our numbers have diminished from 121 to about 40." "But is it possible that some good is again to be done?" was the enquiry of an old leader on the top of an eminence (Carn Bosarvern) which commanded a view not only of the town but of the chapel. Then some good was done for congregations rose to between 250 to 300 on Sunday evenings. Like a romance reads the story of how Cannon (Liskeard) came to be formed through the passionate evangelistic enterprise of the Tamblyn family. Revival services were increasingly supported at Aldermans Green, Foleshill (Coventry) and Sheffield (Weston Street), Mr J. W. Toft, being

then one of the appointed missionaries. As the result of Mr. Atkinson's labours Moira reported its society nearly doubled in 1867. In the same year the Bradford District Meeting reported 30 chapels, 7 ministers, 2383 members, 27 schools and 4998 scholars. Missions continued, the Sleaford and Cawston circuits reporting in 1868 that good times were being experienced in the rural areas. A year later two new names appear as missionaries, viz, Mr. W. Bailey and Mr. Lewis, the former labouring at Hunningley Lane, Jump and Hoyle Mill, the latter going to the Liskeard circuit. The Delegate Meeting for that year (1869) reviewed the whole missionary position and in order to further the missionary policy of the Union asked the General Committee to consider the desirability of a connexional ministry.

Encouraging reports were given in 1876, Muff Field, Bradford reporting 100 conversions in a month. So mightily grew the work that at Ibstock they were encouraged to build a new church, whilst at Worsbro Dale, where it was said 'the people have no relish for spiritual things' there were many converts under Mr. Nuttall, the missionary. In 1880 membership figures were increased with the coming of the Denby Dale circuit into the Union, and also by ingatherings of men and women in a number of churches, Swanton Abbott (Cawston) particularly, receiving much blessing under the ministry of Mr. Sibcy. It was in 1882 that Gower Street, Sheffield, had one of its most gracious times, the forerunner, doubtless, of a series of missionary ventures which has made that church a great supporter of the missionary cause both at home and overseas. Three years later, in 1885, Muff Field, Bradford reported 200 conversions as the result of special services.

As the Union neared its Jubilee celebrations opportunity was taken to stress the missionary aspect of connexional life: though contributions in support of home evangelism continued to increase, aggressive work was urged as a need of the times. Much concern had been expressed in "Christian Words" regarding what was felt to be a decline in religion" as in three years 1889-1892

there was reported a leakage of 1,000 members. The Rev. W. Bailey, who still continued to serve the Home mission cause was ably assisted at this time by Mr. W. Archer.

It was in the year 1900 that a Simultaneous Mission was proposed and undertaken by the Free Churches, ministers and laymen alike, taking their share in the campaign. What effect that had on the nation's life it may be difficult to state here, but the new social conscience which was beginning to express itself doubtless received its inspiration from this upsurge in the religious experience of the nation.

Under the chairmanship of Mr. T. R. Green, the Home Missionary Committee developed its policy and with the help of able evangelists like the Rev. G. A. Metcalfe and Sister Hope the evangelistic emphasis was felt. The latter saw the opportunity of uniting the womanhood of the connexion and set in motion the Women's Auxiliary movement which has been missionary in its emphasis from the beginning, giving practical support year by year. Consistently for some years now the W.A. has contributed from its funds annually the sum of £100 for Home Missions and £21 for work Overseas. With the development of the South Yorkshire Coalfield it was felt that a new challenge was offered for evangelistic work in the Doncaster area, where we were represented only by the Doncaster, St. James's Church. Under the auspices of the Home Missionary Committee the Rev. W. J. Mackness laid the foundation of a spiritual enterprise which resulted in several causes being established in that area. Askern cause had a memorable beginning. Hearing that several Nottinghamshire Reformers had come to this area, the Evangelist — Bro. Metcalfe — went armed with a class-book. The first man he met was a Bro. Terry, of whom the Evangelist — like Oliver Twist — asked for more. As a result a round dozen were found. It was in the little front room of Bro. and Sister Percy Johnson, a class that night was started and the cause formed, to be further developed by the Rev. Frank Dracup, D.D., now in America, who laboured at Askern

consolidating that cause as well as pioneering in other directions. There are churches now at Askern, Warmsworth, and also within the last few years at Cusworth, where a new church has been built, the opening of which in 1947 was a great achievement. So remarkable has been the success here that already the church is inadequate to accommodate the scholars who attend from the rapidly growing new housing area.

Among those who have served on the Home Mission staff we may mention the following. Mr. W. Marsden, Rev. James Morris, and latterly Mr. C. S. Harrison and Mr. J. Saint, a member of our Old Hill church who laboured with much acceptance over a period of years. Following the first world war, Sister Jean came upon the Home Mission staff and together with Sister Gertrude (Miss Nellie Mason) much valuable work was done, the Women's Auxiliary supporting the Committee by additional financial help. We remember, too, Sister Grace, and Sister Annie among others who worked among the churches of the Union. Our present deaconess—Sister Cottrell—has won her way into the hearts of our people by her gifts of organisation and consecrated evangelism.

Since the death of Mr. T. R. Green the Home Missionary Committee has been fortunate in having as its chairman, first, Mr. C. E. Wright, of Stanton-in-the-Peak, who held office for 5 years, only then relinquishing the position under the rule which now limits the period a chairman may hold office. He was succeeded by Mr. E. Grant, of Chapeltown, who brought to the position fine gifts of leadership combined with enthusiasm and vision. His was a great service cut short by sudden "home-call". Bro. Metcalfe succeeded him as Chairman.

The target for the Centenary year was £1,000 in support of Home Missions. Towards this amount the Chapeltown church, which has for many years held the record in the highest individual church offerings, raised over £100.

The missionary movement has been sustained by consecrated men and women and boys and girls. What has been achieved is remarkable and it is not possible fully to assess its value in the larger work of the Kingdom of God. Countless trophies of grace have been won on the hearthstones of England as well as in the open-air and in our churches, as our evangelists have gone upon their appointed tasks. We have this assurance, based upon much evidence and testimony, that consecrated personnel and sacrificial gifts have been instrumental in winning souls for Christ, whilst His Church has been immeasurably strengthened in her task by the contribution which devoted, humble, often nameless, folk have made through the years. To God be the Glory !

Harking back to our beginnings, how challenged we are by the example of our pioneer Evangelists—Thomas Whitehouse, a soul on fire ; John Toft, Derbyshire wood-cutter ; William Bailey, saint and soul-winner ; James Morris, our Peter Mackenzie ; James Marsden, and Thomas Croft. How little they received ; how much they accomplished. What trophies they won and at what a cost ! How far we might go, if from them we would catch "the inspiration of the heroic" and blaze a like trail for Christ and the Church.



Chapter IX

***Women's Auxiliary.***



Sister HOPE  
(Founder of the Women's Auxiliary)

The Women's Auxiliary of our Union has had a useful and honourable place along the years. From small beginnings it has grown into an organisation of vital importance, and has given clear evidence that the churches without the many services of our women would be very much poorer.

Our Lord in His ministry had many women disciples who ministered to Him as He went from place to place. They placed at His disposal much of their wealth, and devotedly used their talents great or small in His service. So in various ways women helped Jesus sacrificially to carry on His redeeming Mission.

Thank God for the women who today are following in their train - helpers of Jesus Christ. That is the meaning of our name, Women's Auxiliary - a helping Society, and in the Church of Christ, what an honour !

It was my privilege to count as a personal friend the founder of our Movement, and in later years to succeed her in the Presidential Chair and to share in her work; to be entertained in her home and to hear from her own lips the story of the W.A. She was then Mrs Fletcher. She entered our Union as a Deaconess on the Home Mission staff. She was a consecrated woman zealous for the work of the Kingdom - a holy woman, yet bright and cheery withal. As Sister Hope she won the hearts of many of the women of our churches, and many more outside as she made her house-to-house visits. But she ministered in hard days when wages were small, and smart clothes few among poor people. Those were the days of "Sunday clothes"—days of struggle and hardship. Many women were tied to home by family responsibilities and many others who desired to attend church, alas, were not sufficiently well-dressed to attend on the Sabbath Day.

Sister Hope experienced much heartache and a sense of frustration, but being a woman of great faith and prayer, she wrestled hard until light came. "Yes," she thought, "that's it, meetings for women during the week when Sunday clothes don't matter so much.

Then began a battle. There was opposition to her idea from many sides. Meetings for women only! Why? What did St. Paul say about women in the churches? But after a long struggle she succeeded in winning the approval of the Rev. Edmund Bromage, then General Secretary. The scheme was then launched, and in the year 1911 the W.A. was officially recognised by Conference.

The Sisterhood Movement was already in being and active in many parts of the country and many of the women of our churches must have joined in it, for the Resolution presented to our 1911 Conference was worded as follows; "That seeing the W.A. for the Home and Foreign Missions is now an integral part of the Union the Conference calls upon the Sisterhoods of our Union to form societies and become affiliated with the Auxiliary." This was moved by Sister Edwards of Rotherham, seconded by Sister Hope, and accepted unanimously. Sister Hope was elected to be the first Secretary and Mrs. E. Jaques the first President.

The first report records a contribution of £2/15/0d. to Home Missions and a contribution of £2/5/0d. to Overseas Missions. The Membership the first year was 250. Eleven churches and three circuits appointed secretaries. In 1913 the W.A. doubled its contributions to £5 each to Home and Overseas Missions. The following year the total was increased to £15. So the W.A. progressed and in 1924 it gave £100 to support Sister Jean as Connexional Deaconess, also £30 for missionary work.

In the year 1910 Mrs. S. Bastow was appointed Treasurer. Miss Payne served faithfully as assistant Secretary, as also did Mrs. Dorothy Young later. Mrs. A. Wortley became secretary in the year 1920.

During the period of 20 years from 1911 the W.A. contributed nearly £100 for missionary work, and its contributions of £100 to Home Missions and £30 to Overseas Missions have been an annual gift for many years up to the present time.

The Coming of Age Celebrations took place in Sheffield in 1931 with crowded meetings, and warm tribute was paid to the pioneers of our Movement. W.A. representatives from churches and circuits far and near shared the thrill of these meetings, and returned to their respective churches on fire with enthusiasm for the organisation.

The Silver Jubilee was celebrated at Youlgreave in the Bakewell Circuit in 1935. Special greetings and thanks were expressed in Conference and conveyed to the Women's Annual Gathering. These greetings have been continued throughout the years and have become one of the brightest features of our Rally.

Then followed many successful years and though most of the pioneers have gone to their reward, the good work continues.

Mrs. S. Bastow retired from the treasurership after 25 years service and was succeeded by Mrs. E. Hanby. In 1937 Mrs. A. Wortley resigned the position of Secretary which she held for 17 years and Mrs. E. E. Bromage was appointed. Mrs. D. Young holds the office at the present time.

The progress of the W.A. has been indeed a proud achievement and its service and value to the Union cannot be measured.

So much for the past, what about the present day? Is not the organisation still far from what it might be if our women were fully consecrated to God, and out-and-out in their service for His Kingdom?

Our future and the success and glory of it is dependent on that spirit of self-sacrifice. The women of our Union can still do more in supporting and promoting Missions, Home and Overseas, temperance and social righteousness, a love of the Sabbath, child welfare and Christian living. Then let us do it. The words of our first President in her New Year's Message can still serve for our inspiration:

"The Women's Auxiliary must organise for service,

We bind ourselves that others may be free,

We know the power of banded ill,

But feel that love is stronger still."

S. H. Burkitt.

## Chapter X

### ***Quest For Youth.***

Any Organisation or Society which has existed for 100 years has a right to have a feeling of pride and satisfaction. It may or may not in its retrospective view be satisfied with its achievements, but it would be a poor sort of return if there were not some redeeming features that justified its existence.

The Wesleyan Reform Union has certainly cause to thank Almighty God for the blessings bestowed upon us, and for all that has been accomplished in His name, and for the trophies won for the Kingdom of God. Never in the history of the world, has so much time, thought and attention been paid to young people as to-day. The State, the Municipality and the Church are now all alive to this important matter and rightly so.

The story of the English child through the ages makes sad reading. In early days the conditions under which children lived were such that it is no wonder that many of them did not survive. If, as frequently happened, a child was unwanted, its chances of survival were very slender indeed. We are told that in the Elizabethan period, two out of every five children of well-to-do parents died in infancy, and that infant mortality amongst the poor was appreciably higher, and the treatment of the child was shocking until Lord Shaftesbury agitated for the abolition of child slavery. From that time onward the child has gradually come into its own, until today, it looms prominently before all organisations and societies who are anxious for its welfare, and the all absorbing question now, is : What can we do to give it its rightful place and guide it into channels which will help in the formation of character ? Herein lies the great opportunity.

A retrospective view of the work of our Union amongst the young people during the century cannot help but bring a feeling of pride to all who have had the joy of being associated with it. We are not altogether satisfied with our achievements, more might have been done. I think it is true to say that our



Ald. L. F. MILNER, O.B.E., J.P.  
(Sheffield)  
(Treasurer, when the Young People's  
Department was formed).  
President, 1933.



Rev. E. E. BROMAGE  
(Aylsham)  
(For many years Secretary, Y.P.D.)  
President, 1938



Rev. A. HALLADAY  
(Y.P. Chairman)  
President, 1952

greatest work has been accomplished since 1908. We had a larger vision at the Hucknall Conference in this particular, realising that we must gather all our forces together, and so in response to the request of Shipley Conference of 1907, a Young People's Department was formed. How well I remember that Conference at Hucknall in 1908. We debated the request of Shipley (still fresh in my memory) the outcome being that a Young People's Department Committee was formed with a view to consolidating the whole of the work amongst our young folk. I had the honour as one of the youngest members of that Conference of being put on the Committee and appointed its first Treasurer. It has been a great joy to retain my membership throughout the years. I have watched with great pride its achievements, though not satisfied by any means, yet we rejoice that throughout the Union a great work has been done in the formation of Christian Endeavour Societies and other young people's activities, all of which have been a great force in bringing young people into direct touch with Jesus Christ. Conventions have been held and to-day the enthusiasm and activities of our young people are greater than ever—yes, a more vital force than at any period of our history. "Westhaven", Swanwick, and Eastwood Grange are inspiring chapters in which Youth shines brightly.

What of the future? Well, we look forward with joyous anticipation, realising as we do that the Church must be ready and prepared to meet the future in the brave hope and confidence that the faith of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the course of true religion must find an even greater place in our National life, and this is particularly pressing in relation to the youth of our land. The Wesleyan Reform Union has been blessed with men of gifts and graces who have given of their best to the young generation of Wesleyan Reformers. They were indeed Fathers in Israel and their example, steadfast devotion and loyalty to the cause of Christ will long be an inspiration to those who have succeeded them. Yes, the workmen pass on, but the work goes forward, and so we thank God for all the blessings of the past.



YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONFERENCE AT "WESTHAVEN", SCARBRO, 1949.



The clarion call comes to our young people to-day, and in responding, there will be a great glamour as you respond. God the great Master Builder of the Universe and of all beautiful and eternal things, is waiting to build a new world, a new England, but He waits for our enterprise and consecrated toil. Our young people must be in the vanguard. We look forward hopefully in the certain hope that the best is yet to be. We, as a Union have a great work to do, and surrounded as we are by consecrated men and women, we shall accomplish great things for Christ and His Church . . . The Young People's Department is becoming more and more a dynamic asset to this end and we rejoice and praise God.

L. F. Milner.

## Chapter XI

### ***Temperance and Social Service League.***

The beginning activities of the Wesleyan Reform Union on behalf of temperance and social righteousness are hidden in a dim past, but as far back as 1865 Conference meeting in Manchester presented a Petition to Parliament in favour of closing public houses on the Sunday.

Again the 1882, Conference in session at High Wycombe, Bucks., reviewed the position of the churches and the country in regard to temperance, and expressed its determination to press forward with a vigorous policy. As part of its propaganda Bands of Hope already in existence were to be encouraged and others started.

Throughout the whole of our history the denomination has shown itself possessed of a strong social conscience and has been deeply concerned about sobriety and kindred subjects. In 1885, again at High Wycombe, Parliament was petitioned, this time on the Criminal Amendment Bill dealing with the seduction of girls.

In 1888, at the Conference held in Bakewell, Derbyshire, it was decided to form a Wesleyan Reform Union Temperance

League. Temperance Societies and Bands of Hope were to be started or revived throughout the Union, and it was agreed to set apart a special day as Temperance Sunday. In the same year representatives were appointed to take part in a conference in London which was being held for the purpose of opposing the appropriation of public money by denominational schools for educational purposes, and for the promotion of education of an unsectarian nature on a national basis.

When the Conference met in Shipley, Yorkshire, in 1891, the national situation was thoroughly reviewed and concern was expressed regarding the increase of gambling, various grievances of nonconformists, and the traffic in opium. These all engaged the serious attention of members present, and resulted in pronouncements by a series of resolutions.

In 1899 satisfaction was expressed with the new Marriage Act which gave Free Churchmen the right to appoint Authorised Persons to act in place of the Registrar at weddings held within their churches.



Rev. W. S. GOODWIN  
(Bradford)  
Past Secretary-President, 1939)



Rev. W. KENDRICK  
(Past Secretary)

The Temperance and Social Service League since its beginning, though often meagrely supplied with funds, has worked consistently and usefully within the Union, advocating temperance and social righteousness. Succeeding secretaries have been the Rev. W. S. Goodwin, Mr. J. P. Squire, the Rev. William T. Burkitt, and the Rev. Wilfred Kendrick. The present secretary is the Rev. C. Mackinder.

At Conference after Conference resolutions on a variety of subjects have been agreed to and sent to the relevant authorities, and year by year literature has been sent out to the churches for use by preachers and leaders on Temperance Sunday.

Intemperance has a fearful record of crime and misery-making. Through intemperance Noah transgressed decency and disgraced himself. Lot degraded himself. It caused Nabal to act the fool, and it put Elah at the mercy of his murderous enemies. Benhadad and Belshazzar both lost their kingdoms as a result of it, and Ahazuerus lost his sense of decency when in drunken masterfulness he commanded Queen Vashti to appear before himself and his lords in the hall of revelry. The drunken orgies of Babylon, Egypt, and Nineveh, Greece and Rome, with their attendant immoralities are set down in history for all to read.

In our own country, as well as in many others, intemperance has been an evil practice of deluded people and a dreadful scourge of human society. There is abundant and irrefutable evidence of the damaging and destroying power of intemperance in our police courts, prisons, asylums, wrecked homes, broken lives, newspapers, etc.

Strong drink injures the body, fuddles the mind, and ruins the soul, and one stands amazed at the indifference of successive Governments - especially in war time - to its baleful power. Whoever yields to intemperance, gambling, Sabbath breaking, impurity, swearing, etc. sells his birthright as Esau did. The T. & S.S. League seeks to fortify our people against such evils, and especially do we wish to guide our young people into the pleasant and safer ways of right living. The Drink Trade is the exploitation of human weakness and folly, and revenue therefrom is the sordid price of human degradation and misery.

The world is much absorbed in materialism and self-indulgence and seems to ignore moral teaching and guidance. This demands that the Christian Church while stressing always the spiritual remedy should at the same time try to understand and be seriously concerned with social and national questions - should work in practical ways to bring in the Kingdom of God. This Kingdom we pray for when we say in the universal prayer "Thy Kingdom Come." The Kingdom is God's Kingdom, and it can only be realised when God rules the affairs of men.

The T. & S.S. League is an organisation through which our Church can express its real and practical concern for both social righteousness and personal salvation. William T. Burkitt.

### Chapter XIII

#### ***Statutes and Songs.***

Was it Oliver Wendell Holmes who once declared that "we are tattooed from the cradle with the birthmarks of our race?" Such might be said concerning the Wesleyan Reformers. Whatever differences exist in polity - and therein lies the genesis of the expulsion of our fathers - doctrinally we are branded through and through with the birth-marks of our Wesleyan Methodist heritage. We still cling - not without reverence and thanksgiving - to the names of the great founder, John Wesley, holding that, "it was mainly his own sanctified genius that made Methodism what it first became. Taught by wisdom from above, he was a chosen vessel for the Master's use." We are essentially one in the foundations of the faith once delivered to the saints. We preach the same doctrines. The same statutes inspired our songs in the house of our pilgrimage.

We sprang from the same "nest of singing birds," and hold with Dr. Wiseman in his tribute to Charles Wesley, that "to him it was granted by means of his extraordinary lyrical genius to express the adoration, lead the devotion, inform the mind, enlarge the understanding, quicken the imagination, purify the affection, guide the aspiration, build up the faith, enrich the experience, voice the call, inspire the testimony, provoke the zeal, unify the spirit of Methodists, not only of his own time, but of future generations."

We own ourselves to be in the same great succession, singing his hymns, voicing his devout thoughts, "speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in our hearts to the Lord."

In our hymn book we have one great common link with all Methodism. From the beginning, the Reformers clung to the song book of their fathers. When occasion did arise to seriously contemplate a production of our own, through the kindly counsel and generous overtures of the Rev. Charles H. Kelly and leaders in Wesleyan Methodism, the idea was willingly abandoned in favour of collaboration. Our Union shared in the preparation of the 1904 edition, the able services of the Rev. Edmund Bromage being much valued.

Again, in the production of the present great hymn book of Methodism, our Union was represented throughout by the Rev. E. Bromage, and his secretarial successor, Rev. G. A. Metcalfe, who also served in the pre-war stages of preparation in connection with the coming new Methodist Sunday School Hymnal, this collaboration being worthily continued in the work of completion by the late General Secretary (Dr. W. H. Jones). In all this endeavour - an association which we shall ever dearly prize - it can only be truly said that our relationship with the Mother Church has been, and still is, most harmonious.

Some of the greatest epics of history would never have been recorded but for the mighty harmonies of grace. Who can conceive of the German Reformation apart from Luther's hymns, or contemplate the 18th century Revival apart from the hymns of Wesley and Watts - any more than that one can never conceive of the birth of our Lord apart from the **Gloria in Excelsis** of the angels, **The Beatitude** of Elizabeth, **The Magnificat** of Mary and the **Nunc Dimitis** of Simeon? If songs still have power to inspire faith, kindle fresh zeal, hearten tired endeavour, enthuse new ventures and adventures in the realm of grace to win the Kingdoms of this world for our God and His Christ, then "let all the world in every corner sing" and may we as Reformers heartily and with renewed consecration, "take up the strain and send the echo back again."

G.A.M.

***A Crowning Day.***



CHURCH HOUSE

Until the year 1880 the Headquarters of the Union were at Exeter Hall, London. There were advantages in administering the affairs of the Union from the Metropolis, but the fact that there ceased to be any church owing allegiance to the Wesleyan Reformers in London proved to be a serious disadvantage. When the tenure of Exeter Hall ended in 1880 it was deemed advisable to move the Headquarters from the south, where the nearest churches to London were those of the High Wycombe circuit, to a more centralised position in the north. This decision, however, was not taken without due consideration. At this time Sheffield was deemed the most

suitable place, but apparently as it was not possible to find premises which could be made to serve the purpose Doncaster was chosen and for some years the Headquarters were in 8, Priory Place, in that town. This continued until 1893 when, it was necessary to effect a change.

Sheffield was again recommended as being the most central. Temporary premises were secured in 21, Change Alley, Sheffield, and later in 1900 the Headquarters were located at 25, Change Alley, the Bookroom being in Surrey Street and also in Cemetery Road for some time. A long-felt need for premises distinctly our own and befitting the denomination, and which would also incorporate the Bookroom was realised when the present building in West Bar was secured in 1938. Considerable alteration, renovation and re-equipment was necessary and it was largely due to the General Secretary, Dr. G. A. Metcalfe, that the adjustments were carried through expeditiously and satisfactorily, his perseverance and unremitting attention being rewarded by the knowledge that there was now a "Church House" with facilities for business transactions, in the form of a Bookroom such as did not apply in Change Alley, with accommodation for Committees to meet, the Board Room being of adequate dimensions to seat comfortably the full General Committee.

The official opening on Saturday, December 10th, 1938, was attended by a large company representative of Sheffield and adjacent circuits, and as far away as Oldbury, Old Hill and Lye and Wycombe districts. The President, the Rev. E. E. Bromage, opened the proceedings with fitting words calling upon the architect, Mr. Flockton, to hand the key to Mr. William Brookes, J.P. - connexional honorary secretary - who opened the door of the Church House. Immediately, the crowded audience more than filled the building and in the Board Room the President presided over an impressive dedicatory service, the Honorary Secretary making the dedicatory pronouncement. Proceeding to Watery Street Church a further service was again conducted by the President, the official sermon being preached by Mr. J. H. Freeborough, J.P., on the text, "Moses built an altar and called

it Jehorah-Nissi" (Exod. xvii, 15). The evening rally was most inspiring. Mr. W. J. Lewis (Mexborough) presided, the Rev. E. Dennis deputising later. Greetings were brought from the Sheffield Free Church Council, the General Secretary reading cordial messages of greeting from many parts of the Union. On the Tuesday prior to the opening the General Committee held its first meeting in the new Board Room, members thus being able to share in some measure the opening of the Church House, the hope being expressed that this venture would mean for all concerned the consecration of a new line of advance throughout the Union.

W. H. Jones.

#### Chapter XIV

### ***Toward Methodist Unity.***

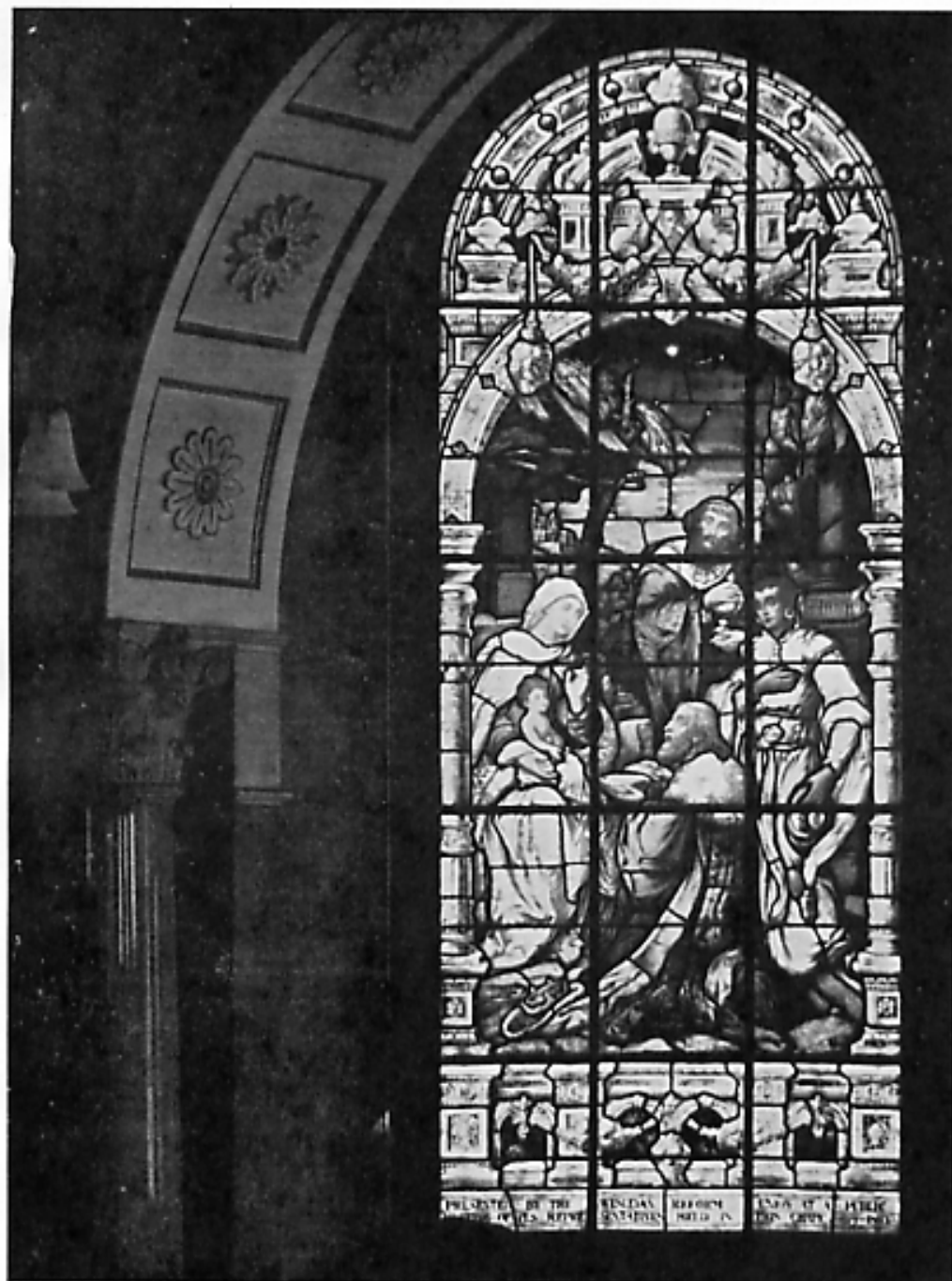
After the death of the Rev. John Wesley, the necessity for some change in Conference methods was soon felt and expressed. One need not recount the matters which drew the attention of many members of the Wesleyan Church at that time, and, later, the formation of groups which did not give full allegiance to the Conference of ministers.

The first-half of the 19th Century was a time of resurgence in many parts of the world, and not least in Great Britain. The times were ripe for advance, and the Wesleyan Methodist Church could not be unmoved amid the industrial, the political and the educational demands surging around.

The term "Reform" meant much in the 1840's, for there was need of change of form and of removal of faults and abuses. Many persons with passionate sincerity entered into the attempt to change old time methods. A steady and moderate advance might have been the way to unity and peace, but the general trend was not conciliatory.

Within the Wesleyan Church there were men of culture who were honoured for their gifts and moderation; there were also others who strongly desired things to remain as before.





# WINDOW IN WESLEY'S CHAPEL, LONDON

This window was placed in Wesley's Chapel, London by the Wesleyan Reform Union, 1898.

Difficulties accumulated and passions rose both within and without the Church, until the climax came in 1849, when the Wesleyan Reform Union came into existence.

It would be easy to say, "If we had been there we would have acted differently." Perhaps; but I think we most likely would have done the same. I met one or two of the old Reformers in my younger days and I remember them with affection. It was a hard time for them and their families. We are in danger of failing to appreciate their difficulties and position at that time and of enjoying too cheaply the advantages they won. These facts should be kept in mind by any who would write on Methodist Unity. I can assuredly state that there has been a closer co-operation with all branches of the Methodist Church during this 20th Century. Even in 1898, the placing of a stained glass window in Wesley's Chapel, City Road, London, by the Wesleyan Reform Union, was more than placing a flower on a grave. It was the expression of a loving and living remembrance of a great religious leader in the service of Christ, and a mark of the high place which John Wesley still holds in the affections of our people.

In 1907 was seen the consummation of agreement between the Methodist New Connexion, the Bible Christians and United Methodist Free Church, and the coming into being of the United Methodist Church.

The Wesleyan Reform Union was at that time invited to join that larger Union, and I personally think there were not a few who hoped it would do so, but for the most part the conditions which were acceptable to the other three denominations were less acceptable to us, and the two-thirds majority was not forthcoming at our 1904 Conference.

Again in 1933, it was recognised that the Wesleyan Reform Union was unlikely to be called to consider the question of Colleges, while some other matters pertaining to the ministry and the proposed new Methodist Constitution were mainly decided before our Union could discuss their application or reasonably understand their implications.

In so saying I am stating my own impressions of these events, and I for one felt that a clearer and better understanding of the whole case for Methodist Union, coupled with a little more patience, might have helped to a decision. Our people desired unity but required to have a share in the framing of the Constitution, with probably some changes to meet our special case.

But that does not mean that our working unity with the Methodist Church was impaired. We have a record of close co-operation in practically all essential church and public matters. There have been pleasant and profitable times at many of our Conferences with the Methodist Church preachers and speakers, and we rejoice in all the fellowship in Christ which we have together.

I must not forget the great assistance in worship which we share in the New Methodist Hymn Book.

Since 1904 we have had the joy of singing the same hymns in all our churches - this treasure of praise, this gift of harmony to lift our hearts to God. Whatever be the method of church organization, the deep things of the Spirit reach us in prayer and praise.

Can it be that, in the wisdom and patience of God, there is a greater task before "the people called Methodists;" that ere this century ends new visions will be given and new victories won—that we of the Wesleyan Reform Union may be called to share the greater tasks?

A. Wortley.

***One Hundred Years.***

SHEFFIELD 1949! It is impossible within the limits of a brief chapter to unfold all that is enshrined in that phrase. The Centenary Conference assembled in the Grimesthorpe Church from July 2nd to July 7th was memorable beyond any full expression. Delegates gathered from all parts of the Union, jubilant and expectant, welcome being accorded by the President of the Sheffield Circuit, our worthy Treasurer, Mr. E. G. Nagle. The Lord Bishop of Sheffield (Dr. Hunter) was amongst those bringing greetings which were acknowledged by the Retiring President (Mr. E. Grant). Fitting, at a later stage, was the historical Union Pageant, "But the End is not yet," finely conceived by Miss E. E. Burkitt and ably presented by the Sheffield Circuit Young People's Department in the Montgomery Hall.

Centenary Sunday was a great day crowned by a great Youth Rally over which Mr. A. Fisher presided. Monday was an outstanding occasion throughout. The Retiring President was timely in his message on "Let us not be weary in well-doing", the Centenary President (Rev. N. S. Lobb) sounding a clarion call with "Ebenezer". A crowded Women's Auxiliary Rally in the afternoon at our Bodmin Street Church, Attercliffe, was presided over by Mrs. A. Halladay, with Mrs. J. E. Watkinson, J.P., as speaker. A Civic Reception was also held in the Town Hall, delegates being welcomed by the Lord Mayor (Alderman Mrs. Tebbutt, J.P.). Conference Sermon in the evening, in Carver Street Methodist Church, was preached by Dr. H. Watkin-Jones, M.A.

An Ordination Service was held on the Tuesday morning, the Rev. E. E. Bromage delivering the charge. One of the ordinands (Rev. C. E. Finnemore) became President at the 1954 Conference. The President of the Methodist Conference (Rev. E. Benson Perkins, M.A.) was evening speaker. Wednesday's Missionary Rally was addressed by Shoran S. Singha and the Rev. William Wallace. Fittingly, Thursday, July 7th, was crowned by a Praise and Thanksgiving Service. The conductor was Mr. R. W.

Walkington, the organist being Mr. Reginald Porter-Brown (B.B.C.). A combined Circuit Choir provided an inspirational climax of song.

Many greetings were received during Conference. From the Rev. Frank Dracup, D.D., an old scholar and evangelist who twice became a Methodist President in the United States, came this word of cheer :—

Greetings and congratulations to you, the officers and members of the Wesleyan Reform Union. Sincere felicitations, in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Looking back over the years of historic usefulness in service, in the cause of Christ and His Church, one can see the mighty hand of God, guiding your course through periods of hardship, blessing your every effort and endeavour, and we can turn in gratitude to God, offering His grateful praise, saying "Great is Thy faithfulness, O God our Father, There is no shadow of turning with Thee."

May I personally acknowledge a debt and obligation I shall never be able to repay, for the training and experience in Church administration, etc. during my years with the Wibsey Church, Circuit and Conference gatherings, not to mention the spiritual awakening, and the world wide vision of the Gospel outreach.

Our heartfelt wish and fervent prayer is that your Church and ministry will continue to rise to the occasion, to meet the challenge of this epochal-atomic age. Our Christ is able, Ye are able in and through HIM.

**The Free Church Federal Council.**

It is a privilege to be asked as a representative of the Free Church Federal Council to send greetings to you, Fathers and Brethren of the Wesleyan Reform Union, assembled together on the occasion of your centenary celebrations.

I first became acquainted with your denomination in 1914 when, as a theological student, at Glossop I visited a home where I met one of the officials of your Church. He was an old man full of fire and enthusiasm, and he told me a good deal about your history. Later in Northampton, I was interested in your Church in Artizan Road and began my friendship with the Rev. E. E. Bromage which has continued in the fellowship of Christian Endeavour ever since. Then in 1931, I met your esteemed ex-secretary, Dr. Metcalfe, at the Methodist Ecumenical Conference at Atlanta, Georgia, U.S.A. From him I learned still more of your Union and its contribution to our Free Church life and witness. Later, I addressed the Youth Rally at your Conference when it met at Wombwell in Yorkshire. I first met your present honoured secretary, Dr. W. H. Jones, in Christian Endeavour circles in Bradford years ago, and on coming into office as General Secretary of the Free Church Federal Council, I renewed and deepened my friendship with him.

From all these sources I have learned with real appreciation a great deal about your history and witness. Naturally, too, I value highly your unswerving support as a denomination of the Free Church Federal Council. You are not a large community, but none excels you in loyalty to those great truths and spiritual insights to which the Free Churches were raised up by God successively to bear special witness.

Most sincerely I congratulate you on attaining your centenary. May your celebrations be crowned with Pentecostal experience. May you be enabled to face the future with confidence and become increasingly certain of the Divine guidance and blessing.

Henry T. Wigley.

#### **The Presbyterian Church.**

On the occasion of the Centenary of the origin of the Wesleyan Reform Union, I extend to you cordial greetings from the Presbyterian Church of England.

We rejoice in your emphasis as a Union of Churches upon principles that are very dear to the hearts of Presbyterians - the "crown rights of the Lord Jesus" and "the priesthood of all believers." Only by adherence to such principles can a Church be truly Christian and democratic.

In acknowledging as our supreme standard of faith and duty the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments we are at one with you in recognising therein a clear and challenging ideal for the times in which we live.

We believe that in the near future are strenuous but rewarding days for Churches that are faithful to their Lord, and eager to follow the leading of His Spirit. We rejoice with you in the signs of quickened spiritual interest in your congregations, and especially amongst your young people, and pray that manifest tokens of God's favour may rest upon all your Churches in the years ahead.

Herbert Stephenson, Moderator.

#### **The Baptist Church.**

As President of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland I send you hearty congratulations and greetings on the Centenary of the Wesleyan Reform Union.

The hundred years of your witness have been the most wonderful in human history. Since the first century we in this island have played a great part in the impact of Christian influence throughout the world. The Evangelical Free Churches have done their Master's work with zeal and have contributed men, ideas, movements and a passion for the souls of men to the universal Christian effort. The nineteenth century was "the great century of advance." Now as you together with us face the enormous opportunities and obstacles of this twentieth century, now nearly half-way run, we have to make a contribution for the expansion of our Lord's influence ever more self-sacrificing and devoted.

The world on the political plane is rapidly being carved up into areas where the whole Christian Gospel can be freely witnessed and others where the Christian enterprise is fettered, watched with suspicious eyes, and where our fellow Christians lie in peril of persecution, imprisonment and even death.

These events call us all to a more wholehearted commitment to the service of the one Lord and Saviour of mankind, to a continuance in New Testament doctrine, in fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in prayer and in a vigorous Spirit-filled witness to the power of the Gospel. All Christians must help each other as never before. May the blessing of God continue to rest on the labours of the Wesleyan Reform Union.

Ernest Brown, President.

#### **The Methodist Church.**

Speaking for the Methodist Church of Great Britain, I have the greatest pleasure in expressing greetings and good wishes to the Wesleyan Reform Union in connection with the celebration of the Centenary.

These are days when within the growing Ecumenical Movement we are bound to recognise the distinctive part which is played by those Churches throughout the world which owe their origin to the glowing evangelism of John and Charles Wesley in the eighteenth century.

I cannot forbear saying that it is a matter of some regret to us that the union of the Methodist Church in Great Britain is not entirely complete, but that regret does not diminish the warmth of our greeting nor the sincerity of our hopes and prayers for the blessing of God upon all the Churches grouped together in the Wesleyan Reform Union.

I trust that the Centenary gatherings, in which I am privileged to take some part, will be full of inspiration and guidance for the future.

E. Benson Perkins.



### ***Consecration***

Throughout this brief and all too inadequate story of our denomination during the century of its witness, one note has been dominant—it is that of thanksgiving. Thanksgiving to God for the special mercies He has bestowed upon us, for the men and women who have so devotedly striven to witness to principles considered to be dear as life itself. Many unselfishly gave their time and generously offered their substance in the erection of chapels in which to worship. We remember those who walked miles in order to preach the Gospel of God's redeeming grace in Jesus Christ, often to a mere handful of people, never seeking reward except the knowledge that they were serving the Lord Christ. Thanksgiving for a noble band of Sunday school teachers, for leaders and members who have maintained a consistent witness with such determination that today our heritage is a glorious one.

It is indeed a wonderful story—"to God be the glory, great things He hath done." Who can assess the value of this service and witness? The pioneers and builders, undaunted in the face of persecution and confident that ultimately their faith would be vindicated handed on to their successors the torch of spiritual freedom. These in turn have kept the flame alight, and after one hundred years it burns brightly. Changes have taken place. Even within the Methodist family there have been re-unions, and it may be questioned whether there is any justification for our remaining apart. We welcome this "growing together spirit" which has enabled us to co-operate in many ways with the larger body of Methodism with whom we have so much in common. It will now be for the coming generation to prove whether there are sufficient reasons for continuing a separate existence.

At the moment, following this recital of our history, there is a fresh call to consecration. But it must be made abundantly clear to what we are called. Is it to perpetuate a denomination merely, or is it to a more aggressive evangelism?

If there is born afresh the conviction that we have a place among the other Free Churches in the country with a distinctive message and witness which can only be given as our principles and constitution permit, then a personal consecration to Christ will give a new orientation to our place and purpose in Christendom. It has been freely stated that the denomination was born in revival. The emphasis in the coming days must still be on evangelism. What the Holy Spirit has done in the way of convincing men of the love of God and the truth of Jesus He can still do.

This consecration will lead us to an acceptance of change as inevitable. Whilst maintaining our principles our future policy may require modification. One of the inestimable benefits of the Class meeting, so characteristic of the early days, was that men and women were nurtured in the faith. Its equivalent must be found today for we are convinced that pastoral oversight is a supreme need and will be in the future. One of the re-adjustments required to be faced in the new century will be that of providing a wider ministry, fully equipped and given a greater measure of security to ensure that this phase of our work is adequately covered. Great as has been the devoted service of our teachers in the Sunday School and their consecration to this task exemplary, a fuller consecration will be required in the future in the way of special preparation and the use of modern equipment coupled with dedication to the call of Christ.

Gifted preachers have been found among our ranks in the days now past, but all who have felt the call to this special vocation of proclaiming the Word of God have enhanced their message according to the measure of their dedication. This will be no less true in the coming century. Ours is not only the task of conducting a service, but to proclaim "the unsearchable riches of Christ," so convinced ourselves of its necessity that we shall bring conviction to our hearers. A marked feature of the membership of our denomination through the past century has been a remarkable devotion and loyalty to the Church of their choice. That loyalty has supplied initiative and drive and has been the well-spring of whatever influence the local church has exerted. The new day

will call for a similar loyalty, but one that will transcend the local church and be given to the "Union" of churches. Instead of the stress on independency the times call for a loyalty which will embrace the connexion as a whole. Our membership of a church carries with it an obligation to serve the interests of the whole, and a fellowship of believers pledged to this high purpose will secure to the connexion the kind of authority which is consistent with the liberty implicit in our connexional faith : "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren."

To this consecration of heart and mind to the privilege and purpose of our high calling in Christ Jesus we call you. To those of us who now ascribe allegiance to the Church of Christ bearing this particular designation the call is given afresh :

Lord, in the strength of grace,  
With a glad heart and free,  
Myself, my residue of days,  
I consecrate to Thee.

Thy ransomed servant, I  
Restore to Thee Thy own ;  
And, from this moment, live or die  
To serve my God alone.

W.H.V.

## ***Some Past Presidents***



President 1881, 1888, 1903  
*H. W. Marden*



Rev. THOMAS BROMAGE  
President 1886, 1891



Mr J. H. FREEBOROUGH, J.P.  
President 1900, 1910, 1911



Rev. T. G. HARPER  
President, 1905

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## Deeps at Personalities

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# FORMER SECRETARIES OF THE UNION.



Rev. E. BROMAGE  
1910-1923 (also President 1902, 1925)



Rev. George A. METCALFE, D.D.  
1923-1943 (also President 1932)



Mr. Wm. BROOKES, J.P.  
Hon. Secretary of the Union for 25 years.  
President, 1898, 1907, 1924



Rev. W. H. JONES, D.D.  
1943-1954 (also President 1942)

GUARDIANS OF FINANCE.



Mr. JOHN CLARK  
Many years Treasurer of the Union



S. BASTOW



Mr. EDGAR BUTTERFIELD  
Treasurer



Mr. EDWIN G. NAGLE  
Present Union Treasurer

MINISTER'S PROVIDENT SOCIETY



Mr. A. E. FULLELOVE  
Past Treasurer



Mr. J. BATES  
Past Treasurer



Mr. E GRANT  
Past Treasurer  
President, 1948



Rev. A. WORTLEY  
Secretary for 31 years  
President, 1927, 1950





Rev. G. E. STONE  
President 1908, 1923, 1934



Rev. W. C. SMITH  
President 1913



Rev. E. DENNIS  
President 1915, 1943, 1944



Mr. W. H. VAUGHAN  
President, 1926



Rev. NORMAN S. LOBB  
President 1936 and  
Centenary Year, 1949



Mr. C. FOWLER  
President 1937



Rev. Wm. T. BURKITT, D.D.  
(Connexional Tutor)  
President 1940, 1947



Sir THOMAS TOMLINSON, B.E.M., J.P.  
(Knighted 1954)  
President, 1945

COUNC. T. O. ROBERTS  
President, 1951



Mr. R. FURNESS  
President, 1953

## Confession of Faith.

"One is your Master, even Christ ; and all ye are brethren."  
Matt. xxiii 8.

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### WE BELIEVE IN

The Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man.

The Lordship of Christ over all things.

The Priesthood of all true Believers in our Lord in Faith and Holiness.

The Equality of spiritual opportunity and the sacred rights of all.

### WE BELIEVE

That Christ is the supreme Head of the Church, and that His Word is the only sufficient rule both of its faith and practice.

That we, being members one of another, are one body in Christ Jesus created unto good works for the glory of God.

That the rules and regulations shall be such as are in accordance with the mind and spirit of Christ as revealed in the Scriptures and that have received the full concurrence of the Church itself.

That the admission of Members into the Church, the exercise of all discipline over them, and their exclusion from the Church, are the responsibility vested solely in the Church, to be exercised by the authority of the Church.

That it is the duty of all Members to be present at all meetings of the Church for the transaction of its general business.

That the election of all office-bearers, together with the call and selection of ministers, is a duty and privilege of the Church in meeting assembled.

That while the maintenance of the connexional principle is essential to our witness in the universal Church, it is agreed that each Church should enjoy the fullest possible liberty, and be responsible for decision affecting its internal affairs.

That restriction upon discussion on vital matters affecting the interests of the Church is an interference with its liberties and with the rights of private judgment.

The OBJECTS of the WESLEYAN REFORM CHURCH are to extend Christian love and increase fraternal intercourse among the Christians comprising the Connexion and to promote unity of action in whatever may best serve the cause of Christ.

## ***Constitution***

- I.—In conformity with the Declaration of Principles, and for such objects as are herein before defined, the WESLEYAN REFORM CHURCH shall comprise such circuits and Churches as have expressed a desire to accept its principles of Faith and Order and to conform to its system of government, such having been received by vote of Conference, to appear upon the official list of Churches and to enjoy the rights and privileges of the Connexion from time to time.
- II.—There shall be an Annual Conference, composed of such representatives as shall have been appointed by their several Circuits or isolated Churches, such comprising the legislative Assembly with full voting power after the calling of Conference Roll. . . . Any special addition or co-option must be in accordance with the will and pleasure of the Assembly so constituted
- III.—The Conference shall hold its sessions early each July, at such time and place as shall have been determined by majority vote at the previous Assembly, save as authority is granted by Conference to its appointed Executive to carry out its will in the event of special circumstances.
- IV.—The following shall be the scale of representation to Conference by Circuits or isolated Churches choosing to appoint :  
Under 100 members, 1 representative; 100 to 200, 2 representatives; 200 to 300, 3 representatives; 300 to 500, 4 representatives; over 500, 6 representatives.
- V.—For the carrying out of the business affecting the Connexion between Conference and Conference, a General Committee shall be elected by ballot at the Annual Assembly. This shall consist of 25 members, or such number as may be agreed upon from time to time, including the President, ex-President, Treasurer, Secretaries, and such other appointments as Conference may direct.
- VI.—The appointment of all Connexional Officers shall rest with Conference.

VII.—The President, as appointed by Conference, shall preside at all meetings of the General Committee whenever possible. Should the President be absent, the meeting shall have power to elect a Chairman. Should the President arrive at any stage of the proceedings, he shall have right of office if he so desires. The President shall have full control of meetings over which he presides, and shall give impartial guidance to business, having a casting vote should such be necessary to decision on matters before the Committee.

VIII.—The General Committee shall consist of President, ex-President, Treasurer, Secretary, Guardian Representatives (which shall not exceed four, with the proviso that the present members shall be retained), Secretary of the Young People's Department, Home Missions Department, Secretary—Overseas Missions, Secretary—Temperance and Social Service League, President and one other of the Women's Auxiliary, and twenty elected members.

Any person shall be deemed eligible for nomination by the Circuits or Isolated Churches with which he/she has been a member of the Union for 5 years. The scale of nomination by Circuits and Isolated Churches shall be:—Up to 200 members, 1 nomination; over 200 and up to 500, 2 nominations; over 500, 3 nominations

IX.—That each Circuit or isolated Church may be represented at the Half-Yearly Meetings of the General Committee on the following scale:—Up to 400 members, 1 delegate; over 400 members, 2 delegates. Such delegates to have full voting powers.

X.—For the purposes of the work of Connexional administration, including all expenditure consequent upon the maintenance of the denomination, there shall be such assessments as Conference may from time to time deem essential, and it shall be expected that such assessments shall be in every case loyally supported.

XI.—The travelling expenses of members attending the General Committee shall be met from the Union Expenses Fund, but any Circuit or Church failing in its full assessments shall be required to meet the expenditure on its own responsibility.

XII.—While full liberty to every Church and Circuit relative to its own internal affairs is acknowledged, it will be readily understood that some measure of Conference authority is essential for the carrying out of the wider connexional policies and programmes affecting all the Churches commensurate with the principles of liberty yet making for common unity and for the perfecting and advancement of the whole.

XIII.—It shall be the duty of each Circuit or separate Church to furnish a full and complete return of its Church and Sunday School membership, with such other particulars as shall be required by Conference at the appointed times. This is imperative if anything like a true record of connexional life is to be recorded.

XIV.—Meetings of the General Committee shall be held as far as practicable every two months, at the discretion of the Committee. There shall also be Half-Yearly Meetings covering a week-end period early in each February, invitations for such meetings to be considered at the Conference Assembly.

XV.—In addition to the General Committee as constituted, there shall be four Guardian Representatives or Connexional Trustees, who shall serve in all matters relating to Connexional properties and deeds, such representatives to be members of the General Committee ex-officio. Any vacancy to be filled by Conference appointment on the recommendation of the General Committee.



XVI.—Six months' notice must be given by members of Conference of any Resolution which in any way affects the Constitution of the Connexion. . . . No Resolution or Notice of Motion which in any way affects the Constitution shall be received from any Member of the Conference or General Committee unless such Resolution or Notice of Motion shall have first received the approval of the Circuit, or Church where there is no Circuit, or General Committee, and such individual must be a member in good standing at the time when such Notice of Motion shall be made.

XVII.—That on any and all questions affecting the Constitution, the decision shall be taken by ballot, and that a two thirds majority of the total number of votes recorded shall be necessary in order that such become operative.

XVIII.—Any question affecting the Constitution shall be referred to the Churches and Circuits for their decision and a report of such referendum be submitted to Conference before the final vote is taken.

That after any such decision has been taken, an interval of at least two years shall elapse before the particular question may be again raised.

## ***Church Membership***

- I.—All persons are welcomed into Church Membership who sincerely express their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour, and give evidence of such faith by their life and conduct.
- II.—As membership of the Church involves fellowship, it is the duty of all members to cultivate and maintain a regular and worshipful attendance at the prescribed means of grace, and to loyally and sacrificially support the Church in every possible way.
- III.—In addition to the attendance at worship on the Lord's Day, each Member shall manifest a consistent and regular allegiance to some other definite fellowship within the Church, according to the usages of the Church in the application of a particular membership test, i.e.—The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and such other definite weekly means of grace.
- IV.—Each Church should have a Young People's Membership Roll for the inclusion and spiritual development of young people up to the age of 16 years who sincerely express and manifest a desire to accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour.
- V.—It is essential that in every Church such means shall be established as shall directly provide for the religious instruction of young people, the object being to secure their decision for Christ, their instruction and training in Christian doctrine and their development in Christian experience and character with a view to Church Membership.
- VI.—Each Member should receive a quarterly ticket of Membership which should be given personally by the Minister, Leader, Church President, or such person as shall be set apart by the Church for the purpose.

- VII.—There shall be a probation of not less than three months on trial after any name has been submitted to the Leaders' Meeting (or Executive) and by them to the Church, those approved being received into full membership at the Church Meeting, and publicly recognised at the earliest opportunity; such recognition to be followed by the administration of the Lord's Supper.
- VIII.—Any member who, without sufficient reason, persistently absents himself (or herself) from the prescribed means of grace, shall be visited by the Minister, Leader, or such as shall be appointed, who shall report. Should such report be deemed unsatisfactory, the names of such, who by prolonged absence sever themselves from the Church, shall be removed from the Membership Roll, by the vote of Church Meeting and they shall cease to be Members.
- IX.—A Membership Register must be kept, with a full record of the names and addresses of all received in membership, with date of admission, a record being also made of transfers, removals, or cessations in membership.
- X.—In the case of Removals, every possible effort should be made to keep those removing to another area in fellowship with a Christian Church.
- XI.—Members from other Churches, bringing satisfactory credentials shall be received without probation.
- XII.—A Meeting of all Adult Members of the Church should be held quarterly, or oftener if necessary, for the transaction of the affairs of the Church, such as :—
- (a) The admission of new members;
  - (b) Receiving official reports concerning affairs and invitations connected with the Church;
  - (c) Determining what means of grace shall be held in connection with the Church, with times and order of same;

- (d) The consideration of any name suitable for recommendation as a suitable candidate for the preachers' plan ;
- (e) Acting as the final court in disputes among members. In no case should such dispute be brought into a Church Meeting until every possible step has been taken quietly and amicably to secure reconciliation as per the rule of Christ (See Matthew xviii, 15-17).
- (f) Dealing with all other matters affecting the welfare of the Church and the extension of the Redeemer's Kingdom.

XIII.—There should be an Annual Society Meeting at a time most convenient to the majority of the Church Members, for religious fellowship, closer co-operation as between departments, a review of the Church's progress during the year, and prayerful consideration of all aspects of Church life and service . . . At such meeting there should be :—

- (a) A brief report from all departments connected with the Church.
- (b) A conversation on the Work of God within the Church and Sunday School;
- (c) Careful consideration of future prospects and responsibilities;
- (d) Election of Officers for the ensuing year;
- (e) Consideration of Home and Overseas Missions and connexional matters.

XIV.—At the age of 18 a person should be entitled to the full privilege of membership.

XV.—Notice of all Church or Society Meetings should be published at each of the public services on the previous Lord's Day, or objection can be taken.

XVI.—Following are the duties of Leaders and Stewards, where such are appointed.

(a) LEADERS— To conduct, and exercise a spiritual interest in such classes as are committed to their care; to collect such monies as members are prepared to contribute for the support of the Church, and to be the first Court of Discipline for Members of their several classes.

(b) STEWARD—To be in attendance on the preacher at each public service, furnishing written announcements of coming services and events; to arrange hospitality for preachers as required, and to secure pulpit supply in emergency cases; to make suitable arrangements in preparation for the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper; to serve otherwise, as the Church may suggest.

XVII.—The greatest care should be taken to avoid all worldly and questionable practices on Church premises, either for the raising of funds for the Church, or for the entertainment of the people. A Church is the House of God and a Sanctuary for fellowship and Communion in Christ. Any departure from the spiritual in either faith or practice can only result in a weakening of the Church's inner life and influence.

## ***Ministerial Statement***

I.—We believe in the doctrine of the Priesthood of all true Believers in Christ Jesus our Lord, and hold that no priesthood exists which belongs exclusively to any particular order or class of men. We believe also that in the exercise and development of the corporate life and worship of the Church, God has definitely called out some "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

II.—Christ's Ministers in the Church are stewards in the household of God, and shepherds of His flock. Some are called of God to this sole vocation, and thus have a leading and directing part in these great duties. They have no exclusive title to the preaching of the Gospel and the care of souls. The ministries are shared by others, to whom the Holy Spirit divides His gifts severally and as He wills.

III.—The office of the Christian Ministry depends upon the Call of God, who bestows the gifts of the Spirit, with the grace and the fruit which indicate those whom God has chosen. These are under strict obligation to give evidence of their calling by studying to shew themselves "approved unto God, workmen needing not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

IV.—All candidates for the Ministry must be recommended to the General Committee by the vote of not less than 75% of the Circuit or Church Meeting of which the candidate has been an active member in good standing for not less than three years, and an accredited preacher upon the plan at such time as the vote is taken. Such recommendation must shew that the candidate is a fit and proper person for the Ministry of the Word in the Churches of the Connexion, possessing both gifts and graces for the work.

NOTE. It is of the utmost importance that great care and discretion shall be observed by those who take this responsibility, and there should be no doubt in their minds that this procedure is in accordance with the Will of God. . . . The candidate himself

must know the compelling constraint of the Holy Ghost to preach the Gospel, and shall also give distinct evidence of ability and success in this work

VI.—A Committee shall be appointed annually by Conference for the examination of all candidates for the Ministry, such Committee to be composed of an equal number of Ministers and other brethren, and to report its proceedings to the General Committee.

The Examination Committee have the right to limit the number of candidates accepted in any one year, according to the needs of the Union.

VII.—Each candidate shall be expected to pass a preliminary examination, giving oral evidence of a general standard of knowledge of the Scriptures, and of Christian Theology. He shall preach a trial Sermon before members of the Examination Committee, and submit a Sermon in manuscript. He shall also be required to pass an examination in English, History and Grammar, elementary Church History (especially Methodist), English Literature, and any other subject the Examination Committee may deem advisable.

VIII.—There shall be a probationary period of training extending over three years, or two years where special collegiate and ministerial experience justifies such a course. . . . At the close of each year, candidates shall be examined upon such text books in Theology, History, English, Logic, Psychology, New Testament Greek, and other subjects agreed upon by the Examiners. . . . All candidates are expected to undergo a course of training and study at some suitable and qualified college agreed upon, or by private tuition through Wolsey Hall, Oxford, or some suitable institution. Towards the cost of such training, the Circuit or Church recommending, also the candidate himself, will be expected to make a contribution of one third each, the remaining third to be met from some Union fund. . . . Should a Minister leave the Connexion at the end of three years, he shall be required to refund 75% of the training costs entailed; at the end of 6 years, 50%; at the end of 9 years, 25% of such costs.

IX.—All candidates for the Ministry of the Connexion must become contributory members of the Ministers' Provident Society from the time of their acceptance as probationers.

X.—Candidates for the Ministry should be unmarried and not more than 30 years of age. Such candidates shall not marry during the period of probation. The Examination Committee shall consider any exceptional cases as presented, and report to the General Committee.

XI.—It is felt that a moving or "itinerant" ministry is more acceptable to our people and more Methodist in custom, five years being recommended, and the limit seven years, as the maximum term of service in any Church or Circuit, save and only where very special circumstances justify an extension of the period.

XII.—For the more effective working of the ministerial system, and to honour the obligation of providing employment for all Ministers upon the approved list of the Connexion, there shall be a Ministerial Executive Committee, consisting of four Ministers and four other brethren.—as far as possible providing area representation, together with the President of Conference and the General Secretary. Areas to comprise :—

NORTHERN : Sheffield, Barnsley, Bradford and Bingley, Clydebank, Denby Dale, Glossop, Doncaster, Rotherham and Mexbro,' Wansbeck and Wibsey Circuits.

SOUTHERN : Deddington, High Wycombe, Ivinghoe, Liskeard and St. Just Circuits.

EASTERN : Cawston and Sleaford Circuits and Norwich Church.

MIDLANDS : Alderman's Green, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Bake-well, Foleshill, Green's Norton, Northampton, Nottinghamshire, Nuneaton, Oldbury, Old Hill and Lye, and Wellingborough.



A Minister and a Layman from each of the four areas—nominees of the General Committee—shall be elected by Conference as from year to year, with the President of Conference as Chairman. The President shall exercise the right of a casting vote, should such be required to aid final decision in the Conference. Where the circumstances demand, the Committee shall have power to recommend a brother not already on the General Committee. The duties of the Committee are :—

- (a) To enter into arrangements with Circuits and Churches not usually employing Ministers to accept a Minister for such period as agreed upon.
- (b) All Circuits and Churches desiring a Minister or change of Minister, and all Ministers desiring a change of Circuit or Church shall (in confidence) consult the Committee appointed. The success and harmonious working of the scheme depends largely upon the loyalty of all concerned in supporting this method of interchange.
- (c) All serious matters of difference or complaint in the relations and work of Church and Minister shall be submitted to the Committee for advice and guidance, and the decisions of the same shall be accepted by both parties.
- (d) In the event of probation being completed by a brother who has successfully passed his examinations and has been accepted by Conference and placed upon the approved list of Ministers, and no Church or Circuit calls him to labour amongst them, the Ministerial Executive Committee shall deal with the case.

#### MINISTERIAL SECURITY

XIII.—In order to establish the principle of Ministerial Security a Sustentation Fund shall be created, with £150 transferred from the Northampton Fund as a nucleus, in addition to which the extra threepence per member received by increased Union Assessment shall be credited to the Fund. The Sustentation Fund shall guarantee to all Accredited Ministers without charge a minimum of £2/2/0 per week.

XIV.—Ministers themselves are expected to contribute £1/0/0 per annum to the Fund and, where possible, they are asked to avail themselves of the National Insurance Scheme in addition.

XV.—All fully-accredited Ministers shall be deemed eligible for the Sustentation allowance agreed upon, older Ministers being regarded as coming within the scope of the scheme in view of long service rendered.

XVI.—Special attention is called to Clause XII (section b) as being vital to the satisfactory and just working of the Sustentation Scheme. Before a Minister tenders notice of resignation to his Church he shall inform the Ministerial Executive Committee in writing of his reasons for desiring a change, also of prospects of employment. Unless a Minister complies with this rule he forfeits all right to benefits under the Sustentation Fund for a period of two years. The Circuit or Church, before giving notice to a Minister, shall also communicate to the Ministerial Executive in writing their reasons for contemplating such action.

XVII.—The Ministerial Executive must be satisfied :—  
(a) That there are adequate grounds for a termination of engagement by the Minister himself or the Circuit or Church concerned, and that no suitable employment can be found by the Ministerial Executive or by the Home Missionary Committee; (b) That the applicant's name appears on the full list of Ministers of the Union for the year ending March 31st, 1941, after which date a "retiring age" shall be fixed at 65 for the purpose of the Scheme.

XVIII.—The Ministerial Executive shall have power to deal with a Minister "out of charge" and if the circumstances justify use of his services in connection with a Church or Circuit, allocating from the Ministerial Sustentation Fund such sums as may be commensurate with the need, co-operating at the same time with the Home Missionary Committee.

XIX.—Payments for the Sustentation Fund shall be paid as early as possible after the close of each month, to be made by

cheque if convenient to the applicant. Printed receipt forms will be available, on which the beneficiaries will append any alteration in income from time to time.

XX.—The Ministerial Executive shall appoint a Vice-Chairman, who shall preside in the absence of the President of Conference, also the President, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer and General Secretary shall form a sub-committee to deal with applications.

XXI.—The full Ministerial Executive shall decide what Ministers shall be regarded as Ministers without Charge, all others to come under new constitutional requirements. The Committee might consent to leave of absence in view of no pastoral care taking all circumstances into consideration then, according to circumstances, a definite period may be agreed upon as deemed desirable.

XXII.—It is deemed advisable that there shall be close collaboration between the Ministerial, Examination and Home Missionary Committees.

XXIII.—It is most essential that the Circuits and Churches shall have complete confidence in the Ministerial Executive, which desires to act in a consultative and advisory capacity.

XXIV.—Churches and Circuits not employing the full-time services of a Minister are urged to consider the advantages of a short-term engagement.

## Conferences and Presidents

*Until the year 1864 the same persons did not—with one or two exceptions—preside over the sittings of the Conference.*

YEAR	WHERE HELD	PRESIDENTS
1850	London ... ..	Mr. R. S. Stanley. .. W. Gandy. .. W. H. Cozens-Hardy. .. G. Mallinson. .. G. W. Harrison. .. W. Martin. .. James Philips. .. G. H. Openshaw.
1850 August 16th—21st	London ... ..	.. G. W. Harrison. .. W. H. Cozens-Hardy. .. W. Gandy. .. I. Schofield.
1851	Newcastle-on-Tyne ... ..	.. W. Gandy. .. G. Mallinson. .. G. W. Harrison.
1852	Sheffield ... ..	.. R. S. Stanley. .. J. Chipchase. .. H. F. Lawes. .. A. Goold. .. J. Massingham. .. G. W. Harrison. .. C. Barber.
1853	Bradford ... ..	.. W. Gandy. .. A. Goold. .. J. Massingham. .. W. H. Cozens-Hardy. .. H. F. Lawes. .. I. Schofield. .. J. Cuthbertson.
1854	Birmingham ... ..	.. A. Goold. .. J. Chipchase. .. W. Gandy.
1855	Leeds ... ..	.. J. Chipchase. .. H. F. Lawes. .. J. Benson. .. J. Massingham. .. A. Goold. .. W. Gandy.
1856	Bristol ... ..	Rev. W. Griffiths. Mr. J. Chipchase. .. A. Goold. .. John Cutts.

YEAR	WHERE HELD	PRESIDENTS
1857	London ... ..	Mr. J. Benson. Rev. W. Griffiths.
1858	Sheffield ... ..	Mr. C. Carr.
1859		.. T. Chamberlain.
1860	Bradford ... ..	.. J. Andrew. Rev. W. Griffiths.
1861	Doncaster ... ..	Mr. J. Andrew.
1862	London ... ..	.. T. Chamberlain. .. E. Courtinall.
1863	Retford ... ..	.. E. Benson. .. T. Chamberlain.
1864	Grantham ... ..	.. T. Chamberlain.
1865	Manchester ... ..	.. E. Benson.
1866	Birmingham ... ..	.. E. Hibbert.
1867	Sheffield ... ..	.. S. Hereman.
1868	High Wycombe ... ..	.. John Neal.
1869	Bradford ... ..	.. T. Chamberlain.
1870	Grantham ... ..	Rev. J. Lord.
1871	Wibsey ... ..	Mr. T. H. Richard.
1872	Middlesborough ... ..	.. John Neal.
1873	Bakewell ... ..	.. S. Hereman.
1874	Masborough ... ..	.. W. Wilkinson.
1875	Sheffield ... ..	Rev. E. Barley.
1876	Bradford ... ..	Mr. S. H. Burrows.
1877	Birmingham ... ..	.. E. Dickinson.
1878	Northampton ... ..	Rev. R. Nichols.
1879	Grantham ... ..	Mr. M. Nash.
1880	Bradford ... ..	.. S. H. Burrows.
1881	Middlesborough ... ..	.. W. Marsden.
1882	High Wycombe ... ..	Rev. E. Barley.
1883	Sheffield ... ..	Mr. John Neal.
1884	Mexborough ... ..	.. J. Parker.
1885	High Wycombe ... ..	.. E. Benson.
1886	Wibsey ... ..	Rev. T. Bromage.
1887	Northampton ... ..	.. A. Holland.
1888	Bakewell ... ..	Mr. W. Marsden.
1889	Skelmanthorpe ... ..	.. George Carr.
1890	Wombwell ... ..	Rev. G. Green.
1891	Shipley ... ..	.. T. Bromage.
1892	High Wycombe ... ..	Mr. H. Turner.
1893	Sheffield ... ..	.. J. T. Law.
1894	Barnsley ... ..	.. T. Johnson.
1895	Wellingborough ... ..	.. J. T. Beale.
1896	Bradford ... ..	Mr. H. Heaton.
1897	Mexborough ... ..	.. W. Shirley.
1898	Clayton West ... ..	.. W. Brookes.
1899	Sheffield (Jubilee) ... ..	.. G. Carr.
1900	Bakewell ... ..	.. J. H. Freeborough.

YEAR	WHERE HELD	PRESIDENTS
1901	Wibsey ... ..	Rev. W. Clough.
1902	High Wycombe ... ..	.. E. Bromage.
1903	Rushden ... ..	Mr. W. Marsden.
1904	Foleshill ... ..	.. T. R. Green.
1905	Barnsley ... ..	Rev. T. G. Harper.
1906	Skelmanthorpe ... ..	Mr. T. Pears.
1907	Shipley ... ..	.. W. Brookes.
1908	Hucknall Torkard ... ..	Rev. G. E. Stone.
1909	Mexborough ... ..	.. W. Clough.
1910-11	Sheffield, Rushden ... ..	Mr. J. H. Freeborough.
1912	Bradford (Muff Field) ... ..	.. T. Barron.
1913	High Wycombe ... ..	Rev. W. C. Smith.
1914	Youlgrave ... ..	Mr. J. Jaques.
1915	Barnsley ... ..	Rev. E. Dennis.
1916-17	Hucknall, Sheffield ... ..	.. J. Clark.
1918-19	Bradford, Muff Field ... ..	.. S. Bastow.
1920-21	Wombwell, Mansfield ... ..	.. W. Robinson.
1922	Sheffield (Sharrow) ... ..	.. J. Abbott.
1923	Rushden (High St.) ... ..	Rev. G. E. Stone.
1924	Youlgrave ... ..	Mr. W. Brookes, J.P.
1925	Foleshill ... ..	Rev. E. Bromage.
1926	Barnsley ... ..	Mr. W. H. Vaughan.
1927	Skelmanthorpe ... ..	Rev. A. Wortley.
1928	Liskeard ... ..	Mr. G. Clamp.
1929	Norwich ... ..	Rev. S. J. Smith.
1930	Wibsey ... ..	Mr. T. R. Green.
1931	Hucknall ... ..	Coun. J. T. Waterhouse.
1932	Wombwell ... ..	Rev. G. A. Metcalfe, D.D.
1933	Grimesthorpe ... ..	Ald. L. F. Milner, O.B.E., J.P.
1934	Rushden (High St.) ... ..	Rev. G. E. Stone.
1935	Youlgrave ... ..	Mr. F. G. Nuttall.
1936	Liskeard ... ..	Rev. N. S. Lobb.
1937	Barnsley ... ..	Mr. C. Fowler.
1938	Coventry ... ..	Rev. E. E. Bromage.
1939	Mexborough ... ..	Rev. W. S. Goodwin.
1940	Hucknall ... ..	Rev. Wm. T. Burkitt P.L.C.Th.
1941	Sheffield ... ..	Mr. A. Brown.
1942	Wibsey Slacksides ... ..	Rev. W. H. Jones, D.D.
1943-44	Skelmanthorpe, Sheffield ... ..	Rev. E. Dennis.
1945	Wombwell ... ..	Ald. T. Tomlinson, J.P.
1946	Mansfield ... ..	Mr. P. Johnson.
1947	Rushden (High St.) ... ..	Rev. Wm. T. Burkitt, D.D.,
1948	Liskeard ... ..	Mr. E. Grant.
1949	Grimesthorpe, Sheffield ... ..	Rev. N. S. Lobb.
1950	Bradford (Muff Field) ... ..	Rev. A. Wortley.
1951	Barnsley (Salem) ... ..	Mr. T. O. Roberts.
1952	High Wycombe ... ..	Rev. A. Halladay.
1953	Bakewell ... ..	Mr. R. Furness.
1954	Wombwell ... ..	Rev. C. E. Finnemore.

## **Women's Auxiliary Presidents**

YEAR	PRESIDENT	CONFERENCE
1910 ...	Mrs. E. Jaques ... ..	Sheffield
1911-12	Mrs. N. Mackness ... ..	Rushden, Bradford
1913-14	Mrs. E. Jaques ... ..	High Wycombe, Youlgrave
1915-16-17	Mrs. F. Stone ... ..	Barnsley, Hucknall, Sheffield
1918-19	Mrs. G. Nicholson ... ..	Sheffield, Bradford
1920 ...	Mrs. S. A. Smith ... ..	Wombwell
1921 ...	Mrs. S. A. Smith ... ..	Mansfield
1922 ...	Mrs. E. Dalby ... ..	Sheffield
1923 ...	Mrs. E. Dalby ... ..	Rushden
1924 ...	Mrs. E. Bromage Smith ... ..	Youlgrave
1925 ...	Mrs. E. Bromage Smith ... ..	Foleshill
1926 ...	Mrs. L. E. Bandey ... ..	Barnsley
1927 ...	Mrs. L. E. Bandey ... ..	Skelmanthorpe
1928 ...	Mrs. G. Nicholson ... ..	Liskeard
1929 ...	Mrs. F. Stone ... ..	Norwich
1930 ...	Mrs. M. E. Hanby ... ..	Wibsey
1931 ...	Mrs. Fletcher ... ..	Hucknall
1932 ...	Mrs. W. T. Burkitt ... ..	Wombwell
1933 ...	Mrs. C. E. Wright ... ..	Grimesthorpe
1934 ...	Mrs. A. Wortley ... ..	Rushden
1935 ...	Mrs. E. Butterfield (Silver Jubilee) ... ..	Youlgrave
1936 ...	Mrs. E. E. Bromage ... ..	Liskeard
1937 ...	Mrs. M. Bradbury ... ..	Barnsley
1938 ...	Mrs. A. E. Metcalfe ... ..	Coventry
1939 ...	Mrs. O. Prince ... ..	Mexborough
1940 ...	Mrs. E. Dennis ... ..	Hucknall
1941 ...	Mrs. E. Dennis ... ..	Sheffield
1942 ...	Mrs. D. Young ... ..	Wibsey Slacksides
1943 ...	Mrs. D. Young ... ..	Skelmanthorpe
1944 ...	Mrs. D. Young ... ..	Sheffield
1945 ...	Mrs. A. Copley ... ..	Wombwell
1946 ...	Mrs. A. Copley ... ..	Mansfield
1947 ...	Mrs. D. Holmes ... ..	Rushden
1948 ...	Mrs. A. Halladay ... ..	Liskeard
1949 ...	Miss E. Abbott ... ..	Grimesthorpe, Sheffield
1950 ...	Mrs. W. H. Jones ... ..	Bradford (Muff Field)
1951 ...	Miss H. Thorpe ... ..	Barnsley
1952 ...	Mrs. C. Mackinder ... ..	High Wycombe
1953 ...	Miss P. Payne ... ..	Bakewell
1954 ...	Mrs. W. A. Brookes ... ..	Wombwell

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