News in Brief

This magazine has given publicity to the efforts in Canada to rebuild and preserve the Barbara Heck House. A letter from Mr. Stephen Puttenham, secretary-treasurer of the Barbara Heck Foundation, Box 668, Bananoque, Ontario, gives a progress report. Mr. Puttenham says he is one of three laymen interested in the project. Their plan has been to restore the Barbara Heck House in connection with a summer assembly ground for church people. They bought a 90-acre unused rough farm bordering the St. Lawrence River in the Thousand Islands. They organized the Landon Bay Vacation Center Limited to operate the campground. They had the first complete season in the summer of 1967 and the results indicated that the venture will be successful. They organized the Barbara Heck Foundation to receive gifts on which donors may receive income tax credit. Thus far not much money has been collected, but a foundation for the house has been blasted and they hope to begin restoring the house this year. It should be said that when the Barbara Heck House had to be moved from its original site, it was carefully dismantled. For this reason it can be restored without difficulty.

Dr. Maldwyn Edwards, noted British Methodist historian and lecturer, is scheduled to be at the Lake Junaluska Assembly July 9-14. He has been invited to the annual meeting of the Southeastern Jurisdictional Historical Association, July 9-11, and will give a series of lectures in connection with the Assembly Bible Conference, July 11-13. His final appearance on the Junaluska platform will be on Sunday, July 14, at the 11 o'clock service. This is a rare opportunity for American Methodists and it is hoped that a good number will take advantage of it. Dr. Edwards is President of the International Methodist Historical Society.

Mrs. Pearl S. Sweet, founder and for years archivist of the J.A.B. Fry Memorial Library at the University of the Pacific, was recently elected archivist emerita at the University by the Historical Society of the California-Nevada Conference. Mrs. Sweet is now living at Seal Beach, California.

A story which appeared in the Savannah Morning News early in January points up without intending to do so the importance of preserving and writing the history of a local church. Wesley Monumental Methodist Church in Savannah, Georgia, was trying to locate its cornerstone, which was laid on August 10, 1875, so
that it could be opened in connection with its centennial anniversary. The cornerstone was "inadvertently covered with stucco during a remodeling job," and numerous probings failed to locate it. Newspaper coverage of the 1875 ceremony was extensive and detailed—except for the precise location of the cornerstone. The cornerstone holds two boxes which contain precious coins of many nations, including a Roman piece dated A.D. 41, and a number of records, relics and other memorabilia. It is hoped that the cornerstone has by this time been located. Local church historians should keep a record of what happens when alterations are made in church buildings. The Association of Methodist Historical Societies now has a pamphlet on "How to Write and Publish the History of a Methodist Church." One copy will be sent free on request. In quantity the price is $1.00 per dozen.

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Plans are now being made for the annual meetings of the Jurisdictional Historical Associations. The following dates and places have been announced: Southeastern Jurisdictional Association, Lake Junaluska, North Carolina, July 9-11; Northeastern Jurisdictional Association, West Virginia Wesleyan College, Buckhannon, West Virginia, July 22-23; Western Jurisdictional Association, University of the Pacific, Stockton, California, May 15-16; North Central Jurisdictional Association, Wyandot Mission, Upper Sandusky, Ohio, July.

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The new directory of Conference Historical Society Officers has been prepared and a copy has been sent to the president of each annual conference historical society. Copies are available for interested persons by writing to the Association's office at Lake Junaluska, N. C.

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Two back numbers of METHODIST HISTORY which have long been out of print are now available in an offset reprint. These numbers are January 1963 and April 1964. The price is $2.00 per copy and orders should be sent to the Association of Methodist Historical Societies, Lake Junaluska, N. C. 28745.

Dr. Clary’s small work on the beginnings of the South Georgia Conference is primarily designed to illuminate the circumstances of the division of the old Georgia Conference into the North and South Georgia Conferences in 1866. Records in that immediate post-war period were not extensive and Dr. Clary has given an exhaustive account of those records. Unfortunately he was not able to locate any discussion of the reason for the division, except the general assumption that the old Georgia Conference was oversized. Conservative forces, characterized by Bishop George E. Pierce, offered some resistance to the change, but Bishop Pierce did not attend the conference of 1866.

Dr. Clary includes with his work an outline of a full history of the Methodist work in Georgia. It is to be hoped that he will have opportunity to complete this larger work and thus add another dimension to our understanding of the Methodist work in Georgia.

One of the more valuable features of the book is a bibliography of Georgia Methodist history which will guide students in making their own study of the field.

—J. Hamby Barton, Dean Southwestern College Winfield, Kansas


“Hardscrabble was the unsavory reputation of the Methodist Girls’ School in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia,” says missionary Mabel Marsh, who was appointed to be its Principal in 1910. Her book is much more than a record of the success of this school and its enviable place in a British colony’s outstanding school system. It is an episodic history beginning with her own hardships as a Kansas farm girl, her struggle for education from primary to college degrees, her adaptation to the complex society of a strange far country. And finally, after forty years, her citation M.B.E. from the British Government, an honor granted few Americans.

Although the twelve chapters with their novel titles may seem to be without progressive coherence, the reader soon finds himself fascinated by an array of interesting and informing facts. The book spans a half-century of beneficent colonialism—from rickshaw days to Rolls Royce. In chapter two, entitled “Shocks, Surprises and Settling In,” the author finds herself at once thrown into the complexities of British social life in the Federal Capital, teacher in a British School system, face to face with a confusion of nationalities with all their various languages, cultures and religions. With rare penetration and understanding she shows how these Malay, Chinese, Indian Eurasian and Sikh girls, studying together
in the English language, find through this means of communication a new sense of freedom, an awareness of the dignity of their womanhood. There is plenty of variety in the book, weddings, funerals, tragedies, comedies and wars.

_Hardscrabble_ is a bright, readable, truly informing missionary book for Methodists. While it is the experience of one American teacher in Malaysia, it is not alone the story of one small Girls' School—which has grown to more than 2,000 since Mabel Marsh left it in 1950. It is the story as well of most Methodist schools of Malaysia, both boys' and girls', which were subsidized by the British Government and number today 60,000 pupils. The book is a tribute to the Methodist men and women in the United States whose faith in education as a foundation for an intelligent Christian church and community, fostered and nurtured and developed these schools.

—Mrs. Edwin F. Lee
Claremont, California


_A Critique of the 1966 Geneva Conference on Church and Society_, but it is more. Indeed Geneva seems only a stereopticon through which views of Ramsey's "genuinely" ecumenical ethic may be seen, but as in a glass, darkly, for all that. Indeed, if Dr. Ramsey can find anyone to carry on the conversation he has offered, one would hope now for a real meeting of minds able to make something positive out of Professor Ramsey's probably appropriate demurrer.

Unfortunately, it seems, much of Ramsey's later work has consisted of giving a hard time to other workmen. Would it not now be time for some attempt at a collaboration in positive terms between Paul Lehmann, John Bennett, and Ramsey—at least?

But in candor the critics have hardly understood Professor Ramsey either—and this work deserves serious study and converse. I am not sure the early reviewers of Ramsey's latest waited for his last nine pages before closing down their reactions but they should have, for the gist of the matter is best said there in his article (previously published) on Dean Acheson's famed speech at Amherst. Dr. Ramsey's opposition is not to the Church, as such, having somewhat to say on Social Issues. He never was a reactionary vis-à-vis the Church as Social Witness. But Ramsey does have a prophet's burden against specificity, naïveté, and suppositiousness. That is to say, he really is opposed to premature precision, misplaced concreteness, arrogant ignorance of alternatives, the abomination of history, and presuppositions that rest in the air. He wants us to quit sounding like a bunch of preachers, and I take it he does not like closed agendas and pre-composed resolutions—nor does he like "theological" and "ethical" statements separately "arrived at."

Those who have rushed to upbraid Ramsey here are premature. Those who have embraced and rejoiced have largely done so for bad reasons. Ramsey is not a hung-over rejection of the Social dimensions of Gospel.
He is saying Church is *more* responsible, not less—and therefore responsible for transcending *specificity*, *naïveté*, and *suppositiousness* in its statements and recommendations.

I would like now to see a Ramsey interpretation of the National Council of Churches’ Study Conference on Church and Society, Detroit, October 22–26, 1967, especially in view of his expectations voiced on page 23. And, I have trouble with the special competency of the magistrate; it approaches too nearly to an *ordnung* ethic for me. Nor am I prepared to concede the *naïveté* of all churchmen, some of whom are amazingly competent in political offices. I do regard highly Ramsey’s evaluation of Roman Catholic, Social utterances in Council. I cannot go along with his Viet Nam material; I am convinced our presence there is impossible of any good. (Not since 1530 could the West fix this and our time has not come.) There are points where I do not like Dr. Ramsey’s arguments, but I know he does not intend a Billy Graham type of rescension to individual salvation (broadcast November 26), and I know he should and will be heard.

—Carlyle Marney
Interpreter’s House
Lake Junaluska, N. C.


A picture of heresy hunting and harassment in American church life between 1845 and 1906 is presented in this book. There are five “heretics” selected representing five denominations. The image of the heretic suggested by the editor is that the heretic is the heir of the faith. George H. Shriver of the Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, North Carolina, edited the book. He also contributed the chapter on Philip Schaff. The *Foreword* by H. Shelton Smith of Duke University speaks of the influence of the Darwinian theory of evolution and of the historical criticism of the scriptures as factors contributing to rifts within the churches during the period under review.

Philip Schaff, a young German scholar at Mercersburg Seminary of the German Reformed Church, found his book *The Principle of Protestantism* charged with irregular views of the scriptures, the sacraments, and of Christ himself. Schaff was completely exonerated of the charges at the Synod in York in 1845. Two later attempts to bring charges of heresy also failed. Schaff stayed at Mercersburg until 1865. In 1870 he became professor of theological encyclopaedia and Christian symbolism at Union Theological Seminary in New York. “If the heresy hunters of 1845–46 had been successful, the American church would have forfeited its most formidable prophet of the ecumenical age.” (p. 51.)

The other “heretics” included are Crawford Howell Toy, Southern Baptist; Charles Augustus Briggs, Presbyterian U.S.A.; Borden Parker Bowne, Methodist Episcopal; and Algernon Sidney Crapsey, Protestant Episcopal. Toy, a widely loved and respected biblical scholar, resigned his faculty position at the seminary in Louisville when his view of the inspiration of the Scriptures was held to be divergent from the view
current in the denomination. He later accepted a professorship in The Divinity School at Harvard.

Charles Augustus Briggs of Union Theological Seminary, New York, was the center of a controversy regarding inspiration of the Scriptures, which resulted in his being suspended from the ministry of the Presbyterian Church and the severance of the seminary from the General Assembly in 1893. He later entered the priesthood of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

Borden Parker Bowne, Boston University, was indicted by a fellow minister and tried upon the authority of the New York East Conference of The Methodist Episcopal Church. The charge was “disseminating doctrines contrary to the Articles of Religion and our standards of doctrine.” None of the charges against Bowne was sustained.

Algernon Sidney Crapsey was minister of St. Andrew’s Church, Protestant Episcopal, Rochester, New York. He was charged with impugning and denying the Virgin Birth, the Resurrection, the Trinity, and the doctrine that “Our Lord Jesus Christ is God.” The real issues seem to have been freedom and authority though no clear delineation of the limits of either was attempted in the trial. Crapsey was convicted of the charges and he withdrew from the ministry.

Contributors to the volume, in addition to the editor, are the following:

Pope A. Duncan, President, South Georgia College, Douglas, Georgia
Max Gray Rogers, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, North Carolina
Harmon L. Smith, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina
Hugh M. Jansen, Jr., Interdenominational Theological Center, Atlanta, Georgia

In the conclusion entitled “Heirs of the Faith,” the editor suggests that “the tradition of the heretics offers the finest opportunity of renewal which the churches have.” (p. 228.) Certainly the “heretics” included in this study have shared in laying the groundwork for the recent development of ecumenical Christianity.

—Gerald O. McCulloh
Nashville, Tenn.


When my copy of Methodism Moves Across North Texas first came, I read it through at one sitting with unflagging interest—which is not at all the usual thing, since most histories of this sort are easier taken by sips than gulps. But this survey of the fortunes of Methodism in North Texas from the earliest days to the present is not the ordinary sample of this sort of church history. It is lively, balanced and informative. Where the data and documents are skimpy, they have been dug out by painstaking research. Where, as in more recent times, they are, if anything, all too plentiful, Dr. Vernon controls them in a carefully organized way and tells his story so that it is unfailingly interesting.
This is, of course, only a small slice of the saga of Christianity in one section of America, but it allows us to rehearse the heroic record of the pioneers for Christ on this uncommonly rugged stretch of the American frontier: the circuit riders and the educators (and the laymen who tended the roots of the tenuously planted churches) and then follow the uneven progress of their successors down through the long century that separates us from Reconstruction days. On balance, Methodism Moves Across North Texas is an inspiring narrative but it is not a simple or uncritical one. The failures are here, too—sad tales of splendid ventures that failed, of opportunities missed, of bitter controversy and sordid politics, of the all too easy acquiescence in high-minded mediocrity in the place of that sustained hunger for holiness and true greatness to which Christ has always called his people everywhere.

This book, then, is one of the best of the regional denominational histories. It is a fascinating record that will interest all those who have any sort of connection with North Texas and it will also remain as an invaluable record and reference for future historians who will, in time to come, want to set this particular episode of the Christian pilgrimage in a larger focus of church history as a whole. If and when we get more such histories, the possibilities and prospects of a more truly adequate history of American Methodism as a whole will begin to brighten toward real fruition.

—Albert C. Outler
Southern Methodist University
Perkins School of Theology
Dallas, Texas