News in Brief

International Methodist Historical Society

The International Methodist Historical Society met in quinquennial session at University Park United Methodist Church, Denver, Colorado, U.S.A., August 17-18, 1971. President Maldwyn Edwards of Bristol, England, presided over the two-day meeting. Reports from Methodist historical societies over the world were presented by Dr. John W. Krummel of Tokyo for the Japan Wesley Study Society; Dr. Edwards and Mr. John Vickers for the Wesley Historical Society in Great Britain; Dr. David H. Bradley for the A.M.E. Zion Church; Rev. Ernest L. Sells for Rhodesia; Dr. John H. Ness, Jr. for the United Methodist Church, U.S.A.; Dr. George M. Clary, Jr. for the C.M.E. Church. Written reports were received from the Protestant Methodist Church in the Ivory Coast and from Bishop R. J. Joshi for the Methodist Church in Southern Asia.

Papers presented during the two days were well received by an attendance of not less than 100 at any session. These were: "Bishop Francis Asbury and His Contribution," by Dr. David H. Bradley, Historiographer of the A.M.E. Zion Church; "The Genius of the Autonomous Churches in Latin America," by Bishop Carlos T. Gattinoni; "Some Women in Wesley's Life," by Dr. Maldwyn Edwards; "Values in Methodism Which Should Be Preserved," by Bishop Eric A. Mitchell of Hyderabad, India; "The Future of Methodism in an Ecumenical Era," by Rev. Gabriel M. Setiloane, Youth Secretary of the All Africa Conference of Churches; and "On Editing John Wesley," by Dr. Frank Baker.

A new constitution was adopted, which among other revisions changed the name of the organization to "World Methodist Historical Society." This constitution is published here so that you may be familiar with the steps taken to coordinate the historical work of all Methodist denominations and to make the Society financially independent.

Officers of the World Methodist Historical Society for the next quinquennium were elected as follows: President, Bishop Carlos T. Gattinoni; Executive Secretary and Editor, Dr. Frederick E. Maser; Secretary, British Section, Rev. Thomas Shaw; Treasurer, Dr. John H. Ness, Jr.; Vice-President for the Americas, Bishop Frederick D. Jordan; Vice-President for Europe, Bishop C. Ernst Sommer. The Vice-Presidents for Africa, Asia, and Oceania are to be elected by the Executive Committee. The following persons were elected to serve with the officers of the Society as the Executive Committee for the next quinquennium: Dr. Frank Baker, Bishop Ole Borgen, Dr. David H. Bradley, Dr. Maldwyn L. Edwards, Bishop O. Eugene Slater, and Mr. John Vickers.
Constitution
World Methodist Historical Society
(Adopted August 18, 1971)

I. Name

The name of this organization shall be the World Methodist Historical Society, formerly known as the International Methodist Historical Society.

II. Purpose

1. To coordinate the activities of historical agencies of all denominations which have their roots in the Methodist movement of the eighteenth century.
2. To promote the organization of historical agencies in Methodist or Methodist-related denominations.
3. To assemble in periodical conferences representatives of Methodist and Methodist-related bodies who are interested in Methodist history.
4. To disseminate information about the activities of Methodist historical agencies.
5. To encourage and assist in the preservation of books, documents, personal relics, buildings, and sites connected with Methodist history.

III. Membership

1. Any interested person may become a member of the Society on payment of the membership subscription, and thus be entitled to receive its publications and to vote in its general meetings.
2. Corporate membership is open to those who are designated as their representatives by Methodist or Methodist-related denominations. These shall comprise:
   a) Five persons designated by the Conference of The Methodist Church of Great Britain and Ireland, the Secretary of the World Methodist Historical Society (British Section), and the President and Secretary of the Wesley Historical Society.
   b) The President and the Executive Secretary of the Commission on Archives and History, the Presidents of the Jurisdictional, Central, and Mission Conference Commissions on Archives and History, and seven persons designated by the Commission on Archives and History of The United Methodist Church.
   c) Two representatives each from all other Methodist or Methodist-related denominations, with one additional representative for each 250,000 members or fraction thereof above the first 250,000.

IV. Officers

1. There shall be a president, who shall serve only one five-year term and whose continental area shall be different from that of his
predecessor; five vice-presidents, one each from Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, and Oceania; two secretaries, one of who shall be the executive secretary; a treasurer; and an editor.

2. There shall be an executive committee, composed of the officers, the immediate past president, and five members elected by the quinquennial meeting of the Society. Between sessions of the Society the Executive Committee shall consider suggestions made by members, fill vacancies, arrange for meetings, designate official representatives to historical gatherings and celebrations, convey official greetings, publish an historical news letter, and perform all other business of the Society. The initiative in all matters shall be taken by the President and the Executive Secretary, in consultation by correspondence with all accessible members of the committee.

V. Nominations

Six months before the quinquennial meeting of the Society, the President shall appoint a nominating committee of three persons which shall propose a list of nominations for all offices. Suggestions will be received by the committee, and all names should be accompanied by a reasoned statement about the persons recommended.

VI. Meetings

The Society shall meet every five years near the time and place of the World Methodist Conference. The Executive Committee may arrange for special or regional meetings.

VII. Finances

1. The membership subscription shall be $5.00 for one year, $20.00 for five years, and $100.00 for life, or the equivalent in other currencies.

2. It is assumed that subscriptions for corporate members will be paid by the bodies which they represent, though they may be paid by the representatives themselves.

3. The Executive Committee may solicit contributions from historical agencies and from individuals.

VIII. Amendments

Proposed amendments to the constitution must be submitted in writing to the Executive Secretary at least six months before the quinquennial session of the Society, and he shall then mail copies for consideration by all members.
BOOK REVIEWS

[Editor's Note: In the review of Franklin Wilder's Father of the Wesleys, by Dr. Frederick E. Maser (Methodist History, October 1971, p. 63), the reference from the autobiography, The Life and Errors of John Dunton, should have indicated Samuel Wesley instead of John Wesley. Throughout the paragraph Samuel Wesley was frequently referred to. It probably was obvious to most readers that the mention of John Wesley was a typographical error which we failed to catch.]


This volume completes David Henry Bradley's history of Zion Methodism, the first volume of which was published in 1956. Bradley makes no claim that his is the definitive history of the A. M. E. Zion Church. His aim has been to prepare a "sincere beginning work," which might stimulate further research and interest in the history of the denomination.

The author has encountered numerous problems in the preparation of his study, among them were lost or destroyed church records, lethargy and indifference of many within the church concerning its past, and the persistent influence of denominational myths and folklore.

Other problems which are evident to the reader pertain to the organization and presentation of data. In places the narrative is hardly more than a listing of names, places, and dates and the re-publication of large blocks of material from the minutes of various ecclesiastical meetings. Different agencies of the church are mentioned including the church extension program, the book concern, missions, education, etc. but the treatment of each is sketchy and scattered. Financial matters, the relation of the A. M. E. Zion Church with other Methodist bodies vis a vis merger, and denominational politics or government receive most of the author's attention but a careful analysis of the issues involved in these questions is not presented.

Zion Methodism was active in the South after the Civil War and it was most successful in North Carolina where it established Livingstone College. However, the discussion of the church and its program in the post-bellum South is extremely limited and disappointing.

There is no evidence in this study that Zion Methodism has been aware of the ideological tensions occasioned by Darwinism, socialism, liberalism, or neo-orthodoxy, and which have influenced the course of American Protestantism in the last hundred years. There is no mention of the church's concern relative to the problems of urbanism or labor-management, or to conditions created by economic depression. If the A. M. E. Zion Church manifested any interest on the issues of war or peace during the past century it is not discussed in this volume. The influence of the Social Gospel movement and the ideas associated with social Christianity evidently escaped the attention of the Zionites. The church also appears to have been indifferent to the civil rights movement of recent years. This reviewer was amazed that a history of one of the nation's oldest denominations could be written and omit so many topics.

Despite the shortcomings of this volume, if it stimulates research and
critical study of any phase of American Church History, it will have served a worthwhile purpose.

—W. Harrison Daniel
University of Richmond, Virginia


It is unfortunate that this book has been encased in a forbidding dust jacket and characterized by a highly technical sub-title: "Ecumenical and Pastoral Studies in Liturgical Theology." Most laymen will probably hesitate to purchase a book with this formidable label, and few pastors will do more than glance through the chapter headings, which are equally discouraging. But if "the hesitating purchaser," to use Robert Louis Stevenson's phrase, will begin reading this volume, he will have difficulty laying it down until he has read clear through to the last page. The reader may not breeze through this book as easily as he would through a novel, but both churchmen and laymen will find the work more fascinating, informative and entertaining than many of today's best sellers. The straightforward simplicity of Dr. Hoon's style, his penetrating wit, as well as the clarity of his outline and thought should guarantee this book a wide readership.

Arresting sentences, for example, abound on every page: "The word orthodoxy . . . derives from orthos and doxa. It means 'right praise' or 'right worship' rather than 'right opinion'; and a truer . . . understanding of the Church . . . comes through right worship as in no other way." Again, "A service may well close in a burst of praise, . . . rather than with the act of dedication to which we are commonly exhorted." In speaking of the classic definition of the Church as "the congregation of believers in which the pure Word of God is preached and the Sacraments duly administered," Dr. Hoon writes, "today the 'marks' of the Church must be redefined to match our larger understanding of the Church as mission," and in another chapter he quips, "one feels that lit-orgy is sometimes confused with liturgy."

Theologically the book maintains what, to me, is a welcome Barthian and Biblical stance. The integrity of worship is described in a "theological sense" and refers not to "integrity in general" or "fidelity to liturgical standards" or "steadfastly following tradition" but to the "self disclosure and self communication of God in the Word Jesus Christ." Dr. Hoon sees Christian worship as profoundly incarnational. "The dialectic of the incarnation understood as the whole Event of Jesus Christ, not merely his birth," he writes, "is to govern all thinking about worship."

In noting that the word "worship" stems from the word "worthship," Dr. Hoon carefully examines the dictum that worship, therefore, is "the acknowledgment of God as supreme value and the ascription of supreme worth to him." Among other things, he says, "the agency of God and the agency of man are correlative, . . . but if any agent is to assign or ascribe worth, it is God who ascribes worth to man rather than man to God. It is precisely the divine initiative undertaking to reconcile the world while we were dead in our trespasses and sins that becomes recapitulated in worship and evokes the Christian's wonder."

The least satisfying portion of the book is that dealing with specifics in worship. Dr. Hoon favors changing the "Thou's" and "Thee's" in our prayers to the more familiar "You," but as an example of an effective
prayer he uses one that reverts to the conventional terminology. He sees no objection to most of the new forms being introduced into contemporary worship services, adding, “these forms are good when done with taste,” naively assuming that, of course, everyone will immediately understand the meaning of “taste” and scrupulously apply its principles.

With a typical ivory tower approach he lays little stress on the practical need for training in the use of liturgical forms on the part of both the preacher and the congregation. It may be remembered in this connection that in 1789 the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America adopted the Scottish form of the Prayer of Consecration in the service of Holy Communion not only because of the urging of Bishop Seabury, but also because in the House of Deputies, Dr. William Smith, the President, “read it so impressively that it was accepted without objection.” In short, the very same service patterns, words, and actions can evoke radically different responses from a congregation when led by two different persons, and a service which is meaningless under one man’s direction can, under another, call forth a miracle of light and truth.

Beyond this, moreover, Dr. Hoon fails adequately to link the psychic needs of the congregation to forms which are satisfying and basic as they embody those needs. He urges that new forms be created to take the place of “altar calls,” “invitations to discipleship,” etc. He looks with favor upon a foot washing ceremony used in a church in Harlem in which “the congregation come forward in groups of eight and while the people stand at the chancel, the clergy kneel and symbolically wipe the soles of each person with the ends of their stoles.” This form would hardly be helpful to the general worshipper and only made me shudder as I thought of those beautiful symbolic stoles being messed up by a lot of dirty shoes. Universal and meaningful forms in the church have ever been linked to the evident and current needs of the people and not to the inventiveness of a committee.

Evangelist Charles Finney, for example, who is credited with being the first to use creatively the so-called “mourner’s bench” and the “altar call” in America, states that after a sermon one evening he was impelled to invite those who were troubled about their souls to remain to talk with him, and he suggested that they move to the front and center of the auditorium. A considerable number responded to his invitation, demonstrating thereby that a definite need existed, and out of this fortuitous circumstance the “mourner’s bench” and the “altar call” gradually developed.

In fairness to Dr. Hoon, he does make much of the idea that a man must know his congregation and that all changes in liturgy should be made in the spirit of love, but one gets the impression that what he is saying is “don’t try something they will not put up with,” thereby missing the deeper truth that universal, lasting, helpful forms should grow out of the needs of the congregation and not the whims of the pastor. One of the essential requirements today in the creation of liturgical forms is a searching study of the needs of the worshippers out of which new forms in worship will arise naturally. Only then will they more fully partake of the Integrity of which Dr. Hoon writes so effectively.

According to the dust jacket of The Integrity of Worship, this seems to be the first full-length book written by Dr. Hoon. Certainly one who can write as perceptively and convincingly should be urged by his publisher to take his pen in hand more often.

—Frederick E. Maser
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

This book will be of interest to Protestant readers not only as a useful work of reference but as a by-product of the Second Vatican Council by which the changing climate within the Roman Church may be measured. The editorial preface in defining the purpose of the volume cites the Council's concern for greater understanding of "our separated brethren" and asserts that the study required for this "should be pursued with fidelity to truth and in a spirit of goodwill," both of which one would like to think of as characteristic of Protestant as well as Catholic in these ecumenical times.

While the majority of contributors are Catholics, the name of Jaroslav Pelikan alone is sufficient to guarantee the impartiality and scholarly integrity of the work; while Methodism is honorably represented by Dr. F. E. Maser of Philadelphia. Works of reference, by definition, exist to be consulted for information on matters with which one is unfamiliar, rather than on those about which one is already relatively knowledgeable. Nevertheless, a scrutiny of the articles on Methodist topics is the most obvious way of judging the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the whole.

Most of the errors and omissions may be put down to the American standpoint which the title implies, and of this the British reader is inevitably more aware as he turns the pages. Thus, there are entries under "Methodist New Connexion" and "Bible Christians"; but under "Primitive Methodism" it is the American denomination that is described, with only incidental references to its British origin. Similarly, the existence of "Free Methodism" is allowed in America, but not, apparently, in England. The weakest feature here is in the bibliographies. The articles on Hugh Bourne and William Clowes ignore the biographies by John T. Wilkinson; that on the Bible Christians has no reference to Thomas Shaw's Wesley Historical Society Lecture of 1965; while that on William Booth, who is described as having been a minister of the "New Wesleyan Connexion," quotes no authority more substantial than General Next to God. In this respect, the Dictionary falls very far short of the otherwise comparable *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*.

In one or two cases the information is definitely misleading or defective. Thus the entry under "Local Preacher," although it traces the institution to Wesley himself, actually describes the American species, which is quite different from its British namesake. There are several entries under "Synod," but no reference to its usage in British Methodism. An account of Alexander Kilham, however brief, which manages to ignore his democratic principles, is scarcely adequate. And the British Methodist hymn books of 1904 and 1933 are more than mere "revisions" of Wesley's 1780 book. A British reader would note the inclusion of Hugh Price Hughes but not of Mark Guy Pearse; and would probably expect to find Arthur Samuel Peake included on several counts.

On the wider scene, even from the vantage point of the New World, it seems odd that a 12th Century Breton heretic named Eon de L'Etoile ("Hands up everybody who has ever heard of him") should gain admittance where neither Anselm nor Abelard have succeeded. Nor can the omissions be explained by lack of space, judging by the presence of entries on "Ancestor Cult (Africa)" (a precedent for the veneration of "Daddy Wesley" among British Wesleyans?), and the Baha'i faith (a mere "sacred mushroom" compared with the other non-Christian religions which are entirely ignored).
All this, however, amounts to little more than the carping criticism of details in a dictionary that should "serve the present age" as a volume that is as up-to-date as any other composite work can expect to be. Apart from the detailed entry under "Vatican 2," there is one on the "Death of God" theology; and the "Anglican Orthodox Church," which separated from the Protestant Episcopal Church as recently as 1963, also gained admission. It is a volume to browse in with pleasure as well as to refer to with profit; and as such should contribute to the growth of both understanding and goodwill in our time.

—John A. Vickers
Bognor Regis, England


Unknown, unnoticed, unreviewed, unread—the fate of many a good book. But even worse—a valuable book both mistitled and touted for what it is not calls to question editorial or sales judgments or both.

John Q. Schisler, had he lived, may have compelled an adequately descriptive title and a synopsis disclosing this volume as institutional history rather than yet another "how to do it." It is true that the jacket photo depicts, if you can make it out in the moonlight, the Board of Education building at Nashville. This is the only clue to the fact that the developing program of the Board is here treated by one who long guided a portion of its tasks.

As might be expected in such a work, almost three-quarters of the text deals with the educational program through fifty-five years of the 20th Century among the three Methodisms united in 1939. Here is thorough understanding of staff development, advances and declines, besides a valuable assessment of the movement to raise Christian education standards in local churches as a plus toward and in Methodist Union. The author also shows how face to face contacts initiated in the Education Boards smoothed the path to success in merger negotiations of the Thirties.

Unfortunately, the 19th Century, sketchily handled from secondary sources, by no means measures up to the companion volumes by Barclay on Methodist missions for that same era.

Schisler, on the other hand, offers a valuable complement to C. A. Bowen's treatment of curriculum development in Child and Church (1960) and fleshes out the insignificant treatment of this aspect of education in the History of American Methodism (1964).

—Edwin Schell
Baltimore, Maryland