THE METHODIST QUARTERLY REVIEW: REFLECTIONS ON A METHODIST PERIODICAL

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The design of this article is to describe a periodical indexing project, sponsored by the Board of Higher Education and Ministry of The United Methodist Church, which will make accessible the contents of five religious scholarly journals published by American Methodist groups. The best known of these five, identified generically by the name Methodist Quarterly Review, has served, since its birth in 1818, as a prototype for the other four.¹ A background for understanding the project is laid by reviewing previous efforts to index these titles and by sketching developments in current scholarship which justify a new indexing effort employing contemporary methods and standards. The scope of the project is explained through analysis of the journals' contents and through the use of statistics. There is a brief description of indexing methodology. The essay concludes with some reflections on themes, issues and concerns that have characterized these titles over the past one hundred sixty-seven years.

1980 marked the launching of a new journal named the Quarterly Review: A Scholarly Journal for Reflection on Ministry, under the sponsorship of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry of The United Methodist Church. This new venture prompted the Editorial Director to explain, “The launching of the new Quarterly Review is an attempt to recapture the spirit and scope of its mid-1800's predecessor. The Methodist Quarterly Review was unashamedly directed toward Methodists—so is QR designed primarily for United Methodists.”² The background for this statement goes back at least as far as 1818 when the

¹For convenience we use the abbreviations MQR for the Methodist Magazine (1818-28), monthly; Methodist Magazine and Quarterly Review (1830-40), quarterly; Methodist Quarterly Review (1841-84), quarterly; and Methodist Review (1885-1931), bimonthly. The Methodist Quarterly Review of the M. E. Church, South (1847-1930), abbreviated as MQRS, went under the titles Quarterly Review of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (1847-61, 1879-86, 1889-94), quarterly; Southern Methodist Review (1887-88), bimonthly; The Methodist Review (1895-1902, bimonthly; 1906-08, quarterly); The Methodist Quarterly Review (1903-06, 1908-30), quarterly. The abbreviation UBR is used for Quarterly Review of the United Brethren in Christ (1890-1901), quarterly; United Brethren Review (1902-08), bimonthly; RIL for Religion in Life (1932-79), quarterly; and QR for Quarterly Review (1980- ), quarterly. For a more detailed description of these titles and a record of libraries holding them see John D. and Lyda K. Batsel's Union List of United Methodist Serials, 1773-1973. (Evanston, IL: Commission on Archives and History of The United Methodist Church, 1974).
American Methodists began publication of the monthly *Methodist Magazine*. “Published every year except 1829, under varying titles, until 1932, it was then succeeded by its depression-born child, *Religion in Life*. Under the generic title of *Methodist Quarterly Review* it has had a longer life than any other religious publication.”³

This publishing history is even more noteworthy when it is realized that MQR was the direct progenitor of the *Quarterly Review of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South* which had its own distinguished record of publication spanning sixty-six years. MQR also served as an example for the *United Brethren Review* which patterned itself after numerous secular and religious quarterly reviews which were popular in 1890, the year of its inception. Taken together these five titles of American Methodist scholarly publishing total two hundred sixty-six volumes and represent a rich, varied treasury of the church’s reflection upon her ministry, mission and purpose.

Surprisingly only in the last twenty-four years have the contents of the volumes published in the twentieth century been indexed.⁴ There were earlier efforts to index these titles. In 1884 the Methodist Book Concern published an *Index to the Methodist Quarterly Review* for the years 1818-1881, covering the first sixty-three volumes. It was compiled by Elijah H. Pilcher. Pilcher was an interesting man, being a founder and regent of the University of Michigan and a co-founder of the *Michigan Christian Advocate* which is still being published. His index, while of some use, is a curious product because Pilcher, rather than consolidating the subject indexing into a single file left it divided into the seven divisions in the magazine: biblical, theological, ecclesiastical, philosophical, biographical, religious intelligence, and miscellaneous. It also contains a portrait index and three author appendices, for a total of eleven sections, making retrieval particularly cumbersome. Pilcher’s subject indexing is characterized by the nineteenth century convention of title inversion, a methodology now considered archaic. Apparently this index was published in a very limited quantity because many libraries owning a run of the journal do not possess the Pilcher index.

William Frederick Poole, when he issued his great index of American periodical literature covering the nineteenth century (1802-1906), included the MQR among the titles indexed.⁵ While Poole’s great weakness, which

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is the lack of an author index, has now been partially rectified, the subject indexing is sometimes capricious or too broad. Only the volume number, not the year, is given and pagination is not inclusive. Also the indexing of book reviews is extremely limited. The years of Poole's coverage for the MQR is identical with that of the Pilcher index.

A much improved effort in late nineteenth century indexing was made by Ernest C. Richardson. His index, covering the last decade of the century, includes both MQR and MQRS for the ten-year period. Richardson used Poole as a model but improved him by giving more complete citations and by supplying an author index.

The publishers routinely issued indexes for each volume beginning with the Methodist Magazine in 1818. The subject indexing is generally quite limited and, of course, for the nineteenth century the Victorian practice of author anonymity is preserved. If one is researching a topic it is necessary to consult the index in each volume, quite an undertaking where two hundred sixty-six volumes are concerned.

At least one library has a partial subject index of MQR. Dr. Frederick Norwood, while teaching at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, compiled a card index for 1899-1930 under twelve headings: (1) Methodist polity, organization, current issues, institutions, programs; (2) Methodist theology; (3) Methodist miscellany; (4) biblical study, church history, missions; (5) Methodist church history; (6) theology, ethics, philosophy; (7) practical ministry; (8) social, political, economic; (9) science, education; (10) culture, literature, art, music; (11) miscellaneous; and (12) book reviews. Dr. Norwood's file, now in the possession of the Garrett library, does make it possible to gain some access to the MQR's contents for its twentieth century years.

While the indexes of Poole and Richardson do index a number of scholarly religious titles for the nineteenth century, there are virtually no indexes to the American periodical literature of the period which meet contemporary research needs. This is surprising since the last century was one which witnessed a proliferation of this literature. By 1830 good quality printing presses were widely available and the churches took full advantage of them to pour forth a torrent of periodical literature. Nearly every denomination or sect of any or little consequence issued a news organ while

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6C. Edward Wall, Cumulative Author Index for Poole's Index to Periodical Literature, 1802-1906. (Ann Arbor, MI: Pierian Press, 1971), provides over 300,000 author entries for all personal names which appear within parentheses in the 1882 edition and the five supplements of Poole.

7Ernest Cushing Richardson, An Alphabetical Subject Index and Index Encyclopaedia to Periodical Articles on Religion, 1890-1899. (New York: Published for the Hartford Seminary Press by Charles Scribner's Sons, 1907).

8Ernest Cushing Richardson, Periodical Articles on Religion, 1890-1899, Author Index. (New York: Published for the Hartford Seminary Press by Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911).
An impressive periodical literature served as an important medium of exchange between Methodism and its religious and cultural context. After 1840, under the editorship of Frank Luther Mott, the preeminent historian of American periodical literature, has pointed out that the most important fact about any magazine is what it contained. Since one hundred sixty-six volumes of these Methodist Reviews have never before been indexed and since only the volumes issued since 1961 have been indexed according to contemporary indexing standards, the contents of all these journals are, for the most part, unavailable for general and scholarly use. Locked away in the thousands of reviews and essays in these titles is some of the most informed and incisive thinking of the church. To correct this situation the Board of Higher Education and Ministry, in 1984, underwrote the Methodist Reviews Indexing Project. The purpose, scope and anticipated results of the project are described below.

The purpose of the project is to make the contents of the five journal titles available for general and scholarly use, employing contemporary indexing standards and methods. While the contents of these titles varied over the years, one notes that the greater part of their contents includes essays on many subjects, both religious and secular, book review essays and book reviews. The book review essay, occasionally running to as many as forty pages or more, was a chief feature of the Reviews in the period 1840-1900, gradually declining in importance in the twentieth century.

The reasons for indexing this body of literature encompass several concerns. The most obvious one is institutional, apologetic and subjective. One of the chief ways of understanding a religious tradition is through the literature it has produced. As Robert E. Chiles has observed,
ship of George Peck and John McClintock, the *Methodist Quarterly Review* reflects an awareness of German biblical criticism and philosophical developments. Under Daniel Whedon's editorship from 1856 to 1884, it exhibits the impact of Darwinism, the development of biblical criticism, and a growing tide of philosophical influence from abroad. Daniel Curry, Whedon's successor, was more traditionally oriented but no less committed to the policy of informing Methodism about world developments with theological bearing. From 1847 on, the southern church had its own Review, somewhat more conservative, aiming to preserve Wesleyan motifs. The Reviews, together with the more popular Christian Advocate, gave Methodism the most widely circulated periodical literature of the time.

The Reviews provided an arena where the current thought of the denomination, of other churches, and of the world at large, could be measured against the tradition of the organizations which gave them being. They furnished a forum for a more extended and reasoned discussion that the space and constituencies of the denominational newspapers offered. The Reviews, designed for circulation among educated and more thoughtful people, could offer discussion of many questions and issues that were not appropriate to conference publications. One is impressed by the large number of articles, especially in the MQR, MQRS and UBR, written by bishops. They expressed their scholarship and their views to this more select audience both within the church and beyond it. The faculties of the church's colleges, universities and seminaries supplied all these journals with able and perceptive writers. One of them, William Fairfield Warren, of Boston University, wrote articles for both MQR and MQRS from 1857 to 1924, a period of sixty-seven years! Thus, the most considered, mature and informed thinking of the church since 1818 is represented in this literature. While a few scholars and doctoral students have researched their contents, the student or person with limited time for searching has found access to this literature limited and frustrating at best.

There is growing and lively interest in nineteenth century studies. The century was one of dynamic growth and expansion in the United States as the frontier rapidly moved Westward. The Methodists shared in many of the events that helped to shape the nation. It matured as an influential denomination. Initially concerned about its survival and identity, it was, by the end of the century, engaged in forming a response to and involvement in the social problems of the time. To fully interpret and understand these developments it will be necessary to have access to the periodical literature produced during this period. An exemplary effort to do this on a broad scale is the impressive *Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals, 1824-1900*. The Wellesley project will index some forty titles of journals published in Great Britain and selected on the basis of their relatively high caliber of writing and editing together with a considerable reputation in

The importance of Victorian periodicals to modern scholars can scarcely be exaggerated... Indeed, there are aspects of Victorian culture, minor ones, no doubt, but parts of the total picture, which simply do not exist in published books, or if they do, are entirely hidden because there is no subject index to Victorian ideas and attitudes. Also, because reviews and magazines reflect the current situation, they are indispensable for the study of opinion at a given moment or in a span of years.\textsuperscript{11}

While the \textit{Wellesley Index} will greatly help us interpret and understand the broader context of the nineteenth century, the \textit{Reviews} index will provide a tool for doing this in the field of Methodist studies. What is true for the nineteenth century is also, in many respects, true for the present century as well.

The rising interest in and rapid development of studies on the evangelical tradition in America help underscore the need for access to the periodical literature of the nineteenth century. In a masterful eighty-six page essay, Leonard Sweet has surveyed this field of study and supplies, in over three hundred bibliographic references, citations to the major studies issued since 1965.\textsuperscript{12} Sweet quotes William G. McLoughlin’s judgment that, “The story of American Evangelicalism is the story of America itself in the years 1800 to 1900, to understand it is to understand the whole temper of American life in the nineteenth century.”\textsuperscript{13} The pages of MQR, MQRS and the UBR, are replete with the contributions which the American Methodists made to evangelicalism. Moreover, one can hardly claim to understand the current American religious scene, partially characterized as it is by strong recrudescence of evangelical-fundamentalist claims, nor the international scene where conservatism has infected all the world’s major faiths, without recourse to its antecedent roots in this literature. The American Methodists represent an experiential, Arminian expression of the evangelical tradition which found its chief expression and means of expansion in revivalism and missions.\textsuperscript{14} Related to this


\textsuperscript{14}Richard M. Cameron, \textit{Methodism and Society in Historical Perspective.} (New York: Abingdon Press, 1961), 119-120.
background is the recognition that the twentieth century women's rights movement had its beginnings in the last century. Methodist women, such as the lay evangelist Phoebe Palmer, were leading exponents of improved conditions for women.  

Toward the end of the nineteenth century the great force of the revival movement was largely dissipated and the Social Gospel movement arose. Most historians agree that the Social Gospel is to be understood as Protestantism's response to the problems created by the change from an agricultural and rural society to an industrial and urban one. This new movement was not immediately congenial to Methodism. Beginning about 1890 a struggle ensued in the church with many members insisting that the Wesleyan emphasis on individual regeneration should restrict social concerns to the moral conduct of the individual. Others perceived a need for the church to address the pressing social problems confronting American society. By 1908 the church was convinced that it not only had a responsibility toward society but it became the first major Protestant denomination to adopt a statement of social principles, the famous "Methodist Social Creed."

Another development heralding the impact of the new century was the emergence of liberalism. While theological liberalism arose in the latter part of the nineteenth century, it did not secure a firm foothold in Methodism until after charges of heretical teaching, brought in 1905 against Professor Hinckley G. Mitchell of Boston University, were declared illegal by the M. E. Church General Conference of 1908. Once the issue of liberalism in higher education had been resolved, it was not long before it became the dominant theological expression in the church. So firm was the foothold, once gained, that William J. McCutcheon has characterized the years 1919-34 as those of rampant liberalism in the church.

Access to the contents of the MQRS will provide access to the life and dynamics of the former Methodist Episcopal Church, South. It will also dovetail with a growing interest in the historiography of southern religion. Much of the ethos and politics of the present United Methodist Church cannot be understood apart from it. Rosemary M. Magee has reviewed eight recently published books which she believes attest to a burgeoning interest in the religious traditions of the south.

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16Cameron, op. cit., 283.


Holifield's *The Gentlemen Theologians: American Theology in Southern Culture, 1795-1860*, a critically acclaimed volume, is among the works Dr. Magee cites to support her evaluation. One also notes the appearance of two reference works which will help bring some order and organization to this rapidly growing and chaotic field of study. They are Samuel S. Hill's *Encyclopedia of Religion in the South*, published in 1984, and Charles Lippy's forthcoming *Bibliography of Religion in the South*. A careful examination of the book review section in recent issues of *The Journal of Southern History* discloses a significant number of titles touching on the life of the churches, the influence of the denominations and the lives of prominent church people.

The URB provides a unique perspective on the life and work of the United Brethren Church. From its inception, one of its purposes was to encourage church union. Its first editor, John W. Etter, remarked, "We shall therefore help to promote organic unity, especially among the smaller denominations that can affiliate in faith and practice." Like the other *Reviews* it consciously promoted denominational interests but was open toward the ecumenical spirit which was abroad and spreading at the turn of the century.

As our own century now moves toward its climax these journals supply us with raw material for interpreting our own times. MQR and MQRS help us move through the period of World War I and the attendant demise of a belief in Western civilization's and Christianity's eventual triumph in the world. RIL was born during this period of crisis. A sense of anxiety permeates its pages as the world and the United States reeled under the impact of the Great Depression, the rise of facism, World War II, the Korean conflict and the Vietnam War. Great changes had swept over the churches as they struggled to cope with these disastrous events. The country and its people were plunged into doubt and uncertainty about the future. RIL reflects Methodism's theological shift from an experiential evangelicalism, in the last half of the nineteenth century, to a socially conscious liberalism by the 1930's. By 1934, however, the rise of theologians such as Karl Barth and the influence of existentialism called this optimistic liberalism into question. By the 1960's the journal's pages were filled with debate about the Death of God Theology. By 1979 the rather self-conscious title, *Religion in Life*, had exhausted itself. The forty-nine volumes of RIL provide a rich trove of documentation on Protestant liberalism's struggle to be self-critical as well as to understand the world in crisis.

The content of these journals, spanning as they do one hundred sixty-seven years, vary immensely, exhibiting changing editorial leadership,

20 Both published by Mercer University Press, Macon, GA.
policy, purpose, taste, style and theological inclination. The *Methodist Magazine* (MQR), began in 1818 as a forty-page monthly. It was consciously modeled after John Wesley’s *Arminian Magazine*, being patterned after its style for the first eleven years of its existence. There are many reprints and extracts and articles from its British prototype including selections from Wesley’s writings as well as sermons, letters, biography and articles on divinity. American contributions consist of mission reports, poetry, obituaries, letters, accounts of revivals, with essays on divinity and secular topics. Many of the articles are unsigned. By 1830 the original title had changed to *Methodist Magazine and Quarterly Review*, it had become a quarterly of one hundred twenty pages per issue and contained long, essay style articles. While contributions by American authors are present, it still relied heavily on reprints from the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, formerly *Arminian Magazine*. A decade later George Peck transformed it into the well-known *Methodist Quarterly Review* with each issue expanded to one hundred sixty pages. Peck’s editorial introduction is also a good description of MQR’s new content,

> Its pages will be devoted to theology, ecclesiastical polity, science and general literature. These subjects will be discussed mostly, but not altogether, in the form of reviews. In extended and elaborate reviews we shall present our readers with the substance of many of the leading publications which from time to time issue from the American and European presses, accompanied with such criticisms and remarks as their character shall demand; and in critical notices shall give our views of the general character of many others. 

The reliance upon reprints from the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* and other journals greatly diminished although interest in Wesley and the parent church remained strong.

The critical review format, introduced by Peck was modified by his successors but remained intact until the mid 1880’s. In 1849 sections on religious and literary intelligence were added concerning events in Europe and reflecting on European and American theological developments. In 1857 editor Daniel D. Whedon inaugurated sections for “Synopsis of the Quarterlies,” digesting articles from the leading journals of the period; “Quarterly Book-Table,” reviewing both European and American publications; and “Editorial,” where he could comment on current issues and offer remarks about the contents of the *Review*. Editor James W. Mendenhall introduced a letters-to-the-editor feature entitled “The Arena,” in January 1889. One of the first letters was from Bishop John H. Vincent proposing the establishment of clubs, which would meet regularly, for pastors in the conference courses of study. One result was the establishment of a regular feature, “The Itinerants’ Club,” begun in the March 1890 issue and continuing through June 1918. Its purpose was to guide and assist persons -

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in the conference courses of study. William V. Kelley, editor from 1892 to 1920, began a section in 1894 called, "Archaeology and Biblical Research," which was to survive until the journal's demise in 1931. "A Reading Course," begun in the January 1918 issue, introduced books of interest to preachers, and also continued until 1931.

Since MQR was already established and had been in existence for twenty-eight years it was only natural that the southern Review (MQRS) should pattern itself after MRQ. The two reviews had similar formats and shared similar editorial policies. In addition to book review essays and contributed articles one finds special sections; for example, "The Open Court," with letters to the editor; "The World of Mission," containing missions news; "The Round Table," a kind of open forum; "Department of Exegesis," featuring biblical interpretation; and, of course, the endemic "Editor's Table."

RIL began without any declared editorial policy or introduction. The subtitle, "A Christian Quarterly," implies that it was not to be sectarian. Further proof of this can be seen in both an Editorial Board and an Advisory Council whose memberships were broadly ecumenical. With the appearance of the Autumn, 1951 issue the subtitle was enlarged to read, "A Christian Quarterly of Opinion and Discussion." Concomitant with this title change was the introduction into each issue of a symposium focused on a special topic with short contributed articles by several authors. Signed book reviews were a feature of every issue.

Formidable challenges face the indexer as he or she confronts this vast array and variety of materials. Several examples will illustrate the problem. Authorship is one of the most important facts about any piece of literature. Who is the author? The reader needs to know so that he or she can judge whether or not the author is qualified to write on the subject addressed. This becomes particularly crucial in the case of scholarly material. Anyone can express an opinion but are they qualified by training and experience to express an informed opinion? Strange as it may seem to us, nineteenth century authors were often reluctant to identify themselves. They wrote anonymously or pseudonymously. The early volumes of MQR contain articles signed by a "Theophilus Arminius," who turns out to be a Thomas S. Hinde (ca. 1785-1846). Hinde was a lay preacher, sometime medical doctor, Kentucky frontiersman and one of the founders of Mt. Carmel, Illinois. Since many pastors who wrote for

23 For a discussion and analysis of this feature see L. Dale Patterson's "Improvement in Methodist Ministerial Education at the End of the Nineteenth Century," Methodist History, Vol. 23, No. 2 (Jan. 1985), 68-78.
24 For a study of anonymity see Oscar Maurer's "Anonymity vs. Signature in Victorian Reviewing," The University of Texas Studies in English, Vol. 27 (June 1948), 1-27.
25 The Thomas Spottswood Hinde papers are a part of the Draper Manuscripts Collection, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison.
the Reviews were not known authors, identification is no easy matter. It must be remembered that while many preachers remained in the ministry for life, surprisingly large numbers of them did not. They left the ministry and simply dropped out of sight.

Book review essays, book reviews and book notices present another area of challenge. There is no question but that all book review essays should and will be fully indexed. Again, the nineteenth century convention of critically reviewing literature appears, at times, oblique to us. The review essay usually begins by discussing the title in question but may quickly metamorphize into the reviewer's declamation on the same or, not infrequently, on a completely different subject! The subject headings assigned to the review will appear puzzling if not erroneous to the twentieth century eye expecting congruity between the title being reviewed and the subject heading assignments.

All articles, including book review essays, will be indexed by author, where it is possible to identify the author, and subject entries assigned as needed to express the article's content. Book reviews will be indexed by the name of the book's author and possibly by the name of the review's author.

Subject indexing will be provided for at least five access points: biographical (person); historical (event); geographic (place); concept (discipline); and object (antiquities, books, etc.) though articles may treat only one or two of these areas. Subject headings are based on current American indexing usage and Library of Congress practice. In the construction of the index the main entry will be by author and/or editor. Attached to the main entry will be the essay title, journal title abbreviation, volume number, date of publication and pagination. Supplementary notes, to explain and enrich the entry, will be attached as appropriate and necessary.

A further indication of the scope of the index can be gained from the following statistics:

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Assuming that eighty-five percent of the essays and book review essays will receive an author entry and an average of two and one-half subject headings per essay, this will result in 45,560 author and subject entries. It is estimated that there are approximately 15,000 book reviews. This will bring the total for all entries close to 60,560. Depending upon how the final index is formatted these entries will be brought together into two or three sections, each alphabetically arranged.

All entries will be processed using a computerized indexing system. Once the data is encoded on magnetic tape it can be manipulated to produce printed hard copy and be made available through one of the electronic online bibliographic retrieval services. One great advantage of using a computerized system is the possibility of correcting and updating the files once the initial data is input. This is a particularly advantageous feature for this project since entries for the nineteenth century anonymous and pseudonymous authors, who have thus far eluded identification, can later be corrected and cross-referenced once verification has been made.

At this writing all the indexing for the project is complete. Having read much of this material and done the research to identify authors, places and events, certain facts and impressions about the Reviews come into clearer focus. Perhaps the strongest initial impression is that while the essays and reviews of all these titles vary greatly in quality, overall one is impressed by the intellectual richness of the material. I believe there has been a tendency to assume that because nineteenth century Methodism placed a great emphasis on personal religious experience and because there was initially strong opposition to the founding of theological seminaries, that its intellectual heritage is minimal. Following the Civil War both MQR and MQRS matured as scholarly publications, were characterized by vigorous editorial leadership and helped to stimulate, shape and influence the cultural and intellectual life of the churches. As Frederick A. Norwood has stated, “During the long decades between 1856 and 1884 Daniel D. Whedon spent his tremendous energy on building the MQR into a journal unsurpassed by any other of the time. Its influence was felt not only within the circle of Methodism but throughout American Protestantism.”

While the Reviews were distinctly American they avoided being nationalistic. As noted earlier, the MQR began as a forty-page monthly containing many reprints from the Arminian Magazine. This heavy reliance upon the English publication continued through the third decade of the century. The articles on theology, episcopacy, church government and ecclesiastical matters invariably invoke the names of John and Charles Wesley. The American Methodists were developing their own views on

theology and were represented by such thinkers as John Miley, Miner Raymond, Thomas O. Summers and Daniel D. Whedon. At the same time they maintained a lively interest in their English counterparts with frequent articles by, about and/or concerning such theologians as Richard Watson and William Burt Pope. Regular mention was made and news items carried referring to the activities of the Wesleyan Methodist Church. The Americans displayed great interest in the Ecumenical Methodist Conferences, the first of which was held in London in 1881.

A certain Canadian presence and influence also permeates the Reviews. This is understandable since, during the first half of the nineteenth century, Americans played a part in the establishment of Canadian Methodism, especially in the province of Ontario, then called Upper Canada. Nathan Bangs, editor of the MQR, 1820-36, is regarded as the founder of Methodism in the Quebec conference, having served in Canada from 1799 to 1805. Reports on mission work in Canada were a regular feature, particularly concerning missions to the Indians. The February, 1823 issue even contains a ten-page article about a United Brethren in Christ mission in Labrador! Canadian authors in MQR include William Case, Alvin Torry and Seth Crawford. Later in the century MQRS demonstrated a sustained interest in Canada, featuring regular contributions from such dominion authors as Edward Barrass, E. H. Dewart and William Harrison.

Just as the Reviews were not nationalistic in tone neither were they narrowly sectarian even though part of their function, particularly at first, was to defend Wesleyan doctrine and to make Methodist views known. Authors were drawn from the several Protestant denominations and beyond. Indeed this was necessary if scholarly writing was desired since some of the best scholars such as Moses Stuart, Professor of Sacred Literature at Andover Seminary was a Congregationalist, while Philip Schaff, the noted church historian and biblical scholar of Mercersburg, PA, Seminary and Union Theological Seminary, New York City, was of the German Reformed tradition. Rev. Thomas V. Moore, a prominent Presbyterian pastor of Richmond, VA, wrote for both MQR and MQRS for many years. In the twentieth century RIL greatly expanded this reach to include authors from Judaism and Roman Catholicism as well as from many Protestant traditions. It published well-known names such as Henry P. Van Dusen, Norman Pittenger, Reinhold Niebuhr, Emil Brunner, Millar Burrows, Martin E. Marty, Nels Ferré and a host of others.

Last but not least something will be said about themes and issues. Early American Methodism concerned itself a great deal with Calvinism which had a strong base of strength and support in New England as well as in other parts of the country. Wesley's doctrine of free will and free grace was not congenial to the Presbyterians and Congregationalists who largely adhered to the traditional Calvanistic view of God's absolute sovereignty and the doctrine of predestination. The Methodists emphasized
Wesley's view of the atonement which stressed its vicarious, substitutionary character, making available to all, rather than to a special class of the predestined, the benefits of Christ's death. Linked to this was the Wesleyan view that through "reprobation after death" the universal salvation of God is available to all, a doctrine inconsistent with predestination. Similar theological differences with the Baptists tended to find a focus around questions of infant baptism and the proper mode of baptism. The chief differences with the Episcopalians concentrated around the doctrine of apostolic succession. The Methodists stoutly defended the validity of their episcopacy as well as Wesley's claim that he was fully qualified to ordain.

As much as any other issue, except possibly the question of slavery, concerns about science and religion claimed the attention of countless authors. The theory of evolution had been propounded well before 1859 when Darwin published his *Origin of Species*. Prior to Darwin the chief evidence for the theory of evolution was based on geological and philological evidence which received wide acceptance even among thoughtful Methodists. However, when Darwin suggested that humans were descended from earlier forms of life, this was seen as a direct attack upon the theory of special creation in the book of Genesis. The battle was joined and it was only fifty years later that any significant number of Methodists could reconcile themselves to this new view of human life.

An equally volatile issue was that of slavery. The controversy became so intense within Methodism that it split the denomination seventeen years prior to the Civil War. In the very first volume of MQRS, the Reverend Henry B. Bascom, editor of the journal and later to become a bishop, wrote an article defending Bishop James O. Andrew against charges of owning slaves and claiming that the M. E. Church General Conference of 1844 had no authority to suspend the bishop from his episcopal responsibilities and duties. Ten years later, Abel Stevens, writing in the MQR, exclaimed, "When the South is spoken of, it is slavery that is meant; when a public measure is propounded, it is its relation to slavery that is questioned; when a new national development is at hand, how to give slavery its due ratio of importance to it, is the inquiry of Southern statesmen." The heated and acrimonious debate raged in the pages of the *Reviews*, to be followed after the war by hard feelings centered around the "Negro question." The northern church set up educational efforts among the southern blacks, while the southerners were incensed that their attitudes toward the blacks were misunderstood and unappreciated.

Because Wesley, like all the Protestant reformers, had laid heavy stress upon the authority of the scriptures, it was only natural that when new


methods of study questioned the authorship and historical reliability of
the biblical accounts, this was viewed as a direct assault upon the faith.
The rise of the discipline of biblical higher criticism in Germany was seen
as a part of the rationalistic attempt to undermine Christian beliefs. In
the 1890's, editor James W. Mendenhall marshalled all his energies and
stamina to wage an unceasing war against Old Testament higher criticism.
His successor, William V. Kelley, while less strident in his criticism, never­
theless continued editorial opposition to these views on the Bible
throughout his tenure from 1892 to 1920. It was only in the last dozen
years of the MQR and MQRS that editorial attitudes changed to welcome
the new spirit of inquiry which had been blowing off the European contin­
ent all during the previous century. It was the advent of RIL which mark­
ed a decided shift toward full acceptance of this newer methodology in
biblical study.

Hardly any development of significance on the religious scene, either
here or abroad, escaped the attention of the Reviews. There is sustained
general interest and discussion devoted to world affairs as well. Not in­
considerable amounts of attention were given to Roman Catholicism, most
of it before 1930 being antagonistic and polemical. There are a significant
number of articles clustered around questions of church-state relations.
The issue of religion in the public schools, for example, is treated well
back into the nineteenth century. Church union became a particular con­
cern for Methodists since the church suffered two major divisions prior
to 1850. The United Brethren, during the tenure of their Review, not only
championed church union but later consummated two unions themselves,
helping to set the stage for the unions which have resulted in the present
United Methodist Church. These and a host of other topics, questions
and issues provide an unequalled source of informed opinion which can
help us obtain a more complete picture of the church's life during the past
one hundred sixty-seven years. The index of the five Reviews will help pro­
vide a key to this treasury of materials which are locked away in the
thousands of pages of these periodicals.