
One of the most distinctive features of the Methodist tradition is its dynamic conjunction of religion and life, its insistence upon the vital interrelatedness of Christian faith and its praxis in the political sphere. There could be no more volatile conjunction than that of African politics and missionary Christianity in the twentieth century. *Are We Not Also Men?* is a riveting collective biography of Thompson Samkange and his two sons, Sketchley and Stanlake, which seeks to reveal and analyze the Christian (and specifically Methodist) roots giving rise to elite African politics in Zimbabwe. Not only the newest addition to the prestigious Social History of Africa series, this volume has also been recognized by the *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* as one of the most important contributions to mission studies in 1995.

Ranger helped to chart the course for the nascent discipline of African history in groundbreaking studies on the social history of Southern Rhodesia, perhaps most notably, *The African Voice in Southern Rhodesia*. This newest biographical contribution brings to perfection an historical methodology that seeks to reconstruct events and present ideas through the words of the Africans themselves. The fluid and incisive narrative brings the Samkange family members to life in such a way that their distinctive and often prophetic voices can be heard. Ranger first analyzes the roots of the Samkange family in the British Wesleyan Methodism of colonial Southern Rhodesia and then discusses Thompson Samkange’s influence as women’s advocate and ecumenical statesman. Ranger carefully delineates the interconnectedness of Samkange’s roles as Methodist circuit minister, President of the African National Congress, and Secretary of the Southern Rhodesia Missionary Conference. While the lives of father and sons were clearly forged upon the crucible of colonial oppression, the portrait of emerging nationalism (in which they all played so vital a role) is set within the broader context of their Methodist inheritance. Of particular interest is the inspiring portrait of Grace Samkange who was as active and important as her husband and sons in the creation of a pan-Africanist vision during one of the most critical phases of Zimbabwean history.

*Are We Not Also Men?* is an example of African Christian history at its best. It is a masterful synthesis of original primary documents, archival materials, rescued correspondence, and oral interviews, all woven together in such a way that the labyrinth of Rhodesian politics and missionary Methodism actually becomes intelligible and instructive. Here is a model of historical/biographical research well worth emulating. The voices of the Samkange dynasty ring out loud and clear!

Paul W. Chilcote

Delaware, Ohio

For teachers of African Christian history 1995 was something of a banner year. Up to this time, the small number of one volume histories of this truly remarkable story (of which Peter Falk’s *The Growth of the Church in Africa* was undoubtedly the best) were almost all based upon the monumental, albeit outdated and Eurocentric studies of C. P. Groves produced at mid-century. A post-colonial revisionist agenda, the production of a plethora of regional and more fully contextual studies, and widening interest in the African Indigenous Christian traditions combined to produce a more carefully nuanced portrait of “African Christianity.” To the relief of many classroom teachers, yearning for good one volume texts that dare to cover an unbelievably expansive terrain, several recently published books bring all of this research and energy into much clearer focus.

Adrian Hastings’ *The Church in Africa 1450–1950* (Clarendon, 1995) is the long awaited exhaustive study of one of the greatest scholars in the field, a work of huge proportion, but, with an equally huge price tag of $110.00, far beyond the range of even the most avid students of the subject. And while Kwame Bediako’s *Christianity in Africa* (Orbis, 1995) offers superb analysis and keen insight with regard to the life of Christianity on the continent (and most importantly from the perspective of a committed and engaged *African*), it does not intend to provide the broad sweep of an historical vantage point. Enter Elizabeth Isichei and *A History of Christianity in Africa: From Antiquity to the Present*, identified by the *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* (along side the above mentioned works) as one of the fifteen outstanding books of 1995 for mission studies.

The author of several focused studies related to the religious life of Nigeria and numerous scholarly articles on Christianity in Africa, Professor Isichei presently serves on the religious studies faculty of Otago University in New Zealand, having taught previously in Africa for some sixteen years. Her one volume history is written, in the estimation of noted Africanist Richard Gray, “with the critical insights of someone who for many years has lived as an insider, conveying a vivid impression of the nature and significance of African Christians, both as individuals and as communities.” The greatest strength of this book is Isichei’s ability to combine monumental sweep and memorable detail. Surveying the full course of African Christianity from its brilliant origins in antiquity to its explosive growth in the post-colonial era, her broad strokes seldom leave you hanging on generalizations easily expected. Her careful concern for detail and her desire to introduce the reader to real African people living out their faith in their own context make Isichei’s volume must reading for any student of contemporary (not just African) Christianity.

Paul W. Chilcote
Delaware, Ohio

Carl Bangs's biography of Phineas Bresee constitutes a significant contribution to a new phase of Methodist and holiness historiography. Forty years ago, John L. Peter's balanced and helpful work, *Christian Perfection and American Methodism* opened the way for a number of holiness movement and holiness denominational histories which have enriched the self-understanding of the movement, its contemporary institutions, and especially their relationship, past and present with Methodism.

Bangs now joins others who have begun to use biography to give us a better historical insight into the dynamics which were at work among those Methodists who made the transition from the established Methodism of the latter nineteenth century into the leadership of new holiness churches such as Bresee's Church of the Nazarene.

Bang's well-researched work produces all the benefits of good biography. It gives us nuances of time, place and person which no general, theological, or intellectual history can produce. Bresee's life and experience within rapidly changing nineteenth century Methodist Episcopal will serve to remind those in the Wesleyan/holiness churches who have only begun to recognize the strength of their Methodist roots how much of the historical Methodist ethos still permeates their own traditions.

If there is any point at which critics will call Bangs's interpretation into question it will be upon an issue long in contention among those who have tried to write the history of the movement relationship with Methodism. There is little doubt that the author comes down, at least in Bresee's case, upon the side which emphasizes the movement's essential Wesleyan and Methodist orthodoxy. He reinforces Timothy Smith's and others' contention that the holiness churches essentially became the major trustees of the principles of a primitive Wesleyanism after established Methodism had moved on to other concerns.

Other interpreters of holiness history would be concerned that Bangs does not adequately explain the radical shift in Bresee's relationship with the movement from his Iowa to his California Conference membership. While not rejecting the integrity of the proclaimed denominational "loyalty" of the National Holiness Association leaders, at the end of the century, they would contend, it was not as much a given in Methodism as Bangs seems to accept. They see the holiness tradition to be just as directly rooted in a more radical American revivalistic matrix. They would believe that Bresee's espousal of that more evangelical mix, although more cautious than some others, was a much more dynamic element in the story of his transition from Methodist Pastor to Nazarene general superintendent than the author allows.

Melvin E. Dieter
*Lyndhurst, Virginia*

Maffly-Kipp's provocative study of the 1848–1869 period in the history of California challenges and alters much of the stereotypical image of the Gold Rush. She asserts that “ironically, the reputed immorality of the California gold rush rendered it one of the most morally significant events in nineteenth century American life.” Three intertwined stories comprise the content of the book. One is the account of efforts to transplant Protestant evangelicalism from the east to California, largely under the auspices of the various home mission societies associated with the Baptist, Congregationalist, Presbyterian, and Methodist churches. Leading in this effort were the Methodists whose “church itself was structured precisely for the purpose of evangelization; the entire organization was, in the truest sense, a missionary society.” By 1860, there were 118 California Methodist churches as compared to a total of fifty-five for the other three Protestant groups. The second story is that of the clashing of eastern evangelical values with the realities of life in the sharply different natural and cultural environment of California. Traditional Christian morality comported poorly with the frenzied quest for wealth and the transitory—both physical and psychic—lifestyle of mining communities. Much of this conflict was occasioned by expectations based upon typical nineteenth century understanding of appropriate gender roles. The chapter entitled “The ‘Wondrous Efficacy’ of Womanhood” is richly insightful and stimulating. The third theme is that of the failure of eastern evangelicalism to establish itself in frontier California and the emergence instead of new religious patterns and practices. In a statement which also evidences some of Maffly-Kipp's best writing style, she concludes:

Evangelical religion by the mid-nineteenth century was a creature of a stable, middle-class, eastern, and familial culture. When transplanted to the world of the mining frontier, it resembled a rare and fragile species struggling in the midst of a harsh and uncompromising climate.

The author's purpose is not limited to reporting or even to analyzing the religious culture of frontier California. She contends that this study of the distinctiveness of California religiosity is also revelatory of the characteristics of religion in the eastern part of the nation. Hence, it can be utilized in revisionist work on antebellum American religion in general and on Protestant evangelicalism in particular.

Maffly-Kipp’s book is the product of prodigious research in both secondary and primary sources. In addition to newspapers, periodicals, and books, she has used numerous unpublished manuscript collections of sermons, pamphlets, letters, and diaries. These sources have afforded her extraordinary access to material by and about women. Copious footnotes serve as a guide for other students in the field. Her writing style sometimes
struggles under the weight of her scholarship, but is redeemed by frequent use of illustrative quotations and felicitous phrasing. This work is a significant contribution to deepening understanding of nineteenth century Protestantism. As such, it should be of special interest to Methodists.

GAYLE CARLTON FELTON
Durham, North Carolina


John Wesley’s attitudes toward romance and marriage have been the subject of numerous inquiries. Most of them have examined Wesley’s views from the perspective of his relationships with Sophia Hopkey in Georgia, devoted Methodist follower Grace Murray, and spouse Mary Vazeille. Many find a less attractive side of the Methodist founder’s life revealed in these episodes.

Although Coe necessarily deals with Wesley and Hopkey, Murray, and Vazeille, his interpretation of Wesley’s views on marriage is organized around a comparison of “The Form of Solemnization of Matrimony” in the Book of Common Prayer (BCP) and Wesley’s revision of it in The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America which he sent to his American sisters and brothers in 1784. An appendix shows in parallel columns the 1662 Anglican service and the changes Wesley incorporated in his service. In discussing the BCP Coe provides important and interesting background information on matrimonial liturgies and customs from medieval times to the 18th century. For example, he explains that the wedding ring was placed “on the fourth finger because it was believed that a vein in that finger ran directly to the heart.”

A range of topics is considered in the volume including marriage law, the time and place of the marriage service, wedding sermons and music, nuptial eucharists, factors in choosing a partner, parental consent, family hierarchy, and the role of marriage and the family in the context of Christian commitment. The variety of these subjects exhibits Coe’s intention to include more in his study than simply liturgical concerns. One of the significant matters to which he draws attention is Wesley’s struggle with celibacy for himself and his preachers.

This is a straightforward, clearly written account of Wesley’s principal views on marriage and the liturgy for matrimony. It gives us another window into Wesley’s life and thought on a most important topic.

CHARLES YRIGOYEN, JR.
Madison, New Jersey
With this volume, S T Kimbrough and Oliver Beckerlegge complete their ambitious publication of all the known, yet previously unpublished, poems of Charles Wesley. In the publication of this three-volume work the editors and the Kingswood Books division of Abingdon Press have done Wesley scholars and Methodism in general a wonderful service in making these poems readily available for study, reflection, and research. As one reads these poems, one receives a deeper insight into Charles Wesley the person, and learns much about his temperament, his dissatisfaction with some of the young preachers of the time (“Great God, Who Never Dost Pass By” and “Prayer for the Unconverted Clergy”), his disagreement with his brother John regarding the ordination of clergy for America (all of Section II), his reverence for the music of Handel (“Ode on Handel’s Birthday” and “Written in Handel’s Lessons”), his preference for the harpsichord over the piano (“The Pianoforte: Written in the Year 1783”), and his distaste for the Italianate music so popular in England in the middle of the eighteenth century (“Written in Kelway’s Sonatas” and “Modern Music”).

In reading the poems and studying the book, this writer comes away wishing that the poems had been accompanied by some sort of critical apparatus. Especially desirable would be the indication of variant readings (if any) when the poem occurs in more than one manuscript, complete with an accompanying explanation regarding why a particular reading is to be preferred. For example, in “The Prayer of One Seeking the Truth II”, pp. 206–207, footnote 108 comments that “There are two versions of this poem in MS CW I(p) but both are virtually the same.” It would be nice to know what the differences are, which reading was chosen, and why.

Secondly, this writer wishes that the editors had noted words and letters originally written in the manuscript, but subsequently marked out. Such notes could possibly provide some insight into Charles Wesley’s thought processes and manner of operation in the composition of poems and hymns.

In spite of the limitations mentioned above, the notes which the editors provide are quite helpful and insightful. Not only do Kimbrough and Beckerlegge identify sources for the poems, but they also identify people mentioned in the poems. They also occasionally note variant textual readings when the manuscript has been changed or edited. Also appreciated is the occasional use of the Oxford English Dictionary when questions arise regarding word usage or meaning, as in the use of the word “unsuffer’d” in “After the Trial” and “expecting” in “In Uncertainty.”

Several poems published in Wesley’s lifetime are included in this publication, poems which were inexplicably omitted from George Osborn’s edition of the poetical works of John and Charles Wesley (see “Hymn for Children” and “After a Recovery: Hymn III”).
Also, this reader would have appreciated greater care regarding some of the smaller details in the preparation of the book. For example, in the note for “Ode on Handel’s Birthday,” the editors note that this poem is written on a wrapper addressed: “Rev. Mr. C. Wesley, Chesterfield Street, Marylebone.” My reading of the final place in the address is “Marybone.” They also fail to note that the “Hymn on our Lord’s Resurrection” found on pages 111-113 is found (with some variant readings) in Hymns for our Lord’s Resurrection (London: H. Cock, 1754). [This is supposed to be a reprint of Hymns for our Lord’s Resurrection (London: Strahan, 1746), but I have not verified this regarding the poem in question!]

In addition, greater consistency in the publication of previously published poems or portions of poems would have helped. For example, “For Miss A. D. (September, 1784)” is included because the subsequent poem would be incomplete without it; but the two middle sections of “In Temptation” are omitted because they have been published previously in Osborn’s edition. The omission of the two middle sections of this poem in this edition breaks the line of Charles Wesley’s thought and leaves the present edition of that poem incomplete.

In the publication of this volume of previously unpublished poetry of Charles Wesley, S T Kimbrough and Oliver Beckerlegge have performed a valuable service to the world of Wesley scholarship. While the present edition has its limits and weaknesses as noted above, its existence provides a wealth of material for Wesley scholarship. This volume (and the two previous volumes in the series) are an essential complement to The Works of John Wesley in studying the writings of John and Charles Wesley.

JAMES L. PYATT
Spencer, North Carolina


Mt. Tabor, New Jersey, is one of those little towns that originated as a Methodist camp meeting. It was founded in 1869 as the camp meeting of the Newark Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. That same year the New Jersey legislature granted the community a unique charter, allowing the camp meeting to function as a municipality within its township. The encampment grew quickly. By 1880 women holiness leaders founded the Women’s Union Holiness Camp Meeting, which met on the grounds for several years, and in 1888 the National Camp Meeting Association for the Promotion of Holiness conducted the annual encampment. By the turn of the century, however, Mt. Tabor had begun to change
into a summer religious colony. This step made possible the metamorphosis from camp meeting to community, a process which took half a century to complete.

Camp Tabor celebrates the 125th anniversary of Mt. Tabor Camp Meeting, and is a welcome addition to camp meeting studies. Here is a reprint of the scarce 1874 edition of Mary Norris’ book, which originally appeared as Camp Tabor, A Story of Child Life in the Woods. The novel, part of the author’s “Ben and Bentie Series,” looks at the 1871 session of Mt. Tabor through the eyes of four children, and presents a simple, humorous and provocative perspective on nineteenth century camp meeting style religion. It is fun to read. The thirty-three page introduction by Robert Drew Simpson and Megan D. Simpson is a fine synopsis of Camp Tabor history, a biography of Mary Harriott Norris and an analysis of her book, Camp Tabor. Overall, this present volume is a fitting tribute to a camp meeting site which has become an historic shrine to northern New Jersey Methodists.

KENNETH O. BROWN
Hazleton, Pennsylvania