

and white, embraced well into the next century.

The trajectory of Claflin University reflected the developing, changing ideas of how white South Carolinians envisioned both black education and modern education. The university's positive track record of graduating engineers, scientists, and farmers compelled the State's white leaders to embrace modernity with the creation of Clemson Agricultural College in 1893. Claflin's successful Normal College supplied Governor Benjamin Tillman with the political capital to build a permanent home for Winthrop Training School for (white) teachers. In both cases, the success stories of African-American graduates convinced white leaders to embrace more progressive education for themselves, and to exert more control over black education. In the twentieth century, Claflin would once again remake itself. Partially because of leadership changes within the university, but also because it shared the city of Orangeburg with South Carolina Agricultural and Mechanical Institute (now South Carolina State), Claflin returned to its roots as a liberal arts college.

Priscilla Pope-Levison, *Building the Old Time Religion: Women Evangelists in the Progressive Era*. New York: New York UP, 2014. 270pp. \$75 cloth/\$25 paper.

Priscilla Pope-Levison provides an important revisionist history of Christianity during the Progressive Era. By exploring a range of largely forgotten women evangelists from the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries, Pope-Levison shows how these individuals created new churches, pioneered techniques in popular evangelicalism, and engaged in a range of urban-based mission work. While often vigorously opposed by male church leaders, these women “proved indefatigable as church planters, denominational executives, training school principals, rescue home matrons, and urban mission founders” (175). In addition to challenging notions of patriarchy in American Christianity, they “rank among the first American women to build—and lead—mixed-gender religious institutions” (181).

With the exception of Martha Moore Avery, a Catholic laywoman and the principal founder of the Catholic Truth Guild, Pope-Levison’s subjects mostly emerged out of the late nineteenth-century holiness movement. These evangelists include Alma White, founder of the Pillar of Fire Church; Florence Crawford, founder of the Apostolic Faith Mission (a pentecostal group that split off from William Seymour’s Azusa Street movement); and Bishop Mary Lena Lewis Tate, founder of the African American Church of the Living God. Pope-Levison discusses the similar career trajectories of these women, including how they overcame male resistance—frequently from their own spouses—to follow their calls to ministry. The book’s primary subjects were often raised in mainstream Methodist churches but reached the conclusion that this tradition had lost its zeal for saving souls. As Alma White observed, Methodism had become “an old painted hulk, with no power, no fire, and no steam” (73).

Like better known Methodist women such as Lucy Rider Meyer, these women played a significant role in founding training schools, rescue missions, and a range of other evangelistic institutions centered upon urban outreach. Unlike other women’s groups associated with the Progressive Era social gospel movement, women such as White, Crawford, and Tate were rooted in the belief that Christianity’s objective was not chiefly to create a better society, but to convert individuals. “Understaffed and chronically underfunded, they nevertheless contributed to the wave of institution building that swept across America and American Christianity during the Progressive Era” (171).

Pope-Levison succeeds in recovering the stories of important women evangelicals previously ignored by most historians. At the same time, she

acknowledges that these women left behind an ambivalent legacy. The commitment that drove them to create new church institutions blinded them to the need to mentor younger women to one day succeed them—reflected by the fact that all of the holiness-pentecostal churches created by these evangelists would never have another woman as their principal leader. However, Pope-Levison demonstrates how these women forged models of leadership that contributed to the success of later twentieth-century women evangelists, notably Aimee Semple McPherson.

Pope-Levison has written a monograph that contributes significantly to our understanding of American religious history and American Wesleyanism. It provides an important window into interpreting the development of twentieth-century popular evangelicalism that places women at the center of that history.

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*Perfecting Perfection: Essays in Honour of Henry D. Rack*, edited by Robert Webster. Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 2015. 312pp. \$37.00.

When Henry D. Rack, formerly Bishop Fraser Senior Lecturer in Ecclesiastical History in The University of Manchester, published *Reasonable Enthusiast: John Wesley and the Rise of Methodism* in 1989, he secured his place in an elite pantheon of Wesley scholars including names like Curnock and Telford, Baker, and Heitzenrater. Many had been awaiting a biography like this one, and no other attempt to portray Wesley up to the present time has since surpassed it. His subsequent contributions to the study of Methodist history, and the early Methodist “experience” in particular, including his volume on *The Methodist Societies in The Works of John Wesley*, only secure his reputation in a more permanent fashion. So this festschrift in his honor could not be more fitting or well-deserved.

The editor, Robert Webster, an Oxford-trained student of Methodism, noted for his work on *Methodism and the Miraculous* (2012), assembled a team of contributors second to none to honor their colleague. The thirteen essays included in this anthology—the work of eminent scholars with immediately recognizable names such as Watson, Heitzenrater, Meadows, Wigger, Campbell, and Wellings—span from Arminius to Dominic Wildthorne, deal with Wesley’s sermons as well as the spirituality of the early Methodist preachers, examine central Wesleyan concerns such as the doctrine of justification and the importance of holy conferencing, and explore territory so widely divergent as the US Southwestern frontier and the Anglo-Catholicism of the Victorian age *vis-à-vis* the Methodist heritage. This volume is most certainly wide-ranging in scope, but it also focuses on scholarly concerns that, in many instances, open up new arenas for further research. All of this work honors Dr. Rack’s life and legacy well.

Some of these essays reflect the long-standing interests of the authors

with regard to particular, even unique, areas of study—material and concerns in which they have immersed themselves over a long period of time. To illustrate this important aspect of the volume, the most noted biographer of Francis Asbury, John Wigger, provides an analysis of the relationship between Wesley and his subject and how this shaped Methodism in its American context. David Lowes Watson reflects on the formative influence of Robert Barnes (one of his favorite Puritan theologians) on Wesley’s doctrine of justification. Phil Meadows addresses the topic of mission spirituality, one of the issues that, in his view, remains of vital importance to contemporary Methodism. In similar fashion, Dick Heitzenrater helps the church reclaim the Wesleyan concept of “holy conferencing” as an important spiritual practice. Bishop Streiff, long concerned to enhance the preaching capacity of his Methodist clergy, explores “plain truth for plain people” as a relevant hermeneutic for homiletics today. Stephen Gunter continues to explore a decades-long passion for Arminius. Other contributors explore more obscure or unexplored themes such as the Oxford Movement (Peter Nockles), Anglo-Catholicism (Martin Wellings), and Charismatic renewal (Robert Webster), or the American Southwest frontier (Ted Campbell), witchcraft (Owen Davies), and medicine on demand (Deborah Madden). Clive Field provides a helpful bibliography of Dr. Rack’s principal publications.

I remain somewhat unconvinced that the title, *Perfecting Perfection*, captures the essence of the volume in any helpful way. Only three of the chapters address this central Wesleyan theme in any sustained way, and then only tangentially. Given the disparity of topics throughout, the volume somewhat cries out for an organizing principle. It falls into the trap of so many *festscriften* in this regard, namely, a book that presents a collection of great essays which have no internal or discernable relationship to each other. Regardless, this valuable book offers the student of Methodism an outstanding collection of essays that will both stimulate thinking and promote the exploration of new terrain related to the Wesleyan/Methodist heritage. Nothing could please Dr. Rack more than this.

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D. R. Wilson, *Church and Chapel in Industrializing Society: Anglican Ministry and Methodism in Shropshire, 1760-1785*. New York: Peter Lang, 2017. 337pp. \$99.95.

D. R. Wilson has written a thoughtful, exceedingly well-researched volume on the ministry of John Fletcher in Madeley Parish. The only quibble I have with this work is its title, which suggests a study of the whole of Shropshire rather than of just one parish therein, and does not mention Fletcher. One fears that Wilson’s fine work will be overlooked or misunderstood as a result.

Madeley Parish is located near the epicenter of the Industrial Revolution,

an explosion of technological innovation that transformed the eighteenth-century British economy from an agrarian focus to a manufacturing one. Simultaneously, tens of thousands of English citizens migrated from farms and farming occupations to the industrializing West Midlands where they mined coal, forged iron and iron products, wove textiles, produced elegant cutlery and pottery. Fletcher's ministry in Madeley Parish, which encompassed Shropshire coal fields as well as the forges and furnaces of the Darby iron dynasty at Coalbrookdale, occurred as these dramatic changes were underway. Thus, the population of Madeley Parish upon Fletcher's assumption of office in 1760 was already "four times larger than the seating capacity of the church." (234).

The conventional wisdom has long been that Methodism was wildly successful in the West Midlands because of the Church of England's failure to respond to the rapidly changing circumstances along with the indolence of its clergy. With Madeley as the poster child for Britain's internal combustion, one might expect to be offered the finest examples to prove that thesis, but it does not. Wilson credits the creative, determined pastoral ministry of John Fletcher and his ability to "assimilate evangelical emphases and methods" (234) into his parish work for, instead, increasing Madeley communicants from about thirty per week in 1760 to more than 200 per week at Fletcher's death in 1785. Wilson terms Fletcher's successful program "church extension" (95). Fletcher pursued a strategy familiar to students of early Methodism: not only did he preach at Sunday morning worship, but he also added twice-weekly preaching services in the outskirts of his parish where they were more accessible to the laborers who worked twelve-hour shifts in factories that churned seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day. Further, Fletcher preached in his own vicarage and out of doors near the mine shafts and foundry gates. He engaged in a limited itineracy among Madeley and nearby parishes, including pulpit exchanges with those vicars who were willing. He established societies, Anglican small group meetings nearly identical to the Methodist societies of John Wesley; and he engaged in systematic house-to-house visitation across the breadth of his parish.

Despite Wesley's repeated attempts to corral Fletcher into full affiliation with Methodism, even dangling the post-Wesley leadership mantle before him, Fletcher remained an Anglican. Wilson argues that Fletcher offered the best of both church and chapel to his parishioners, grounded in serious attention to catechism, through which he maintained Anglican orthodoxy despite energetic competition for the unchurched or barely churched from Baptists, Catholics, and Quakers. Fletcher's respectful engagement with Quaker preacher Abiah Darby offers a role model modern United Methodists torn to the edge of schism would do well to adopt.

Wilson explicates Fletcher's desire to create a formal Methodist branch of the Church of England, an *ecclesiolae in ecclesia* through which Methodism could go about "reforming the church from within in order to 'provoke our superiors to godly jealousy and a complete reformation'" (153). He believed that Methodism would be most effective working within the framework of

the Church of England with its national parish system, while returning the established church to a primitive Methodistical Christianity of pure doctrine and strict discipline.

Wilson also provides generous gifts to the academy with his detailed appendices, which include a compendium of Fletcher's Sermons, brief biographical sketches of a number of key characters in this story, and a Calendar of Fletcher's correspondence. This tome—despite its title—is truly of model of scholarship that adds significantly to the literature on John Fletcher and the relationship between John Wesley's Methodism and its mother communion.

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David W. Scott, *Mission as Globalization*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2016. 207pp. \$90.00.

By focusing on three decisive decades of the Methodist missionary enterprise in Southeast Asia, David Scott has added a meticulously researched and delicately stitched history of fervent evangelism, ecclesiastical growth and institutional development. Scott artfully places Methodist missionary expansion in Malaysia and Singapore in the context of a rapidly changing socioeconomic and political environment emphasizing their interconnectivity and mutually reinforcing patterns. The dialectic of these transformative impulses led to mutually reinforcing configurations of adjustment and adaptation. These dynamic forces rose swiftly in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth and propelled the internationalization of both the church and the region

Scott takes the reader on a fascinating journey into the interplay between the missionary aspirations of a church that embraced Wesley's assertion that the "world is our parish" and the multicultural world of competing languages and ethnicities of the outer reaches of the British colonialism. Malaysia was poised to become a victim and an engine of globalization as the demands of the empire became more urgent as demand for the region's resources exploded with the technological innovation and new inventions. None were more prominent than the automobile fueling demand for rubber—which permitted vast concentrations of wealth and spurred migration flows.

Eschewing more traditional analyses of economic and political drivers of change, Scott opts instead to view globalization as a "multifaceted phenomenon with economic, political, cultural, religious, technological, environmental and other dimensions, all of which exhibit complicated interactions with one another" (xvii). It is into the maelstrom of indigenous and external modernizing forces that he introduces the Methodist church's mission outreach and impact. By choosing this optic, Scott makes an original contribution to mission studies by providing remarkable insights into the unfolding of the

Methodist church's methodical movement from the U.S. temperate climes (especially Minnesota) into the tropics of equatorial Malaysia.

The conceptual device Scott uses is metaphor. The backdrop for interpreting the Methodist experience are the massive secular forces dismantling barriers and erasing boundaries—physical, emotional and psychological. Scott describes a new imagination that was gripping the world through the processes of cultural dissemination, capitalism, imperialism, migration and evangelization.

The primary institution at the center of this interplay with secular forces was the Malaysia Mission. Within the scope of Scott's purview, the Malaysia Mission (MM) and its parent body—the Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC)—were not only strategic beneficiaries of globalization pulsating across the region, but also contributed to it. This was made abundantly clear through the adroit use of six global developments that serve as symbolic touchstones elucidating the interplay of church and society as follows: Methodist mission and Methodism as (1) global vision, (2) as global culture, (3) media conglomerate, (4) multinational corporations, (5) the MM as franchise system, and (6) migratory network.

Each contributed to the acceleration of globalization, but perhaps none as decisive as the media platforms emanating from the Malaysia Mission. Scott accurately declares that media is a purveyor of culture and describes the MEC as a "media conglomerate" (83). Fired by evangelistic conviction, the MEC produced a wide variety of publications, including newspapers, books, tracts, reports that were tailored to both educate, equip and motivate growing numbers of clergy and congregants. They were an adjunct that helped deepen English as the *lingua franca* of both business and faith. The Malaysia Mission's principle media instrument was the Malaysia Message that served as a critical linkage between the sending agencies in the U.S. and the field operations. The news included everything from church polity to enlightened discourse about Wesleyan and holiness theology.

Having come to this project knowing very little about the status of mission in Southeast Asia at the turn of the twentieth century, I was swept away by the scope and depth of this historical survey. Not only was I immersed in the macro-realities of a complex region undergoing profound transnational connections, but also of the talent, commitment, and courage of my missionary forebears and the people their ministries touched. Scott's innovative approach to consider the missional experience in the context of globalization worked. Hopefully it will encourage other scholars to follow in his footsteps.

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*The Spiritual Journals of Warren Felt Evans: From Methodism to Mind Cure*, edited by Catherine L. Albanese. Bloomington and Indianapolis:

Indiana UP, 2016. 305pp. \$45.00.

On January 29 [1857], Warren Felt Evans noted he had “been reading Baxter’s *Saints Rest*, and have reaped some spiritual profit . . . on leading a heavenly life on earth.” Adding further affirmation of and quoting seventeen lines from Baxter, Evans affirmed:

The above was drawn from the depth of his heart. How often has my own soul been ravished with delight, when I have been transported myself from this dark world, to the heavenly sphere, where I have seemed to walk with God high in “the climes of bliss.” Upon my bed in the darkness of night, I have bathed my soul in waves of celestial light. My soul at times has been transported to the suburbs of the New Jerusalem. In this heavenly contemplation it is important, as far as may be done, to banish all material, sensuous images from the mind, that our foretaste of heaven may have less of earth in it, and more of the pure spiritual bliss enjoyed by glorified spirits. The more complete our abstraction from things seen and temporal the more divine will be the bliss of the soul in this sublime exercise (85-86).

The above excerpt from Evans’s journals perhaps best captures the life-trajectory of this once-Methodist preacher, characterizes the entirety of his now-finely edited journal, and provides incentive, perhaps the imperative, to read Catherine Albanese’s superb introduction. Other itinerating preachers certainly from time-to-time scribbled in their worries about, assessment of, endeavors for, and progress on their spiritual journey. But fifteen years and 200 pages of such introspection, engagement with the Spirit, and flight God-ward? Highly, highly unusual, strange, bizarre was Evans’s progress towards and exhaustive focus on what he fittingly entitled his first (and autobiographical) book, *Happy Islands; Or, Paradise Restored* (1860). Evans “experienced” God on spiritual waters in his land-based sea journey. Earthly waves might assume tidal proportions. Evans floated. Other preachers rode horses, visited house-to-house, described their circuits, and recorded who preached and who exhorted. Evans swam towards, with, for and buoyed by the Spirit.

Evans journaled spirituality. Seven terse lines cover his son’s induction into the Federal army and another line, a month later, noted Abraham Lincoln’s 1861 proclamation of a “day of the national fast” (180). Or consider Evans’s coverage of the month-long and momentous 1860 (Buffalo) General Conference which he attended as a delegate. In ten-and-a-half pages of journal, he devoted but six lines to the Conference. A reflection captures where he thought the nation ought to be led: “I can but think it would be far better for the kingdom of God on earth, if all the intellectual power, which the General Conference brings together, could be consecrated to the promotion of the spiritual life & inward holiness of the Church” (158). The rest of this 1860 journaling, line-after-line, attended to spiritual conferencing as with God’s guiding him to Niagara Falls and around Lake Erie. On the latter, he proclaimed, “The lake in its unruffled stillness is like the sea of Galilee after the rod of Christ had hushed the storm to silence” (163). A second book of his, *Divine Order in the Process of Full Salvation*, also published in 1860, reflected Evans’s conviction—conveyed as the final entry for the General

Conference dates but for another trip away on the St. Lawrence—that “The world is far and beautiful, and is everywhere radiant with the wisdom and love of God” (169).

Lay preacher by 1839, deacon in 1844, elder in 1847; college-educated; influenced by the holiness enterprise of Phoebe Palmer; widely, widely read; sometime instructor at the Biblical Institute (Concord, NH—BUST predecessor); and eventually heavily influenced by Emanuel Swedenborg, Evans surrendered his Methodist ordination in 1864 and accepted re-baptism into the Church of the New Jerusalem. Thereafter he would be a key leader, along with Phineas P. Quimby, of the New Thought movement. Furthering the cause, Evans contributed eight more books to the higher life, its curative power, and the spiritual landscape through which believers might travel. For a sense of Evans’s own tracking into this heaven-on-earth and his incredible engagement with the array of classic spirituality texts, do read Albanese’s very fine “Introduction.”

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