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VICTORIA LIBRARY WESLEYANA

A collection of John Wesley's writings, nearly complete and rich in first editions, is one of the most valued possessions of the Victoria University Library. The 24th of May will be the two-hundredth anniversary of Wesley's conversion and it is therefore fitting that this number of *The Bulletin* should contain an account of the Wesley collection.

A description of the Wesley volumes has been written for *The Bulletin* by the Rev. F. Louis Barber, M.A., Ph.D. Dr. Barber is Librarian in Victoria University and has for many years been associated with the University of Toronto. The interest which he has shown in securing material of historical value has greatly strengthened the resources of the library and increased its value to students who are engaged in research. He knows the Wesley material thoroughly, and his account is full of interest and information.

THE RICHARD GREEN COLLECTION OF WESLEYANA

By F. LOUIS BARBER

When thirty million Methodists are celebrating on May 24 of this year the two-hundredth anniversary of John Wesley's change of heart from dogmatism and ritualism—as exemplified in his life in Oxford and in Georgia—to the beginning of a career of reformation—reformation of himself and his country—it is appropriate that one should give attention to one of the most outstanding features of his life work—his publications. While he was travelling five thousand miles and preaching five hundred sermons a year over a long life-time he was at the same time writing stories, pamphlets, and letters; publishing scientific, philosophical, and theological volumes; compiling dictionaries, commentaries on the New Testament; publishing *The Arminian* magazine; collecting and publishing his "Christian Library"; and keeping a journal. These works collected make a liberal library—large enough in itself to comprise a life's work.

The significance of Wesley's writings appears the greater when it is realized that he wrote under conditions that were most unfavourable for literary work. He was never rich and had few of the comforts of life.

Though the profits from his many publications amounted to £30,000, he gave much to the needy, and died a poor man.

Daily travelling by horseback or carriage would have made writing impossible for any ordinary man. Wesley, however, found that his travels were a help rather than a hindrance, for they gave him nine or ten hours a day of solitude. It was in this way, apparently, that he found time to write in spite of the pressing demands of a busy life. Full responsibility for the executive work of a growing movement, together with an exacting pastorate in a parish as wide as England, were his main pre-occupations. There were other lesser ones. A boys' school at Kingswood near Bristol, which he organized and conducted, was a continual source of irritation to him. The discipline he required in the school may provide the explanation for his own prodigious industry, for the scholars were required to rise at 4 a.m., never to play, and to be under constant supervision. One part of his personal life, too, may be mentioned as a distraction making sustained labour difficult. He had five love affairs, the final one resulting in an unhappy marriage that lasted thirty years. Even such problems as these increased rather than hindered his writing, for he seems to have put something on paper about every subject that touched or interested him.

Lastly his frail body proved a handicap, and he refers in his journal as many as sixty-nine times to illnesses, including tuberculosis and a major operation. On one occasion, at fifty-one years of age, he went to Bristol to die, having written his own epitaph. To say these things only increases the wonder that he accomplished so much in the work of publication.

THE VICTORIA COLLECTION

We are fortunate in Toronto in possessing one of the finest first edition collections of Wesley's works. It was made by the Rev. Richard Green (at one time Governor of Didsbury College, England) and presented in 1921 to Victoria University Library by Sir John Eaton. Green was a prominent authority on Wesley's writings, and wrote a bibliography based on what he refers to in the preface as "his own almost complete collection of the earliest editions of all the Works published by John and Charles Wesley". The collection

consists of 608 volumes and 407 titles, of which 246 are first editions.

The books which he collected were arranged by Green with great care and they remain in the Victoria Library in the condition in which he left them. The collection is almost complete, since only ten titles have not been included. Of the 417 items which constitute the complete publications of John and Charles Wesley and which are listed in his bibliography, Green says: "The works are placed in the precise order in which they were published, as far as that order, by the most careful enquiry, can be ascertained. The only variations being that, for convenience of reference, the Poetical Works issued in any year are placed at the end of the list for the year." The collection is, therefore, in excellent condition for use by any student of Wesley or his period.

OTHER COLLECTIONS

Some idea of the extent to which this collection is unique may be gained by comparing it with Wesleyana that have been gathered together elsewhere. There are fine collections of first and early editions of Wesleyana in the United States in Drew Theological Seminary Library (with 82 first editions); in Garrett Biblical Institute Library (with 123 first editions), and in Wesleyan University Library (with 43 first editions). The second mentioned is particularly strong in having a large list of the various editions of many items.

In England there are the Wesley Museum (City Road), the Mission House Museum (originally known as the Methodist Museum of Antiquities), collections at Didsbury, Richmond, Headingley, Ranmoor, and Victoria Park College, and private collections, such as those of the Colman family and M. E. S. Lamplough.

The Richard Green collection contains many valuable items. For instance, there is a thin volume entitled *A Narrative of a Remarkable Transaction in the Library of John Wesley* which is his own account of his relations with Grace Murray in 1748. There are four and a half pages of poetry at the end of the book, recounting the prose narrative. (The poetry, in the original manuscript which is in the British Museum, is in John Wesley's handwriting.) The volume in the Green collection is a first printed edition, 1848. The tale of the theft of the manuscript from Wesley's papers by Noah Vazeille (his step-son) and its ultimate discovery and publication is itself a romantic story.

PAMPHLETS

As a pamphleteer, too, Wesley was the author of many works. When newspapers and the popular press were beginning to have general use for the first time, Wesley entered this field. He covered a wide range of subjects in these essays; slavery, the American War of

Independence, the liquor trade, drunkenness, riches, poverty, and vice all received attention from his busy pen.

Though very little is said by any of Wesley's biographers concerning his views on the American War of Independence, there are at least three published documents on the subject. Victoria Library has first editions of all. One is a letter to Lord Viscount H——e on his *Conduct of the American War*, 1781, and signed "The Friend of Your Country"; the second, a pamphlet, *Reflections on the Rise and Progress of the American Rebellion*, 1780, was published anonymously and by some it is claimed that Joseph Galloway is the author of this pamphlet (see *Proceedings of Wesley Historical Society*, vol. IX, p. 5); the last, the famous *Calm Address to Our American Colonies*, 1775, caused the Methodists to become objects of suspicion and the personal safety of their preachers often to be in danger in America. This *Calm Address* is really a re-writing of Dr. Johnson's pamphlet entitled *Taxation no Tyranny*. The reason for its unpopularity in America can be seen from the following argument (Sec. 6): "You are the descendents of men who either had no votes or resigned them by emigration. You have therefore exactly what your ancestors left you: not a vote in making laws, nor in *chusing* [choosing] legislators, but the happiness of being protected by laws, and the duty of obeying them."

PHILOSOPHY

When English philosophy was presented by John Locke, Hume, Berkeley, Peter Browne, and the theory of evolution was incipient—as seen in Buffon and Lamarck—Wesley wrote a work on philosophy and natural history, *Survey of God in Creation*, 1763. This work is of special interest though few of his present-day followers have ever read it—or even know about it. Wesley used to read and expound it to his preachers during the latter part of his life. On the shelves in Victoria Library are (1) the first edition, 1763, (2) the second edition, 1770, (3) the third edition, 1777, and later editions. The bulk of this work refers to physical science: astronomy, physiology, botany, anthropology, and, as I have said above, an exposition of an incipient theory of biological evolution after Buffon and Lamarck. The latter part of the work deals with mental and moral philosophy after Peter Browne, who followed John Locke and Bishop Butler. Incidentally in this work Wesley expounds his belief in the *immortality* of animals, because of their suffering, love, and memory.

LETTERS AND JOURNALS

The most valuable parts of Wesley's library are his letters and journals, and as to the latter—"the most extraordinary journal of evangelistic labour ever published"—the printed *Extracts* begin with his embarking

for Georgia, 1735, and continue to the entry for Monday, June 28, 1790: "This day I enter into my eighty-eighth year. For above eighty-six years I found none of the infirmities of old age; my eyes did not wax dim, neither was my natural strength abated. But last August I found almost a sudden change, my eyes were so dim that no glasses would help me."

The first edition of the first volume is undated but the last paragraph was written in February, 1738, and the next number of the Journal was published in 1740. The last number (first edition, 1791) has this note: "There are unavoidable chasms in this Journal, owing to some parts being mislaid: and it is probable that many of the proper names of persons and places are not properly spelt; as the whole of the manuscript was so ill written as to be scarcely legible."

Victoria University has these *Extracts* complete in first or early editions as well as in later editions. Stevens (VI:5) says: "Wesley's Journals are the most entertaining productions of his pen. . . . Besides their historical value they are replete with curious incidents. . . . For more than half a century they keep us not only weekly, but almost daily in the company of the great man, in his travels, his studies, and his public labours."

It is these Journals that reveal the facts upon which modern writers base their histories and biographies which have made the life of Wesley real to present-day readers.

A LETTER ON TEA

There are also published four groups of letters and twenty-four single ones, and all except two letters are included in this collection. The famous letter written *To a Friend on Tea* is here. In it Wesley gives many reasons why the drinking of strong green tea should be abandoned. After talking "largely" for two years with his leaders, he came to the conclusion it would be a great saving in health, time, and money if the poorer people among the Methodists would give up the use of tea. This opinion might have a new significance to-day in the light of the recent government tax on tea. Wesley describes the effect on himself when he abstained from tea after using it twenty-six years, as follows: "The first three days my head ached, more or less, all day long, and I was half asleep from morning to night. The third day my memory failed almost entirely." He persisted, however, and found a "remedy in prayer".

Victoria Library also possesses three original letters of Wesley one of which is kept in a volume of portraits, and original letters of all the presidents of Wesleyan conferences in England from, and including, John Wesley, to 1900.

"PHYSICK"

One cannot close this brief account of the Wesley collection without mentioning the works on medicine

which he wrote at a time when medicine had hardly passed the stage of quackery. His *Primitive Physick* was a compendium of the best of medical knowledge of his time—though some of it sounds positively funny to-day. There are hundreds of interesting prescriptions, such as "To prevent tooth-ach, rub the teeth often with tobacco ashes" and "To cure tooth-ach, put a clove of garlick into the ear". Victoria Library possesses various editions, including the first (1747), second (1754), fifth (1755), eighth (1759), twenty-first (1785), and thirty-sixth (1849).

The numerous editions indicate its popularity. It was part of his effort to better the conditions of those who lived in the poorer parts of the great cities that were growing in England. He had established a dispensary for the poor at the Foundery in 1746—a year before the first edition of *Primitive Physick*. Of the 36 editions no less than 23 were published during his lifetime. This work did not go without protest. In 1776 a Dr. Hewes wrote *An Examination of Rev. Mr. John Wesley's Primitive Physick* "to prevent the public from being imposed upon, by an injudicious collection of pretended remedies".

Of another item called *The Desideratum; or Electricity made Plain and Useful by a Lover of Mankind and of Common Sense*, Wesley says: "Having procured an apparatus on purpose, I ordered several persons to be electrified who were ill of various disorders: some of whom found an immediate, some a gradual cure. From this time I appointed, first, some hours in every week, and afterwards an hour in every day, wherein any that desired it, might try the virtue of this surprising medicine. Two or three years after, our patients were so numerous, that we were obliged to divide them: so part were electrified in Southwark, part at the Foundery; others near St. Paul's, and the rest near the Sevendials: the same method we have taken ever since. And to this day, while hundreds, perhaps thousands, have received unspeakable good, I have not known one man, woman or child, who has received any hurt thereby. So that when I hear any talk of the danger of being electrified, (especially if they are medical men who talk so) I cannot but impute it to great want either of sense or honesty." One machine is still on exhibition in the British Museum.

SERMONS

There are here also, Wesley's first edition of his collected works, 1771, in 32 volumes, the second compiled by Joseph Benson, at the direction of the Conference, 1808, in sixteen volumes, and the third edition of fourteen volumes compiled by Thomas Jackson. We should mention the first edition of Wesley's "Christian Library" of 50 volumes, 1749, as well as the second edition of thirty volumes, 1819 to 1827; the *Poetical*

Works of John and Charles Wesley, thirteen volumes, collected by the Rev. George Osborn, 1872; *Minutes of the Irish Conferences*; and a revised edition of the English Conferences.

It is significant that Green was able to collect all of Wesley's *Sermons on Several Occasions* from 1748 to 1788, in every case first editions except one, as follows: volume I, 1854, 2nd edition; volume II, 1748, 1st edition; volume III, 1750, 1st edition; volume IV, 1760, 1st edition; volumes V, VI, VII, VIII, 1788, 1st edition.

The Explanatory Notes on the New Testament, one of Wesley's principal works, was first published in 1755 in three volumes, with following editions in 1757, 1760, 1768, 1788. Victoria Library possesses copies of the first, third, and fifth editions. This copy of the third edition is interesting because it is inscribed in Wesley's handwriting "Auctoria donum Joanni Doty Feb. 1771, Londini". There is a covering letter, 1842, stating that John Wesley personally gave this volume to John Doty, the husband of the writer of this letter.

VOLUMES MISSING

Victoria University wishes to make its material on Wesley as extensive as possible. Besides this collection, the library owns 325 volumes of Wesley's works, 75 volumes about the Wesleys, 570 volumes on Methodism, and complete files of *Minutes of Conference*, *Disciplines*, periodicals, and *Proceedings of the Wesleyan Historical Society*.

Of the ten items lacking in the Green collection it will be of interest to note each one, in the hope that the Library may yet possess some of them:

1. Number 7 is a *Collection of Psalms and Hymns*, 1738. There is a copy in Didsbury and one in the Archbishop's Library, Lambeth. No others are known.

2. *Hymns for Children* (no. 99) is contained in number 40. In this volume the children's hymn "Gentle Jesus, meek and mild, Look upon a little Child" appears for the first time. Of the nine hymns and four prayers published separately as number 99, however, Green says "I have never seen a copy". In a note written later Green says: "Whilst these pages have been passing through the press a copy of this pamphlet has come into my hands. It is anonymous—I am compelled to think that this tract was *not* compiled by Wesley." He gives his reasons for this judgment.

3. Every trace seems to have been lost of *A Word to a Methodist*, written by John Wesley in 1748 (no. 109). "It is not even known whether the Dublin edition was in Welsh or English."

4. *A Word to those Freemen of the Established Church who make the Scriptures the One Rule of their Faith and Practice* (no. 180) was printed in 1756. The only known

copy is in the Library of the Methodist Book Room, London.

5. Number 205, *Select Hymns, with Tunes Annexed, Designed Chiefly for the Use of the People called Methodists*, London, 1761, is supposed to be in the Green collection but was not found. The contents, however, are in the succeeding numbers.

6. Of *A Letter to the Reverend Mr. Fleury*, Dublin, 1771, Green says, "I have not seen an original copy of this". In this letter replying to objections to lay preaching Wesley quotes the whole of number 110, *A Letter to a Clergyman*.

7. Wesley's *Defence of the Minutes of Conference, 1770, Relating to Calvinism* was printed for private circulation, 1771, but never published. "I have never seen a copy of this", writes Green.

8. *Proposals for Printing by Subscription The Arminian Magazine*, consisting of extracts and original treatises on Universal Redemption (no. 322). See copy of the proposals in Tyerman's *Life of Wesley*, vol. III, pp. 281-2.

9. The so-called number 325 note "is in no sense an additional work, nor is there anything to distinguish it from the first editions 1766 (no. 238), except a few verbal alterations. It is the last of a few revisions, and the title, as above (*A Plain Account of Christian Perfections, as believed and taught by the Rev. John Wesley, from the year 1725 to the year 1777*) is used in all subsequent editions".

10. *A Letter to Mr. John Whittingham* is a broadsheet, 1780, in which Wesley proved his point in replying to a broadsheet by Whittingham which charged Wesley with falsehood in his statement, "the Council of Constance avows that no faith is to be kept with heretics". "A copy of the broadsheet is in the Allan Library."

WESLEY'S HYMN TUNES

The following tunes appeared in the *Foundery Tune Book* (1742) or in *Sacred Harmony*. They were used and approved by John Wesley himself. In each case, the number given here is that of the hymn in *The Hymnary*, United Church of Canada.

Old 113th (Lucerne), No. 10; Winchester New, No. 85; Old 112th (Vater Unser), No. 22; Hanover, No. 21; Easter Hymn, No. 105; St. Matthew, No. 76; St. Mary, No. 279; Burford, No. 227; Old 23rd, No. 272; Surrey (Carey's), No. 312; Savannah, No. 292.

AN EXHIBITION

During the month of May an exhibition of Wesleyana is on display in Victoria University Library. Samples of the collection, autograph letters, and a number of interesting Wesleyan souvenirs are placed on view, and friends of the Library are invited to attend.