

*On the origin of the Primitive Methodist Connexion,
with notices of the origin of the Wesleyan Connexion*

**ON THE ORIGIN OF THE PRIMITIVE METHODIST CONNEXION,
WITH NOTICES OF THE ORIGIN OF THE WESLEYAN CONNEXION**

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Given the detail and content of the text it is assumed that it was written by the editor and co-founder of Primitive Methodism, Hugh Bourne.

Chapter 1.

Introduction

The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all that have pleasure therein; and in tracing the openings of Divine Providence, our faith is strengthened, and our souls are edified. And it now seems we owe it to posterity to give Him some account of the circumstances, which, undesigned of man, issued in the origin of what is called the Primitive Methodist Connexion.

Its beginning was small, and its prospects, humanly speaking, were low; but the height to which Divine Providence has since raised it, has induced inquiries relative to its first movements; and different writers, following fancies, or led by vague reports, have published accounts wide of the truth; an instance of which may be seen in the Wesleyan Magazine for July, 1835, page 519. The writer there states, that in the year 1812, a division took place among the Wesleyans at Tunstall, nearly to half of the Society, and that those who left, formed themselves into a separate body, and afterwards assumed the name of Primitive Methodists. How the writer got this information we know not; there being surely many respectable Wesleyans at Tunstall, who, of their own knowledge, could have informed him that his statement was wide of all historical truth.

Now it must be but a small thing with the P. Methodists to be judged of man's judgment, and the mistakes of such writers make them neither better nor worse in the sight of God, for they still have to live by faith, and perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord.

But still it may be deemed a duty to use due means to prevent misrepresentation. And further it is our opinion that a split or division is hardly ever owned of the Lord; and if the P. M. Connexion had originated in a split or division, it hardly could have risen to its present height: we know of no split or division, that has risen to an equal height; and other communities have got thousands of the fruits of its labours. And a historical account of its first movements will show it to have been as really an original, as was Mr. Wesley's, But in order to throw light upon the subject, we shall first give some account of the origin, or first rise of the Wesleyan Connexion.

Chapter 2.

On Methodism. – The Waldenses. – On revivals and their failures. – Mr. Wesley established faith in God, and sound morality. – He was trained up by his mother. – His father a high churchman. – John and Charles strike out a new course. – FIRST RISE of Methodism. – The Mr. Wesleys in Georgia. – The Moravians. – The second rise of Methodism. – Mr. Wesley returns to England, meets with P. Bohler. – On justification by faith. – Third rise of Methodism, May 1, 1738.

Methodism, so called, has been noted for its stability, and its extensive spread. And it is a natural enquiry, ‘How have these ends been obtained?’ We answer, by promoting faith in God, and establishing the law through faith.

This may be illustrated by the history of the Waldenses in the vallies of Piedmont, in the Northern and North-Western parts of Italy. In these vallies the gospel appears to have been planted in the apostles’ days; and it has been handed down, from father to son, through all the generations to the present time; and they have stood in the faith from age to age, to our own days.

In the fourth century, when Pius Sylvester, enriched by Constantine the great, departed from self denial and purity, and lived in luxury and corruption, the Waldenses refused to hold fellowship with him. In after ages they suffered dreadfully, for hundreds of years, from papal persecutions; they were robbed, plundered, tortured, massacred – their blood was shed like water; and the history of their cruel sufferings is enough to make a person’s flesh to chill. But they stood their ground, and at times spread religion through most of the countries in Europe.*

The Waldenses, (called also Vaudois, and Albigeois,) had faith in God, and were diligent to establish the law through faith. Their morality was sound; and in a barren country they lived from age to age, in a state of laborious poverty; their industry and self-denial were great; and their course of laborious piety has been a blessing to the world.

In tracing the range of ecclesiastical history, from the apostles’ days to the present time, we shall find that almost every age has, more or less, produced revivals of religion. And these revivals have often been raised by the piety and industry of an individual, or of a few individuals. And some who have been instrumental in awakenings, have not been free from whimsical notions. But still the failures of the work have been caused, not so much by the notions, as from a weakness of faith in God, or from omitting to establish the law through faith; they not being sufficiently careful to promote sound morality. But of all the persons Divine Providence ever raised up, none took more care to promote faith in God, and establish sound morality, than Mr. John Wesley. And to this care, under God, Methodism is mainly indebted for its stability, and its extensive spread.

Mr. John Wesley was the second son of Samuel and Susanna Wesley, and was born at Epworth in Lincolnshire; of which place his father had the living, and was for many years a laborious clergyman. His mother possessed the strongest understanding of almost any person then in the world; and she bestowed uncommon pains on her son John, to train him up in sound principles, and in sound and pure

morality. Her success was great, and the world has been benefitted by her labours. And this is an encouragement to all pious mothers.

They had a numerous family; and Samuel, their eldest son, was born in the year 1692, John in 1703, and Charles in 1708. The father was a high churchman; and his three sons were educated at the University of Oxford, and trained up in high church principles.

Samuel, the eldest, on leaving the University, became eminent as a schoolmaster.

John, when a child, had a narrow escape from the flames, when the parsonage house at Epworth was burned down by incendiaries. This fixed the mother's attention on him; and after being taught by herself, he was removed to the Charter house school in London, and then to the University at Oxford; where, in 1724, he was elected fellow of Lincoln college, and in 1726, took his degree of Master of Arts. During all this time he was under his mother's training; and her wise letters were a treasure.

When John Wesley had been some years at the University, he had the satisfaction of his brother Charles coming there as a student. But Charles, as himself said, lost his first year at college in diversions; and his brother's serious admonitions were paid little attention to. But in the year 1729, John being gone into Lincolnshire to be his father's curate, Charles became industrious, grew serious, and prevailed with two or three students to unite with him: and "this," says he, "gained me the harmless name of METHODIST."

In November, the same year, John Wesley came to reside at Oxford, and a society was formed. John Wesley, in his short history of Methodism, says, "The FIRST RISE of Methodism (so called) was in November, 1729, when four of us met together at Oxford." So here we have the origin or starting place. And in reference to this, Mr. Wesley, in a letter to a Mr. Morgan, dated October 18, 1730, says, "In November, 1729, at which time I came to reside at Oxford, your son, my brother, myself, and one more, agreed to spend three or four evenings together. Our design was to read over the classics on common nights, and on Sunday, some book in divinity."

Here then was the origin of Methodism; and this society soon assumed a still more religious character, and increased in number. All people were aware that they had struck out a NEW course; and yet it was all within the limits of high-churchism; but still it was NEW. And their society was called in ridicule, "the holy club," "the godly club," and it had other titles; but METHODIST, was the name that finally prevailed.

Having noticed, the origin, or, as Mr. Wesley terms it, "*The first rise*," we may observe that the father wished John to succeed him at Epworth; but John could not then be induced to leave Oxford; but in the year 1735, he undertook to go to Georgia in America, as a missionary to the Indians. On the voyage he got acquainted with the pious Moravians from Germany, whom he greatly admired; and the more so, when in a storm he found they had that faith which delivered them from the fear of death; but that faith neither himself nor any of the English were in possession of.

When he arrived in Georgia, finding no opening to preach to the Indians, he supplied the church at Savannah. And here was, what he calls, the second rise of Methodism. In his journal he speaks as follows:

"Not finding as yet any door open, for the pursuing our main design, we considered, In what manner we might be most useful to the little flock at Savannah. And we agreed, First, To advise the more serious among them, to form themselves into a sort of little society, and to meet once or twice a week, in order to reprove, instruct, and exhort one another. 2. To select out of these a smaller number for a more intimate union with each other, which might be forwarded, partly by our conversing singly with each, and partly by inviting them altogether to our house; and this accordingly we determined to do every Sunday in the afternoon."

But as the Spanish war had shut up the prospect of preaching to the Indians, Mr. Wesley, on Friday, December 2, 1737, leaving Savannah, set out for England, and on Wednesday, Feb. 1, 1738, landed at Deal. And one result from the whole was, he learned that although he had gone into America to convert the Indians, he was not himself converted, he had not that faith which overcomes the fear of death. But Divine Providence began to open his way in this respect also. Peter Bohler, a zealous young man, being ordained minister of the Moravian colony in Georgia, set out from Germany; and, on the 18th of February, 1738, he arrived in London, met with John and Charles Wesley, and was by them invited to Oxford, where and in London, he held several meetings, and many were awokened, and some converted.

Peter Bohler, with much difficulty, was enabled to make Mr. Wesley understand the nature of justification by faith, and of obtaining the knowledge of salvation, by remission of sins. This made a mighty change; and was ultimately a means of moving England.

It has been before observed that the Waldenses maintained the truth from the days of the apostles: and they, by the good hand of God upon them, spread the truth in Bohemia and Moravia; from whom are the present Moravians. And the truth relative to justification by faith had, it appears, been preserved among them from the apostles' days, and now, by the grace of God, it took its seat in England, in order to its moving the world. To God be all the glory.

We now come to an important point, Mr. Wesley's journal, under date of Monday, May 1, 1738, says, "This evening our little society began, which afterwards met in Fetter Lane. Our fundamental rules were as follows:

"In obedience to the command of God by St. James, and by the advice of Peter Bohler, it is agreed by us,

"1. That we meet together once a week, to confess our faults one to another, and pray one for another, that we may be healed," &c.

We shall now give an extract from Mr. Wesley's short history of Methodism, as follows:

"On Monday, May 1(1738,) our little society began in London. But it may be observed, the first rise of *Methodism* (so called) was in November, 1729, when four of us met together at Oxford: the second was at Savannah, in April, 1736, when twenty or thirty persons met at my house: the last was at London, on this day, when

forty or fifty of us agreed to meet together every Wednesday evening, in order to a free conversation, begun and ended with singing and prayer.”

* See the History of the Waldenses, by the Rev. Adam Blair, sold by Longman, &c., London.

Chapter 3.

On the power of faith. — Mr. Wesley falls in with Peter Bohler, who instructs him in the nature of justification by faith. — A remark on faith. —A. D. 1738.

Mr. Wesley, trained up by his excellent mother, was perhaps unequalled in his day, for strict and sound morality; and his learning industry, and ministerial talents were of a high order; yet it is clear that something was wanting for up to this time his ministry had produced only small effects. But the Lord provided for this also, for to Mr. Wesley's great ministerial excellencies, the Most High added the mighty faith which is and will be a means of moving the world. And in treating on this more at large, it will be proper to give it, as much as may be, in Mr. Wesley's own words. He says, "Tuesday, Feb. 7, 1738. (A day much to be remembered,) at the house of Mr. Weinantz, a Dutch merchant, I met Peter Bohler, Schulius Richter, and Wensel Neiser, just then landed from Germany. Finding they had no acquaintance, in England, I offered to procure them a lodging, and did so, near Mr. Hutton's, where I then was. And from this time I did not willingly lose any opportunity of conversing with them, while I stayed in London."

"Friday 17. I set out for Oxford with Peter Bohler, where we were kindly received by Mr. Sarney, the only one now remaining here, of many who, at our embarking for America, were used to take sweet counsel together, and rejoice in bearing the reproach of Christ."

"Saturday 18, All this time I conversed with Peter Bohler, but I understood him not: and least of all when he said, "My brother, my brother, that philosophy of yours must be purged away."

Mr. Wesley, in his letters from Georgia to his friends in England, had spoken much of the excellency of the Moravians. This had made them known; and on his return to England, he spoke much of them; and by these means their way was opened; and when P. Bohler and his companions came to England in their way from Germany to America, they found a prepared people; and Bohler, being a zealous young man, entered fully into the work, and his labours were crowned with immediate success.

Mr. Wesley, leaving his brother and P. Bohler at Oxford, returned to London. And on Tuesday, February 28, he saw his mother; and the next day prepared for his journey to Tiverton, in Devonshire, to visit his brother Samuel. But on Thursday morning, March 2, receiving a message that his brother Charles was dying at Oxford, he set off thither immediately. And he says:

"Saturday, March 4, 1738, I found my brother at Oxford, recovering from his pleurisy; and with him Peter Bohler: by whom (in the hand of this great God), I was on Sunday 5th, clearly convinced of unbelief, of the want of that faith wherby alone we are saved.

"Immediately it struck my mind, 'Leave off preaching. How can you preach to others, who have not faith yourself?' I asked Bohler, whether he thought I should leave it off, or not? He answered, 'By no means.' I asked, 'But what can I preach?' He said, 'Preach faith till you have it, and then, because you have it, you will preach faith.'

“Accordingly, Monday 6, I began preaching this new doctrine, though my soul started back from the work. The first person to whom I offered salvation by faith alone, was a prisoner under sentence of death. His name was Clifford. Peter Bohler had many times desired me to speak to him before. But I could not prevail on myself so to do; being still (as I had been many years) a zealous asserter of the impossibility of a death-bed repentance.”

“Friday 10, Peter Bohler returned to London.

“Tuesday 15, I set out for Manchester.” On this journey Mr. Wesley had two companions, and he and they laboured much in promoting serious religion. And on Wednesday 22, they again arrived at Oxford. And his journal proceeds:

“Thursday, March 23, I met Peter Bohler again, who now amazed me more and more, by the account he gave of the fruits of living faith, the holiness and happiness which he affirmed to attend it. The next morning I began the Greek testament again, resolving to abide by the law and the testimony, and being confident that God would hereby show me, whether this doctrine was of God.”

Mr. Wesley's usual method in those days. He says:

“Sunday, March 28, I preached at Witham on the new creature, and went in the evening to a society in Oxford, where (as my manner then was at all societies) after using a collect or two, and the Lord's prayer, I expounded a chapter in the New Testament, and concluded with three or four more collects and a psalm.”

It gives satisfaction to trace such an example of zeal and diligence. The collects were, of course, taken out of the prayer book. The next day's journal introduces what appears to be his beginning to use what is called

Extempore Prayer.

He says, “Monday, March 27, 1738, Mr. Kinchin went with me to the castle, where, after reading prayers and preaching on ‘It is appointed for all men once to die,’ we prayed with the condemned man, first in several forms of prayer, and then in such words as were given us in that hour. He kneeled down in much heaviness and confusion, having ‘no rest in his bones by reason of his sins.’ After a space he rose up, and eagerly said, ‘I am now ready to die. I know Christ has taken away my sins, and there is no more condemnation for me.’ The same composed cheerfulness he allowed when he was carried to execution: and in his last moments he was the same, enjoying a perfect peace, in confidence that he was accepted in the Beloved.

“Saturday, April 1, Being at Mr. Fox's society, my heart was so full, that I could not confine myself to the forms of prayer, which we were accustomed to use there. Neither do I propose to be confined to them any more; but to pray indifferently, with a form or without, as I may find suitable to particular occasions.”

We see here how the Lord introduced the use of extempore prayer, in public, among the Methodists. It was then truly the day of small things. But the happy effect produced in praying for and with the condemned man, would assist in establishing it in Mr. Wesley's mind.

His journal proceeds: "Sunday April 2, Being Easter-day, I preached in our College chapel, on 'The hour cometh and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.' I preached in the afternoon, first at the castle, and then at Carfax, on the same words. I see the promise; but it is afar off.

"Believing it would be better for me to wait for the accomplishment of it in silence and retirement, on Monday 3, I complied with Mr. Kinchin's desire, and went to him at Dummer in Hampshire. But I was not suffered to stay here long; being earnestly pressed to come up to London, if it were only for a few days. Thither therefore I returned, on Tuesday 18th.

"Saturday 22, I met Peter Bohler once more; I had now no objection to what he said of the nature of faith, namely, That it is (to use the words of our church), 'A sure trust and confidence which a man hath in God, that through the merits of Christ his sins are forgiven, and he reconciled to the favour of God.' Neither could I deny either the happiness or holiness which he described, as fruits of this living faith. 'The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:' and, 'He that believeth hath the witness in himself,' fully convinced me of the former: as, 'whatsoever is born of God, doth not commit sin,' and, 'Whosoever believeth, is born of God,' did of the latter. But I could not comprehend what he spoke of an instantaneous work. I could not understand, how this faith should be given in a moment; how a man could at once be thus turned from darkness to light, from sin and misery to righteousness and joy in the Holy Ghost. I searched the scriptures again, touching this very thing, and particularly the Acts of the Apostles: but, to my utter astonishment, found scarce any instances there of other than instantaneous conversions; scarce any other so slow as that of St. Paul, who was three days in the pangs of the new birth. I had but one retreat left; namely, 'Thus, I grant God wrought in the first ages of Christianity: but the times are changed. What reason have I to believe he works in the same manner now?'

"But on Sunday 23, I was beat out of this retreat too, by the concurring evidence of several living witnesses; who testified God had thus wrought in themselves; giving them in a moment, such a faith in the blood of his Son, as translated them out of darkness into light, out of sin and fear into holiness and happiness. Here ended my disputing. I could now only cry out, 'Lord, help thou my unbelief!'

"I asked Peter Bohler again, 'Whether I ought not to refrain from teaching others?' He said, 'No; do not hide in the earth the talent God hath given you.' Accordingly on Tuesday 25, I spoke clearly and fully at Blendon to-Mr. Delamotte's family, of the nature and fruits of Christian faith. Mr. Broughton and my brother were there. Mr. Broughton's great objection was, 'He could never think that I had not faith, who had done and suffered such things.' My brother was very angry, and told me I did not know what mischief I had done by talking thus. And indeed it did please God then to kindle a fire, which I trust shall never be extinguished."

Mr. Wesley afterwards, in noticing Mr. Broughton's remark, said, "He," Mr. Broughton, "was in the right. I certainly then had the faith of a servant, though not the faith of a son." It would be clearer to say, that he had then a, measure of faith; but not

a measure sufficient to so fully bring down the grace of God into the heart, as immediately to realize the knowledge of salvation by remission of sins.

Chapter 4.

Various matters. – A society established in London. – P.B. leaves England. – C. Wesley converted. – J. Wesley converted, May 24, 1738. – He goes to Hernhut, is edified, and returns to England. – A.D. 1738.

On Wednesday, April 26, Mr. Wesley returning to Oxford, says, “P. Bohler walked with me a few miles, and exhorted me, not to stop short of the grace of God. At Gerrard’s Cross I plainly declared to those whom God gave into my hands, the faith as it is in Jesus: as I did next day to a young man I overtook on the road, and in the evening to our friends at Oxford. A strange doctrine, which some, who did not care to contradict, yet knew not what to make of; but one or two, who were thoroughly bruised by sin, willingly heard, and received it gladly.

“In the day or two following, I was much confirmed in the truth that is after godliness, by hearing the experiences of Mr. Hutching (of Pembroke college) and Mrs. Fox: two living witnesses, that God can, (at least if he does not always,) give that faith whereof cometh salvation in a moment, as lightning falling from heaven.

“Monday, May 1, 1738. The return of my brother’s illness obliged me again to hasten to London. In the evening I found him at James Hutton’s, better as to his health, than I expected; but strongly averse from what he called, the new faith.”

It was on this day that the society was formed, which Mr. Wesley considers the finally establishing of Methodism in England; as has been before noticed, see pages 71, 72, of this Magazine.

Again he says, “Thursday, May 4, 1738, Peter Bohler left London in order to embark for Carolina. O, what a work has God begun, since his coming into England! Such an one as shall never come to an end, till heaven and earth pass away.

This zealous young man would be thankful that in his way from Germany to Georgia, the Lord had made him instrumental in planting religion in England.

Mr. Wesley’s journal proceeds: “Friday, May 19, 1738, My brother had a second return of his pleurisy. A few of us spent Saturday night in prayer. The next day being Whitsunday, after hearing Dr. Heylin preach a truly Christian sermon, (on, ‘They were all filled with the Holy Ghost.’ and so, said he, may all you be, if it is not your own fault,) and assisting him at the holy communion, (his curate being taken ill in the church,) I received the surprising news, that my brother had found rest to his soul. His bodily strength returned also from that hour. Who is so great a God as our God?”

Here we have Charles Wesley’s conversion to God. And on Wednesday, May 24, 1738, Mr. John Wesley’s soul was converted to God. This was a great change; and it was a means of producing great effects in the world.

Mr. Wesley had purposed when at Georgia, that if his way opened he would visit Hernhut, the principal seat of the Moravians, in Germany. And now,

experiencing all the difficulties of a new convert, with scarcely any that could give him suitable advice, he put his design into execution, crossed over into Germany; and, after a tedious journey, arrived at Hernhut on Tuesday, August 1, 1738. Here he was much edified; and received much instruction relative to the nature of religious experience, which was of great service to him. After this, in returning, he visited other religious establishments, and arrived at London on Saturday, September 16, 1738. And on Sunday 17, he says, "I began again to declare, in my own country, the glad tidings of salvation."

Chapter 5.

Mr. Wesley brought into the doctrine of a free, full and present salvation through and by faith, A.D. 1738, 1739.

When Mr. Wesley first began to understand the nature of justification by faith, he asked Peter Bohler, if he should leave off preaching till he had faith; meaning, .till he had that faith; and P. Bohler said, "By no means." Mr. W. asked, "But what can I preach? He said, "Preach faith till you have it, and then, because you have it, you will preach faith."

This answer has been admired, and it is good as far as it goes. But there are many in the Primitive Methodist Connexion, who, in such a case would add, "The Lord is able to bestow it upon, you NOW:" and would say, "All things are NOW ready." But at that time, the doctrine of FREE, FULL, AND PRESENT SALVATION, was little known in the world. The Moravians and others went a great way in faith; but into this they hardly did go. But the Lord took care for this also: and on this great point it will be well to trace carefully the leadings of Divine Providence. And,

1. On Monday, March 6, 1738, Mr. Wesley preached the faith though his soul started back from the work. The first person to whom he offered salvation by faith, was a prisoner under sentence of death. To this man P. Bohler had many times desired him to speak. But he had refused because he thought a. death-bed repentance impossible.

2. On March 15, Mr. Wesley Mr. Kinchin, and Mr. Fox, set off for Manchester. And at Chapel-on-the-Heath, Mr. K. spoke a few words to a poor woman, which so melted her heart, that she burst into tears; and they went on rejoicing and praising God. In the evening of the following day, arriving at Stafford, they had family prayer in the inn, and one or two of the servants were affected; and at most of the places they witnessed effects. On Monday, March 20, they left Manchester. And Mr. Wesley says, "At Talk-o' th- Hill, (in Staffordshire,) where we dined, she with whom we were was so much of a gentlewoman that for near an hour our labour seemed to be in vain. However we spoke on. Upon a sudden, she looked as one just awaked out of sleep. Every word sunk into her heart. Nor have I seen so intire a change both in the eyes, face, and manner of speaking, of any one in so short a time. And on Wednesday, March 22, they reached Oxford, Mr. Wesley says, "Rejoicing in

our having received so many fresh instances of that great truth, ‘In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall, direct thy paths.’” In these remarks we at once witness a change for the better in Mr. Wesley’s ministry; its effects were far greater than ever before. This excellency arose from his preaching salvation by faith. And here we see the buddings of that great work which afterwards rose to such a wonderful height.

3. On Monday, March 27, 1738, Mr. Wesley says, “Mr. Kinchin, went with me to the castle.... We prayed with the condemned man, first in several forms of prayer, and then in such words as were given us in that hour. He kneeled down in much heaviness and confusion, having ‘no rest in his bones by reason of his sins.’ After a space he rose up, and eagerly said, ‘I am now ready to die. I know Christ has taken away my sins, and there is no more condemnation for me.’ And in his last moments he was the same.”

Here was such an instance of the power of faith, as Mr. Wesley had not before witnessed. And here too was the introduction of extempore prayer; that is, its glorious introduction into Methodism.

4. On Friday, May 19, Mr. Charles Wesley found rest to his soul. And on Wednesday, May 24, 1738, Mr. John Wesley’s soul was converted to God. This would greatly enlarge his heart, clear his views, and correct his judgment. He would now preach salvation by faith with increasing zeal. And his visit to Hernhut would still further improve him.

5. Mr. Wesley was now got into a greater faith and power than he himself seemed to be aware of. He says, “Saturday, September 30, One who had been a zealous opposer of this way, sent and desired to speak with me immediately. He had all the signs of settled despair, both in his countenance and behaviour. He said, He had been enslaved to sin many years, especially to drunkenness: that he had long used all the means of grace, had constantly gone to church, and sacrament, had read the scripture, and used much private prayer, and yet was nothing profited. I desired we might join in prayer. After a short space he rose, and his countenance was no longer sad. He said, ‘Now I know, God loveth me, and has forgiven my sins. And sin shall not have dominion over me; for Christ hath set me free.’ And according to his faith it was unto him.” Here was a great and immediate salvation, through and by faith.

6. He says, “On Monday, (October 9, 1738,) I set out for Oxford. In walking I read the truly surprising narrative, of the conversions lately wrought in and about Northampton in New-England, (in America.) Surely this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.” The reading of these would be of much service to Mr. Wesley at that time.

7. After Mr. Wesley’s return to London, he speaks as follows: “Monday, January 1, 1730, Mr. Hall, Kinchin, Ingham, Whitefield, Hutching, and my brother Charles, were present at our lovefeast in Fetter Lane, with about sixty of our brethren. About three in the morning, as we were continuing instant in prayer, the power of God came mightily upon us, insomuch that many cried out for exceeding joy, and many fell to the ground. As soon as we were recovered a little from that awe and amazement at the presence of his Majesty, we broke out with one voice, ‘We praise thee, O God; we acknowledge thee to be the Lord.’”

8. These instances of the power of faith would have a great and good effect on Mr. Wesley; but the Lord was about to show him yet greater things: he says: "Friday, March 2, 1739, It was the advice of all our brethren, that I should spend a few days at Oxford: whither I accordingly went on Saturday 3. A few names I found here also, who had not denied the faith, neither been ashamed of their Lord, even in the midst of a perverse generation. And every day we were together, we had convincing proof, such as it had not before entered into our hearts to conceive, that, He is able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God through him.

"One of the most surprising instances of his power which I ever remember to have seen, was on the Tuesday following; when I visited one who was above measure enraged at this new way, and zealous in opposing it. Finding argument to be of no other effect, than to inflame her more and more, I broke off the dispute, and desired we might join in prayer, which she so far consented to, as to kneel down. In a few minutes she fell into an extreme agony, both of body and soul; and soon after cried out with the utmost earnestness, 'Now I know I am forgiven for Christ's sake.' Many other words she uttered to the same effect, witnessing a hope full of immortality. And from that hour, God hath set her face as a flint, to declare the faith which before she persecuted." A clearer instance of a free, full, and present salvation, through and by faith, was scarcely ever witnessed: the light truly shone out to the perfect day.

9. He says: "Thursday 8, I called upon her and a few of her neighbours, who were met together in the evening, among whom I found a gentleman of the same spirit she had been of, earnestly labouring to pervert the truth of the gospel. To prevent his going on, as the less evil of the two, I entered directly into the controversy, touching both the cause and the fruits of justification: in the midst of the dispute, one who sat at a small distance, felt as it were the piercing of a sword, and before she could be brought to another house whither I was going, could not avoid crying out aloud, even in the street. But no sooner had we made our request known to God, than he sent her help from his holy place."

It was by gentle steps the Lord brought Mr. Wesley into the way of a free, full, and present salvation, through and by faith. The Lord led him into such things, as it had not before entered into his heart to conceive; and the two instances at Oxford, were perhaps such as had scarcely been witnessed by any other man then in the world: and thus the Lord put honour on his servant, and made his ministry a means of moving the nation, and eventually of moving the world.

Chapter 6.

The rises of Methodism. - Sound morality, and perseverance in doing good – Methodism established at London, May 1, 1738. - Mr. Wesley increases in faith, and attains the knowledge of a free, full, and present salvation. – He is invited to Bristol. – A NEW period of his life. — He enters upon field preaching April 2, 1739, and adopts it as an essential part of the Wesleyan system.

We have now viewed Methodism in its high church origin at Oxford, its second rise at Savannah in America, and its third rise in Fetter-lane, London. But a first foundation was laid by Mrs. Susanna Wesley, in training up her sons, and in particular her son John in pure and sound morality, and zeal for God; and -it was on this excellent foundation Methodism originated. And a young man, a Mr. Morgan, a native of Ireland, had a main hand in the first rise; and was one of the four that united together to promote piety and sound morality; and they were greatly strengthened and encouraged by Mr. Wesley's father, Mr. Samuel Wesley, Rector of Epworth, in Lincolnshire. And Samuel, their eldest brother, in a vigorous letter said, "Rather than you and Charles should give over your whole course, especially what relates to the castle, I would chose to follow either of you, nay, both of you, to your graves, I cannot advise you better than in the words I proposed for a motto to a pamphlet, 'Stand thou fast as a beaten anvil; for it is the part of a good champion to be flayed alive and to conquer.'" But in the year following they had to lament the death of their pious and valuable friend and colleague, Mr. Morgan, who finished his shining course, and entered into the joy of his Lord.

In the second rise, at Savannah, in America, in April 1736, we see the same vigour, and the same zeal to promote piety and sound morality.

In the third, or last rise, (as Mr. Wesley terms it), in London, May 1, 1738, they had the same zeal and the same purpose, with an additional knowledge of the nature and power of faith. And this knowledge greatly increased when John and Charles Wesley, by faith, obtained the knowledge of salvation by remission of sins, and were born again of the Spirit of God. A still further increase of the knowledge of faith, and the nature of Christian experience, was obtained by means of Mr. John Wesley's visit to Hernhut, the principal Moravian settlement in Germany. But it appears to have been by means of the circumstances detailed in the last chapter, that Divine Providence led Mr. Wesley into the way of a PRESENT salvation, and mightily increased his knowledge relative to the immediate power and effect of faith — that faith which worketh by love, and whereby God purifieth the heart, Acts, xv. 9. It will be manifest that the Lord was preparing the way for still greater things.

On the Sunday after the two peculiar instances of full, free, and present salvation at Oxford, Mr. Wesley preached at Dummer; and he says, "I returned on Tuesday to Oxford, where I found many more and more rejoicing in God their Saviour. Thursday, March 15, 1739, I set out early in the morning, and in the afternoon came to London."

He proceeds, "During my stay here, I was fully employed; between our own society, in Fetter-lane, and many others, where I was continually desired to expound; so that I had no thought of leaving London, when I received (after several others) a letter from Mr. Whitefield, and another from Mr. Seward, intreating me in the most pressing manner, to come to Bristol without delay. This I was not at all forward to do."

Wednesday, March 28. — My journey was proposed to our society in Fetter-lane. But my brother Charles would scarce bear the mention of it; till appealing to the oracles of God, he received those words, as spoken to himself, and answered not again:- Son of man, behold I take from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke: yet

shalt thou not mourn or weep, neither shall thy tears run down. Our other brethren however continued the dispute, without any probability of their coming to one conclusion, we at length all agreed to decide it by lot. And by this it was determined, 'I should go.'

They seem to have entertained an extraordinary dread of Mr. Wesley losing his life, if he went to Bristol on this occasion. But the Lord seeth not as man seeth; and Mr. Wesley himself calls it a NEW PERIOD of his life. And this new period manifests the goodness of God, and his loving kindness to the children of men. Mr. Wesley says:-

"Thursday, March 29, I left London, and in the evening expounded to a small company at Basingstoke. Saturday, 31. In the evening I reached Bristol, and met Mr. Whitefield there. I could scarce reconcile myself at first to this strange way of preaching in the fields, of which he set me an example on Sunday: having been all my life (till very lately) so tenacious of every point relating to decency and order, that I should have thought the saving of souls almost a sin if it had not been done in a church."

A fancied decency and order, which prohibits open-air worship, is contrary to the order of God, as laid down in both, the old and new testaments. The garden of Eden had open-air worship; so had the patriarchs and prophets; such was the temple worship; such was John the Baptist's; such was our Lord's on the mount, in the plain, and in other instances; and such was the worship on the day of pentecost, &c. And, what may be thought strange, Mr. Wesley himself, while in Georgia, had occasionally held worship and preached in the open air. But in England his heart revolted against it; but Mr. Whitefield had adopted it of necessity. Mr. Wesley proceeds:- "April 1. In the evening (Mr. Whitefield being gone) I begun expounding our Lord's sermon on the Mount (one pretty remarkable precedent of field preaching, I suppose there were churches at that time also) to a little society which was accustomed to meet once or twice a week in Nicholas-street.

Monday, April 2, 1739. At four in the afternoon, I submitted to be more vile, and proclaimed in the highways the glad tidings of salvation, speaking from a little eminence in a ground adjoining to the city, to about three thousand people. The scripture on which I spoke was this, (Is it possible any one should be ignorant, that it is fulfilled in every true minister of Christ?) 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted; to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind: to, set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.'"

This was the first time Mr. Wesley ever preached in the open air; in England. But the Lord so opened his heart, and opened his way, that he practised it through his whole life, and established it as a necessary part of Methodism, as will be evident by the following

Extracts on Field Preaching.

A duodecimo volume, being the 15th of Mr. Wesley's works, printed in Bristol, in the year 1772, and published by himself, contains his Minutes, or rules of the Methodist Connexion, and in pages 280 and 281, he speaks as follows :-

"Q. 9.—Is field-preaching then unlawful?

"A.—We conceive not. We do not know that it is contrary to any law either of God or man.

"Q. 10.—Have we not used it too sparingly?

"A.—It seems we have: 1. Because our call is, To save that which is lost. Now we cannot expect such to seek us. Therefore we should go and seek them. 2. Because we are particularly called, by going into the highways and hedges (which none else will) to compel them to come in. 3. Because that reason against it is not good. 'The house will hold all that come.' The house may hold all that come to the house, but not all that would come to the field.

The greatest hinderances to this you are to expect from the rich, or cowardly, or lazy Methodists. But regard them not, neither stewards, leaders, nor people. Whenever the weather will permit, go out in God's name into the most public places, and call all to repent, and believe the gospel; every Sunday in particular: especially in the old societies, lest they settle upon their lees."

And in page 350, of the same volume, he says:-

"Q. 79.—What can be done in order to revive the work of God where it is decayed?

"A. 1. - See that no circuit be at any time without preachers, &c.

"2. Be more diligent in field preaching. The want of preaching abroad, and of preaching in new places, has greatly damped the work of God."

These rules, or orders, Mr. Wesley published as a part of the standing rules of the Wesleyan Methodist Connexion. And that Mr. Wesley adopted field preaching as an essential part of the Wesleyan system, will appear from the following extract, from his Farther Appeal to men of reason and religion: it is taken from the same 15th volume of his works, pages 163, 165, where, after speaking of many brought to the Lord by means of field-preaching, he proceeds:-

By what other means was it possible they should have been plucked out of the fire? Had the minister of the parish preached like an angel, it had profited them nothing; for they heard him not. But when one came and said, "Yonder is a man preaching on the top of the mountain" they ran in droves to hear what he would say. And God spoke to their hearts. It is hard to conceive any thing else which could have reached them. Had it not been for field-preaching, the uncommonness of which was the very circumstance that recommended it, they must have run on in the error of their way, and perished in their blood.

"But suppose field-preaching to be in a case of this kind, ever so expedient, or even necessary, yet who will contest with us for this province? - May we not enjoy this quiet and unmolested? Unmolested, I mean by any competitors. For who is there among you, brethren, that is willing, (examine your own hearts) even to save souls from death at this price? Would not you let a thousand souls perish, rather than you would be the instrument of rescuing them thus? I do not speak now with regard to conscience, but to the inconveniences that must accompany it. Can you sustain them,

if you would? Can you bear the summer sun to beat upon your naked head? Can you suffer the wintry rain or wind, from whatever quarter it blows? Are you able to stand in the open air, without any covering or defence, when God casteth abroad his snow like wool, or scattereth his hoar-frost like ashes? And yet these are some of the smallest inconveniences which accompany field-preaching. Far beyond all these are the contradiction of sinners, the scoffs both of the great vulgar, and the small; contempt and reproach of every kind; often more than verbal affronts, stupid, brutal violence, sometimes to the hazard of health, or limbs, or life. Brethren, do you envy us this honour? What, I pray, would buy you to be a field preacher? Or what think you, could induce any man of common sense to continue therein one year, unless he had a full conviction in himself, that it was the will of God concerning him."

Chapter 7.

Open-air Worship.- Mr. Wesley gets more fully into faith, and a free, full and present salvation, and the arm of the Lord is made bare. – Praying mourners into liberty. – Mighty instances of the power of God. – A general view. – April 8, to May 2, 1739.

One glory of Methodism was, the Lord bringing it, by his providence, into the scriptural way of open-air worship; and giving Mr. Wesley wisdom to establish the same. He says:-

“Sunday, April 8, 1739. At seven in the morning I preached to about a thousand persons at Bristol, and afterwards to about fifteen hundred, on the top of Hannam Mount, in Kingswood. I called to them in the words of the evangelical Prophet, ‘Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; come and buy wine and milk without money, and without price.’ About five thousand were in the afternoon at Rose-green, (on the other side of Kingswood), among whom I stood and cried, in the name of the Lord, ‘If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water’.

“Sunday, 15. I explained at seven, to five, or six thousand persons, the story of the Pharisee and the Publican. About three thousand were present at Hannam Mount. I preached at Newgate after dinner to a crowded congregation. Between five and six we went to Rose-green: it rained hard at Bristol, but not a drop fell upon us, while I declared to above five thousand, Christ our wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. I concluded the day by showing at the Society at Baldwin-street, That his blood cleanseth us from all sin.”

Thus the open-air worship rose in its fullness; the Lord was in it; and it opened upon Mr. Wesley and his friends like the morning. It is a scriptural course, appointed of God to assist in moving the world.

We have seen how gently Mr. Wesley was led into a fuller knowledge of the power of faith, even to the realizing what is usually called present salvation. And it might have been said, as our Lord said to Nathaniel, John i. 50, “Believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.”

Tuesday, April 17, 1739, at five in the afternoon, he was at a little society in the Back-lane, Bristol. The post which propped the floor gave way, and the floor sunk, but not very much. He proceeds:-

"Thence I went to Baldwin street, and expounded as it came in course, the fourth chapter of the Acts. We then called upon God to confirm his word. Immediately one that stood by (to our no small surprise) cried out aloud with the utmost vehemence, even as in the agonies of death. But we continued in prayer, till a new thing was put in her mouth, a thanksgiving unto our God. Soon after, two other persons (well known in this place, as labouring to live in all good conscience towards all men) were seized with strong pain, and constrained to fear for the disquietness of their hearts. But it was not long before they likewise burst forth into praise to God their Saviour. The last who called upon God as out of the belly of hell, was I—E—, a stranger in Bristol. And in a short space, he also was over-whelmed with joy and love, knowing that God had healed his back-slidings. So many living witnesses hath God given, that His hand is still stretched out to heal, and that signs and wonders are even now wrought, by his holy child Jesus".

The remark of it being, *to their no small surprise*, shows that it was what neither he nor any of his friends looked for, or had perhaps never seen. And had he not previously witnessed the instances of present salvation Oxford, he might have been at a loss how to proceed. But as it was, he says, "We continued in prayer, till a new song was put in her mouth, a thanksgiving unto God. So here was fully introduced the custom of praying mourners into liberty in congregations, and in joint prayer; for he says "We continued in prayer"And the mighty work went on, he says:-

Wednesday, 18. In the evening L—S—, (late a Quaker, but baptized the day before), R—a M—, and a few others were admitted into the society. But R—a M— was scarcely able either to speak or look up. The sorrows of death compassed her about, the pains of hell got hold upon her. We poured out our complaints before God and showed him of her trouble. And he soon showed, he is a God that heareth prayer. She felt in herself, that being justified freely, she had peace with God, through Jesus Christ. She rejoiced in hope of the glory of God, and the love of God was shed abroad in her heart.

"April 20. Being Good Friday, E—th R—n, T—W—, and one or two others, first knew they had Redemption in the blood of Christ, the remission of their sins.

Saturday, 21. At Weavers-hall a young man was suddenly seized with a violent trembling all over, and in a few minutes, the sorrows of his heart being enlarged sunk down to the ground. But we ceased not calling upon God till he raised him up full of peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."

We may now say, Mr. Wesley and his friends were fully brought into the work, and fully understood the manner of it. But still to him and them, and to all the children of God, who press firmly and faithfully on, the word continually stands: "Believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these," And the Lord's arm was soon more mightily made bare. Mr. Wesley says:-

"Thursday, April 26, 1739.— While I was preaching at Newgate on these words, 'He that believeth hath everlasting life,' I was insensibly led, without any

previous design, to declare strongly and explicitly, That God willeth all men to be thus saved; and to pray that "If this were not the truth of God, he would not suffer the blind to go out of the way; but if it were, he would bear witness to his word." Immediately one and another and another sunk to the earth; they dropped on every side as thunderstruck. One of them cried aloud. We besought God in her behalf, and he turned her heaviness into joy. A second being in the same agony, we called upon God for her also; and he spoke peace unto her soul. In the evening I was again pressed in spirit to declare, that Christ gave himself a ransom for all. And almost before we called upon him to set to his seal, he answered; one was so wounded by the sword of the Spirit, that you would have imagined she could not live a moment. But immediately his abundant kindness was showed, and she loudly sang of his righteousness.

"Friday, 27. All Newgate rang with the cries of those whom the word of God had cut to the heart. Two of them were in a moment filled with joy, to the astonishment of those that beheld them.

"Sunday, 29. I declared the free grace of God to about four thousand people, from these words, He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? At that hour it was, that one who had long continued in sin, from a despair of finding mercy, received a full clear sense of his pardoning love, and power to sin no more. I then went to Clifton, (a mile from Bristol), at the minister's desire, who was dangerously ill, and thence returned to a little plain near Hannam Mount, where about three thousand were present. After dinner I went to Clifton again. The church was quite full at the prayers and sermon, as was the church-yard at the burial that followed. From Clifton we went to Rose-green, where there were (by computation) near seven thousand, and thence to Gloucester-lane Society. After which was our first lovefeast in Baldwin-street. O how has God renewed my strength! Who used ten years ago to be so faint and weary, with preaching twice in one day.

Monday, 30. We understood that many were offended at the cries of those on whom the power of God came: among whom was a physician, who was much afraid there might be fraud or imposture in the case. To-day, one whom he had known many years, was the first (while I was preaching in Newgate) who broke out into strong cries and tears. He could hardly believe his own ears. He went and stood close to her, and observed every symptom, till great drops of sweat ran down her face, and all her bones shook. He then knew not what to think, being clearly convinced it was not fraud, nor yet any natural disorder. But when both her soul and body were healed in a moment he acknowledged the finger of God.

Tuesday, May 1. Many were offended again, and indeed, much more than before. For at Baldwin-street my voice could scarce be heard, amidst the groanings of some and the cries of others, calling aloud to Him that is mighty to save. I desired all that were sincere of heart, to beseech with me the Prince exalted for us that he would proclaim deliverance to the captives. And he soon showed that he heard our voice. Many of those who had been long in darkness, saw the dawn of a great light; and ten persons (I afterwards found) then began to say in faith, My Lord and my God!

"A Quaker, who stood by was not a little displeased at the dissimulation of these creatures, and was biting his lips and knitting his brows, when he dropped as thunder-struck. The agony he was in was even terrible to behold. We besought God, not to lay folly to his charge. And he soon lifted up his head and cried aloud 'Now I know, thou art a prophet of the Lord.'

"Wednesday, 2. At Newgate another mourner was comforted. I was desired to step thence, to a neighbouring house to see a letter written against me as a deceiver of the people, by teaching that God willetteth all men to be saved. One who long had asserted the contrary was there, when a young woman came in (who could say before 'I know that my Redeemer liveth') all in tears and in deep anguish of spirit. She said, 'She had been reasoning with herself, how these things could be, till she till she was perplexed more and more; and she now found the Spirit of Christ was departed from her.' We began to pray, and she cried out, 'He is come! He is come! I again rejoice in God my Saviour.' Just as we rose from giving thanks, another person reeled four or five steps, and then dropped down. We prayed with her, and left her strongly convinced of sin, and earnestly groaning for deliverance.

I did not mention one J—n H—n, a weaver, who was at Baldwin-street the night before. He was, I understood, a man of a regular life and conversation, one that constantly attended the public prayers and sacrament, and was zealous for the church, and against dissenters of every denomination. Being informed that people fell into strange fits at the societies, he came to see and judge for him self. But he was less satisfied than before; insomuch that he went about to see his acquaintances one after another, till one in the morning, and laboured above measure to convince them 'It was a delusion of the devil.' We were going home, when one met us in the street, and informed us, 'That J—n H—n had fallen raving mad.' It seems had sat down to dinner, but had a, mind first to end a sermon he had borrowed on 'Salvation by faith.' In reading the last page, he changed colour, fell off his chair, and began screaming terribly, and beating himself against the ground. The neighbours were alarmed and flocked together to the house. Between one and two I came in, and found him on the floor, the room being full of people, whom his wife would have kept without; but he cried out aloud, 'No; let them all come, let all the world see the just judgment of God.' Two or three men were holding him as well as they could. He immediately fixed his eyes upon me, and stretching out his hand, cried, 'Ay, this is he, whom I said was a deceiver of the people. But God has overtaken me. I said it was all a delusion. But this is no delusion.' He then roared out, 'O thou devil! Thou cursed devil! Yea, thou legion of devils! Thou canst not stay. Christ will cast thee out. I know his work is begun. Tear me to pieces, if thou wilt; but thou canst not hurt me.' He then beat himself against the ground again; his breast heaving-at the same time, as in the pangs of death, and great drops of sweat trickling down his face. We all betook ourselves to prayer. His pangs ceased, and both his body and soul were set at liberty."

So Methodism, appearing first as a little rill at Oxford, was now moving in power as a majestic river. And similar effects attended Mr. Wesley's ministry at London and elsewhere. And Mr. Charles Wesley, Mr. Geo. Whitefield, the laborious John Nelson, of Birstall, and others, got into a similar faith and power; and though dreadful persecution rose, faith prevailed, and the work went on.

A notice of a few particulars will enable us more fully to view Methodism in its PRIMITIVE state:-

1. The sound and pure morality established by Mrs. Wesley. This was the sound starting place.
2. Promoting religion in conversation, including ministerial family visiting, and teaching from house to house.
3. Itinerant preaching, and general labouring.
4. Seeking the knowledge of salvation by remission of sins; to be justified by faith, and have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ; to be born again of the Spirit of God.
5. Praying mourners into liberty. This excellent service brings many talents into action.
6. Open-air worship. This was one of the leading glories of Methodism, in its PRIMITIVE state.
7. Free, full, and PRESENT salutations. This and open-air worship, the Lord fully engrafted in Methodism, during Mr. Wesley's first visit to Bristol.

Other matters, in the progress of Methodism, might have been usefully noticed, but the above will give us a pretty full view of its origin, and the manner of it in its first or PRIMITIVE state: and it will be sufficient to illustrate the providential circumstances, undesigned of man, issued in the Primitive Methodist Connexion, And which will in course be entered on in the next chapter.

Chapter 8.

A NEW course struck out. — A uniting of Methodists at Bemersley and Harresehead to hold prayer meetings. — Their course said to be a NEW one. — Much owned of the Lord.

It will be evident Methodism originated at Oxford, in the sound morality implanted in her two sons, by Mistress Susanna Wesley. And when they, and two others united together, to promote goodness in themselves and others, it was evident to all that they had struck out a NEW course; yet that NEW course was fully within the limits of even high churchism, and more consistent with the statutes of the university, than was the course of many, who complained of them. But still it was NEW; and Mr. Wesley gives it as the origin, or first rise of Methodism. Here, then, was a connexion formed, consisting of four persons, Mr. John Wesley, fellow of Lincoln College; Mr. Charles Wesley, student of Christ Church; Mr. Morgan, commoner of Christ Church; and Mr. Kirkham, of Morton College.* This connexion was apparently feeble, and despised of all; but the hand of the Lord was in it, and it proved the dawn of a mighty work.

And about, the month of March, in the year one thousand eight hundred and one, when Hugh Bourne. Daniel Shubotham, and Masthias Bayley, united together to hold prayer meetings at Harresehead, near Mow, in Staffordshire, it seemed a feeble

affair, both in their own eyes, and in the eyes of others. But the hand of the Lord was in it, and it was the beginning of a mighty work.

There was a fourth person, namely James Bourne; for although, from circumstances, it was not in his way to give a personal attendance, yet he was strengthener and encourager of H. Bourne, and of the cause in general.

It has been observed that, when the little connexion first rose at Oxford, it was evident to people in general that they were entered on a NEW course. And in this there was a striking parallel in the little connexion formed of the Methodists at Bemersley and Harresehead. For though these had, in a degree, been a neglected people, yet when the Lord began to own their labours, in the conversion of sinners to himself, and the work rose, there was soon an outcry made, that, they were going on in a NEW course. This outcry was raised by Methodists who came from a distance, and who called themselves “old standards.” But Hugh Bourne and his fellows were not conscious of any NEW course, any more than were Mr. Wesley and his fellows at Oxford. Still the complaint became general, that H. Bourne and his fellows were in a NEW course. But they themselves could not understand it; their proceedings, as far as they could judge, being fully, and in every sense, within the limits of Methodism; they were clear and full in the Wesleyan system of doctrines. And prayer meetings, as well as promoting religion in conversations, were fully within the limits of Methodism; and further they had not gone. And the Lord had owned, and was owning their labours, in the conviction and the conversion of sinners to himself, and in moralizing the whole of that very profane and ungodly neighbourhood. Conversions in those days had been rare, and in the preceding year the circuit had sunk sixty members, and all was low. And there had then been more souls converted at Harresehead than in all the circuit for a long time. But still nothing would avail, it became a complaint far and near, that they were in a NEW COURSE. So in this respect they might be said to have been precisely on the same ground with Mr. Wesley’s little connexion, in their Oxford proceedings.

But as Mr. Wesley had even then some encounters, so had these; for there being at that time a revival at one or two places, in a neighbouring circuit, their hands were somewhat strengthened from thence. But the chief matter was, the Lord so abundantly owning their labours.

* Watson’s Life of Wesley.

Chapter 9.

Circumstances which led to what was called a New Course. – H. Bourne hears Mr. Bradburn preach. – The effects. – On praying and preaching.

It appears to have been peculiarly providential, that the little connexion, consisting of the Methodists at Bemersley and Harresehead, should unknowingly strike out a NEW course. But it may, in some degree, be accounted for: Hugh Bourne was born April 3, 1772, at Fordhays, a very obscure place, in the parish of Stoke-upon-

Trent, in the county of Stafford. His father paid no attention to religion. His mother aimedl at religion in the best way she could. She knew scarcely any thing of doctrines; all her religion was practical. Her laborious industry was almost proverbial. Her way through, the world was rough, but she was diligent in prayer; taught most of her children to read; and laboured to store their minds with upright principles, and the fear of God. Her success with her son Hugh Bourne was the greatest. He was diligent in prayer; and so soon as she taught him to read, he was diligent in the scriptures, and in other serious books; and in committing to memory both hymns and prayers.

But at an early age he was fully, clearly, and deeply convinced of sin; and waded through much sorrow for many years; but in the spring of the year 1799, being then twenty-seven years of age, he obtained the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins, and was born again of the Spirit of God.

In the mean time, though brought up to hard labour, he had read exceedingly much; and had made himself acquainted with abundance of various learning. He taxed his sleeping hours for reading, and read many religious books as well as others.

His mind was cleared at last by reading in Mr. Wesley's sermon on the Trinity, that "opinion is not religion." This important piece of information, by the good hand of God, fully opened his mind. He also read many books of the Quakers and others; and when he laid aside opinions and notions, he found, the inward work came much to the same.

He sought the Lord in great distress of mind for some weeks, till one Sunday morning, in his father's house, while reading in Mr. Fletcher's Letters on the Spiritual manifestation of the Son of God he himself received the manifestation, and obtained the knowledge of salvation by remission of sins, and in an instant had peace with God, and power over sin.

He now, with all his might, entered on a course of religious reading. And, not knowing what religious community to unite with, he made it a matter of earnest prayer; the consequence of which was, that, about midsummer following, he united with the Wesleyan Methodists.

H. Bourne's situation was considered by himself as rather painful, and not, as he thought, well calculated for his growing in grace. He had a timidity and bashfulness beyond almost any other man: and as he lived at an out-edge of the circuit, he had little opportunity to be much among the religious people; and the neighbourhood in which he resided, was, in regard of religion, a poor, low, and considerably neglected place. And again, his employment almost constantly left him at a distance from any week-night meetings; and be thought it long to be from Sunday to Sunday without any public means. He had of course to make the best use he could of all the public means he could attend; but he much regretted what he considered a great scarcity of religious privileges. But herein we may say, "the Lord seeth not as man seeth." He blessed Joseph in. Egypt, and he can bless in any situation. But still H. Bourne, at times, thought his lot hard; but his way did not open for employment within reach of week-night meetings,

The peculiarities of his situation kept him, in some degree, ignorant of the Methodistical usages in the circuit. But he kept to his diligent course of reading, and this again made him, in some respects, more fully acquainted with Methodism in its

early or PRIMITIVE state, than in its more modern usages. But of this he himself was not fully aware; but conceived the Methodists in general copied after Mr. Wesley, Mr. Fletcher, John Nelson, John Haime, and others of like stamp. And he formed a high opinion indeed of the travelling preachers.

In July, 1799, Mr. Samuel Bradburn, then superintendent of Birmingham circuit, being on his way to the Manchester Conference, stopped and preached on a week-night at Burslem. This man had been represented to H. Bourne as one of the greatest and most popular preachers in the Wesleyan connexion; and H. Bourne happening to be gone over to Burslem, on business, had the opportunity of hearing him; and heard him with admiration. His text was, Psalm cxix, 132. In the course of his sermon, he spoke degradingly of preaching in general, said it was merely talking to our fellow creatures, and made light of it. But praying, he observed, was great,—it was talking to the Almighty.

H. Bourne had looked upon Methodist preachers as being little, if any, inferior to the angels; and their preachings as precious gold. But the views given him by this much extolled preacher, began to season his admiration, and had at first a slow and gradual, but after some years, a powerful influence on his mind and conduct. There was certainly a misleading in it. But the matter may be cleared up by a few remarks.

On Praying and Preaching.

“PRAYING is great, it is talking to the Almighty.” Yet by and through the blood of the Lamb it is free to all, even to little children.

PREACHING is of two kinds, or sorts. One sort is noticed in Peter i. 12, “Them that have preached the gospel unto you, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.” And in 1 Cor. ii. 4, “And my speech and my preaching was in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.” This sort of preaching is great and high; yea, it is “mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds.” It is a means of turning many to righteousness; and they that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever.

The other sort of preaching is that which stands only in man’s wisdom; it is noticed and spoken against in 1 Cor. ii. 4, “And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom.” And, verse 13, “Not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth.” And, 1 Cor. i, 17, “For Christ sent me to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.”

This latter was unhappily Mr. Bradburn’s own sort of preaching; and in it stood all his great popularity. And this sort cannot be set too low. But this popular man’s words, dwelling continually in H. Bourne’s mind, induced him at length to look upon preaching as being in general of very little value.

Chapter 10.

H. Bourne much in an ungodly neighbourhood. – Its situation. – Daniel Shubotham, and Matthias Bayley. – A somewhat new course.

The difficulties H. Bourne had to meet were great; but after some time his mother, and then his brother James Bourne, joined the society.

In the year 1800, H. Bourne's employment caused him to be much in the neighbourhood of Harresehead and Mow, a neighbourhood ungodly and profane to a proverb. Harresehead, in point of religion, was neglected by all men; indeed it was reckoned almost dangerous for a stranger even to pass through the neighbourhood. Harresehead is in Staffordshire; it is reckoned to be about five or six miles from Burslem, and nearly the same from Tunstall, and about five miles from Congleton, in Cheshire. And it is nearly three miles from Bemersley.

Mow is a large mountain, running between the two counties. It is perhaps the highest land in England, and it is part in Staffordshire and part in Cheshire, the boundary line running along the ridge. And on the Cheshire side, and near one end of the mountain, there was, and had been for years, a small Methodist society, which met at the house of old Joseph Pointon, and himself was leader. It was in the Burslem circuit, and was appointed for one sermon a fortnight; but the distance being great, the roads bad, and the congregations small, they were at times neglected.

Mow is generally reckoned to be about a mile from Harresehead; but old Joseph Pointon's might be more, besides climbing the mountain. But there was one member, old Jane Hall, wife of John Hall, living at Harresehead.

H. Bourne was not well satisfied with his situation; no week-night meetings, a wild barren country, and ungodliness abounding on every side. He was afraid of losing all his religion; yet, at times, he so far broke through his timidity as to speak occasionally about religion, but not much to his own satisfaction; and he thought to remove to a place where he could have had opportunity to attend week-night meetings; but was providentially hindered. But his present situation appeared to him the unlikeliest he could have been in for being built up in religion. But it is evident the. Lord seeth not as man seeth.

There was some relationship between H. Bourne and a collier who lived at the top of Harresehead, and whose name was Daniel Shubotham. Their fathers were first cousins. And Daniel's father, being a man of property, a coal-master and large farmer, gave Daniel a good education, and left him a handsome independency in land and houses. But after his father's death, his wildness had been such, that he had made all away, except about two dwelling-houses with their gardens. He was a man of a vehement turn of mind, a great fighter, and a sort of a leading man among the rough people. He was married and had two children, but he lived unhappily.

The relationship caused a little acquaintance, and H. Bourne tried occasionally to talk to him about religion; and it was not quite without effect, and in particular on the day before Christmas-day. And as they would be off work the next day, H. Bourne made an offer to come to his house at Harresehead next morning to talk further.

The next day, which was Christmas day, December 25, 1800, H. Bourne took up his cross, and set out for Harresehead: and it was a cross indeed; many and many times was he tempted to turn back. But at length he arrived, was well received, and discoursed a while, and then asked Daniel to accompany him a little. He then talked more pointedly, and lent Daniel a written account of his own conversion and experience; and then took leave with a sorrowful heart, fearing that it was all to no purpose. But Daniel afterwards said that every word went through him. And Daniel, on returning to his own house, found a number of persons come, as usual, to play at cards. But he, in his own vehement way, said he would have no more of that, and if they would not go to heaven with him, he would not go to hell with them. And he began to read the bible aloud. They stopped a while, and then went away, saying, "Hugh Bourne has driven him mad."

Daniel pressed on with all his might, and Hugh Bourne gave him the best advice and encouragement in his power; and advised him to step down to Dales Green, some night after his day's work, and visit Matthias Bayley. This was another collier, who, a little before, happened to hear a sermon preached in the open air by an eccentric local preacher from Burslem, and had thereby been induced to set out for heaven. Dales Green is about half a mile from Harresehead, and lies between there and Mow. Daniel got into the way of visiting Matthias two or three nights a week and they strengthened each other's hands in the Lord.

In a few weeks, Daniel was enabled to believe; but on H. Bourne talking to him in a doubting way, he sunk into unbelief, and lost his evidence. But shortly after, he had a glorious manifestation, and set off in haste to tell his neighbours, and exhort them to obtain the same, or they would go to hell.

Daniel and Matthias spoke and spared not. And their plain strong way was NEW to H. Bourne. He had hardly ever before known any professors, but who seemed to make it a point of duty to talk about religion in a doubting hesitating way. But Daniel and Matthias bore down all before them. And one day Daniel questioned H. Bourne why he did not do the same.

H. Bourne's timidity stood in his way. But Daniel would not allow this to be as a reasonable objection. H. Bourne had talked to him to purpose, and why not to others. And he saw no reason for talking in a doubting hesitating way about religion.

H. Bourne observed, that if he should talk about religion, and should afterwards fall away, it would make things worse than if he not talked; and the thought of this brought a fear upon him.

But Daniel said H. Bourne had nothing to do with the falling away; he had to talk, and leave to the Lord the falling away. That if all were to reason as H. Bourne did, nobody must talk, and people would be left to go to hell in their sins.

Finally, in that one conversation, H. Bourne was fully brought out of his former way. He saw at once the excellence of Daniel and Matthias's way, and fully entered into it; and in that respect fully entered on a NEW course. And from that hour to the present, H. Bourne has laboured with all the diligence in his power to promote that course; and, through the mercy of God, it has great root in the Primitive Methodist Connexion, and has been a means of many being convinced of sin, and converted to God, strengthened in the way of holiness.

Chapter 11.

A moralizing. — Four colliers convinced of sin. — All prospect of assistance from preachers and others cut off. — A uniting to hold prayer meetings.

H. Bourne and his fellows diligently reproved sin, and pressed religion on almost every one that came in their way. There was soon a moralizing; the carters and others bore a fear of being talked to; and, in addition to this, four other colliers were soon deeply and fully convinced of sin; and their distress was very great. And this very matter, glorious as it was in itself, brought H. Bourne and his fellows into great difficulty, and great trial of mind. They knew not what to do with the convinced mourners, whose distress was becoming unbearable. So here was distress upon distress, and that on all sides. A prayer meeting was thought of, and John Hall's house, at Harresehead, was offered. But H. Bourne had never prayed in public, and it seemed doubtful to him whether it would ever be possible for him to do so. Daniel and Matthias had prayed together; but could not tell whether their praying would be fit for a prayer meeting. So, from a fear of doing injury, it was given up.

In this strait, H. Bourne applied to one of the travelling preachers for assistance, wishing to get a person from Burslem to come weekly to hold prayer meetings; and unless something of this sort could be obtained, he conceived an attempt to hold prayer meetings would do injury and not good; and as the distance was five or six miles, he purposed to pay a weekly sum towards such person's loss of time. But all prospect was cut off. He could not cause others to see what he thought - the importance of the case.

This was a time of extreme distress. And, as the sorrows of the seeking mourners appeared to increase, H. Bourne, Daniel Shubotham, and Matthias Bayley met together to consult on the matter. All prospect of help from any quarter was cut off. It was a time of distress; and at length, in a kind of despair, they yielded to try to hold a prayer meeting, hoping to do no hurt if they could do no good. And Daniel and Matthias insisted that H. Bourne should take a part in praying in the proposed prayer meeting. This to him seemed almost a killing stroke. He had never prayed in public, and was almost of opinion that it was out of his power so to do. But they urged conscience, and a variety of motives, as well as his having been in the way to heaven so much longer a time than they had.

Finally, they at length all came to one mind, and united together to attempt to hold prayer meetings; and appointed the first to be held on Tuesday, the following week, at the house of old John Hall, at Harresehead.

They then laboured to strengthen and encourage one another; and of this there was sufficient need.

They also agreed to try to pray in language similar to what they used in conversation. This to H Bourne was NEW, as he had scarcely known any to exercise in prayer but who seemed studiously to avoid the language in common use. But he at once saw into the propriety of the proposal.

Thus was a union formed, willed bears a considerable parallel to that formed by John and Charles Wesley, and two others, at Oxford; which Mr. John Wesley calls the FIRST RISE of Methodism.

Chapter 12.

Trial of mind in H. Bourne and his fellows, at the prospect of having to become public characters. — The first prayer meeting held. — Its effects. — They are established public characters. — The ORIGIN of a great work. — On Mr. Wesley und his fellows, compared with the present small beginning. — A. D. 1801.

H. Bourne and his fellows were now about to commence public characters, in holding prayer meetings. This caused great trial of mind; but a dispensation was committed to them by the Lord, necessity was laid upon them, and however painful it might be to their feelings, they were obliged to take up their cross; and now also their word was gone forth, they had opened their mouth unto the Lord, and to the neighbours, and they could not go back; a prayer meeting was actually given out, and how great soever might be the trial, they were obliged to abide by it. But the word of the Lord informs us, if we suffer with Christ, we shall also reign with him, 2 Tim. ii. 12. And now in prospect of the approaching meeting, they had a time of suffering.

The time appointed having arrived, and a considerable number being present, Matthias Bayley opened the meeting with singing, and prayer. He prayed in common language, and with great zeal and fervency. H. Bourne was much surprised to hear such praying, and was of opinion he had hardly ever heard it equalled. He was blest under it, and thought, if he could pray like that man, he should not hesitate.

They rose from their knees, sung again, and then put it on H. Bourne to pray. On the Sunday morning previous he had made an attempt, for the first time, to pray in the class; but this had not much encouraged him. But now, necessity being laid upon him, he forced himself and begun; which he had no sooner done, than the Lord so blessed him that he was very happy in his soul, and went on without difficulty. And the blessing he then received was such as he will perhaps remember to all eternity.

Daniel then prayed with all his native vehemence; after which another man followed. This last man lived about half a mile off; he was a Methodist and steady, hut was considered as weak in prayer. At the close, the neighbours seemed satisfied; and at the instance of some, and at the request of old Jane Hall, the woman of the house, a prayer meeting was given out for the week following.

H. Bourne had joy in the Lord; and falling in with Daniel, next morning, informed him of the blessing he had received, and his opinion of the excellency of Matthias's praying. But Daniel astonished him, by informing him in return, that Matthias was in great distress of mind, and was upon determining never to attempt to pray in a meeting again, because he, in his own opinion, could not pray like H. Bourne. The meeting too had almost brought as great distress on Daniel's mind; so the whole was on the point of failing. But they two had not conversed long before faith sprang up, the cloud broke, and Daniel determined to press on. And also Daniel,

falling in with Matthias, surprised him, by informing him, how H. Bourne was blessed under his praying, and how highly H. Bourne thought of it. This quite revived Matthias. And in the course of the week they all three met together to consult and advise. And Matthias observed, that on H. Bourne had been so greatly blest at the meeting, it was a proof the Lord had owned their labours, and they must go on; although he allowed that himself and Daniel had no encouragement.

So low had been their opinion of their own prayer meeting performance, that to have been assured that no harm had been done, would have given satisfaction, and to have known that any soul had received good, would have caused thankfulness; and H. Bourne having, on that occasion, received so lasting a blessing, was matter of encouragement. And on this proof that the Lord had owned their labours, they concluded to go on in the Lord. And thus they were all three established in the character of pious-praying labourers.

When the church at Jerusalem was scattered, (Acts viii. 1,) "they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word." These scattered ones, it appears, were ordained public characters through providential necessity; and the great, distress of the mourners was the providential necessity, by means of which the Lord ordained H. Bourne, D. Shubotham, and M. Bayley, to be public characters. And this apparently small beginning, so little thought of, even by themselves, the Lord made the ORIGIN of a great work, a work that is still increasing.

It was about as small a beginning when Mr. John Wesley and his brother, and two others, agreed to meet together at Oxford, in November 1729. But, beyond all human expectation, the Lord made their so doing, the ORIGIN of a mighty work. In that instance the Lord wrought by four ministers of the church of England; but in the present instance, (namely, in the year 1801,) the Lord made choice of three hardworking men. In both instances the excellency of the power was of God; to whom be glory and dominion for ever and ever. — Amen.

Chapter 13.

The work on the point of failing. — Success depends on the descending of the grace of God. — The work breaks out — Low state of the Methodist Burslem circuit, A. D. 1797—1800. — The spirit of reproof and exhortation abounds. — An extraordinary meeting, May 12, 1801, followed by a great work. — No class meetings attainable. —

The place neglected by the preachers, still the work rises — This apparently providential. — A. D. 1801.

Matthias Bayley had suffered greatly in this first prayer meeting, because he thought he could not pray in such fine words as H. Bourne. But even this was not without its use, for it at once settled the point, that success in praying depended more on the descending of the power of God, than on the polish of words; and that without the descending of the power or grace of God, the highest eloquence was of no avail. And these views were, in the hand of God, among the means of their future great success.

H. Bourne and his fellows now proceeded in their public capacity; their views being to bring forward the mourners, to promote their own growth in grace, and eventually to promote the glory of God, and the general good. And their labours were not without success, for in a short time one of the mourners obtained liberty; and this, though not in a meeting, gave great encouragement. And soon after, two of the others cried out in the meeting. They were directed to cast themselves upon Christ, — prayer went on with power, and they were soon brought gloriously into liberty. This caused joy indeed. And here was such an instance of the power of faith, and of present salvation, as they had not before witnessed. And about the same hour, the other was brought into liberty in the coalpit, under ground, where he was at work. And this, when known, caused an increase of joy.

In these proceedings they had to follow their own judgment, having never before seen mourners prayed into liberty; and having none to instruct them nor to advise with. But the Lord was their help, and in him they trusted. The Burslem circuit at that time showed a very great departure from Methodism in its primitive state. Open air worship was generally opposed, ministerial family visiting almost totally neglected, the converting work was much lost sight of, and praying mourners into liberty was scarcely known. It will therefore be no wonder if the circuit were in a declining state. The reports of it, on the minutes of Conference, stand as follows:

Burslem Circuit

August 1, 1797,	.. 860 members
July 30, 1798,	.. 810
July 29, 1799,	.. 810
July 28, 1800,	.. 750

So in the course of three years it had, it appears, sunk one hundred and ten members. This showed that the circuit needed something; and it proved that the preachers, or people, or both, were missing their way. And the work at Harresehead, of which we have seen the apparently small ORIGIN, did, in a few years, by the good hand of God, raise the whole circuit. The revival was great, yea, glorious but the trials and sufferings were great also.

H. Bourne had read of souls being brought into liberty in meetings; and had long wished to witness such a work; and the Lord, at this prayer meeting, granted him the desire of his heart.

The new converts, without hesitation, prayed in the meetings, and followed the track opened before them, in cultivating a spirit of reproof, and exhorting and advising such as fell in their way, to turn unto God. The spirit of reproof and of exhorting in conversation is not often carried to so great an extent. And yet such was the mingled zeal and affection that, though many bore a fear of being talked to, yet scarcely any were offended — “Honour all men,” appeared to be fully written on their hearts; and they were hardly ever known to treat any, either man, woman., or child, with disrespect. In this they were manifestly taught of God.

A degree of moralizing took place in the neighbourhood, and the new converts grew in grace. But, the attendance at the meeting lowered, until a Congleton

fair occurred, which is held about the twelfth of May, and which, that year, proved to be the time of the meeting. And the consequence was, that H. Bourne, Daniel, Matthias, the woman of the house, a girl, and one man more, formed the whole of the congregation. But this meeting proved such a one as they had not before had. H. Bourne observed that in prayer his own words appeared to be taken away, and other more suitable words came into his mind as he needed them. They experienced such an outpouring of the Spirit of God, as they had never before known, and such as filled them with surprise and wonder. The effects were great; it soon appeared that the whole neighbourhood was moved: people flocked to the meetings, the work broke out, souls were convinced and converted; hymns were sung in all directions, profane songs were put away, and the whole neighbourhood greatly moralized.

H. Bourne wished the new converts to be joined in society, and meet in class; but this, to his sorrow, he could not accomplish. There was no class but that at old Joseph Pointon's, and that was more than a mile from where most of them lived, besides its being on the other side of the mountain. He had before advised Daniel to attend it; but old Joseph being of a timid turn, uniformly turned it into a prayer meeting when any one came who was not a member; and the consequence was, that the class was not led of many weeks. H. Bourne talked with him, but it was of no avail. He also advised him to take Daniel and others into the society. But the good old man said it was the work of the travelling preachers to take people into the society, and to see after them; and if they neglected their duty he should not do their work. H. Bourne then applied to one of the travelling preachers, and laid the whole case before him, and he said the class ought to be led. But nothing was done further; and H. Bourne had again to mourn over the disappointment.

The neglect of this place by the preachers, and in particular, by the travelling preachers, can scarcely be accounted for. The work as has been shown, was started in H. Bourne's visit to D. Shubotham, on Christmas day, December 25, 1800; and the first travelling preacher that visited it was Mr. John Grant, who was first stationed in the Burslem circuit at the Methodist Conference, July 26, 1802. But by some means the general impression on the preachers' minds was, that the work was almost as nothing; and Mr. Grant came with that impression on his mind, as he acknowledged in the pulpit; but said he, "I was surprised, I was amazed, I was astonished." Perhaps this impression might have got in their minds from the work being raised up almost without the aid of preachers. And it will appear that the preachers' neglect of this place and work, answered a very providential end. They did not come there till the revival was grown strong, and the people settled in revival habits; and this proved eventually a blessing to the whole circuit, and to many others. Truly the Lord is gracious in all his works; and though for the present it was a painful trial to H. Bourne, he afterwards proved that the Lord had done all things well.

Chapter 14.

H. Bourne, D. S., and M. B., have to consult — The revival should be perpetual, and the regulations accordingly. — The regulations. — Not to hold over-long meetings. —

To sanctify the Sabbath, &c. — Difficulties surmounted. — The people wish for longer meetings, which brings on the idea of a whole day's meeting; and this proves the First Spring or Origin of the English Camp Meetings. — A. D. 1801.

Our Lord says, “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.” And it was the glory of H. Bourne and his fellows to have the work of God forward, but they were not so fully aware that the cross would come with it; that cares and troubles would multiply upon them, that they must suffer if they would reign with him.

After the outpouring of the Spirit, (May 12, 1801,) the work greatly flourished, many were convinced and converted; and all hope of assistance failing, H. Bourne, Daniel, and Matthias, had soon a great charge on their hands, and had frequently to meet for consultation; and all the-knowledge H. Bourne had previously acquired was soon put in requisition. To him they looked for information, as themselves were but newly come into the way. And H. Bourne laid it down as his belief that it was not the will of God that the revival should ever cease, but that it should be perpetual. To this Daniel and Matthias agreeing, the next question was what steps should be taken to render it perpetual. And H. Bourne noticed that, “Six days shalt thou labour,” was the command of God, and if the religious services were allowed to interfere with this, it would be like attempting to make one part clash with another. This made an opening; for discourse, and H. Bourne pointed out the propriety of not holding the meetings over long, lest the fatigue should, in any degree, unfit them for the duties of their callings; as in his view; in. order to render the revival perpetual, the religious services, and the duties of their callings must harmonize.

This was adopted at once, and Daniel and Matthias were excellent at carrying regulations into effect, when they saw matters clearly; and in their constant talkings with the people they pressed this point, as well as the propriety of diligence and industry in the duties of their callings.

Religion found its way into the coalpits, and generally in all their employments; and their talk was of it at meal-times, and coming and going, and at any vacant opportunities. And their talk was to the purpose both of faith, experience, and inward and outward holiness. This caused a rapid increase in knowledge.

Another point in their regulations regarded propriety of expression in prayer. And H. Bourne showed them a sermon of Mr. Wesley's, that disallows fondling-expressions as *dear Lord, sweet Lord*. So these were put away, and sound and clear expressions were cultivated. The people also were taught that success in praying did not so much depend on the words used, as on the descending of the power or grace of God.

Also by H. Bourne's advice, great regard was paid to the sanctity of the sabbath; and this proved a blessing indeed.

Class meetings were unattainable. This pained H. Bourne's mind; but the freedom of talking experience was of service. And they all applied to Daniel, and especially if any thing particular occurred in their experience; and he usually consulted these things over with H. Bourne, or with him and Matthias, as the case fell in.

None were allowed to pray in public unless they walked circumspectly. And in case any were overtaken in a fault, they usually laid it open to Daniel, and he advised with them. They hardly ever attempted to hide a fault. But such were restrained from praying in public, until there was proof of repentance. This was excellent.*

H. Bourne and his two companions, by the good hand of God upon them, had got tolerably well through the difficulties they had to meet, and had succeeded in establishing sound morality, strictness of discipline, and a due regard to the sanctity of the sabbath; and their prayer meetings being held about an hour or an hour and a quarter, harmonized with the people filling up the duties of their respective callings. But the increase of the work raising a host of praying labourers, zealous to exercise in the meetings, a difficulty seemed to approach, as without lengthening out the meeting, it was difficult to say how all should be accommodated with opportunity. But with this they had little trouble, it being unexpectedly swept away by the fervour of the people. Their zeal for praying hardly admitted on much waiting; and when the meeting grew powerful, hardly any were silent. And when the leading people saw that the power was kept up, they gave into it; and it swept away the difficulty. The proceedings soon bore some resemblance to Ezra iii, 11-13, for the meetings generally proceeded by course at the opening, but after a time the noise might be heard to some distance. The exercises consisted in singing, prayer, and praise, with occasionally a few words of exhortation.

To preserve the purity of the meetings, it was judged right to press the regulations very strongly; chiefly these, namely, that in their conduct they must keep out of sin; in prayer they must not use improper expressions; and then in the meetings pray or praise as they choosed. These points were embodied in a short form: as, "You must keep out of sin, and not use improper expressions, and then go on how you like."

They soon found that establishing the law through faith, was the best method of regulating their prayer meetings. They never found any inconvenience from allowing full liberty in the meetings, to any who were of sound morals, and upright and correct in their conduct.

The strictness of conduct was a means, in the hand of God, of giving stability to the work, and keeping all steady. And it was soon evident that by works is faith made perfect; for great power soon began to attend their prayer meetings; and a great zeal for praying rose among the people, both in their own houses, and in the meetings.

H. Bourne and his two friends might now be said to have reached the extent of their views, only when the Spirit of God works so powerfully in people's hearts, they thirst for the conversion of the world. And it may be truly said that the Lord bringeth the blind by a way they knew not, and leadeth them in paths they have not known, Isa. xlii. 16. The regulations and proceedings at Harresehead led to a point that hardly ever before entered the mind of man. The people, at times, regretted that

the meetings were not continued longer. And at the close of one very powerful meeting, as some of the people were speaking rather freely on the subject, Daniel Shubotham, in his native vehement way, said to this effect: "You shall have a meeting upon Mow, some Sunday, and have a whole day's praying, and then you'll be satisfied."

H. Bourne was surprised, and the rest seemed struck, but no one spoke a word, it silenced all.

His view might be that in such case they might satisfy themselves with praying, without infringing on the duties of their callings. And this might have been the case. But if this was a suggestion ill' the Spirit of God, he, like Peter, at the day of Pentecost, might speak it without being aware of the extent of it. It is thought, that in Acts ii. 39, the Gentiles are included. The words are, "The promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." It is believed that that the words, "all that are afar off," meant the Gentiles. But Peter needed both a vision and a call when he had actually to preach to the Gentiles, see Acts x.

It is likely Daniel's words would be a subject of thought and meditation among the people; and with their views, and their zeal for praying, hardly any thing could have appeared more desirable; and as they had neither preachers nor others to consult with, they had to decide on their own views. And a week or two after this, it so happened that a similar talk took place, namely, that it would have been well for the meeting to have been held rather longer. This H. Bourne did not fall in with: and Daniel Shubotham, as before, spoke of a day's meeting upon Mow; a whole day's praying, "and then," says he, "you'll be satisfied." It was done, it took root in the people's minds; it became the conversation of the neighbourhood; it became a matter of desire and prayer to Almighty God; unexpected opposition afterwards rose, but there was no moving it out of the people's minds, till after near six years' prayer, it, by the good hand of God, issued in the English Camp meetings.

As these Camp meetings proved themselves to be of the Lord, it will be a satisfaction to many to be able distinctly to trace the starting place. And this starting may be providentially in the work set on foot, in H. Bourne's visit to D. Shubotham, December 25, 1800. And the sound morality and strict regulations, established by the advice of H. Bourne, were means, in the hands of the Lord, of suggesting the idea of "A DAY'S PRAYING," to meet the zeal of the people, without interfering with the duties of their callings. And here was the first spring, or origin or idea, the first suggestion of the Holy Spirit to the mind of man, which after mighty praying for near six years, the Lord in the year 1807, caused to issue in the English CAMP MEETINGS.

Chapter 15.

The day's meeting delayed, and why. – H. Bourne has numerous calls. – He enters on class leading. – An appointment made for him to preach, which issues in a great meeting. – A.D. 1801.

From the zeal with which the day's meeting was proposed, and from the deep root it took in people's hearts, it might be thought that it would be forthwith entered upon. But such was not the case. Some of the outward reasons were, Daniel's zeal in the matter sunk; and H. Bourne was not often among them on the sabbaths; and he soon had various other calls. A member of Ridgway class who resided at Norton, requested H. Bourne to assist in an attempt to introduce the cause into that village; and with the assistance of J. Bourne, a prayer meeting on Thursday nights was established at the man's house, which after a time was crowned with success.

Norton-in-the-Moors, so called, gives name to the parish in which Bemersley is situated. It is about two miles from Bemersley, in a contrary direction to Harresehead; and it is about two miles from Burslem.

They also laboured at Brown Edge in the same parish, and at place near Brown Edge. The Harresehead people also, being invited, opened a place called Bradley Green, where H. Bourne attended with them.

Further it was thought H. Bourne ought to be employed in class leading; but timidity stood in his way, until he begun to be charged with neglect of duty. However, to lead Ridgway class was too heavy a task. But a class having been raised up at Kidsgrave, at the house of Joshua Bayley, Matthias's eldest brother, H. Bourne went over there, and led it.

Kidsgrave is the seat of a large colliery. It is about three miles from Bemersley, and nearly two from Harresehead.

These numerous calls prevented H. Bourne from giving immediate attention to the idea of, "a day's meeting upon Mow." And again, the undertaking was great, and his timidity or fearfulness at that time, stood in his way of becoming immediately the leading man in it.

But we may look higher. The thing was great; and in the order of the Lord, great things are not accomplished without great prayer, and great exercises of faith.

And, in the order of Divine Providence, it became a matter of desire and prayer for about six years, before it was fully accomplished: that is, before it issued in the Camp Meetings.

But although the fulness of the matter was delayed, the Lord favoured the people with a partial accomplishment of it. And in doing this, he certainly brought the blind by a way that they knew not; he led them in paths they had not known, Isa. xlii. 16, The matter was this:

It grew into an opinion that H. Bourne ought to preach; and such were the impressions on his own mind, that he durst not withstand it. But difficulties were in the way. He had never even exhorted in a prayer meeting. He made one attempt to exhort in a class meeting; but in his own opinion it was a failure.

In addition to this, Mr. Bradburn's degrading remarks on preaching begun to have their effect on his mind; and there being, at that time, so much preaching, and so little converting, seemed to confirm what Mr. Bradburn said; and further, in prayer meetings at Harresehead and other places, there had been many conversions; but in the preachings, for years, in that circuit, he had heard only of about four conversions. And on this account he put little value indeed on preaching; yet such were his impressions, that he did not dare to refuse even this; and accordingly a preaching was given out to be at old Joseph Pointon's at Mow, on a vacant Sunday, which was Sunday, July 12, 1801.

The trial was heavy. It was a time of sorrow and prayer. When the sabbath morning, July 12, 1801, arrived, he went thoughtfully to Ridgway class. After this he went to Harresehead, and discoursed with Daniel. They took Dales Green in their way and called on Matthias and in his house there was a course of praying as H. Bourne can never forget. It was mighty.

In climbing up Mow, his mind was very heavy, and he was in doubt whether he had not missed his providential way. It was also doubtful with him whether he should be able to preach or not. But he thought, perhaps ten or twelve might think it was worth their while to come to hear him; and in such case, if it were a disappointment, he hoped it would not do much hurt.

But contrary to his expectation, the country was moved, and some came from considerable distance. And good old Joseph Pointon, though he had a zeal against open air worship, was obliged to yield, and said, "Then its like to be out of door."

It was a fine day, and in the midst of settled fine weather. A preaching stand was fixed at the end of old Joseph's house, and the people lined the rising hill like a spacious gallery. It was in the same field in which was afterwards held the first English Camp Meeting.

H. Bourne opened the meeting with singing and prayer, but under much trial of mind; but shortly after taking his text, he felt the power of God upon him, the subject opened before him and he spoke without difficulty and with effect, although he held his hand over his face the whole time.

At the conclusion of the sermon, feeling unwell, he retired into the house, his brother, J. Bourne and others being present. And there commenced a mighty time of singing, prayer, praise and exhortation in the open air. And H. Bourne, after resting some time, came out and joined them; and it was a great time, and formed a remarkable era, or period, in H. Bourne's life, and a signal instance of Divine Providence.

Chapter 16.

A small Camp Meeting. – Open air worship. – An excellent system opened. – Providential, and the ORIGIN of great things.

It will be seen that this great meeting, held upon Mow, on Sunday, July 12, 1801, was what would now be called a small Camp Meeting. But the main thing is,

the great work God brought in on that day, the introducing of an important system, which will be seen in two views: 1. Open air worship. 2. Accompanying or connecting the preachings with an extended course of prayer, and labour.

H. Bourne was inclined to open air worship, for besides that introduced by Mr. Whitfield, and Mr. Wesley, he had read of it among the quakers and others. But it chiefly consisted of what was termed field preaching. It was mainly confined to one person; and up to July 12, 1801, H. Bourne had no idea of any other general system. But on that remarkable day, the Lord, in his providence, opened another system before his eyes, a system he had not before thought of; and the Lord gave him wisdom, at once, to see into its excellency, and its suitableness, both to open air worship, and in-door worship. And here was the true ORIGIN of the system or work, which finally, in the hand of Divine Providence, issued in the Primitive Methodist Connexion. Here was the origin of accompanying preachings with extended courses of prayer and labour, since practised with so much success in the P. M. Connexion. And here too is the ORIGIN of holding open air worship on an extended system, so mightily owned of God in the P. M. Connexion. Here too was the ORIGIN of the system which finally brought up the Camp Meetings, and established them in usefulness.

Worship, consisting of preaching, accompanied with extended prayer and labour, was, as a general system, unknown at that time in England. And in the Burslem circuit there was not a preacher that could willingly endure it. But the Lord wrought on H. Bourne's mind from that hour, to take it up as a general -system, and establish it, as far as lay in his power. And to this system may be applied the words of the poet:

“The little cloud increases still,
Which first arose upon Mow Hill.”

The little cloud, if we may so term it, which has produced such an effect in the world, was in the system of holding open air worship, and indeed, in-door worship also, with the united aid of preachers and pious praying labourers. This has been, and is still, a means of bringing many talents into action, of imparting vigour and energy to the people, of increasing their faith and their zeal, and mightily bringing forward the work of God.

It will be evident too, that this system was, on the 12th of July, 1801, brought in entirely by the Lord in his Providence, as H. Bourne had thought of only having to preach to about ten or twelve in a house; he had no thought of such a multitude; and even when he concluded the sermon he had no thought of the great course of prayer and labour that followed. So it is evident the whole was brought in by providential circumstances, and un designed of man; and the success of the system has been accordingly. To God be all the glory in the church, by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

Chapter 17.

Chapel built at Harresehead.—The cause at Norton.—H. B. puts in M. Bayley to lead Kidsgrove class.—He forms a class at Harresehead, and puts in D. Shubotham leader.—Variety in class leading excellent.—Sunday school.—Notices of the year 1801.

On Friday, July 31, 1801, H. Bourne was informed that it was proposed to build a chapel at Harresehead, and that Daniel Shubotham would give a part of his garden for the purpose. On hearing this he promised to give the timber, and as the chapel when built was between eleven and twelve yards long, and eight yards and six inches wide outside, the offer was liberal. It was set about; and soon the whole was entirely thrown upon H. Bourne; and he was involved in difficulties indeed. And before the roof was fully covered in, one gable end was blown down, the roof fell in, and much damage was done. He, however, at length completed it, almost without any assistance from any quarter; and thus a provision was made for the present, and for future generations. And in the year 1804, a mighty revival was set on foot in it, which was blessed to hundreds.

The cause at Norton.

Norton, being near Burslem, preachers were obtained; but after a time, all was given up; and the blame was laid on H. Bourne, for not, it was said, giving a greater attendance on the sabbaths. This pained his mind, he having done all he reasonably could. He, however, sent word that he would preach there the Thursday night following. The company was small, but his eldest brother's wife being present, got her soul converted; and a course of praying followed by James Bourne and others. The neighbourhood was moved, the prayer meetings were resumed, a class was formed, and the preachers again invited. And on Sunday, August 2, 1801, H. Bourne preached in the open air; and a powerful course of prayer followed, by J. Bourne, D. Shubotham, M. Bayley, and others. H. Bourne had scarcely any liberty in preaching, but a young man set out for heaven, and became a champion in the cause.

H. Bourne, after leading the Norton class for a time, put in the man of the house as leader, but himself and others led it in turn.

Also in July, when the first appointment was made for him to preach, he prevailed with Matthias to undertake the Kidsgrove class, and put him in as leader, and he, Matthias, led it a number of years.

But a still heavier matter was thrown upon him, which was making arrangements at Harresehead. The eccentric local preacher had undertaken this, but he made things worse, and H. Bourne had at length to take up the whole matter. He entered upon it in the fear of the Lord, formed a class at Harresehead to meet on Monday nights, and appointed D. Shubotham to be the leader. The rest of the people he entered into Joseph Pointon's class, which met on Sunday mornings; the good old man having obtained a deeper baptism of the Spirit, had resumed his office of leader.

The Harresehead class was appointed to meet on Monday nights, in the chapel so soon as it should be ready, and in the mean time in D. Shubotham's house. And H. Bourne, D. Shubotham, and M. Bayley led it in turn, and it was occasionally led by others. Almost all the classes H. Bourne was at that time concerned in organizing, had a variety in the leading. This was a point Mr. Wesley aimed at, but did not accomplish it; and it is certainly excellent.

This class was led with great zeal, and great strictness, and the class meetings became very powerful. It was also a place, of resort for members of other classes, and there were great outpourings of the Holy Spirit.

When the chapel was completed, a Sunday school was established, and provision made for the rising generation.

Notices of the year 1801.

It will be seen that during this year there was a great change in H. Bourne's life. At the beginning of it, he considered himself as one of the weakest of Christ's followers, was in a situation where he conceived he, could scarcely at all grow in grace, but even was afraid of losing his own personal religion, and doubtful whether he should be ever able to act in public. But God seeth not as man seeth. In that, apparently, most unlikely place, the Lord built him up, made him a promoter of religion in conversation, and ministerial family visitings, a praying labourer, a manager of prayer meetings, an establisher of rule and order, a class leader, an establisher of classes, and an appointer of leaders, a chapel builder, a promoter and establisher of open air worship, on an extended system, and of in-door worship on a similar system, a bringer of talents into action, a provider for the children, the rising generation, a foundation layer, and a way preparer for the future Camp Meetings, and a system former for promoting and perpetuating present and future revivals.

It is not very common for so great a change to happen in a man's life, in the compass of a single year. But the Lord did as it pleased him; and during that year H. Bourne's trials were very great, and of a kind to which he had before been a stranger.

Chapter 18.

Providential proceedings in the year 1801.— Features of proceedings in the P. M. Connexion.— The first revival checked.— The people learn wisdom by it.

The year 1801, presents us with various openings of Divine Providence, producing an unlooked for course of proceedings, such as, powerfully promoting religion in conversation, and in family visitings. Powerful prayer meetings with present salvation, praying people into conviction and mourners into liberty. Establishing the law through faith, due regard to the sanctity of the sabbath, and diligence in the people's callings; and, in order to this, not holding the regular meetings over long. Open air worship on a broader basis than that established by Mr. Wesley; and in-door worship the same, bringing many talents into action. A

foundation laid for Camp Meetings; a large meeting held, which would now bear the name of a small Camp Meeting. Societies raised, class leaders put in, and variety established in the class leading. A chapel built for the benefit of the present and future generations, and for the children, the lambs of the flock. Measures taken to promote and perpetuate present and future revivals.

Here may be seen some of the features of the proceedings in the Primitive Methodist Connexion. But it may seem strange that H. Bourne should so suddenly have such a weight of management upon him. But this might be the Lord's doing, although it was painful to his mind. But the circuit was large, and the travelling preachers might have their hands pretty full; and they seemed to think the work at Harresehead and Mow was as nothing; and they seemed to pay little attention to enlarging the circuit by opening new places.

The work of religion set on foot on Christmas-day, 1800, and which rose so high, and showed such manifestations of Divine Providence, in the year 1801, was afterward called the first revival. H. Bourne wished this revival to have been rendered perpetual; but it was brought to a close by two men who were methodists, and who lived near Tunstall. One of these was born near Harresehead, and he, coming to see his friends, happened to be at one of the Harresehead prayer meetings; and seeing a fine rising work, spoke in an extolling way; but privately he professed to find fault, and say that the work was carried on in a new way. After this, he brought the other man with him, and came occasionally; and by degrees he and his fellow waxed confident, proclaimed themselves "old standards," found fault with all the measures, saying that all was going on in a new way, different from the way of Methodism. They were reminded that they lived among a much greater population, and were asked how the cause went on there; and they allowed that all was in a dead state, and their labours of no effect. Still, however, they determined to oppose, what they called the NEW way; and their coming were still more frequent; and by their getting the ear of one and another, they at length made such trouble, that the people were in some degree drawn out of the way in which Divine Providence had raised them up, and the revival made a pause, the converting work ceased; but not one fell away. This steadfastness was imputed to the strictness previously established.

The ceasing of the revival awakened both Daniel and Matthias; they found H. Bourne's words true, who had at first and all along warned them of what would be the event; but the mischief was done; and soon after one of the troublers fell away.

H. Bourne much regretted the ceasing of this revival; but one good came of it, which was this, it gave the Harresehead people to see the danger of suffering themselves to be drawn out of the way in which Divine Providence had raised them up; and this was afterwards of immense service. So God brings good out of evil.

Chapter 19.

The Harresehead chapel completed. — An over-load of preaching. — Open air worship opposed. — On the new way. — Prayings at the closings of preachings. — Judging of preaching by its success. — Reproving the preachers. — The tone of morals raised.

At length, after much delay, H. Bourne got the Harresehead chapel completed, and the preaching, and a Sunday school in it. But all was not to his satisfaction; the preachers finding so powerful a work, run into the opposite extreme, they appointed preaching for ten o'clock and two, every Sunday, and a travelling preacher once a fortnight on week nights. Now as the cause had mainly risen by means of the people's own exertions, with H. Bourne's direction and assistance, such an over-load of preaching, he was aware, tended to weaken their energies, and, in a great degree, to bury their talents.

In addition to this, the preachers, with the exception of the eccentric local preacher at Burslem, were opposed to open air worship; and had great zeal against the idea of a day's meeting on Mow. This caused H. Bourne, and others to sigh in secret.

When these things were established, it was soon apparent that there was some reason for saying the people at Harresehead and Mow had gone on in a new course. The extended praying, at the close of preachings was disliked, but the people persisted in it, and the congregation appeared to prefer these prayings above the preachings.

Again, the Harresehead people had learned to judge of preachings by the success in the converting line; and they could not be got out of this, although the preachers in general professed to be builders up only. But from what hath been noticed before, it will be evident, that what they called building up had, in the course of three years, sunk the circuit one hundred and ten members.

The eccentric preacher had a talent for awakening; but with this exception, the Harresehead people scarcely ever expected any rise, or increase of the work by the preachers.

The scale of morals too, at that time, was not high in the Burslem circuit; and when the preachers fell into vain, frivolous, or worldly conversation on the sabbath, or in any other case, they met with steady reproof. And in those days to reprove a preacher was almost reckoned unpardonable. The preachers made much confusion about this; but as they could not move the Harresehead people, they were obliged to submit; and it had a gracious effect; it was a means of raising the tone of morals through the circuit; and, through the mercy of God, the circuit, by degrees, began to wear a different appearance.

It will now be evident that the chapel being blown down, was a providential good, as it was a means of keeping the preachers at a distance till the moral and other revival habits were settled; and until, in the checking of the first revival, they had seen the evil of suffering themselves to be swayed out of the way in which Divine Providence had graciously raised them up.

Chapter 20.

The preachers and the Harresehead people. — The name of Camp Meeting taken from the M. Magazines. .— The second revival, September, 1804. — Lovefeast at Congleton. — Faith and present salvation. — The circuit on a move. — Fondlings are evil. — The revival at Harresehead makes a pause. — A. D. 1802—1806.

Harresehead was chiefly supplied with local preachers from Burslem and Tunstall. They were much respected by the people, although the views on either side were different. The preachers complained of the people being in a new course, or new way of proceeding: they chiefly objected to the people's course of praying at the close of preaching services, to their zeal for open air worship, to their judging of the excellency of preaching, not from its polish, but from its success; this was mortifying. But they were peculiarly pained with the people's steady administering reproof and admonition without respect of persons. And the people's idea of a day's meeting, the preachers could hardly bear. But the people could not be moved.

The people had reason to complain that the preachers in general were not useful in the conversion of sinners to God. But in reply to this the preachers professed to be, what themselves called "builders up."

The difference of views did not cause any particular unfriendliness; but matters were discussed with a freedom and firmness to which the preachers had not been accustomed. But the preachers, by degrees, yielded on almost every point, and it became a blessing.

But to the idea of a day's meeting, the preachers could not be reconciled; they, both travelling and local, set their faces against it, and laboured to root it out of the minds of the people. But about the year 1802, the Camp Meetings rose in America; and in no very long time accounts of their great success began to appear in the Methodist Magazines; and these accounts spoke louder for such meetings, than the preachers could speak against them; and the hoped for "day's meeting" began to be called, "A CAMP MEETING." And here was the ORIGIN of the name.

But it must be understood, that in the years 1802, 1803, and part of the year 1804, while these things were in operation, the work did not spread in the way usually termed revival; though there was a degree of general quickening in the circuit, with some converting. And at Harresehead the usual strictness was kept up, as well as the faith, and life, and power. But still their united faith was not strong enough to fully open the work. But the Lord provided for this also.

The Second Revival.

After much praying, and groaning in the spirit, the Lord, in September, 1804, graciously begun a revival in Harresehead chapel. This was called, the second revival. Its rise was as follows:-

There were at that time, in the Methodist Connexion, at or near Stockport, certain persons called Revivalists. And James Clark, a blacksmith, at Congleton, formed a plan to get these and the Harresehead people together, judging it might be of

service. He accomplished this at a quarterly love-feast, held in the Methodist chapel at Congleton, in the month of September, 1804; where, at his invitation, H. Bourne, and a number of Harresehead and Mow people attended; and he, J. Clarke, at his own expense, got a number from Stockport, a distance of about twenty miles. And these, though entire strangers to each other, found themselves to be one people; only the revivalists, so called, spoke far more highly of the power of faith, and of present salvation, by and through faith, than H. Bourne and his fellows had been accustomed to. And after the lovefeast, they held a prayer meeting together, in James Clark's house; in which meeting, present salvation was pressed without restraint.

At length H. Bourne and his fellows took leave of their new friends; and on their return home, that night, and also the next day, Monday, they had plentiful subjects of conversation. Pleased and edified by the discourse of their new acquaintances, they were full of conversations on the nature and manner of revivals.

At night the class meeting commenced in Harresehead chapel. And when it had gone on for some time, with more than common zeal, the united faith rose to an unusual height, and there was such a mighty outpouring of the Spirit of God, as the people there had never before known. The whole country was moved, and the SECOND REVIVAL BEGAN.

Believers soon began to press into a greater fulness of SANCTIFICATION; people from all quarters flocked to the meetings; multitudes were convinced of sin; and praying mourners into liberty was like the order of the day; and by degrees the circuit got on a move, and the work became very general, it rose to a great and extensive revival.

This great work brought great trials; but H. Bourne and his fellows had had painful experience, and had learned much of the nature of perpetuating revivals. They knew one main point was, firmly and resolutely to establish the law through faith. They pressed the people, with all their might, to diligent attention to the duties of their callings, careful regard to the sanctity of the sabbath, uprightness in their dealings, and a care not to use improper expressions in prayer or otherwise. The strictness before established was zealously kept up, and all were shown that by WORKS is FAITH made perfect.

But the enemy, after some time, made an inroad in an unlooked-for way. A zealous young man, who lived at some distance introduced fondlings among the people. He was rather above the middle rank in life, was a very good young man, came often among the people, and was much respected both by H. Bourne, and by all. Nevertheless H. Bourne saw it to be his duty to testify against the fondlings. But they still went on until the men made no scruple of putting their hands upon the women in the meetings. And so strong was the tide, that even D. Shubotham and M. Bayley were so carried off, that, although they did not practise it themselves, they did not reprove it in others. And some begun to take offence at H. Bourne's strong reproofs, saying that he was unreasonable, and they represented the fondlings as harmless.

H. Bourne laboured much with D. Shubotham on this subject, informed him that in all his readings he had never met with one revival, but what had suffered more or less by such fondlings; and some revivals had been totally ruined, and religion disgraced, by means of such fondlings. He also illustrated it by Martin Luther, who,

in an unguarded hour, set aside the epistle by St. James; and such a flood of antinomianism followed, as was thought by some, a means of shortening his life through excess of grief.

He also noticed what Mr. Wesley said about the injury caused to religion by inordinate affection. And that such fondlings led to inordinate affection, and other bad things, and on some occasions to foul wickednesses.

When H. Bourne found that he could not prevail, he wrote a protest, signed it with his own name, and delivered it to D. Shubotham, as a witness that he had borne testimony against the fondlings.

Having done this, H. Bourne attended less at Harresehead and more at Tunstall, where the work was growing strong; and where he fell into the acquaintance of William Clowes, James Nixon, Thomas Woodnorth, and others; who were then new converts, fruits of the revival, and were going on well.

In a short time the Lord took the matter into his own hand, and convinced D. Shubotham and M. Bayley, of the evil of those fondlings; and they soon drove them out, and the revival was saved. No man was allowed in a meeting to put his hand on a woman; and out of meetings, men and women were not allowed to walk arm in arm, except a man with his own wife. The revival then had a sound clear course, and it went on.

The preachers in general fell in well with the work, and Mr. Edward Jackson, the superintendent preacher, informed H. Bourne that it was the steadiest revival he had ever known. But his colleague, namely, the other travelling-preacher, set himself against the work in every way he could. This had no good effect, it caused many to think that the man had never been converted to the Lord; and it lowered, for a time, the travelling preachers in general estimation, it being evident others were useful in the hand of the Lord, in the conversion of precious souls to God; but it was asked, What in the usefulness of the travelling preachers?

At the Conference of 1805, one of the preachers stationed for the circuit was termed a revivalist, and had, it was said, been a successful man. He, at first, drew great respect; but at Harresehead he took a peculiar course, and succeeded in drawing the people out of the way in which the Lord had raised them up; and, as before, the revival there made a pause, and twelve months elapsed without a single conversion taking place at Harresehead, or in the neighbourhood. This was grievous.

Chapter 21.

The ceasing of the revival turns the people's minds to the Camp Meeting. — State of the circuit in that respect. — Visit of an American preacher. — Circumstances that concurred in preparing the way. — A case in Norton society causes an appointment to be made. — The people at Harresehead and Mow promise to assist; and also appoint one for Mow. — A. D. 1806, 1807.

The ceasing of the revival at Harresehead caused much sorrow and mourning. But it was the means of turning the tide of the people's minds to a Camp Meeting, as

the only hope or prospect they had of again raising the work. But the obstacles for a time seemed insurmountable. And the views in the Burslem circuit appeared peculiar: Bemersley, Norton, a few at Brown Edge, and with little exception, the whole of the people at Harresehead and Mow, were for a Camp Meeting; the rest of the circuit, and in particular the preachers appeared arrayed against it, and against open air worship in general. There was, however, on the one hand, the eccentric local preacher at Burslem, who was an open air worshipper; and on the other hand the preachers had won Daniel Shubotham over to be against the Camp Meeting, and against all open air worship; and this appeared to be the general state of things in the Methodist Burslem circuit at that time.

Daniel Shubotham's defection, added to the other obstacles, was a means of shutting up all the prospect; but those who were for the Camp Meeting prayed mightily; they might even be said to travail in birth.

In the mean time a preacher of the name of Thomas Cotton, had been raised up in the Harresehead society. He was popular, and successful in the converting line, and was peculiarly zealous for the Camp Meeting. And he got into the acquaintance of pious people at Macclesfield and Congleton, who strongly urged the holding of a Camp Meeting upon Mow; but there appeared no way unless the Almighty opened it.

Again, it was known that in some of the surrounding neighbourhoods, there had long been a desire among the inhabitants for such a meeting to be held. This was looked upon as a call of Providence; and H. Bourne pressed D. Shubotham on this point, but he gave no ear to it.

But the Methodist Magazines were among the chief means the Lord made use of in preparing the way for the Camp Meetings; for these Magazines had now, for at least four years, been circulating constant accounts of the great work and great revivals effected by the American Camp Meetings; and reading these had filled the people's minds, far and near, with Camp Meeting notions, and with wishes and desires to witness a Camp Meeting.

In the mean time, Daniel Shubotham and Thomas Cotton and others, were filled with discourse about an American preacher named Lorenzo Dow, whom they had been a few times to hear at Congleton and at Macclesfield; and who, they represented as being very successful in the converting line, and who spoke much of the American Camp Meetings. But H. Bourne's attention was never drawn to this man until one day a messenger came over to Bemersley in haste, to say that at eleven o'clock that forenoon, he would preach in Harresehead chapel. H. and J. Bourne and others set off, and were edified with his preaching, and almost all were struck with his talk about the Camp Meetings; and in particular his remark, that in the twelve months before he left America, there had been in America more souls converted at the Camp Meetings than at all the other meetings put together. This remark took wonderfully, for scarce any thing would raise the people there, like accounts of souls being converted to God; so this remark was calculated to kindle a flame.

This same man preached at Burslem and Tunstall the same day, but nothing material occurred. The next morning H. and J. Bourne heard him at Congleton, and purchased his journals and a few tracts relative to the American Camp Meetings. The man set off the same day for Liverpool on his way back to America. This took place

about the month of April, in the year 1807. And this man's visit to Harresehead made a peculiar move in regard to Camp Meetings.

The reader will now have before him nearly all the providential circumstances which, in the hand of God, united their influence in preparing the way for the English Camp Meetings. It will be seen that H. Bourne and people at Harresehead and Mow, had prayed for it for six years; and perhaps this praying was the greatest means of all. Then there was the introduction of open air worship, which took place upon Mow, July 12, 1801, the first time H. Bourne stood up to preach. On the same occasion too, was begun the system of accompanying preachings with extended praying services. Then the name of Camp Meeting was introduced by the Methodist Magazines, and the reading of these Magazines made a great Camp Meeting move in the minds of the people through the country. And the second Harresehead revival being brought to a close, in the manner it was, caused much grief, and turned the thought of H. Bourne, and of the people in general at Mow and Harresehead, with a full tide on a Camp Meeting; and the American preacher's visit to Harresehead chapel, drew much attention to the subject.

By the operation of all these means, the matter was brought to a point, and needed only a finishing stroke; and this was brought about in the way of guarding against an expected evil. The cause was this, there had been a chapel built at Norton in 1805; but for several years the society at Norton had had regularly year after year, to lament the loss of members at the time of .the wake or parish feast; some of the younger members having, in each year, been drawn away by the vanities of the wake. This regular loss of members at the time of the wake had caused H. Bourne much thought and much sorrow, and he had devised various plans to prevent it, but hitherto without success. But now, in reading over the Camp Meeting tracts, he had purchased from the American preacher, the Lord wrought on his mind in a peculiar manner. It appeared to him that if a Camp Meeting were held a few days at the beginning of the wake week, it would be likely to engage the attention of the younger members of the society, and preserve them from the vanities of the wake. No material difficulties appeared in the way. He could be accommodated with a suitable field by a brother-in-law of his. And he concluded that himself, his brother James Bourne, and Thomas Cotton, would be sufficient for preaching; and there were good praying labourers at Norton, and one or two at Brown Edge; and these, with a number from Harresehead and Mow, would, he judged, complete the whole! and he could pay them wages, as far as necessary, for their loss of time. All appeared clear; he concluded on it at once; and this was the first real Camp Meeting appointment ever made in England.

It may be observed that it was now about the beginning of May, 1807, and the wake week would commence on Sunday, the twenty-third of August; and it will be evident there was more than a man's hand in it, for even now if H. Bourne were to appoint such a meeting so long beforehand, it is not likely that it would be held. This evidently shows that there was over it a superintending Providence; as such an instance of a meeting so appointed and so held, cannot be paralleled in England, perhaps not in the world. But when the Lord works who shall let it?

H. Bourne filled with thankfulness at the prospect of preserving the younger members of the Norton society, lost no time, but on the Monday following posted off

to Harresehead, to attend the class, and engage assistance. He arrived before meeting time, entered into conversation with D. Shubotham, but felt timid at the thought of mentioning his real business. But to his surprise, talk, as follows, passed between them:-

D. S. We are to have a Camp Meeting.

H. B. Are you?

D. S. Aye, upon Mow. Will you assist us?

H. B. Aye, I'll be with you.

H. Bourne was thankful to the Lord that his way was so unexpectedly opened, but he kept silence respecting; the Norton Camp Meeting. And it proved there was not at that time any Camp Meeting appointed for Mow. The whole matter turned out to be this:- the American preacher's visit, together with other things, had, for the time being, turned D. Shubotham's mind to the Camp Meeting, and no preacher had had any opportunity to turn it back again.

They all went into the chapel, and after the class was led, H. Bourne stood up to give an account of the intended Norton Camp Meeting. It may be observed that up to this time H. B. had not spoken of it to any living person whatever; but he now gave the account at large. His words went among the people like fire. They at once promised their assistance. And it set them on fire for a Mow Camp Meeting. But there was an obstacle in the way; the preachers planned for the chapel were known to be decidedly opposed, and would make trouble. But D. Shubotham, raised to the height of his zeal, opened the way. He got the preachers; plan, examined it, and finding that Thomas Cotton was planned in the Harresehead chapel for Sunday, May 31, 1807, he at once gave that out as the day for the Camp Meeting. It was done:- and they all fell down on their knees and prayed mightily to God, and continued in prayer until they all believed the Lord would bless the two Camp Meetings.

The matter of publishing it then came up, and H. Bourne, and some others were for no publishing, except just making it known amongst themselves. He, in his own mind, wished, if possible, for the knowledge of it not to reach Burslem and Tunstall until after it had been held, as the preachers from those places had made so much trouble about it; and he wished, as much as possible, to avoid further trouble.

But Thomas Cotton pleaded so hard for liberty to let his pious friends know at Macclesfield, Congleton, &c., that he was yielded to, and H. Bourne wrote him a few notes to send to those places, stating that a Camp Meeting would be held upon Mow, on Sunday, May 31, 1807, to commence at six o'clock in the morning, if the weather suited; but that there would be no Camp Meeting if it were a rainy morning.

H. Bourne's caution was useless, the report spread in the country like fire.

The preachers dealt with D. Shubotham on the subject, but he had gone too far to draw back. But he gave them a promise that if no souls were converted at it, he would never again be concerned in a Camp Meeting.

H. Bourne fell in with Mr. John Riles, the superintendant of the circuit; and on taking a view of the whole, he thought it would be proper to lay the matter before Mr. R. And on his so doing, Mr. R. spoke with some lightness, but did not say that he either approved or disapproved. But shortly after this, he again falling in with H. Bourne, told him the meeting must be stopped. H Bourne said it could not be stopped;

that it was well known those colliers, in a matter they believed was to the glory of God, and the good of souls, would not be stopped by any. Mr. R. said it would do hurt; but H. Bourne replied it would not do hurt. Mr. R. then said, "One meeting will satisfy all people." "Very well," said H. Bourne, "then we'll leave it as that meeting leaves it." "Very well," said Mr. Riles.

It would seem Mr. Riles in his zeal, was not fully aware of the import of his own words; for he being the agent of the Conference in that circuit, did hereby in effect, not only give the Conference sanction, (as far as he was concerned), to that meeting, but to leaving the Camp Meeting cause or system on the same footing as that meeting should leave it. Neither was H. Bourne at the time aware of the import either of his own words, or of those of Mr. R. But at that Camp Meeting, when he came literally to act on Mr. R.'s words, he began to wonder; and Mr. Riles's words were one means of perpetuating the Camp Meeting system. But in all this we may clearly see, that the Lord brought the blind by a way that they knew not; and led them in paths that they had not known: that he made darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things he did unto them, and did not forsake them, Isa. xlii. 16.

Chapter 22.

Instances of Divine guidance. — The first English Camp Meeting powerful. — H. Bourne writes and prints a historical account of it. — The historical account. — A. D. 1807.

The judgments of the Lord are a great deep; and when he works who shall let it? A Divine hand was variously manifested in the work, which under the title of Methodism, rose by means of a Mr. Morgan, and Mr. John and Charles Wesley, and another. And a Divine guidance was variously manifested in the work that rose, undesigned of man, at Bemersley, Harresehead, Mow, and Norton. In various instances it exceeded human wisdom, and manifested a Divine hand; and this was strikingly evidenced in the first Mow Camp Meeting. H. Bourne and his Harresehead and Mow friends, had, in their prudence, given it out that there would be no Camp Meeting if it were a rainy morning. But although the rain fell, the Lord moved on the Cheshire people, and they came in, (some of them from great distances), and begun the meeting at six o'clock in the morning, the time for which it had been published.

The meeting, beginning thus early, proceeded with power and effect, and without intermission, till half-past eight at night, so that it continued, its powerful course for about fourteen hours and a half. And its effects were great, and not only present, but permanent. It spread its beneficial and moralizing influence through the whole neighbourhood, so that a change for the better was strikingly manifest. And pious people were of opinion that more good was done at that Camp Meeting, than had been done at all the preachings and meetings held at Harresehead and Mow, during the whole of the preceding twelvemonths. And as H. Bourne had been in the way of reading historical accounts of the American Camp Meetings, in the Methodist Magazines, and in other publications, he set on and wrote a historical account of the

proceedings of this English Camp Meeting. And this account was to him as a record of the goodness and mercy of God.

In a very short time after the conclusion of this very powerful meeting, it was found that evil misrepresentations were beginning to be circulated concerning it. And as this appeared injurious to the cause of God, H. Bourne consulted his brother and his Harresehead and Mow friends. And the conclusion was, that the best thing that could be done, would be to print and publish the historical account he had written. He had some doubt whether the sale of it would cover the expense of printing.* But as the design was to serve the cause of God, he forthwith prepared it for the press. And it was published with the following title:-

“Observations on Camp Meetings with an Account of a Camp Meeting, held on Sunday, May 31, 1807, at Mow near Harresehead.” By H. Bourne.

“Price one penny.”

To this was added, “If any profits arise from the sale of this pamphlet, they will be applied to the discharge of the debt incurred by the above Camp Meeting.”

The observations were chiefly taken from an American publication, called, “A Defence of Camp Meetings, by the Rev. S. K. Jennings, A. M.” And they referred to the feast of tabernacles, Lev. xxiii. 39-44, and Nehemiah viii. 13-18. And to our Lord with the multitudes in the desert, Matt. xiv. 13-21, and elsewhere. To these H. Bourne added a sketch of the American Camp Meetings. He then proceeded as follows:

“Mow Camp Meeting was appointed to be held on Sunday, May 31, 1807. The morning proved rainy and unfavourable, which rather put it back, but about six o’clock, the Lord sent the clouds off, and gave us a very pleasant day.”

The pamphlet then gives an account of some of the Cheshire people, who opened the meeting, and who, it says, “carried on and sustained the meeting a considerable time, in a most vigorous and lively manner. They conducted it by preaching, prayer, and exhortations, relating experiences, &c. The Lord owned their labours, grace descended, and the people of God were greatly quickened. The congregation rapidly increased, and others began to join in holy exercises.”

Then follow a number of remarks and observations made in preaching and speaking; after which the account proceeds:-

“Meanwhile the people were flocking in from every quarter. The wind was cold, but a large grove of fir trees kept the wind off, and made it very comfortable. So many now covered the ground, that another preaching stand was erected, in a distant part of the field, under the cover of a stone wall. Returning over the field, I met a company at a distance from the first stand, praying for a man in distress. I could not get near, but I there found such a measure of the power of God, that it was beyond description. I should gladly have stopped there, but other matters called me away. I perceived that the Lord was beginning- to work mightily. Nearer the first stand was another company praying with mourners. Immediately the man in the other company was praising God, and I found that he had obtained pardon of his sins, and was born

again. I believe this man to be the first that was born of God at this meeting. Many were afterwards born again or converted in the other company; the number I could not ascertain; but from what information I was able to collect, I suppose about six."

"Meantime preaching went on without intermission at both stands, and about noon the congregation was so much increased, that we were obliged to erect a third preaching stand; we fixed it a distance below the first, by the side of the fir tree grove. I got upon this stand after the first preaching, and was extremely surprised at the amazing sight that appeared before me. The people were nearly all under my eye; and I had not before conceived that such a vast multitude was present; but to see the thousands hearing with attention solemn as death, presented a scene of the most sublime and awfully pleasing grandeur my eyes ever beheld.

"The preachers seemed to be fired with an uncommon zeal, and an extraordinary Unction attended their word, while tears were seen flowing, and sinners trembling on every side. Numbers were convinced, and saints were uncommonly quickened. And the extraordinary steadiness and decorum that was maintained throughout the whole day, (notwithstanding the vast concourse of people who attended), seemed to make a great impression upon every mind.

Many preachers were now upon the ground from Knutsford, Congleton, Wheelock, Burslem, Macclesfield, and other places; and a most extraordinary variety appeared." Then follow observations and remarks made by different preachers, and it says, "Persuasion dwelt on their tongues.

"The congregation increased so rapidly, that a fourth preaching stand was called for. The work now became general, and the scene was most awful and interesting. In this glass any one might have viewed the worth of souls. To see the thousands of people, all (except a few stragglers), in solemn attention; a company near the first stand, wrestling in prayer for mourners; and four preachers" [preaching with all their might]. "These things made an impression on my mind not soon to be forgotten. This extraordinary scene continued till about four o'clock, when the people began to retire, and before six they were confined to one stand.

"About seven o'clock in the evening, a work began among the children; six of whom were converted, or born again, before the meeting broke up; and the power of God seemed to have a great effect upon the people present. At about half-past eight at night the meeting was finally closed. A meeting, such as our eyes had never beheld! a meeting, for which many will praise God in time, and in eternity! such a day as this we never before enjoyed! a day, spent in the active service of the living God! a sabbath in which Jesus Christ made glad the heart of his saints, and sent his arrows to the hearts of sinners. The propriety and great utility of Camp Meetings appeared to every one; so great was the work, that the people were ready to say, 'We have seen strange things today.' O may the Lord carry on his work, till righteousness cover the earth, for Jesus's sake. Amen.

- It would have done more than cover the expense. But as it begun to take a rapid sale, other people, without H. Bourne's consent, got it printed and sold it throughout the country; and this so obstructed H. Bourne's sale, that it was with difficulty that he was able to make it pay his way.

Chapter 23.

Norton Camp Meeting given out, and a second for Mow. – Great opposition. – Mr. R's handbill against Camp Meetings. –Remarks. – A.D. 1807.

This meeting exceeded the expectation of the people in the neighbourhood, both in its greatness and in its effects; and H. B. was of opinion that if such meetings were generally adopted in the Wesleyan connexion, they would renew open air worship, and be a great blessing.

In the afternoon, when this meeting was proceeding, H. Bourne published the intended Norton Camp Meeting, to be held in August, and to continue a few days, to counteract the bad effect of the wake. This last expression drew the attention of some of the Cheshire people, a man out of Yorkshire, and some of the Harresehead and Mow people; and they proposed for a similar Camp Meeting to be held on Mow, in July, to counteract the bad effects of the wake in that neighbourhood. But H. Bourne hesitated — his mind was full of the excellency of Camp Meetings; and he was aware that by such a measure, good might be done, evil hindered, and souls converted; and here conscience and duty would require him to go forward. But on the other hand, the undertaking was weighty, and Mr. Riles had shown reluctance to such meetings being held, and these things caused him to hesitate. But in that instant, Mr. Riles's agreement to leave it as that meeting left it, came so forcibly to his mind as to turn the scale, as he appeared to have Mr. Riles's implied authority for appointing that second Mow Camp Meeting. So he fell in with the measure, and published the meeting to be held accordingly.

Through injudicious advice, a considerable quantity of food had been provided for the first Mow Camp Meeting; and nearly the whole of the debt incurred thereby, had to be paid by H. and J. Bourne. Still the injudicious advice and persuasions of many prevailed for an attempt to be made to provide food on a large scale for the second Mow Camp Meeting. It was hoped subscriptions would be raised sufficient to pay for it. But this failed, and the weight was thrown on H. and J. Bourne, the advisors having kept themselves out of the responsibility. H. Bourne also promised to put up a few tents both for that and Norton.

The printed account of the first Mow Camp Meeting went through the country like fire; and in the same pamphlet the two intended Camp Meetings were advertised. And thus the first meeting left it with two more given out.

Opposition rose as if the world was being turned upside down; and Mr. Riles put out a handbill, which was considered as being deficient in point of grammar. Another opposition handbill was put out by the travelling preachers in Macclesfield circuit. And Mr. Riles, in two different conversations with H. Bourne, expressed a fear lest he, H. B. should write an answer to the handbill. But this fear was unnecessary, for H. B. respected Mr. Riles; and, as far as he could avoid it with a clear conscience, would not do any thing to pain Mr. Riles's mind; otherwise the propriety of open air worship might have been shown by reference to Mr. Wesley; the Camp Meetings, by reference to the Wesleyan magazines; and the authority, by Mr. Riles's agreeing to leave it as that first meeting left it; and as he was the agent of Conference,

this, as far as it went, was Conference authority. And the beginning of the first meeting had no more impropriety in it, than had the beginning of the watch-nights, which were begun in Mr. Wesley's days, by the Kingswood colliers.

It may not be out of place here to observe, that shortly after the Norton and Mow first Camp Meetings were appointed, H. Bourne, D. Shubotham, and M. Bayley, were at old J. Pointon's, praying for those two Camp Meetings. It was a powerful time, but such were the impressions that they believed opposition would rise, but from what quarter they could not conceive, but that the Lord would stand by those two Camp Meetings. And H. Bourne believed himself called of God to stand by the Camp Meetings. And in this he did not waver except for a short time, when the dreadful opposition rose against the second Mow Camp Meeting. But the Lord took care for this.

Chapter 24.

The conventicle act.— H. Bourne thinks to give up, but is deterred by a manifestation from heaven. — He makes great preparations. — A handbill is put out, and the opposition increases.— A. D. 1807.

In addition to the other oppositions, a master potter, a man of infidel principles, and a great persecutor, was preparing to injure the people, and sweep away the Camp Meetings, by means of the Conventicle act then in force. If an information had been laid against the first Mow Camp Meeting, each preacher would have been liable to a penalty of twenty pounds; old Joseph Pointon to as large a penalty, for having it in his field; and every hearer, above sixteen years of ages, to a penalty of five shillings and expenses. So the law then stood. And the country rang with this man's intentions.

Here was peril. And as Hugh Bourne was promoter of the meeting, he concluded that, as far as his property would reach, it would be his duty, as an honest man, to pay out of his own pocket, all the penalties that might be levied. So here was a prospect of his being ruined in his circumstances.

H. and J. Bourne were licensed preachers, but this would not avail unless the place was licensed also. So the law then stood. H. Bourne applied for a license to the bishop's court, and it ought to have been granted. But it was refused, and all was disappointment.

H. Bourne was now completely at a stand, and what to do he knew not. To proceed with the Camp Meetings would be likely to ruin his circumstances, and overwhelm him in troubles. And for what benefit? for if good were done, the opposition of the preachers might sweep it away. And the conventicle act was likely to sweep away the Camp Meetings, after ruining both him and his brother, if they persevered. In viewing these things, he began to doubt whether Providence had as yet opened the way. And he concluded to give up Camp Meetings.

Those who admire Camp Meetings will now see that they were on the point of being totally swept away. They were gone beyond human wisdom; and if they triumphed it must be by the power of a divine hand.

While H. Bourne was pondering these things over in his mind, and thinking what would be the best way to make it generally known that he had given up the Camp Meetings, he was at a prayer meeting at good old Joseph Pointon's. And here he had a peculiar manifestation from heaven. It was of the severe kind. It made him tremble; and he was made sensible that if he drew back from the Camp Meetings, the bottomless pit, and that only, would be his portion. And he was made sensible too, that he had looked more at the expense, than was consistent with the spirit of religious sacrifice. It was done - the terror of the Lord was upon him, and he durst no more confer with flesh and blood.

He applied to an extensive freeholder, and obtained his right to occupy the open common, on the top of Mow. He then with his brother's assistance, purchased a quantity of deal boards and other materials; put up a line of tents and other fixtures, and made an establishment capable, as he judged, to contain the whole of the Camp Meeting. He then applied to the bishop's court, and obtained a license; and put up a board to give notice of its being licensed. And, with J. Bourne's assistance, he proceeded with all other preparations. The expense was great, but that was not to be looked at.

While these preparations were making, the opposition rose so high that it began to be circulated that no Camp Meeting would be held. But H. Bourne got a small handbill printed, to say that the Mow Camp Meeting, which had been published, would be held. And this handbill was signed,

HUGH BOURNE.

JAMES BOURNE.

DANIEL SHUBOTHAM.

MATTHIAS BAYLEY.

THOMAS COTTON.

The authors of the Camp Meetings were now considered as having fully avowed themselves, and the opposition was still more vehement. The opposers soon turned D. Shubotham against the Camp Meetings. And they laboured with Matthias till he regretted giving his name to the handbill, but they could not get him a hair's breadth further. The other three they nearly let alone. But they circulated it that the Methodists from Burslem and Tunstall would attend no more Camp Meetings, and that they regretted having been at the first Camp Meeting. But this was of little weight, for, with the exception of the eccentric local preacher, they had not been looked to. And the opposers made their talk look particular, by saying, it was allowed to a few from Tunstall, who had been at the first meeting, to go to this second, because they had said they would be there, and so must go "*to save their word.*"

The trials and difficulties were great, but H. Bourne durst by no means look back.

Chapter 25.

The second Mow Cop Meeting held with great effect. – The persecutor's visit turns to good. – Proceedings to the conclusion. – A. D. 1807.

On Saturday evening, July 18, 1807, the second Mow Camp Meeting commenced. And it was opened again early on the Sunday morning, July 19. The eccentric local preacher from Burslem ventured to attend for the day. In Cheshire there was a great move, and people came in from Knutsford, Congleton, Macclesfield, Stockport, and other places; some came more than twenty miles. A number came from Warrington in Lancashire, a distance of more than thirty miles. There were preachers and praying labourers in abundance; the weather was fine, the converting work broke out, and the meeting rose in power.

As the day advanced, a few from Tunstall made their appearance. These were at the first meeting; and it was relative to these that the remark was made of their having to go to this meeting. But H. Bourne would have wished for such only to attend as approved of Camp Meetings.

In the afternoon of the Sunday, the work again broke out with power. Many were in repentance, and distress; and the hosts of praying labourers supplicated heaven in their behalf.

While the pious praying labourers were thus engaged, in praying with mourners, the fore-mentioned infidel persecutor came on horseback, accompanied by two others, one on horseback, and the other on foot. He attempted to break in where numbers were praying for mourners; but could not easily force the fixtures H. Bourne had previously put up. He then enquired for the heads of the meeting, and was directed to H. Bourne. But a little time before this man's arrival, H. Bourne had withdrawn from the congregation, and had gone to the other side of a hill to rest himself, and was in conversation with a distant comer. A hue and cry was raised, search was made, and H. Bourne was found. The man came in an angry threatening manner, and talked of law and rights. But the Lord gave H. Bourne to speak cool words, and he had a superior acquaintance with the law. The man wished to see H. Bourne's license; and H. Bourne showed it him with all frankness. He then enquired after the license for the place, and H. Bourne informed him that it was at Bemersley. After some more talk, he rode away with great threatenings. The people were alarmed, but H. Bourne immediately gave his word, that if any penalties were levied, he would pay the whole out of his own pocket.

But H. Bourne was not without anxiety, for such was the state of things, that attempts might have been made to evade the license. But when the man first came, one of the Cheshire men, aware of his design, engaged a number to pray; and all this time they were praying mightily to God in this behalf.

The man did not go off by the way that he came, but rode past the congregation, in another direction, and where he would see the board that gave notice of the license, and warned against disturbing; and, stopping at some cottage houses that were near, he sent for H. Bourne to come to him. H. Bourne went with reluctance. But the Lord had taken the matter into his own hand; and the man was

apparently under a terror lest the law should be brought upon him. But if so, he talked until he believed himself safe, and then took leave, and at parting said, "God bless you." And the people present said, "God bless him."

This was a wonderful deliverance; and was a means in the hand of the Lord of bridling persecutors, and protecting the Camp Meetings against the horrid conventicle act; people in general concluding that if any thing could have been done against the Camp Meetings, this man would have done it. To God be all the glory.

Monday, July 20, the Camp Meeting opened more than an hour later than on the sabbath. But not one Methodist was present from either Burslem or Tunstall, during the day. So what had been reported of their being turned against the Camp Meetings appeared to be confirmed.

But there were preachers and praying labourers in abundance; and the attendance was very great. The ungodly wake was nearly swept away. The work of God broke out; many were in distress; the worship continued till a late hour in the evening, and souls were converted to God. To his name be the glory.

Tuesday, July 21, the congregation was small, but the services were powerful. And, in noticing this important Camp Meeting, H. Bourne's journal, written near the time, says, "About forty were converted on the Sunday, and about twenty on the Monday; on the Tuesday towards night we broke up." This important Camp Meeting was held in Staffordshire; though but a few yards distant from the field, in which the first Mow Cop Meeting was held, and which was in Cheshire.

Chapter 26.

Minutes of Conference, and dread of alarming the government. — Preparing for the Norton Meeting. — Brown Edge Camp Meeting. — Great opposition. — The NORTON CAMP MEETING. — The Tunstall blow. — The coming of Dr. Johnson. — The Camp Meeting cause finally established. — A. D. 1807.

At the Methodist conference, which met July 27th, Mr. Riles got a sort of minute made against Camp Meetings. And after this, in a conversation with H. Bourne, he expressed a fear lest such meetings should alarm the government. But H. Bourne saw no cause for such fear; and on Mr. R. further pressing it, he referred him to the power of God, which was able to protect.

In preparing for the Norton Camp Meeting, expense had to be incurred, an establishment made, and things done, as for the second Mow Camp Meeting. But prospects were gloomy, measures being taken in almost every quarter to cut off all assistance. And so critical was the opposition that even James Bourne himself wavered. But on earnest prayer for direction, the Lord settled his mind in a dream.

Great as were the trials, and severe as was the opposition, H. Bourne ventured to appoint a Camp Meeting to be held at Brown Edge, August 16th, the Sunday before that at Norton. This meeting was small but powerful, and its success strengthened the cause.

In the mean time the country appeared to be all on a move against the Norton Camp Meeting. The sound of it had already gone through the Methodist Connexion in England. The clergyman of the parish interfered, and both professors and profane rose up in all directions, and the zeal against it raged like fire. In short, it was the grand and sublime struggle for the very life and existence of the Camp Meeting cause; a cause which might be said to be pursued by its enemies, and forsaken by its friends.

Amidst all these whirlwinds of confusion and opposition, about six o'clock on the Sunday morning, August 23, 1807, in much apparent weakness, the Norton Camp Meeting opened. The Lord was present, and the Unction from the Holy One rested on the services.

The preachers present were H. and J. Bourne, and two out of Cheshire. The praying labourers present were Matthias Bayley, and three or four from his neighbourhood, with those of Norton and Brown Edge, who were few and weak; and H. Bourne began to doubt whether, with this assistance, they could sustain the meeting through the day. When he first made the appointment he thought only of a small peaceable meeting, consisting chiefly of religious people. He had no idea that it would move the country, that the sound of it would go through the nation; and that, in the order of Providence, it would have to meet the weighty opposition, and sustain the grand and sublime struggle for the life or death of the mighty Camp Meeting cause.

It was evident from the great move in the country, that multitudes of the ungodly wake people would resort to the field, and the preachers and labourers present were evidently unequal to the work, as the worship on that day would have to be kept up for more than twelve hours. So he began to anticipate a failure. But more assistance was shortly expected; a popular female preacher having come from Macclesfield to Tunstall, for the express purpose of attending that Camp Meeting.

But here again expectation was cut off. He was requested to go to the out-edge of the field, and he there found a young man, one of the lively Methodists from Tunstall, who informed him that the female preacher would not come, Mr. Riles and the Tunstall people having persuaded her to stop and preach for them, and Mr. R. had given her his appointment in Tunstall chapel.

H. Bourne felt this as a severe blow. He, however, asked the young man whether he would come into the meeting and join them; but this he declined, and observed, that the lively people at Tunstall did not approve of Camp Meetings, and he would be as they were.

This blow, coming in so particular a point of time, wounded H. Bourne deeply. He had been in fear of a failure, and this greatly pained his mind. He, however, thought that himself and his brother, having spared no trouble nor expense, would be clear of the blood of all men; and if the Lord now permitted the Camp Meeting cause to fail, he would, at some future time, open the way before it.

But the old Puritans had a proverb, that, "Man's extremity is God's opportunity." And at this point a stranger came into the field, and was introduced by one of the preachers who had come out of Cheshire. The stranger was Paul Johnson, a doctor of physic, from the city of Dublin, in Ireland. His friend in Cheshire, who was also a native of Ireland, had written him an account of the English Camp Meetings, with their success, and the opposition, and, he, Dr. Johnson, in waiting before the

Lord, was impressed with a belief that the Lord required him to cross over the sea into England and to go and assist at the Norton Camp Meeting. His business did not well admit of such an absence, but believing the Lord required it, he crossed over into England, and came to that Camp Meeting. He was an eminent speaker, had great authority over the multitudes of the wake people, and the Camp Meeting rose in its strength, and proceeded with power.

In the after part of the day Thomas Cotton arrived. He had an appointment that day at Kidsgrove, and Mr. Riles did not allow him to get a substitute, and that kept him away a great part of the day.

Also James Nixon from Tunstall came to the field, and assisted as a praying labourer. He was the only man among the Tunstall methodists, who ventured to attend this Camp meeting.

The meeting rose in strength, and went on with power, till near eight o'clock in the evening. And it proceeded with power on the Monday. But on the Tuesday, the attendance was small, and on the Tuesday evening, this very important Camp Meeting closed.

The end H. Bourne first proposed, was graciously accomplished, not one of the young people being drawn away by the wake. And the Lord caused the mighty array of opposition to pass away as a cloud.

The Camp Meetings of the year stood H. and J. Bourne in about thirty pounds. Dr. Johnson bore his own expenses, and would have subscribed to the general expense; but his coming was so extraordinary, and so marked by Divine Providence, that H. and J. Bourne wished him not to do so.

The Lord gave this Camp Meeting a triumph, and the whole storm of opposition subsided into a calm; and from that time the Lord established the great Camp Meeting cause on a basis not to be shaken, and which is likely to continue to the end of the world. To him be the glory.

Chapter 27.

Preaching established at Mr. Smith's of Tunstall.

In a conversation in the Camp Meeting field, H. Bourne observed, that he should not be surprised if the Lord permitted that female preacher's way to be shut up at Tunstall; as he hardly ever knew a case of any shunning the cross, but what they feared came upon them. This was handed to her at Macclesfield. She, however, thought it unlikely. But on her coming to Tunstall a few weeks after, M. Riles shut her out of the chapel.

But his giving her his own appointment on the Norton Camp Meeting Sunday, and then shutting her quite out, pained many minds, and induced Mr. John Smith of Tunstall to open his kitchen for preaching. This was a large room, and he furnished it with a pulpit and forms. And his relation, Mr. James Steele of Tunstall, being his house steward, usually brought in the seats and pulpit, and removed them after the service.

Mr. Smith fixed on Friday nights for his regular preachings. And before the close of the year 1807, there was regular preaching there every Friday night; and this continued for four or five years, even to the time of Mr. Smith's death, without a single failure.

Methodism in Tunstall was first raised up in this same house, and supported chiefly by the Smith's family. Also the Smith's family gave the land for the elegant Methodist chapel at Tunstall, which the writer in the Wesleyan Magazine speaks of; and the chapel and cause were for many years supported chiefly by this family. But of these things, that writer has taken no notice whatever. His silence may have risen from the fact of Mr. John Smith opening his large kitchen for worship in the year 1807. But Mr. Smith did not appear to open it with the least design of raising up a separate society, neither was there any class ever raised up in it.

Chapter 28.

On the Camp Meeting cause. — H. B.'s excursions. — Camp Meeting on the Wrekin. — Ramsor and Wooton. — A solemn impression. — Wooton meeting. — Mow third Camp Meeting. — H. Bourne put out of the Methodist society. — The way similar to that of Mr. John and Charles Wesley. — Observations. — A. D. 1807. — 1808.

It will be clear that at several times, the Camp Meeting cause, humanly speaking, was at the point of being swept away. But the Lord, by various providences, rescued it; and one of the most striking was the coming of Dr. Johnson from Dublin. This fully satisfied H. and J. Bourne that the Camp Meetings were of the Lord, and that he would support them.

In the course of this year, (1807,) H. Bourne began occasionally to make distant religious excursions, both to promote religion, and to talk with experienced persons for his own benefit.

On Sunday, May 1, 1801, H. and J. Bourne again opened the Camp Meetings, by holding one on the top of the Wrekin, a stupendous mountain, near Wellington in Shropshire. This place is near forty miles from Bemersley.

Saturday, May 7, 1808, by a peculiar opening of Divine Providence, H. Bourne was called to visit Ramsor, a village in Staffordshire, for the first time; and he preached in the evening, and again on the Sunday following.

Several villages were pointed out to him, at which there were no means of grace. He fixed upon one of them, namely, Wooton-under-Weaver, and appointed a meeting to be held there the Sunday but one after. Ramsor is about seventeen miles from Bemersley, and Wooton is near two miles further.

The second Camp Meeting for the year was held at Bug-Lawton in Cheshire, about seven miles from Bemersley. And at this Camp Meeting H. Bourne first introduced reading.

H. Bourne had for some time been deeply impressed with the thought of having to relinquish his business, labour at large in promoting religion, and trust to the Lord for a living. This was a great trial to his mind. But on Saturday, May 21, 1808,

while on his way to Ramsor and Wooton, the impression was so awful that he durst no longer resist it. He resigned himself up to the will of God; and the Lord gave him a peculiar manifestation from heaven.

This, in some degree, formed a new era or period in his life. Hitherto he had made distant religious excursions when he could suit his business to allow of the time; but after this he began by degrees to give up his business, and did not allow his business to interfere with his religious excursions.

On the next day, (which was Sunday, May 22,) about a quarter past two o'clock, H. and J. Bourne commenced their first Wooton meeting. It was held in the open air, was a small Camp Meeting, and was powerful. And this, and the meetings held at Ramsor, May 7, 8, 1808, were the beginning of a great spread of the gospel.

Sunday, May 29, 1808, H. and J. Bourne held the third Mow Camp Meeting, with good success; and H. Bourne's journal says, "We had some opposition, but we had plenty of labourers. Glory be to God for ever."

After this, H. Bourne made a religious excursion into Cheshire and Lancashire, and on Thursday, June 23, on his journey home, an impression came upon his mind that he would soon be put out of the Methodist society. This filled him with surprise. And when the powerful feelings had a little subsided, he began to examine matters. He was aware of his having expended more than one hundred pounds in promoting and supporting the Methodist Connexion, a connexion to which he was wedded, and he was a trustee in two of its chapels, and the Lord had made him and his fellows instrumental in raising up many people in it; yet while the impression was upon him, he had some sense that he should be more useful out than in. But still on taking a view of the whole, it was so unlikely for him to be put out, and so much against his mind, that he supposed he had not judged rightly concerning the impression, and he put it away. But on his so doing, distress came upon him till he could scarce walk along the road. The distress growing insufferable, he gave up, and resigned himself to be as the Lord willed; and in an instant heaven opened in his soul, and gracious words of promise came into his mind.

The next day on his arrival at Bemersley, he was at once informed that he was likely soon to be put out of the Methodist society. This was the first intimation he had of it from any human being; and he was thankful to the Lord for having prepared his mind. On the Saturday he set off for Kingsley in Staffordshire, and on the Sunday preached there, and at Tean, a village about twenty miles distant from Bemersley. On the Monday he came home.

On the Tuesday, June 28, the news reached H. Bourne that on the day before, which was June 27, 1808, the Methodists had held their quarter day at Burslem, and had put him out of their society. But why they had done so was not stated. On hearing this he said, "The Lord's will be done." But as he had been much from home during the quarter, and on that account had not had opportunity to pay up all his class money, he went to the leader, and paid up the arrears, in order that all might be clear on his part. But though turned out to the wide world, he bore them no resentment for having so put him out; neither did he attempt to weaken their hands, nor cause them trouble, nor did any one leave their society on his account. But still on being in no religious connexion, he felt very solitary. And why the Lord had permitted him to be

so separated, he could not tell; but he endeavoured to stay himself on his God. His situation was at first very trying; but after a time the Lord found him a CONNEXION. The Lord connected him and his brother together to open new places, labour in word and doctrine, establish open air worship, get souls converted to God, and promote religion in a general way. This was somewhat like Mr. Wesley's course at Savannah in America, in April, 1736, which he calls the second rise of Methodism. And on his return to England, 1738, he and his brother Charles Wesley, laboured in a way most strikingly similar, until the Lord, led them into the formation and care of classes. Mr. George Whitefield long laboured in a similar way.

But why the Lord in his Providence moved in this way, in the year 1808, it is not for us to say: but some things will be evident, as:-

1. Unless the Lord had raised up an original Connexion, the English Camp Meetings would have failed, there being no religious community then in England that was inclined to take them up.

2. Worship in the open air had risen from age to age, and Mr. Whitefield, and Mr. Wesley revived it; but it was much again gone out of use; and the Lord, by means of this Connexion has greatly renewed it.

3. The converting work was then low in England, and the Lord, by means of this Connexion, has much increased it.

Chapter 29.

A preachers' plan formed. - A travelling preacher taken out. - Work at Standley. - Reflections there on. - The whole grown into a full Methodist Connexion. — Remarks on its origin. — Further notices. - A. D. 1809 to 1811.

As the labours of H. and J. Bourne increased, several local preachers wished to take appointments with them, and a regular preachers' plan was formed, consisting of H. and J. Bourne, Thos. Cotton, William Maxfield of Mow, Thomas Knight, (who for a time lived at Ridgway), and Francis Dreacott, of Ramsor.

November 17, 1809, they took out a person to labour as a travelling preacher. He was a widower, having two children not grown up, and they gave him, out of their own pockets, a voluntary salary of ten shillings a week. But they still continued to unite their converts to other communities, determined to have as little care on their own hands as possible.

On Wednesday, March 14, 1810, they visited Standley, a village about four miles from Bemersley, and a class of ten members was soon raised up; and one of the members, Samuel Simcock, afterwards became an eminent local preacher.

This place they purposed to unite with the Wesleyans; but, through the press of affairs, it was delayed; and in the mean time a Wesleyan class leader made an interference, and between him and his superintendant, the uniting these people with the Wesleyans was put aside.

This was a great trial of mind to J. Bourne; and when H. Bourne came home, having been out during the time, he was struck with grief and astonishment on being

informed that they must take Standley wholly upon themselves. There was, however, no remedy; they could not draw back without sacrificing conscience. But after they had suffered awhile, the Lord begun to raise them up assistance among themselves; and H. Bourne, under date of Wednesday, May 23, 1810, wrote in his journal as follows:-

"I cannot but look back and admire the wonderful hand of God. It was not my intention to have had any thing to do with raising up separate societies, but to have raised up as many people into the service of God as I was able, and then to have encouraged them to join other societies. This view I had from a supposition that there was (already) a sufficient number of societies; from a vehement attachment to the {Wesleyan} Methodists, and from a peculiar aversion to have any ruling part, or any thing to do at the head of societies. But Mr. ——'s conduct about Standley has quite put a different turn upon things. Here necessity is laid upon us, and we are obliged to go on in the work without them."

The whole being now, by a train of providences, brought to be a Methodist Connexion in a full sense, having travelling preaching, local preaching, class leading, camp meetings, and other means of its own, the Wesleyan travelling preachers, as a matter of prudence, were diligent to restrain their preachers and members, as far as they could, from attending the Camp meetings or other means in this Connexion. And in this, they, of course, were not to be blamed. The rising Connexion had much to do in holding Camp meetings and opening new places: and it had on its preachers' plan, nine preachers and six places. The preachers were H. and J. Bourne and their travelling preacher; and T. Cotton, T. Knight, W. Maxfield, F. Dreasott, and two young men newly raised up. These were the whole on the plan; and the six places at which they had regular services of worship, were:-

RAMSOR,
WOOTON,
TEAN,
CALDON LOWE,
LASK EDGE,
STANDLEY.

Having now given a view of various providential circumstances, until it became a full Methodist Connexion, we must leave it to all people to judge whether it did or did not originate in a split or division; or whether it was an original Connexion providentially raised up. It certainly appears to be as clearly an original Connexion as was that which was raised up by Mr. Wesley.

Further Notices.

All the forementioned places, at which regular preaching was established, are in North Staffordshire; but a Camp meeting held at Ramsor, on Sunday, June 3, 1810, was a means of introducing the cause into Derbyshire, from whence it spread greatly.

On Friday, July 27, 1810, H. Bourne, at the instance of some of his Ramsor friends, made a visit into the south of Staffordshire. The Lord was mightily with him, souls were converted, the work took root, and, after a time, spread much.

For an account of the introduction of the work into the large and populous village of Tunstall, the reader is referred to the History of the Primitive Methodists, sold at the book-room, and by the preachers in the circuits; in which history that matter is circumstantially related.

But it may not be unuseful to observe that about Sunday, April 28, one thousand eight hundred and eleven, preaching was established at Tunstall, in a large earthenware room, belonging to Mr. John Boden. And the same year a plain building, sixteen yards by eight, and galleried half way, was erected at Tunstall, for worship and for a Sunday School.

On duly weighing these things, and tracing the various operations of Divine Providence, it will be found that Mr. T. Harris, in what he got inserted in the Wesleyan Magazine for 1835, page 519, took up things without due examination; and there are, no doubt, many respectable Wesleyans now living in Tunstall, who could have informed him of this, had he consulted them.