

dition first reported in a note by Wheaton to Sturges *vs.* Crowninshield (4 Wheaton's *Reports*, 151), ascribes its authorship to Wilson; and he undoubtedly took it from the works of the Scotch philosopher Thomas Reid, under whom he seems to have studied before his immigration. But although Wilson lectured on the Constitution we can find no suggestion by him that the clause applied to charters or executed grants and was not confined to executory contracts. The only passage from his works that can lend color to such a view is in his argument against the repeal of the charter of the Bank of North America, written two years before the Federal Convention, where the word obligation is used in a way that might bear such a construction. Had James Wilson intended to protect charters by the phrase he would undoubtedly have said so in his lectures before the University of Pennsylvania. (See the discussion in Shirley's *Dartmouth College Causes*, Ch. XII.)

If Mr. Fisher has discovered and will publish any evidence that before the Federal Convention there was any general belief that chartered rights should be protected from state legislation, he will make a valuable contribution to our constitutional history. If not, he should speak less positively on the subject in the next edition of his compilation.

ROGER FOSTER.

*A History of Methodism in the United States.* By JAMES M. BUCKLEY. (New York: The Christian Literature Company. 1897. Two vols., pp. xiii, 472, 481.)

THE aim of Dr. Buckley in these volumes is "to distinguish Methodism from other forms of Protestant Christianity, to explain its origin and trace its development" through the one hundred and thirty years of its existence in the United States. The book is an excellent piece of historical criticism and narration, having many admirable qualities. Good judgment is shown in the selection of events; the treatment is lucid, and the research is seemingly exhaustive. There is rigorous condensation of all minor matters that fuller consideration may be given to events epochal in significance. Recompense is made for omissions caused by abstention from minute treatment in an extended bibliography of exceeding value to the student in Methodism.

Nearly a fourth of the first volume is devoted to the English genesis. Protestantism in England is carefully traced from its beginnings in the reigns of Henry VIII. and Edward VI., and Methodism is given its proper historical setting within this larger movement. "The springing of American Methodism fully fledged from the brain and heart of Robert Strawbridge and Philip Embury" is accounted for in the personality of John Wesley, whose influence on these humble pioneers is described. To determine this personality our author seeks the formative influences of Wesley's life. He chronicles the founder's progenitors, who on both sides were of "gentle birth and ancient lineage;" and tells of the decisive impress of the home, the school, the university and of Peter Bohler, that

devout Moravian from whom Wesley learned the meaning and fruits of faith. The moral degradation and religious laxity of the age is pointed out and authority quoted to the effect that "the darkest period in the religious annals of England was that prior to the preaching of Whitefield and the two Wesleys." In this part of the work we are told why and how Wesley formed Methodism. From its beginning the movement was successful. In 1742, "twenty-three itinerants and several local preachers" recognized the final authority of Mr. Wesley. Twenty-four years later the total membership in England was estimated at more than twenty-two thousand, and before the end of the century it had increased to nearly ninety thousand.

Whether the first American society was organized in New York by Philip Embury, or in Maryland by Robert Strawbridge, has long been a matter of dispute. Dr. Buckley states the arguments for each theory; but holds with Nathan Bangs, Wakely and other writers that priority belongs to Embury's work. He says that "Dr. John Atkinson in *The Beginnings of the Wesleyan Movement in America* exhaustively discusses this question, furnishing cumulative and convincing proof that American Methodism began in New York" (I. 142.) It is to be regretted that our author does not cite what new facts Dr. Atkinson has discovered. So far as Dr. Buckley's *History of Methodism* is concerned the question is as debatable as ever, and we are forced to adopt the conclusion of Dr. Abel Stevens that "The impartial student of early Methodist history will find it expedient to waive the decision of the question till further researches shall afford him more data" (*Hist. of M.E.C.*, I. 72, note.)

The years that followed the formation of the first societies were times of struggle and self-sacrifice. The early leaders were men of marked individuality. Their clear-sighted purpose enabled them to build wisely. While there were differences among them they were all united in allegiance to Mr. Wesley. They believed thoroughly in the doctrines of the movement he had inaugurated; his personality animated them in their labors; and in all things his power was supreme. Along lines laid down by him the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized at Baltimore in 1784. The liturgy, a revision of the English Book of Common Prayer by Mr. Wesley, was to be used; the sacraments were to be administered by a superintendent, elders and deacons; and rules were devised for the induction and ordination of ministers. Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury were elected first superintendents. Four years later the title of superintendent was changed to that of bishop. This displeased Mr. Wesley, though he afterward acquiesced in the change as reasonable and justifiable.

The need of some method of general legislation soon became apparent. To satisfy this need the conference adopted a plan proposed by the bishops for an institution to be called the council. It was to be made up of the bishops and presiding elders. But manifest dissatisfaction with the institution from the outset soon grew into a general protest and the bishops were compelled to consent to its indefinite postponement. Then

came the General Conference of all the preachers which first met, November 1, 1792, in Baltimore. This has become a permanent institution of the church. The constitution for its perpetuation and government was adopted in 1808; and since that time it has been a delegated body.

In clear outline our author sketches the secession of O'Kelley and the establishment of his Republican Methodist Church, which had only a brief and feeble existence; and the attempt of Bishop Coke in 1791 and 1792 to effect a union of the Methodist Episcopal and Protestant Episcopal churches, and seven years later to unite the Wesleyan body of England with the Anglican church. Concisely, too, he treats of the question of lay representation. He sets forth the reasons for the secession of 1828 that resulted in the formation of the Methodist Protestant church, and describes the later movements that have succeeded in giving laymen representation in the highest councils of the mother church.

The question of slavery as it affected the church is treated comprehensively. From its foundation in the United States till 1800, Methodism was unrelenting in its opposition to slavery. The tone of condemnation became less severe in 1804; and four years later all rules forbidding the holding of slaves by private individuals were stricken out. When the abolition movement began in the thirties the Ohio and Baltimore Conferences unhesitatingly condemned it; while those of Philadelphia, Pittsburg and Michigan declared it incompatible with the duties of Methodist preachers to deliver abolition lectures. But in church as well as in state the "irrepressible conflict" was on; the crisis was reached in the General Conference of 1844 when the church was rent in twain. The organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the more important events in its history are briefly described; and in still less degree the same is done for the other branches of Methodism. A chapter toward the close of the work is devoted to "propagandism, culture and philanthropy of the Methodist Episcopal Church." The beneficent and educational institutions are carefully grouped. The work of the church in these directions is indeed a magnificent tribute to the evangelism of Methodism, to its founder, John Wesley, and to his followers who came to America infused with his spirit. Dr. Buckley's book is a valuable contribution to our historical literature. It is a clear and concise statement of an influence and an organization—for Methodism is both—that constitute one of the formative forces of our national existence, and that is playing an important part in the making of the world that is to be in the twentieth century.

JOHN WILLIAM FERRIN.

*New Light on the Early History of the Greater Northwest.* The Manuscript Journals of Alexander Henry, Fur Trader of the Northwest Company, and David Thompson, Official Geographer and Explorer of the same Company, 1792-1814. Exploration and Adventure among the Indians on the Red, Saskatchewan,