

Journal of the
Rev. John Wesley

The JOURNAL
of the Rev JOHN
WESLEY A.M.
IN 4 VOLUMES
VOLUME I

EVERY
MAN
I WILL
GO
WITH
THEE
BE THY
GUIDE



IN THY
MOST
NEED
TO
GO
BY
THY
SIDE

LONDON & TORONTO
J. M. DENT & SONS
LTD. & NEW YORK
E. P. DUTTON & CO.

FIRST ISSUE OF THIS EDITION . 1906
REPRINTED . . . 1913, 1921

The text is framed by a highly decorative border featuring stylized leaves, vines, and small flowers. The border is symmetrical and fills the entire page around the central text block.

A GOOD
BOOK
IS THE
PRECIOUS
LIFE-BLOOD OF
A MASTER
SPIRIT
EMBALMED &
TREASURED
UPON PURPOSE
TO A LIFE
BEYOND LIFE
MILTON

INTRODUCTION

DURING Wesley's life, and for some years after his death, his countrymen, speaking generally, did not care to claim him as in any sense a national possession. They were quite content to leave him in the private possession of his followers, excellent people, doubtless, but not very interesting or influential. But time is a great readjuster of perspective. The point of view changes; the relative dimensions of men and things alter; great reputations decline and lowly ones enlarge; what was once central in the field of vision passes well nigh out of sight, while the previously obscure moves into the foreground. And this is accomplished, for the most part, not in a definite and formal way, but gradually, we hardly know how; for the process is one of unconscious movement in innumerable minds.

There can be no doubt as to the change that has taken place in the general estimate of Wesley. It is no longer left to his followers to praise him. He is held in honour by men of all forms of belief, and all schools of thought. His name is now a national, not a denominational glory. He is recognised as belonging to that foremost few in whom the best qualities of our race have found expression. His century produced no better man, and few greater men than he. It may be said of him, "We know him now." His character and his work stand out large and clear, and when the one or the other is criticized, it is with that kind of criticism which is in itself a tribute of respect.

Though Wesley was a copious writer—his collected works occupy fifteen octavo volumes—it was not the literary instinct that drew him to authorship. To write a

book was never with him an end in itself. It was always associated with some call or requirement of the work to which his life was given. Notwithstanding his scholarly tastes and poetic gifts, it is pretty certain that he would never have written either prose or verse unless by so doing he thought he could serve the great ends that were ever before his mind. This should be taken into account when judging his literary labours as a whole.

The commencement of his *Journal* was the result of an impression received in his early days at Oxford from reading Bishop Taylor's *Holy Living*. It determined him, "to take a more exact account than I had done before of the manner wherein I spent my time, writing down how I had employed every hour." This rigorous plan was followed for no less than fifteen years, a striking illustration of Wesley's firmness of purpose and devotion to method. But happily it was not to be continued on these lines to the end. From the time when he sailed for Georgia, October, 1735, being then in his thirty-third year, Wesley's *Journal* becomes a record of his travels, studies, and labours, of varied adventures, and intercourse with persons of all kinds, of his views on questions practical and speculative; and, generally, what had been mainly a religious time-table broadens into an autobiography.

But the religious motive which led him to begin to keep a journal was still his chief motive in continuing it. His career had widened in an altogether unexpected way. He was no longer a college tutor, the religious guide of a handful of University men. He was an evangelist, travelling the country and preaching to vast congregations; a spiritual leader forming Societies throughout the length and breadth of the land for whose administration and teaching he must provide. And his new vocation brought with it controversy, conflicts, and persecution. His more reputable opponents attacked his theology and denounced his procedure. Less scrupulous foes assailed his character and

motives—he was a Papist, a Jacobite, a polygamist, and many things beside. The mob in a score of towns broke up his congregations, beat his people and stoned the preacher.

Wesley's attitude towards his opponents was determined by their character and degree. To those who would listen he addressed *Appeals* and *Remonstrances*; to those who accused him of various crimes and misdemeanours he knew how to reply—when he replied at all—in a good-tempered but sufficiently pungent manner; and as for the mob, he faced it, and broke its noisy courage again and again by his gentle, fearless presence.

It now occurs to him to make his *Journal* an *Apologia*, in which those who have candour and patience may read his own statement of his principles and of his aims. He will give an account of himself, of his manner of life and his religious experience. He will write his own history and that of the work in which he is engaged. The *Journal* of his life shall be his answer to those who are perplexed or angered by what he is doing. He would not have that which is good to be evil spoken of, or be condemned unheard. He therefore sets himself to give such an account of his stewardship as it is possible to present to one's fellow-men.

There was, moreover, an ever-increasing number of people who looked to him as their leader, we might say, their father. They were exposed to contempt, often to rough handling, from those around them. They needed comfort and encouragement and further instruction. It was only at rare intervals they could hear his voice, and be cheered by his presence. It would be good for them to read of his journeyings and preachings, to know that he was not cast down, but strong and hopeful, and that the good work prospered. They should learn from his *Journal* his best thoughts on Christian doctrine, and his counsels and exhortations respecting Christian life. By means of it

his people should know him in the whole round of his life and labours, and understand the spirit and meaning of the order of things in which they and he were found, he as leader, they as brethren and companions.

With such objects in view Wesley published about 1739 *An Extract of the Rev. Mr. John Wesley's Journal, from his embarking for Georgia, to his return to London*. Similar *Extracts* appeared at irregular intervals during the remainder of his life, a period of fifty years, and the *Journal* as we now have it consists of no fewer than twenty parts or instalments. In *Lloyd's Evening Post* for January 20, 1772, appears the following notice of one of these issues :

"Those who expect to find in this *Journal* only the peculiar tenets of Methodism will be agreeably disappointed, as they are intermixed with such occasional reflections on men and manners, on polite literature, and even on polite places, as prove that the writer is endued with a taste well cultivated both by reading and observation; and above all with such a benevolence and sweetness of temper, such an enlarged, liberal, and truly protestant way of thinking towards those who differ from him, as clearly show that his heart at least is right, and justly entitle him to that candour and forbearance which, for the honour of our common religion, we are glad to find he now generally receives."

Wesley's *Journal* is still his best biography. It is, as Montaigne said of his *Essays*, *un livre de bonne foi*, written in perfect honesty and good faith. It reveals his limitations and defects, but it shows him to be a man of rare powers, of unsurpassed zeal and devotion, and of the loftiest Christian character. One may wish that he had allowed himself a greater variety of topics, for, as Dr. Johnson said of him, "He can talk well on any subject"; that he had said more respecting the public and social life of his time, and the persons whom he met. But he is not

a St. Simon, writing the inner history of a court; nor a Horace Walpole, chronicling the scandals and small talk of Mayfair and of Twickenham. He is John Wesley, and we must take him as such, preacher of the Gospel and leader of men, to whom it was given in a sensual and irreligious age to revive the Church and awaken the people, thus bestowing great benefits not only on his own generation but on those that followed.

F. W. MACDONALD.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

JOHN WESLEY'S first publication was a volume of daily prayers, 1733. The number of original works assigned to him by his bibliographer, Green, is 233; works in which he shared with his brother, 30; works extracted or edited by him, 100.

"Sermons on Several Occasions," 1st edition of first four volumes, 1746-1760; 2nd edition, 1788; vols. v. to viii., 1788. These include the sermons which had appeared in the "Arminian Magazine," which was started by Wesley in 1778, and which has been carried on since, being now known as the "Wesleyan Methodist Magazine."

Extracts from his "Journal" were published at intervals by Wesley from 1738 or 1739 to 1791, the first extract being issued on his return from Georgia, and the latest when he was in his 88th year; abridged edition, by H. P. Parker, with introduction by Hugh Price Hughes, 1902, 1905; another abridged edition (preface signed N.C.), 1903; popular edition, with introduction by Rev. W. L. Watkinson, 1903, etc.

During the years 1737 to 1787 John Wesley published, in some cases with his brother Charles as co-author or co-editor, twenty-three anthologies and hymnal. Their collected poetical works, with the latest corrections by the authors, were edited by G. Osborn, D.D., 1872.

Collected works. Compiled by Wesley himself, 32 vols., 1771-1774; 2nd edition, 17 vols. ed. by Rev. J. Benson, 1809-13; 3rd ed., 14 vols. octavo, ed. by Rev. T. Jackson, 1829-31; same edition, in 15 vols. duodecimo, with a life by the Rev. J. Beecham, D.D., 1856.

The best lives of John Wesley are those by Hampson, 1791; Coke and Moore, 1792; Whitehead, 1791-3; Southey, 1820; Moore (revised edition), 1824-5; Watson, 1831; Tyerman, 1870-71. See also Dr. Rigg's "Living Wesley," 1875; Isaac Taylor's "Wesley and Methodism," 1851; G. W. Taylor's "Wesley and the Anglo-Catholic Revival," 1905.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION, - - - - -	ix
BIBLIOGRAPHY, - - - - -	xv
 EXTRACT FROM THE REV. MR. JOHN WESLEY'S JOURNAL:	
Preface, - - - - -	i
Letter to Mr. Morgan, Sen. - - - - -	3
On the Death of Mr. Morgan, of Christ Church, - -	13
 JOURNAL:	
I. FROM OCTOBER 14, 1735, TO FEBRUARY 1, 1737-8, - -	15
II. FROM FEBRUARY 1, 1737-8, TO HIS RETURN FROM GERMANY, -	78
III. FROM AUGUST 12, 1738, TO NOVEMBER 1, 1739, - -	148
IV. FROM NOVEMBER 1, 1739, TO SEPTEMBER 3, 1741, - -	242
V. FROM SEPTEMBER 3, 1741, TO OCTOBER 27, 1743, - -	337
VI. FROM OCTOBER 27, 1743, TO NOVEMBER 17, 1746, - -	447

AN EXTRACT
OF THE
REV. MR. JOHN WESLEY'S JOURNAL,
FROM HIS EMBARKING FOR GEORGIA, TO HIS
RETURN TO LONDON.

What shall we say then? That Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by FAITH, but as it were by the works of the law.
Rom. ix. 30, 31.

I.

PREFACE.

1. It was in pursuance of an advice given by Bishop Taylor, in his "Rules for Holy Living and Dying," that, about fifteen years ago, I began to take a more exact account than I had done before, of the manner wherein I spent my time, writing down how I had employed every hour. This I continued to do, wherever I was, till the time of my leaving England. The variety of scenes which I then passed through, induced me to transcribe, from time to time, the more material parts of my diary, adding here and there such little reflections as occurred to my mind. Of this journal thus occasionally compiled, the following is a short extract: it not being my design to relate all those particulars, which I wrote for my own use only; and which would answer no valuable end to others, however important they were to me.

2. Indeed I had no design or desire to trouble the world with any of my little affairs; as it cannot but appear to every impartial mind, from my having been so long "as one that heareth not," notwithstanding

the loud and frequent calls I have had, to answer for myself. Neither should I have done it now, had not Captain Williams's affidavit, published *as soon as he had left England*, laid an obligation upon me, to do what in me lies, in obedience to that command of God, "Let not the good which is in you be evil spoken of." With this view I do at length "give an answer to every man that asketh me a reason of the hope which is in me," that in all these things "I have a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man."

3. I have prefixed hereto a letter wrote several years since, containing a plain account of the rise of that little society in Oxford, which has been so variously represented. Part of this was published in 1733; but without my consent or knowledge. It now stands as it was wrote; without any addition, diminution, or amendment; it being my only concern herein nakedly to "declare the thing as it is."

4. Perhaps my employments of another kind may not allow me to give any farther answer to them, who "say all manner of evil of me falsely, and seem to think that they do God service." Suffice it, that both they and I shall shortly "give an account to Him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead."

LETTER TO MR. MORGAN, SEN.

SIR,

Oxon, Oct. 18, 1730.

THE occasion of my giving you this trouble is of a very extraordinary nature. On Sunday last I was informed (as no doubt you will be ere long) that my brother and I had killed your son: that the rigorous fasting which he had imposed upon himself, by our advice, had increased his illness and hastened his death. Now though, considering it in itself, "it is a very small thing with me to be judged by man's judgment;" yet as the being thought guilty of so mischievous an imprudence might make me the less able to do the work I came into the world for, I am obliged to clear myself of it, by observing to you, as I have done to others, that your son left off fasting about a year and a half since, and that it is not yet half a year since I began to practise it.

I must not let this opportunity slip of doing my part towards giving you a juster notion of some other particulars, relating both to him and myself, which have been industriously misrepresented to you.

In March last he received a letter from you, which not being able to read, he desired me to read to him; several of the expressions whereof I perfectly remember, and shall do, till I too am called hence. I then determined, that if God was pleased to take away your son before me, I would justify him and myself, which I now do with all plainness and simplicity, as both my character and cause required.

In one practice for which you blamed your son, I am only concerned as a friend, not as a partner. That therefore I shall consider first: your own account of it was in effect this: "He frequently went into poor people's houses in the villages about Holt, called their children together, and instructed them in their duty to God, their neighbour, and themselves. He likewise explained to them the necessity of private as well as public prayer, and provided them with such forms as was best suited to their several capacities: and being well apprized how

much the success of his endeavours depended on their good will towards him, to win upon their affections, he sometimes distributed among them a little of that money which he had saved from gaming, and the other fashionable expenses of the place." This is the first charge against him; upon which all that I shall observe is, that I will refer it to your own judgment, whether it be fitter to have a place in the catalogue of his faults, or of those virtues, for which he is now "numbered among the sons of God."

If all the persons concerned in "that ridiculous society, whose follies you have so often heard repeated," could but give such a proof of their deserving the glorious title¹ which was once bestowed upon them, they would be contented that their lives too should be counted madness, and their end thought to be without honour. But the truth is, their title to holiness stands upon much less stable foundations; as you will easily perceive when you know the ground of this wonderful outcry, which it seems England is not wide enough to contain.

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 in a week together. Our design was to read over the classics, which we had before read in private, on common nights, and on Sunday some book in divinity. In the summer following Mr. M. told me he had called at the gaol, to see a man who was condemned for killing his wife; and that, from the talk he had with one of the debtors, he verily believed it would do much good, if any one would be at the pains of now and then speaking with them. This he so frequently repeated, that on the 24th of August 1730, my brother and I walked with him to the castle. We were so well satisfied with our conversation there, that we agreed to go thither once or twice a week; which we had not done long, before he desired me to go with him to see a poor woman in the town who was sick. In this employment too, when we came to reflect upon it, we believed it would be worth while to spend an hour or two in a week, provided the minister of the parish, in which any such person was, were not against it. But that we might not depend wholly on our own judgments, I wrote an account to my father of our whole design;

¹The Holy Club.

withal begging that he, who had lived seventy years in the world, and seen as much of it as most private men have ever done, would advise us whether we had yet gone too far, and whether we should now stand still, or go forward?

Part of his answer, dated September 21, 1730, was this:—

“And now as to your own designs and employments, what can I say less of them than *valde probo*:¹ and that I have the highest reason to bless God, that he has given me two sons together at Oxford, to whom he has given grace and courage to turn the war against the world and the devil, which is the best way to conquer them. They have but one more enemy to combat with, the flesh; which if they take care to subdue by fasting and prayer, there will be no more for them to do, but to proceed steadily in the same course, and expect the crown which fadeth not away. You have reason to bless God, as I do, that you have so fast a friend as Mr. M., who I see in the most difficult service is ready to break the ice for you. You do not know of how much good that poor wretch who killed his wife has been the providential occasion. I think I must adopt Mr. M. to be my son, together with you and your brother Charles; and when I have such a ternion to prosecute that war, wherein I am now *miles emeritus*, I shall not be ashamed, when they speak with their enemies in the gate.

“I am afraid lest the main objection you make against your going on in the business with the prisoners may secretly proceed from flesh and blood. For ‘who can harm you if you are followers of that which is so good;’ and which will be one of the marks by which the Shepherd of Israel will know his sheep at the last day?—Though if it were possible for you to suffer a little in the cause, you would have a confessor’s reward. You own none but such as are out of their senses would be prejudiced against your acting in this manner; but say, ‘these are they that need a physician.’ But what if they will not accept of one who will be welcome to the poor prisoners? Go on then, in God’s name, in the path to which your Saviour has directed you, and that tract wherein your father has gone before you! For when I

¹ I greatly approve.

6 Rev. John Wesley's Journal

was an under graduate at Oxford, I visited those in the castle there, and reflect on it with great satisfaction to this day. Walk as prudently as you can, though not fearfully, and my heart and prayers are with you.

“Your first regular step is to consult with him (if any such there be) who has a jurisdiction over the prisoners, and the next is, to obtain the direction and approbation of your Bishop. This is Monday morning, at which time I shall never forget you. If it be possible, I should be glad to see you all three here in the fine end of the summer. But if I cannot have that satisfaction, I am sure I can reach you every day, though you were beyond the Indies. Accordingly, to Him, who is every where, I now heartily commit you, as being

“Your most affectionate and joyful father.”

In pursuance of these directions, I immediately went to Mr. Gerard, the Bishop of Oxford's Chaplain, who was likewise the person that took care of the prisoners when any were condemned to die: (at other times they were left to their own care:) I proposed to him our design of serving them as far as we could, and my own intention to preach there once a month, if the Bishop approved of it. He much commended our design, and said he would answer for the Bishop's approbation, to whom he would take the first opportunity of mentioning it. It was not long before he informed me he had done so, and that his Lordship not only gave his permission, but was greatly pleased with the undertaking, and hoped it would have the desired success.

Soon after, a gentleman of Merton College, who was one of our little company, which now consisted of five persons, acquainted us that he had been much rallied the day before for being a member of *the holy club*; and that it was become a common topic of mirth at his college, where they had found out several of our customs, to which we were ourselves utter strangers. Upon this I consulted my father again, in whose answer were these words:—

Dec. 1.

“This day I received both yours, and this evening, in the course of our reading, I thought I found an answer that would be more proper than any I myself could dictate; though since it will not be easily translated, I send it in the original. Πολλη μοι Καυχησις υπερ υμων.