

ANECDOTES  
OF  
THE WESLEYS:

ILLUSTRATIVE OF  
THEIR CHARACTER AND PERSONAL  
HISTORY.

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION  
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churches ; second, no parish church could contain the congregations."

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### **The Surreptitious Letter.**

John Wesley was the soul of honor, as the following will show :

George Whitefield, some time after his separation from Mr. Wesley, wrote him a letter on the subject of Calvinism. In it he assumed a superiority over Mr. Wesley that was no credit to him. Whitefield's friends in London having obtained a copy of this letter, had it printed without Whitefield or Wesley's permission, and distributed a number of copies at the door of the Foundry, and also in the meeting. Mr. Wesley took one of the letters in his hands into the pulpit, and having stated to the congregation the fact of its surreptitious publication, he said, "I will do just what I believe Mr. Whitefield would do if he were here himself;" and then he tore it to pieces. Every one in the house having a copy of the letter, followed Mr. Wesley's example, and the letters were in a moment torn into fragments. In reference to the person by whom the letter had been published Mr. Wesley says, "Ah, poor Ahithophel!"

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### **Wesley, Pool, and Whitefield.**

Adam Clarke and John Pool traveled the same circuit, and Mr. Pool, who was intimately ac-

Whitefield, "If you should die abroad, whom shall we get to preach your funeral sermon? Must it be your old friend John Wesley?" Mr. Whitefield replied, "He is the man." When the news of Mr. Whitefield's death reached London Mr. Keen waited on Mr. Wesley and engaged him to preach it. Mr. Wesley complied with the request, and in his sermon he bore ample testimony to the undissembled piety, the ardent zeal, and extensive usefulness of his much-loved and honored friend.

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#### **Whitefield and the Uncharitable Minister.**

The following anecdote will show the views of Mr. Whitefield concerning John Wesley: "A minister was in company with Mr. Whitefield, and during the interview he was very free in his reflections on Mr. Wesley and his followers. Finally he expressed a doubt concerning Mr. Wesley's salvation, and said to Mr. Whitefield, 'Sir, do you think when we get to heaven we shall see John Wesley?' 'No, sir,' replied Mr. Whitefield, 'I fear not, for he will be so near the eternal throne, and we shall be at such a distance, we shall hardly get a sight of him.'"

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#### **John Wesley and the Young Critic.**

In 1744 Mr. Wesley was riding near London when a young gentleman overtook him on the road, and asked him "if he had seen Whitefield's

### Ludicrous Scene.

Charles and John Wesley in the early days of their Christian experience were in the habit of spending a part of the Sabbath walking in the fields and singing psalms. One Sunday, while they were in the fields and just about to begin to sing, a sense of their ludicrous situation came upon Charles, and he burst into loud laughter. John was horror-struck at his want of reverence, and he inquired in an angry tone, "Charles, are you distracted?" No sooner had he asked the question than he began to laugh as loud as Charles. They were obliged to return home without singing a line.\*



### Charles Wesley and George Whitefield.

Charles Wesley had the high honor of being the spiritual father of George Whitefield, the unequaled pulpit orator. Whitefield, when a student at Oxford, noticed the devout conduct of the Wesley's, with the ridicule to which they were subject, and desired to become acquainted with them. A poor woman in one of the work-houses had attempted to cut her throat, but was prevented. George Whitefield heard of it, and knowing that the Wesleys were ready for every good word and work, sent an old apple woman of the college to inform Charles Wesley, charging her not to tell him who sent her. But she told him. Charles

\* Southey's *Life of Wesley*, vol. i, p. 293.

Wesley sent word to Mr. Whitefield to breakfast with him the next morning. Mr. Whitefield says, "I thankfully embraced the opportunity, and, blessed be God! it was one of the most profitable visits of my life. My soul was at that time athirst for some spiritual friends to lift up my hands when they hung down, and to strengthen my feeble knees. He soon discovered it, and, like a wise winner of souls, made all his discourses tend that way." He put two books into his hands, one of which, he says, "was wonderfully blessed to my soul." He soon lent him another book entitled "The Life of God in the Soul." He says, "and though I had fasted, watched, and prayed, and received the sacrament so long, yet I never knew what true religion was till God sent me that excellent treatise by the hands of my never-to-be-forgotten friend."

When Charles was in Georgia, he wrote to Mr. Whitefield to join him and his brother in America. This is evident from the poetic epistle he addressed to him years afterward :

"In a strange land I stood  
And beckoned thee to cross th' Atlantic flood;  
With true affection winged, thy ready mind  
Left country, fame, and ease, and friends behind;  
And eager all Heaven's counsels to explore,  
Flew through the watery world and grasped the shore."

After Mr. Whitefield became a Calvinist he wrote a tract against John Wesley's sermon on Free Grace, and submitted it to Charles Wesley for inspection. He returned it indorsed with these

significant words, "*Put up again thy sword into its place.*"

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### **Charles Wesley and the Narrow Escape.**

In 1735 Charles went with his brother John to Georgia. The mission was a failure. Charles suffered much persecution, and plots and designs were laid to destroy him. It was a severe discipline, under which he learned lessons that were very valuable to him in after years. One day he went to a myrtle grove, which was his Bethel, for devotional purposes, and while he was repeating, "I will thank thee, for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation," a gun was fired from the other side of the bushes. Providentially he had just before turned from the end of the walk at which the shot entered. He heard the ball pass close by him. Had he not changed his position he would have been killed. But the Almighty

Covered his defenseless head  
With the shadow of his wing.

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### **Charles Wesley and the Drunken Captain.**

On the 5th of August, 1736, Charles Wesley embarked at Savannah for England. He soon found that the Captain had given his berth to another person, and his only bed was a chest. He adds, "What was still worse, I had no asylum to fly to from the Captain, the most beastly man I ever saw. A lewed, drunken, quarrelsome fool, praying,