

# *John Wesley and the Urban Poor*

BY

**John WALSH \***

## ABSTRACT

### JOHN WESLEY AND THE URBAN POOR

John Wesley has sometimes been depicted as an agent of industrial capitalism, but in his relations with the poor and in his approach to charity he is more easily seen as a priest in a medieval tradition. He sought to bridge the gap between elite and popular religious culture. He saw the poor as especially close to Christ and dispensed alms to beggars with almost Franciscan abandon.

## RÉSUMÉ

### JOHN WESLEY ET LES PAUVRES DES VILLES

*On a parfois représenté John Wesley comme un agent du capitalisme industriel, mais ses rapports avec les pauvres et sa conception de la charité permettent de voir plutôt en lui un prêtre dans la tradition médiévale. Il a tenté de combler le fossé qui sépare les élites de la culture religieuse populaire. À ses yeux, les pauvres étaient très proches du Christ et il distribuait les aumônes avec une générosité presque franciscaine.*

\* Jesus College, Oxford.

From the beginning of the Evangelical Revival, John Wesley saw himself in quasi-apostolic terms as a man with a national, almost a universal mission — " I look upon all the world as my parish " he declared in 1739 — but he also saw himself as having a particular mission to poor people.<sup>1</sup> In an early programmatic declaration of intent he told his fellow clergy, " the rich, the honourable, the great, we are thoroughly willing... to leave to you. Only let us alone among the poor, the vulgar, the base, the outcasts of men. " <sup>2</sup>

In the iconography of eighteenth century English religion, few images are so familiar as that of the small figure of John Wesley, in the black cassock of an Anglican priest, preaching out of doors to a large crowd of poor people. But the very familiarity of the image conceals its oddity. What is this Oxford don and High Churchman doing, mingling with a crowd of unruly plebeians ? How has a man so obsessively neat and tidy, who devoutly subscribed to the maxim that " cleanliness is next to godliness ", come to be so closely involved with the blackened colliers of Bristol and the street people of Hogarth's London ? Many churchmen were concerned with the plight of the urban poor, but they often saw Wesley's descent into low life as puzzling and even alarming. The Bishop of London, Edmund Gibson, was shocked by Wesley's attachment to those whom he himself regarded as " the rabble. " <sup>3</sup>

The motives behind this specialized mission are not easily unravelled. Was it — as Elie Halhévy claimed, in a brilliant essay — an exercise in social control, aimed at the pacification of industrial unrest ? <sup>4</sup> Or — as E.P. Thompson has suggested — was Wesley launching a campaign which instilled into the labouring poor the time-work discipline needed for an industrialising society ? <sup>5</sup> Neither hypothesis is absurd. Wesley was undoubtedly concerned to propagate the virtues of industriousness — he cut his own sleep down to the minimum possible in order to have a longer day and even ordered his followers to sing more quickly in order not to waste time. <sup>6</sup> As an old High Tory he certainly had a profound and religious respect for magis-

tracy, royalty and order. But such attributions of motive underrate the profoundly religious purpose in Wesley's mission. They overemphasize the role of Wesley as an agent of nascent industrial capitalism, or as a thoroughgoing "modernizer." In some important respects it is possible to regard Wesley in a very different light; as the transmitter of traditional, medieval, or "Catholic" attitudes and beliefs. In his social ethic (as in his theology) one can see the blending of elements often set in antithesis. There is perhaps a bourgeois desire to inculcate the virtues of work and self-discipline; there are also attitudes which reach backwards towards the Middle Ages and Christian Antiquity.

This is especially visible in his approach to the poor. His concern for the poor as a special pastoral category became spectacularly visible after his debut as an itinerant evangelist in 1739, but it clearly antedated his celebrated evangelical "conversion experience" in 1738, and was very prominent in his early phase as an Oxford tutor. Some of its roots run back into Catholic tradition.

For Wesley was incubated in a "High Church" Anglicanism which revered the Fathers and placed the authority of patristic Tradition only a little lower than that of Scripture itself. Of his upbringing at Epworth Rectory he wrote later "from a child I was taught to love and reverence the Scriptures... and, next to these, to esteem the primitive Fathers, the writers of the first three centuries." <sup>7</sup> In his eclectic reading at Oxford he browsed heavily in the pastures of patrology and church history, feeding still further his vision of the primitive church as the example for all subsequent Christian congregations. In the Fathers he encountered a patristic consensus on the need for the sharing of wealth and the avoidance of covetousness and luxury. <sup>8</sup> Here he saw a drastic theory of the stewardship of property which ran diametrically opposite to the possessive individualism and the notion of property as an absolute right, which were becoming popular in the early eighteenth century. From his study of history, Wesley gained a romantic view of the primitive Church as a kind of extended family, bonded together by love, sharing its resources and prizing its poor as the "treasure of the Church." <sup>9</sup> In transmitting this image, no work was probably more influential than the Abbé Claude Fleury's *Mœurs des Chrétiens* which depicted the first church at Jerusalem as a model of mutuality and fraternity, in which "none regarded himself alone, but all considered themselves as only one body, " sharing their goods and tending those who could not tend themselves. Wesley had published 5 abridged translations of this work before he died. <sup>10</sup>

At a time when many economists regarded the poor as miserably reluctant producers of labour, and many moralists saw them as an intractable social problem, one could still find High Church writers who saw them in traditional terms as *pauperes Christi*, especially close to Christ; the earthly representatives of the Poor Man of Nazareth. In the works which as much as any were guides for Wesley's little Oxford Holy Club, William Law's *Christian Perfection* and *Serious Call*, readers were enjoined to "love poverty and reverence poor people... because our blessed Saviour was one of the number." <sup>11</sup> A similar message came through another French work which had a profound influence on the young Wesley, the *Life of the Marquis Gaston de Renty* — Monsieur de Renty — written by the Jesuit, de Saint-Jure. <sup>12</sup> This eccentric *dévot*, member of the Compagnie du Saint-Sacrement, who prostrated himself before the poor in a romantic agony of respectful dedication, was henceforth a life-long role model for Wesley. His *Life* was constantly quoted by Wesley and several times reprinted by him. There are several Wesleyan attitudes which can be paralleled in de Renty: his habit of inviting large numbers of poor to his table, his dispensing of medicines to the poor — even his practice of removing obscene graffiti with a sponge specially carried for the purpose. <sup>13</sup> Wesley shared to the full de Renty's intensely literal vision of the poor as the embodiment of the suffering Christ-figure. This striking passage from one of Wesley's sermons is borrowed almost intact from Saint-Jure:

*a poor wretch cries to me for an alms: I look and see one that has an immortal spirit, made to know, and love, and dwell with God to eternity. I honour him for his Creator's sake. I see, through all these rags, that he is purpled over with the blood of Christ.* <sup>14</sup>

It was in this early Oxford phase too that Wesley encountered the poor not only as a category in devotional literature but in their squalid actuality. With other members of his "Holy Club", he immersed himself busily in the life of the local jailbirds and paupers, making severe sacrifices of time and money to carry out his mission. Of the Holy Club's charitable work the father of one disgruntled student member complained "they almost starve themselves to be able to relieve the poor and buy books for their conversion." <sup>15</sup> In part this was an ascetical quest for personal purification; by daily contact with dirt, disease, stench and death, Wesley sought the purgation of self. But it was also more positively inspired by a dedication to the *Imitatio Christi* which was characteristic of seventeenth century Laudian High Churchmanship <sup>16</sup>.

In 1738-9 Wesley set out on the roads for a lifetime as a travelling evangelist. His contact with the poor was henceforth continuous and often closely physical. He must often have attracted their fleas and lice and in 1774 remarked that he had caught the "itch" a hundred times by shaking hands with poor people and sharing their beds.<sup>17</sup> As a much mobbed field preacher, he now had plenty of opportunity to encounter the poor at close quarters not merely as respectful and supplicant, but as aggressive, obscene and violent. He had first-hand knowledge of the "scum of Cornwall, the rabble of... Darlaston, the wild beasts of Walsall, and the turnkeys of Newgate" [prison].<sup>18</sup>

Yet his vision of poor people remained remarkably optimistic, free both of censoriousness and of the tone of condescension which has so often marred charitable giving. If modern interpretations of Wesley were correct, one might expect to find him castigating the labouring classes for their idleness and indiscipline, but he did not. The reverse is true. He did not share the conviction of the host of contemporary moralists who saw the poor as workshy. Watching invalids in London crawling across the floor to get at their work in the grim winter of 1753, he wrote with passion, "so wickedly, devilishly false is that common objection, 'They are poor only because they are idle'" In his hands, the work-ethic is used to assert the dignity of labour. It is not a scourge against the poor, but an offensive weapon against an unproductive and slothful aristocracy.<sup>20</sup> He saw the poor as the repository of strong civic virtues. In their simplicity they practised naturally and without self-consciousness some social graces which, among their worldly superiors, were often only the result of artifice. "I have seen as real courtesy in an Irish cabin, as could be found in St. James' [Palace] or the Louvre," he claimed.<sup>21</sup>

But far more, he saw them as the exemplars of piety. It was a leading idea of Wesley's that while vice descended from above, spirituality ascended from below.<sup>22</sup> As in the first days of Christianity, so today the labouring poor were a potential reservoir of spiritual revival. In the age of Walpole, which was particularly cynical about the capacities of the labouring classes, Wesley maintained that all great religious revivals began among the poor and moved up the social scale to peter out among the nobility: conversely, much that was evil — scepticism, luxury, arrogance — moved downwards like a slow stain from the "great ones" at the apex of society. The poor were nearer to God than the rich, for in their humility they were not so hampered by that self-righteousness which insu-

lated the soul from repentance and conversion. They could accept grace as a free gift, while the genteel and educated saw it as the well-deserved reward for their own merit. In his *Notes on the New Testament* Wesley remarks tersely "the salvation of a rich man requires the utmost effort of divine omnipotence... If rich men, with all their advantages cannot [be saved] Who? A poor man: a beggar ten thousand of them sooner than one that is rich." <sup>23</sup> In medieval terms he described the poor as "members of Christ." <sup>24</sup> Wesley re-sacralized the poor.

At times he was so carried away by his theme that he came close to seeing himself as a man almost unclassed: "I bear the rich," he declared, "I love the poor." <sup>25</sup> He told the Evangelical Lord Dartmouth "to speak a rough truth, I do not desire an intercourse with any persons of quality in England." <sup>26</sup> In this perception there was perhaps more than a little of the romanticism of the *bourgeois déraciné*, who imagines himself to have abandoned his own class in order to join the despised ones below. Despite his ascetical life-style, Wesley was hardly a precariously circumstanced poor man; he was a former Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, with a solid income from his numerous publications. Initially at least, his was a mission to the poor, though it soon evoked an active, cooperative response from below.

Wesley can perhaps best be seen as a man working alongside the poor, striving to mediate *between* the worlds of elite and plebeian religious sensibility. He was a "cultural broker." He aimed to leap over the chasm between *culture cléricale* and *culture folklorique*; to bridge the gap between the liturgical and the charismatic. He strove to broaden the social base of Anglicanism. He hoped to bring back into the orbit of the Church of England the piety of the poor which had been often rebuffed both by the austerity of the Puritans and by the stiff, rubrical devotion of the post-Restoration High Churchmen, in whom the Commonwealth years had instilled a panic fear of plebeian "enthusiasm." Since the Reformation, there were virtually no mediating institutions within the national Church which could engage the emotional, spontaneous, fervent spirituality of the poor on something like its own terms, while yet restraining it within bounds of order and decency. There were some small plebeian sects, but the Established Church offered almost nothing except its formal Sunday services, Mattins and Evensong, with a periodic Eucharist, often very thinly attended by the poor, who considered themselves unworthy to partake of a sacrament which they regarded as an offer only to the respectable.

Wesley set about bridging this gap of sensibility by providing institutions which could cater for the demands of humble people. He satisfied a need that was particularly acute among migrants to the city by providing small group fraternal associations which could replicate, to some degree, the neighbourliness of the natural village communities which they had abandoned. It was their function to help members to sustain, comfort and, if need be, reprove each other.<sup>27</sup> The intimate fellowship of the "band" and "class meeting" allowed cultural space for the free expression of inner feeling: it provided the opportunity for collective, supportive discipleship on a small and human scale. Tears and gusts of emotion, noise, even jumping for joy were accepted, and often prized as authentic manifestations of the Spirit. At the Love Feast (a revival of the early Christian *Agape*) the two-handled loving-cup was passed round in a kind of domesticated, democratised folk Eucharist, at which each member was encouraged to recount his spiritual experience.<sup>28</sup> By encouraging the "freedom of the Spirit" Wesley was able to make large allowances for orality as well as literacy in worship and thus to engage the attention of the illiterate, for, as a simple Methodist poet noted of the operations of the Holy Spirit:

*"Were books His constant residence indeed  
What must the millions do who cannot read?"*<sup>29</sup>

Ordinary lay people were encouraged to develop their spiritual and devotional "gifts." They could become class leaders, trustees, even unordained preachers. They, as well as their genteel superiors, could aspire to be saints. In Wesley's *Arminian Magazine* [later re-titled as the *Methodist Magazine*] one can find the obituaries of scores of plebeian saints, male and female — in strong contrast to the hagiography of the established Church of England, whose spiritual heroes were, socially speaking, always of the officer class, never drawn from the ranks.

In his view of grace Wesley made ample allowance for spiritual immediacy. He was a natural "enthusiast", holding that the Holy Ghost could and did affect the believer by immediate impressions on the heart. He had a profound supernaturalism which brought him close to popular culture — his *Arminian Magazine* contains stories of portents, apparitions and demonic possession which could have come out of the *Bibliothèque Bleue*. He believed in divine influence through the medium of dreams and in direct guidance on the mind. While he accepted that the Spirit flowed mediately through the ordinances of the institutional Church — the constituted "means of

grace", which all Christians must utilize for their own salvation — he also believed that conversion was often an instantaneous event: literally a *coup de grâce*. In order to be accepted by Christ one did not need an antecedent life of respectability; all that was needed was repentance, a simple and immediate commitment of the heart to faith in the merits of Christ. Poor persons should therefore not despair or feel excluded from the offer of salvation. Wesley offered the poor a salvation which they felt to be within reach: a present salvation, attainable instantly by a grace that was free and unconditional, and immediately attested by an inward feeling of assurance. This message was dramatically portrayed by the attendance of Methodist preachers on condemned criminals at public executions, such as those at Tyburn in London. Their presence was prompted by more than a desire for publicity before huge crowds: it was intended to represent, as in a *tableau vivant*, the instant availability of divine love to the most despised and vulnerable of mankind. To the modern criminal, shivering on the scaffold at Tyburn, salvation could still come as freely and immediately as it did at Golgotha to the crucified malefactor to whom Christ had promised "this day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Charles Wesley wrote hymns and prayers for condemned criminals, which were sung on the way to the gallows:

*Lamb of God, whose bleeding love  
We still recall to mind,  
Send the answer from above,  
And let us mercy find.*

*Think on us, who think on Thee,  
And every struggling soul release;  
O remember Calvary;  
And let us go in peace!*<sup>30</sup>

But if grace was free, it was not cheap. If it could be instantly received, it could be forfeited by sin. If Wesley aroused strong religious emotions in the poor, he also sought to canalize them into the institutional life of his mother Church of England. Those who joined his societies were subjected to the ascetical group discipline which was the price of full membership. They were expected to pursue holiness. They were urged regularly to attend the services of the parish Church. While he saw the necessity for *ecclesiolae* to liven up the *ecclesia*, he believed devoutly in the primary authority of the historic, institutional Church, with its regular pastorate and its sacramental system. Wesley was a strong sacramentalist, holding a doctrine of Real Presence in the Eucharist and was insistent on the necessity of



frequent communion — though, significantly, he insisted that it was a “converting ordinance” which was open to all those who wished to be saved, and not the preserve of the godly or respectable.<sup>31</sup>

While respecting the poor, Wesley did not admire poverty, which, as he well knew, “contracts and depresses the mind.”<sup>32</sup> His ideal was a kind of golden mean between affluence and indigence — the *autarkeia* of the Stoics and St. Paul; the simple life extolled by *Proverbs* 30, verse 8 — “give me neither poverty nor riches.”<sup>33</sup> The relief of the poor in his urban societies was a major preoccupation. He experimented with a variety of small scale projects: charity schools, spinning schools, a medical dispensary for the London poor, a loan fund rather on the lines of the medieval *mons pietatis*.<sup>34</sup> Towards the end of his life, the Methodists created the Strangers Friend Society, whose object was actively to seek out those — often migrants — who were suffering unnoticed in the alleys, poor houses and prisons of the larger cities.<sup>35</sup> More remarkably, in 1744 Wesley contemplated (though he did not implement) a “community of goods” by which he and others would contribute their weekly earnings to a common stock, take out what was needed for a simple life, and dispense the remainder in the style of the Primitive Church.<sup>36</sup> Wesley put great pressure on his society members to dispense all their surplusage to the poor. Many were reluctant to comply, but a number clearly made relief work so central in their lives that it became an avocation. Wesley himself spent a lot of time begging for his poor, sometimes hat in hand in the street, or at a church door. His economic ethic was encapsulated in a terse triad: “gain all you can, save all you can, give all you can,” and by give, Wesley meant “not a tenth, not a third, not a half, but all” — all above that needed for a simple life-style.<sup>37</sup> It was Wesley's conviction — like that of his hero Chrysostom — that there need be no poor if churches looked after their own flocks, as in the days of the early Church.<sup>38</sup> His model for charity remained that of the world of *Acts* in which the first Christians had been bonded together by the voluntary ties of love, like a great family. If this vision of *koinonia* inspired him, it also restricted him, for he had nothing to say on the role of the State as the agency for poor relief. He did not engage in the debate on reform of the state Poor Law, as did a number of his clerical contemporaries who had an *ex officio* role to play in the administration of poor relief in the parish. He seems to have regarded the relief of the poor primarily as a matter of localized, community ethics; the responsibility of Christian individuals and Churches.

Wesley warmly endorsed the institutionalised philanthropy of the Enlightenment and preached charity sermons on behalf of its various causes. But he also believed strongly in the value of personal alms giving and visiting, not merely as an ascetical exercise, but as a symbolic testimony to human interdependence. By this means, he believed, not only would good be done to the poor, but the rich would learn the grim realities of existence among those who were deprived and marginalized. "One great reason why the rich, in general, have so little sympathy for the poor, is because they so seldom visit them," he wrote. "One part of the world does not know what the other one suffers." Why did not the English aristocracy follow the example of the French princesses of the blood, who visited the sick in the public hospitals? <sup>39</sup> Wesley advised the genteel Miss March in 1776 that she must follow the path of Christ and in person "creep in among [the poor] in spite of dirt and a hundred disgusting circumstances, and thus put off the gentlewoman." In so doing she would give to the poor — but she would receive too: she must allow herself no *frisson* of condescension or pride, for she would often find among them a faith and love that put the piety of the polite world to shame. <sup>40</sup>

In his attitude to charity, Wesley was in some respects perceived as an archaic figure by the time of his death. Much of his own almsgiving was conducted in a remarkably haphazard, medieval style. He displayed an almost Franciscan disregard for money, which he saw as possessing a dangerously phosphorous quality: he got rid of it immediately, he said, lest it stick to his fingers and burn him. <sup>41</sup> "If I leave behind me ten pounds," he wrote, "...you and all mankind bear witness against me, that I lived and died a thief and a robber." <sup>42</sup> Far from extolling the virtues of capital accumulation, (which Max Weber saw as a leading feature of the Protestant Ethic), Wesley gave away much of his money as fast as it came in, often in the form of sixpences or half-crowns to beggars, though sometimes as much as £ 5 to a tradesman in danger of bankruptcy. <sup>43</sup> On publishing his *History of England* he observed "I find that I am £ 200 in pocket, but as life is uncertain I will take care to dispose of it before the end of the week." <sup>44</sup> In his distribution of charity Wesley treated the indigent with the consideration due to a "poor member of Christ." If possible he gave his alms out of sight down an alley or in a doorway, and always touched or raised his hat to the recipient, as a mark of respect. <sup>45</sup> Most unusually, he gave freely to vagrants, a category of mendicant for whom moralists had little or no sympathy. As one of his preachers put it, in an elegiac verse:

*The Vagrant Poor, suspected and despised  
Weve oft relieved by him, and sometimes prized.*<sup>46</sup>

Wesley appears unimpressed by the distinction which was by now generally drawn between the "deserving" and the "undeserving" poor. He saw charity as a paradigm of grace itself, which descended to a world of sinners who, in the eyes of their Maker, were all equally *undeserving*. Charity must not be restricted to sect or party, or to those we loved and respected, but must embrace all — even the ungrateful and repulsive; it should struggle to reflect a divine love which "soars above all scanty bounds, embracing neighbours and strangers, friends and enemies; yea, not only the good and gentle, but also the forward, the evil and unthankful."<sup>47</sup>

By the end of his life Wesley felt *frissons* of despair about his mission to the urban poor. In the larger trading cities he saw unmistakable signs that his societies were stratifying along class lines, and that the richer members were drawing away from the poor.<sup>48</sup> The increasing pace of industrialization in the 1780's brought comparative affluence to some of the trades in which Methodism was most strongly represented, encouraging an incipient consumerism which was hostile to Wesley's drastic ethic of charity. At the same time, the growing popularity of *laissez-faire* economics made Wesley's personalized ethic of almsgiving appear archaic. Who did more to help the poor, asked a Victorian Methodist: the exponent of casual almsgiving who distributed doles haphazardly, or the manufacturer who clung on to his money, and with his accumulated capital built a factory to provide work for the workless? Did not casual doles merely pauperize the poor and destroy their moral independence?<sup>49</sup> Late Victorian exponents of Christian collectivism — "the Social Gospel" — criticized him from the opposite point of view, for his failure to engage the State in his vision of poor relief.<sup>50</sup> Yet these criticisms are perhaps anachronistic. They expect too much of an eighteenth century clergyman. Perhaps Wesley's greatest legacy was a simple one: to revive the medieval conception of the poor man as especially dear to Christ, the Poor Man of Nazareth; to restore to the forefront of Christian consciousness the significance of *Matthew 25*: "Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison and did not minister to thee?" It is at this point that Wesley the High Tory and High Churchman meets the modern Liberation theologians.

## NOTES

1. J. WESLEY, *Letters*, ed. J. Telford, 8 vols., London: Epworth Press, 1931, vol. 1, p. 286.
2. J. WESLEY, *Works*, ed. T. Jackson, 3rd. edn., 14 vols., London: Wesleyan Conference Office, 1872, vol. 8, p. 239. This edition is widely available in the Zondervaan photographic reproduction.
3. [E. GIBSON], *Observation upon the Conduct and Behaviour of a certain Sect*, London, n.d., p. 4.
4. E. HALEVY, *The Birth of Methodism in England*, ed. B. SEMMEL, Chicago Press, 1971, translated from "La Naissance du Méthodisme", *Revue de Paris*, Paris, 1 and 15 August 1906, pp. 519-39, 841-67.
5. E.P. THOMPSON, *The Making of the English Working Class*, London: Gollancz, 1963, pp. 354-62, 365-75, and "Time, Work Discipline and Industrial Capitalism", *Past and Present*, vol. 38, 1967, pp. 88-91.
6. WESLEY, *Works*, vol. 7, p. 69; vol. 13, p. 230.
7. *Ibid.* vol. 13, p. 272. See J.D. WALSH, "John Wesley and the Community of Goods," *Studies in Church History*, Subsidia 7, *Protestant Evangelicalism: Britain, Ireland, Germany and America, c1750-c1950*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1990.
8. For recent surveys of patristic attitudes to property see M. HENGEL, *Property and Riches in the Early Church*, London: S.C.M. Press, 1974; Justo L. GONZALEZ, *Faith and Wealth, a History of Early Christian Ideas on the Origin, Significance and Use of Money*, San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1990. There are many striking similarities here to Wesley's economic ethic.
9. [C. FLEURY], *The Manners of the Ancient Christians, extracted from a French Author [by Wesley]*, Bristol; Felix Farley, 1749, pp. 7, 21. This is a typically Wesleyan abridgement of FLEURY's *Les Mœurs des Chrétiens*, Bruxelles, 1682, or, rather from its existing English translation as *An Historical Account of the Manners and Behaviour of the Christians in the Church*, London: T. Leigh, 1698. Wesley published 5 abridged editions of this work before his death in 1791. Fleury had quarried this small work from his celebrated *Histoire Ecclésiastique*.
10. *Op. cit.*, p. 17.
11. W. LAW, *A Practical Treatise upon Christian Perfection*. London: W. Innys, 1726; *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*, London: W. Innys, 1729, p. 370.

12. For Wesley and de Renty see J. ORCIBAL, "Les Spirituels français et espagnols chez John Wesley et ses Contemporains," *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*, vol. 139, Paris : Presses Universitaires de France, 1951, pp. 52-3, (a richly footnoted article); H. BETT, "A French Marquis and the Class Meeting," *Wesley Historical Society Proceedings*, Burnley, etc. 1897, vol. 18, 1931, pp. 43-45; D.D. WILSON, "John Wesley, Gregory Lopez and the Marquis de Renty," *op. cit.* vol. 35, 1966.
13. Wesley, *WORKS* vol. 7, pp. 145-6.
14. J. WESLEY, *Letters, 1, 1721-1739*, ed. F. Baker, Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1980, p. 365 : (this is volume 25 in the new Oxford and Abingdon edition of Wesley's works, as yet incomplete.) For the charitable work of the Oxford "Holy Club" see especially M. MARQUARDT, *Praxis und Prinzipien der Sozialethik John Wesleys*, Gottingen : Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1977; also R. HEITZNERATER, *John Wesley and the Oxford Methodists*, (Duke University Ph.D. thesis, 1972).
15. *Ibid.* p. 365.
16. *The Christian's Pattern: or, a Treatise of the Imitation of Christ*, London : Rivington, 1735. See J. S. MAGEE, *The Godly Man in Stuart England*, New Haven : Yale University Press, 1976, pp. 107-13.
17. Letter of J. Wesley to Dr. A. Wilson, 8 July 1774, *Wesley Historical Society Proceedings*, vol. 36, 1967, p. 30.
18. WESLEY, *Works*, vol. 8, p. 245.
19. J. WESLEY, *Journal* ed. N. Curnock, 8 vols., London : Epworth Press, 1909-16, vol. 4, p. 52.
20. See J.D. WALSH, "Elie Halévy and the Birth of Methodism," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th. series, vol. 25, London, 1975, p. 18.
21. WESLEY, *Works*, vol. 7, p. 145.
22. *Op. cit.*, vol. 6, pp. 282-3; 11 p 183.
23. J. WESLEY, *Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament*, London : Bowyer, 1755, pp. 62-63.
24. WESLEY, *Works*, vol. 7, p. 286.
25. WESLEY, *Letters*, vol. 8, p. 267.
26. WESLEY, *Letters*, vol. 4, p. 260.
27. See D.L. WATSON, *The Early Methodist Class Meeting*, Nashville : Discipleship Resources, 1985.
28. See F. BAKER, *Methodism and the Love Feast*, London : Epworth Press, 1957.
29. *The Arminian Magazine*, vol. 4, London : G. Whitfield, 1781, p. 227.
30. WESLEY, *Journal* vol. 3, p. 386. See Charles WESLEY's *Prayers for Condemned Malefactors*, 1785, reprinted in *The Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley*, ed. G. Osborn, 11 vols., London ; Wesleyan-Methodist Conference Office, 1868-77, vol. 8, pp. 337-353.
31. See C. BOWMER, *The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in Early Methodism*, London : Dacre Press, 1951.

32. WESLEY, *Letters*, vol. 5, p. 180.
33. *Op. cit.*, vol. 8, p. 29.
34. *Op. cit.*, vol. 8, pp. 260-7; see also MARQUARDT, *passim*; R.F. WEARMOUTH, *Methodism and the Common People in the Eighteenth Century*, London: Epworth, 1945, pp. 195-216; R. GREEN, "The Foundery Lending Stock," *Wesley Historical Society Proceedings*, vol. 3, 1902, pp. 197-8.
35. For the Strangers Friend Society see *The Methodist Magazine*, [continuation of the *Arminian Magazine*], vol. 31, London, 1798, pp. 418-26 and WEARMOUTH, *op. cit.*, p. 212-6.
36. WALSH, "Wesley and the Community of Goods," *passim*.
37. WESLEY, *Works*, vol. 6, pp. 124-136.
38. *Op. cit.*, vol. 7, pp. 286-7.
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40. WESLEY, *Letters*, vol. 6, p. 207.
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