

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

BY THE WELSH BOARD OF MISSIONS

A DESIRE had been frequently expressed, over the years, in presbytery, synod, and General Assembly of the Calvinistic Methodist Church that a comprehensive history, especially of the early years of its life, should be written. The present volume is presented in response to that desire and with a conviction of its permanent value.

The Welsh Board of Missions in sponsoring the undertaking is greatly indebted to the Welsh synods and the interested patrons for their generous coöperation in subscribing amounts sufficient to meet the cost of authorship.

Synod of Minnesota		\$ 156	
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Interested patrons	(21)	540	\$3,392
		<hr/>	540
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			\$3,932

The Board also gratefully acknowledges its debt to the author, D. Jenkins Williams, Ph.D., D.D., who accepted its invitation to write the history. For three years Dr. Williams has labored with diligence and enthusiasm on the work.

By the terms of the agreement with the Welsh synods the Board was authorized to underwrite the cost of publication out of its own funds. It has directed the publishers to remit all royalties that accrue from the sale of the history, on a fifty-fifty basis, to the Boards of National and Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.

On behalf of the Welsh Board of Missions,

E. EDWIN JONES, D.D., *Secretary.*

225 N. Cassingham Road,
Columbus, Ohio.

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INTRODUCTION

A NUMBER of years ago, it was my privilege, at a dinner in Washington, D. C., to have an intimate conversation with Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes. We were comparing notes about our Welsh ancestors. His father and my paternal grandfather had come from the little principality of Wales. "My father came to America because he loved it before he ever saw it," said Chief Justice Hughes. "He gave his heart to it and believed in it as a chosen nation of God." I could honestly apply the same sentiments to my grandfather. These are, I have no doubt, the sentiments which were in the breasts of many of our Welsh forbears who left their beloved native land, severed their connections with the great empire of which they had been a loyal part, and transferred their allegiance to the young nation across the sea.

How glad and how proud we of later years ought to be that our forbears were immigrants to America! It was their choice that set in operation not alone the forces that have brought us into being in this favored land, but the forces that have given us so much of our proud heritage. My friend Dr. D. Jenkins Williams, in the charming volume for which I have been permitted to write this introductory section, puts us all under a debt of gratitude. It is difficult to know whether our Welsh pride or our American loyalty is enhanced the more by this accurate and moving description of the part the Welsh people have played in the development of the religious life of our country. We have felt and known all along that our people were God-fearing and church-loving. Dr. Williams' volume confirms our opinions and clothes our traditions with flesh and blood.

Numerically we do not compare, so far as Welsh immigrants are concerned, with those who have come from a number of other lands. The Scottish and English folk who were among the early American settlers, as well as the Dutch, far outnumbered our migrating ancestors. The early Teutonic immigration was

much larger than that of our forbears. Needless to say, the incoming of prospective new Americans from central and southern European countries has been as a flood tide compared to a small stream, when we contrast it with Welsh immigration to the United States. At the same time, what we may lack in quantity we believe that we make up in quality. We take particular pride in feeling that the Welsh element in American life has been genuinely patriotic. The record even of colonial and early national days confirms that pride. It is equally true to-day. The spirit and the form of American democracy have always appealed to the heart of the Welsh-American citizen. For one thing, they have afforded him a high sense of individual freedom, and at the same time an assurance of security. Perhaps better even than enlightened constitutional monarchy, as in Great Britain, the American institution of government has been suitable to the Cymric temperament.

It is possible, of course, to exaggerate the part played by any one factor in the development of national character. The author of this volume certainly puts his finger upon one of the essential characteristics of our people—their fundamentally religious outlook upon life. My sainted mother, not herself of Welsh stock, used to tell me in my boyhood that the Welsh language to her was always one of great religious significance. When I was but an infant in arms, I was taken to the funeral services of my paternal grandmother in Wisconsin. The whole atmosphere of the place was surcharged with religious emotion. There was much fervent praying. Mother used to say that she always thought of the Welsh tongue as specially adapted to the communion of man with God. It is, of course, possible for a man to swear like a trooper in the Welsh tongue, but prayer and praise are entitled to claim it as a more truly "native heath."

The process by means of which the Welsh immigrants and their descendants have been woven into the fabric of our American religious life is not altogether simple. The ties of language, the love of music and the heavenly gift of song, the practical sagacity of people who had learned the value both of hard work and of thrift, the large place occupied by the Bible, and, in not a few cases, the theological and ecclesiastical talents of born leaders have all been elements of the contribution of the Welsh people.

For a long time, as was inevitable, distinctly Welsh churches and congregations were maintained. They were clannish in the sense that they clung to their old traditions and customs, yet at the same time there was very little of secretive or seclusive separateness. They early sought fellowship with those of English-speaking churches. There were no Welsh colleges or seminaries, so those desiring to enter the ministry of the Welsh churches were compelled to go to English-speaking institutions. In many of them, however, there were notable Welsh-Americans upon the faculties. My own father, a full-blooded Cymro, is a case in point. About the time that his parents moved to Wisconsin from Utica, New York, where he had been born, a Vermont Yankee farmer also trekked "westward-ho!" and took to wife a lovely young woman of Scottish stock. They were married in the home of her uncle, Dr. Eriel MacArthur, a Chicago physician of earlier days. The Welsh family settled near Oshkosh and the Yankee-Scottish family near Fond du Lac. When some years afterward a son in the first family and a daughter in the second felt the urge to secure a liberal education, they were practically compelled to go to a small near-by institution, now headed by Dr. Silas Evans—Ripon College. From there the young man, after romance had cast its spell over these two young people, went to Lane Theological Seminary, in Cincinnati, Ohio, under the control of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. The young woman taught school until the young man's seminary course was over. Then followed a wedding and the young minister's ordination at the hands of the Presbyterian Church, which he served with fidelity and distinction to the day of his death.

In many cases, however, the Welsh congregations maintained their racial and linguistic identities. Congregations of remarkable size and influence were gathered, with preachers whose names were household words and whose fame spread far beyond their own borders. Gradually, however, by attrition and by the rapid rise of free American institutions, by the influence of the common school system, and, perhaps most of all, by the true Americanism of the Welsh people, the separate Welsh denominations began to find reasons for their consolidation with larger religious bodies. It has not all been gain. There has been a loss of many phases of

the original Welsh tradition and practice. It is to be hoped, however, that the gains outweigh the losses and that the most devout Welsh-American Christian is conscientiously able to rejoice in the contribution he and his fellows have made and are making to the larger religious life of the nation. To call the roll of those Welsh-Americans who have exercised marked influence in historic Christian churches of the land is outside my province and beyond the range of my ability. There have been many who have been conspicuous in their leadership. There have been hosts of others, equally devoted and in many cases equally able, who have been content to fill less conspicuous places although not less useful. Only the recording angel himself, however, could call the roll of the noble people of Welsh blood and tradition who have enriched both the nation and the Christian Church with their steadfast allegiance and devotion.

In the face of days that are critical to the core, when all our free institutions are being challenged and attacked, when democracy itself is upon a scaffold and the Church is being put upon the spot, may God raise up Christian patriots who have the courage of their convictions and the fervor of their faith! Is it too much to hope and believe that in the vanguard of those who shall stand fast for the faith, both in behalf of country and of Church, that the descendants of the men of Harlech will fill an honorable and useful place? For what they have already done and are doing an appreciative nation and a grateful Church may well render thanks. For what they shall yet do, by words of power, by songs of praise, by God-fearing lives, let the future inscribe its tribute. How worthy and glorious that record will be, I have no lingering doubt.

May the perusal of the interesting and significant pages of Dr. Williams' timely treatise serve the double purpose of confirming proper pride in ancestral achievements and traditions and of spurring us forward to still greater accomplishments in the cause of Christian freedom!

WILLIAM HIRAM FOULKES.

Old First Church,
Newark, New Jersey.

PREFACE

Two controlling factors prompted the writing of this volume: a desire for a memorial to the devoted labors of the fathers of Calvinistic Methodism in America; and a desire that a brief record of the service of this particular branch of the Presbyterian family be available to the future student of church history.

Long ago the leaders in the Church had been ambitious to have a written record of the origin and development of the Calvinistic Methodist Church in this country. William Rowlands, D.D., in 1842, published a booklet of some twenty-seven pages on the "Beginning and Increase of Calvinistic Methodism in America." We are greatly indebted to Dr. Rowlands for this brief outline, for without it much of the history of the first two decades of the life of the Church would not be available. The denomination at that time had thirty-six churches.

After 1842 the Church grew rapidly and extended into many states. The Church went on record many times as desiring a history of its labors—a historical record of its rise and increase. Had this record been made, many interesting details and events of interest would be at our disposal which now are forever lost.

Many attempts to assemble materials for a compiled record of the Church were made since the appearance of the booklet by Dr. Rowlands. In 1854 Rev. J. Gordon Jones, M.A., of Wabash College, Crawfordsville, Indiana, proposed writing the history of the Church. The gymanvas heartily indorsed the idea and men were appointed within the gymanvas and presbyteries to collaborate in assembling materials for the work, but nothing was accomplished by way of concrete results.

The first General Assembly (1869) passed a resolution pertaining to a history of the Church: "That every church is expected to appoint suitable persons to assemble materials on the history of the beginning and increase of Methodism in their midst." The General Assembly of 1873, in session at Racine, Wisconsin, appointed a committee of seven on the "Literature of

the Denomination" (*"Llenyddiaeth y Corph"*). Among the resolutions presented and adopted by the Assembly was the following: "Inasmuch as the persons who were active in establishing many of our churches in this country are being removed by death, one after another; and, consequently, the difficulty of obtaining an accurate history of the beginning of the cause in many places will increase, year after year, be it Resolved: That we urge our state gymanvas to appoint suitable persons in every presbytery to assemble a complete history of the beginning of Methodism within their bounds." The committee thus reporting consisted of: Rev. E. Foulkes Jones, Pennsylvania; Rev. Owen Evans, Ohio; Rev. Richard Hughes, Minnesota; Uriah Davies, Wisconsin; Thomas Lloyd Williams, Wisconsin; R. R. Owen, Ohio; and M. J. Meredith, New York.

Pursuant to the passing of this resolution there was a general movement throughout the Church, a vigorous agitation in all gymanvas and presbyteries, urging local communities to appoint men to search all available sources, oral tradition as well as records, in every local church neighborhood. In 1881 Rev. R. Vaughan Griffiths volunteered to write the history of the Church, and appealed to leaders in churches throughout the denomination for coöperation in the immense task of gathering data for the work. Every gymanva indorsed the proposal of Mr. Griffiths and promised support and coöperation in his laudable undertaking. But this effort also ended without substantial result.

The Assembly of 1895, in session at Minneapolis, repeated, almost verbatim, the resolution of 1873; then added, "It is expected that these historical productions will be in the hand of the stated clerk before the Assembly of 1898 convenes, without fail."

After almost continuous effort in every General Assembly for more than a quarter of a century, the Assembly of 1898 reported as follows in words which almost savor of irony: "The history of the cause within the bounds of the several gymanvas: Progress is reported in this direction and in view of this interesting fact (*y ffaiith ddyddorol hon*) we consider that we as General Assembly have nothing further to do in the matter." This ended the early effort.

Some may wonder why such repeated attempts to produce the history of the Church, so much desired by all, were not successful. The real reason is that while all favored the history, the plans resorted to for its accomplishment were too general. Where so many individuals in scores of neighborhoods are asked to do such voluntary service, the task is seldom accomplished. Some were very faithful and scrupulously careful in their labors. Others procrastinated, and in many localities the task was never completed.

These repeated attempts, however, were not in vain; valuable data of local communities were assembled and compiled and have been of great aid to the author in writing the present volume.

This monograph possesses one advantage over previous efforts. It presents the Church as a whole—from its beginning to its conclusion—as an organized body. And here, may it be repeated, appears the second major reason for writing this history. It is to present, in concrete form, the story of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Church, and its record of achievement, as an integral part of historic Presbyterianism in America; as such, we hope that it may be of some assistance to future students of church history.

The story might be more complete if two or three additional chapters were included. The Sunday School would supply ample material for an interesting chapter. The Sunday School in Wales was inaugurated as an institution of the Calvinistic Methodist movement by Rev. Thomas Charles, of Bala, about three years after Robert Raikes started his schools in England. The schools of Mr. Raikes were for children, but the Welsh Sunday School was for adults as well, and continued to be so. When the Calvinistic Methodist Church took root in America, the Sunday School in Wales was new. Many of the early fathers of the Church in America were disciples of Thomas Charles and some had been colaborers with him in establishing Sunday Schools in Wales. This may account for the remarkable enthusiasm for the Sunday School in Welsh communities in this country, and their loyalty to it. The Sunday School was taken up by other religious denominations in Wales, and it soon found its way into every neighborhood in the principality. In like manner, it became established in Welsh communities in America.

The prominent part taken by Rev. Thomas Charles in establishing the British and Foreign Bible Society won for that invaluable institution the allegiance of Calvinistic Methodism in Wales. The zeal for its welfare crossed the Atlantic with the early founders of the Church in this country. Auxiliaries to the American Bible Society were organized in every Welsh community, and Welsh churches of all denominations united in their maintenance. Annual Bible Society meetings were held by these societies and annual collections were made for the support of the American Bible Society.

Another subject worthy of a chapter is the music of the Church. The story of its development is very interesting. Hymn books at first were very scarce and the leader, preacher or elder, used to "line out" the hymns, lining out a couplet at a time. Among early songbooks issued for use in the churches, and indorsed by the *gymanvas*, were: "Caniadau Seion" ("The Songs of Zion"), 1847; "Y Drysorfa Gerddorol" ("The Musical Treasury"), 1857; "Hosanna," 1865; "Ieuan Gwillt," 1869; "Hymnau a Thonau" (American edition), 1871; "Can a Mawl," edited by Daniel Protheroe, Mus.D., and published by the Welsh General Assembly in America, in 1918.

The children were not overlooked. Congregational singing in Welsh churches may be accounted for, in a large measure, by the attention paid to the musical instruction of the children. There were songbooks for children at an early day. Among these were: "Telyn y Plant" ("The Children's Harp"), 1859; "Cor y Plant" ("The Children's Choir"), 1867; "Y Delyn Aur" ("The Golden Harp"), 1869; "Blodau Paradwys" ("Flowers of Paradise"), a gospel hymn book, 1879.

The Church did much to encourage and develop congregational singing. There is no better congregational singing in any church in America than is heard in Welsh churches. Singing schools were held in local churches. These were united into musical associations of limited areas, and these again constituted the *gymanfa gerddorol*, or state musical convention. The *gymanfa ganu* has been revived in recent years, but is not under the direct control of the *gymanva* and presbytery as it was formerly.

Special mention might be made of the young people's society

of Christian Endeavor, which occupied a large and important place in the religious life and activities of the young people of the Church. Some of the *gymanvas* had state Christian Endeavor organizations, which held large and inspiring annual conventions, but these in general are a part of the International Society of Christian Endeavor and their story is well-known.

The author acknowledges his indebtedness to the many individuals and organizations who have given valuable assistance in making this work possible. He has traveled many thousands of miles in his researches, to visit Welsh communities in east and west, and, wherever he went, he was kindly received and generously assisted by scores of friends in locating old landmarks and supplying such oral tradition as was available, and also documents, manuscripts, pamphlets, and reports which were of great aid in compiling the records. To all who thus helped he gives thanks.

To the Welsh Board of Missions, under whose auspices he has labored; to the several *gymanvas* for their material support and encouragement; to the many friends who generously subscribed as patrons of the work; and to William Hiram Foulkes, D.D., LL.D., Moderator of the 1937 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, for kindly consenting to write the Introduction, he is truly grateful.

D. JENKINS WILLIAMS.

June 10, 1937,
Bryn Mawr,
Wales, Wisconsin.

AID TO THE PRONUNCIATION OF WELSH WORDS

THE VOWELS

A has the pure vowel sound of *a* (ä), as in arm, father, farmer.

E has the sound of long *a* (ā), as in ale, fate, labor.

I has the sound of long *e* (ē), as in eve, mete, serene.

O has the sound of *o* (ô), as in born, horse.

U has the sound of short *i* (i), as in bit, bitten; a thickened sound of *i*.

Y has the sound of short *u* (ü), as in but, hut, shudder.

SOME OF THE CONSONANTS

C is always hard, and has the sound of *k*.

F is sounded *v*.

Ff has the sound of *f*.

G is always hard, as in get; never the sound of *j* or *dzh*, as in gesture.

Dd has the sound of *th*, as in this, that, thou.

Th has the sound of *th*, as in thick, thin, thimble.

Ll represents the surd force of unilateral *l*.

R is trilled.

S is never sounded as *z*.

W has the sound of *oo*, as in whoop, loop, rooting.

"Seiat" and "gymanva" are two Welsh words retained throughout the book, more or less. They are the names of two judicatories of the Church corresponding to the session and the synod.

The English *v* is substituted for the Welsh *f*, in the spelling of gymanva, for the convenience of the reader.

I. THE NAME

THE derivation and history of the official names or titles of various religious bodies, or denominations of Christians, is an interesting study. Some are derived from the names of their illustrious founders, some from a cardinal doctrine in their system of theology, some from their form of government, and others from roots and influences not readily understood by men generally. Within the last classification the name "Calvinistic Methodist Church" falls.

To many American readers the name Calvinistic Methodist appears incompatible and a contradiction of terms. The name was inherited from the denomination in Wales. The Church in America was organized along the same lines as the Church in Wales, and was formed as the American branch of the Calvinistic Methodist Church of Wales. The American branch followed in every detail, so far as conditions in the new environment would permit, the form of government established by the founders in Wales.

The early fathers of the Church in America were very zealous in adhering closely to the Confession of Faith and Rules of Discipline of the Welsh Church. They were proud also to carry over the name with its full content of meaning and experience for them, and the Church became known as "The Calvinistic Methodists," and, later, "The Calvinistic Methodist Church in the United States of America."

The name at the outset in Wales was not a matter of choice; it was applied to the denomination with but little, if any, consideration. It simply was applied. The Church germinated, grew, developed, and naturally evolved out of conditions then existing. All the elements of its Presbyterian form of government were implied and expressed in the original plans and labors of Howell Harris and Daniel Rowlands, the two distinguished leaders, and their colaborers in the early part of the eighteenth century. When the Confession of Faith was submitted in writing, agreed upon, and adopted by the chosen representatives of the entire Church,