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WESLEYAN METHODISM
IN THE
BRITISH ARMY.

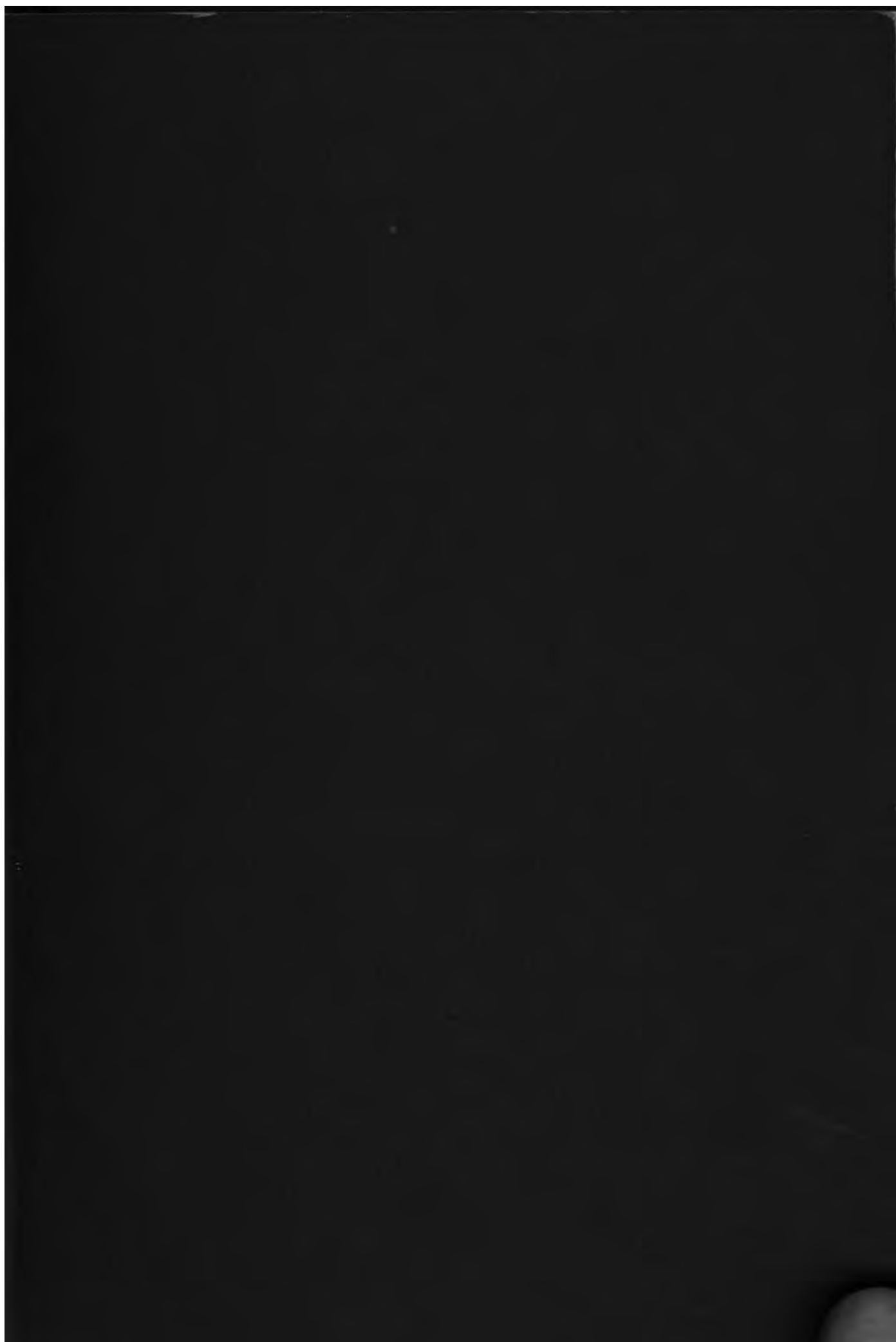


WILLIAM HARRIS RULE, D.D.



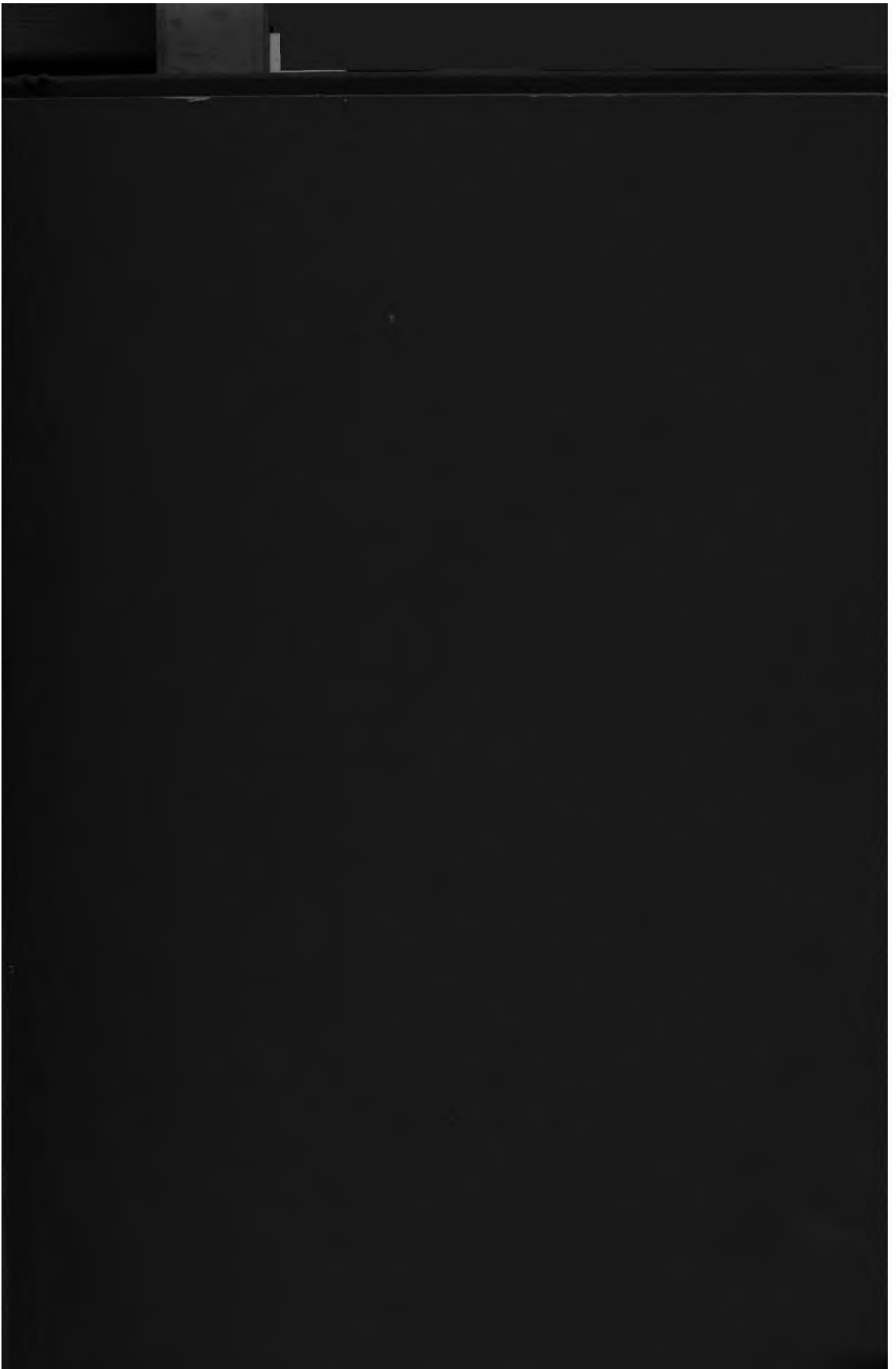


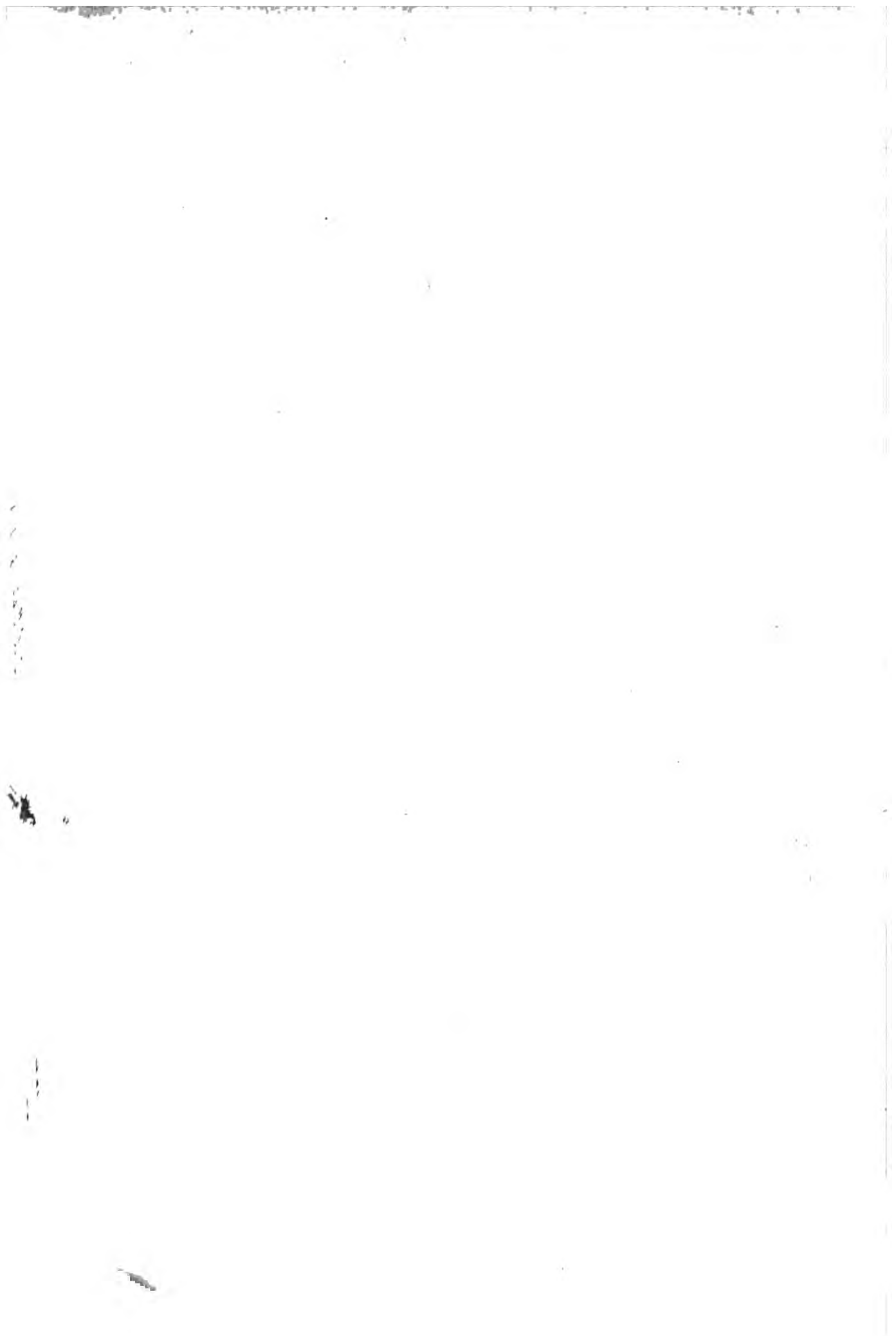
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WESLEYAN METHODISM IN THE
BRITISH ARMY.

AN ACCOUNT
OF THE
ESTABLISHMENT
OF
WESLEYAN METHODISM
IN THE
BRITISH ARMY.

BY
WILLIAM HARRIS RULE, D.D.

'Hitherto the Lord hath helped us.'

LONDON:
T. WOOLMER, 2 CASTLE STREET, CITY ROAD; AND
66 PATERNOSTER ROW.
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PREFACE.

THE initial sketch now presented to the reader does not contain more than is promised on the title-page. A large volume might be filled with narratives of Christian life in the Army, gathered from the diaries of Chaplains, the recollections of military men converted to God after enlistment or commission, and Soldiers' letters. There is much to be said on topics of religious interest that frequently occur, and are too important to be touched on cursorily, as of mere secondary interest. But in a monogram on public relations of the Church with the Army, and the incipient establishment of Wesleyan Methodism therein, there is no sufficient place for the treatment of subjects of primary importance in connection with the spiritual work of God, which is the ultimate and supreme end of all our labours.

Neither is it our purpose to advocate the cause of the Soldier as if he were an object of compassion, or as if he had reason to complain of excessive hardship, or should be treated as if he were assailed by peculiarly powerful temptations beyond those to which civilians in

general are exposed. We do not offer him pity, nor that sympathy which is rendered to persons in a state of suffering; except, indeed, it be in times of exposure, privation, or anguish; as when on heavy and perilous marches, in the labours of active warfare; in the siege, perhaps, or on the field of battle, when he goes to lay down his life in the defence or for the honour of his country. He has gone to do his duty, and it is for us at home to do ours on his behalf. This describes our relative positions, and being so related, we owe him genial sympathy, opportune aid, and constant prayer.

But apart from the horrors of war, which many a Soldier never has experienced, and perhaps never will, the Service itself has characteristics which widely distinguish it from civil society; so widely that it cannot be well understood by those who live outside the Army.

We Wesleyans, however, are not any longer to be accounted strangers to our military brethren. Our acquaintance began in the person of Wesley, as appears in his biography; and in the middle of the last century, devout Soldiers, raised up in the great Methodist revival, were signalized as witnesses of Christ, and founders of societies and congregations at home and abroad, in the Eastern and the Western Hemispheres. The reader of this little book will now have before him a consecutive statement of occurrences between the years 1839 and 1865 which connect a period of

dark intolerance with the present age of happy recognition. At this time several of our ministers in their Circuits, like those of the Church of England in their Parishes, are appointed to act as officiating clergymen, and others are fully devoted by the Conference to the work of Chaplains, while the official members of our congregations cordially and liberally give us their concurrence. It is therefore high time that we should all have a distinct idea of the constitution and discipline of the Army.

We must know that in this discipline there are two vital principles intimately combined, Unquestioning Obedience in those who serve, and Entire Responsibility in those who command. Yet even the highest who commands, is as responsible to a superior power as the humblest who obeys. No officer can be, with impunity, a tyrant: no private soldier, without redress, a slave. Every one must obey; none can shun his duty, or he will find himself speedily called to give account. None can absent himself without leave, nor break a regulation without becoming liable to the penalty. For all that is done authority must be had. Without authority none may presume to intrude into the Service. Sometimes the discipline may seem to be severe, but it must be always just, and it is essentially moral; it subdues the stubborn and brings down the proud. It comprehends the combatant and the non-combatant. The Captain and the Chaplain, each according to the law of his own profession, must be

submissive; and so it devolves upon the latter to encourage the obedient, instruct the unwilling, and everywhere show himself an example of the virtue of self-denial, which can be attained by the grace of God, and is needed, without exception, by every one living.

The writer of these lines, after nine years of stern probation as an unbidden volunteer, but constantly keeping himself in communication with the Authorities concerned, as well as with the humblest subjects of his own spiritual charge, can testify that as a Christian Minister, subject to God above all, he has found at once the advantage and the necessity of careful self-adaptation to this admirable system of authority and order by which he and his troublers were controlled alike.

He was endeavouring to obtain perfect religious liberty for members of his own church, was on familiar terms with those of other churches, and is bound in honesty to say that he never witnessed any interference in religious matters with the Chaplain of any denomination, and now that his own struggle is over, it is his pleasurable duty to make this acknowledgment.

Thousands of youths, whose parents found them ungovernable at home, and who, compelled by poverty, or led by choice, enlisted in the ranks, are taught obedience, trained into habits of manly endurance, fed and clothed sufficiently; and if just now, in consequence of an offensive Act of Parliament, the morality of Her Majesty's Service is not guarded as it should be,

neither is the population of Great Britain, in town or country, protected against legalized licentiousness, but more completely than in either, there is for those who bear arms for national defence the provision of a Minister of Christ to be every man's counsellor and friend, and the following pages contain an account of the means at first employed to obtain for the soldiers born in the homes of our humblest members, and for those taught in our Sunday Schools, the services of their own ministers.

We confidently believe that the Circuit ministers appointed as officiating clergymen, and those who are set apart as Chaplains by the Conference, will do as has hitherto been done, aiming at nothing less than the conversion of sinners from the error of their ways, and the salvation of souls from death.

W. H. R.

CROYDON, *February* 13, 1883.

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WESLEYAN METHODISM IN THE BRITISH ARMY.

CHAPTER I.

Earliest Report known of Soldiers' Meetings for Prayer in Gibraltar in 1769—Diffusion of earnest Piety by means of Soldiers and Sailors in the Mediterranean—Soldiers found a Methodist Society and Congregation in Gibraltar in 1792—Many Adversaries—Fierce Persecution—The first Wesleyan Minister appointed in 1804, died soon after landing—First Place of Worship built in 1810—A second Missionary cut off by pestilential Fever in 1828.

It is needless to relate what has been often told. The interest taken in the welfare of British soldiers by Wesley and the early Methodists is well known, actuated as they were by motives of patriotism and religion. My present object is to describe the eventual establishment of Methodism in the Army as one of the recognised forms of Christian worship for which solemn observance is provided.

Until far on in the present century, with some exception in Scotch and Irish regiments, only 'the King's religion,' as soldiers were used to call the form of worship observed in the Church of England, was recognised in the Service. But we have entered into a better state of things, and the time has fairly come for tracing the first lines of a new section in the History of our own Church and of the country.

I take Gibraltar as the historic point of departure, and find my first note for the year 1769. On the 9th of June in that year, General Lord Cornwallis issued the following Garrison Order: 'Whereas divers soldiers and inhabitants assemble themselves every evening to prayer, it is the Governor's positive order that no person whatever presume to molest them, nor go into their meeting to behave indecently there.' Above seventy years later this Order was copied from the original entry in the Government Office, and handed to me. I regard it as a fragment of authentic history, probably indicating an earnest and well-attended prayer-meeting, often with a profane and noisy rabble outside; now and then a few persons of the same sort within; prayer answered in the conversion of many; at least one Englishman of high rank sharing in the fear of God and reverence of holy things with the Sovereign himself,¹ and by example and authority discountenancing vulgar persecution.

As regiments went abroad to man garrisons and fight battles, some of the rank and file, already converted to God in their native country, and unable to hide the holy fire enkindled in their bosoms, let it shine. It was caught by their unconverted comrades; the work of God spread far and wide, and none could stop it.

A soldier's letter in one of the early Methodist Magazines contains information that in March, 1792, the 46th, 51st, and 61st Regiments arrived at Gibraltar from Ireland. Ten or eleven men of them feared God; one preached, and two exhorted. They soon found each other out, and began to meet in a private room,

¹ George III.

where they sang the praises of God, and people flocked round the door and asked admittance. So a congregation was formed, and publicity came unsought. Then, like wise and honest men, they went direct to the Governor, told him they were Methodists, and asked him to sanction their proceedings. This he did most readily, only hoping that they would not neglect their duty as soldiers. Then they took a larger room, and then another twice as large as that. Many persons were wakened to a sense of sin, and many found peace with God. Quickly—for those volunteer preachers aimed at the permanent welfare of soldier and civilian alike—there was formed a happy and earnest Society of fifty members; and before war broke out in 1793, they numbered One Hundred and Twenty. Many of these were marked in the class-papers as '*awakened*.' After earnest and persevering prayer, about fifty could give evidence that they were '*converted*.' This marks the actual foundation of one Church in Gibraltar, and in this fact the British Wesleyan Soldier made good his perpetual claim on our pastoral regard. Nearly all the military members of this infant Church went to the war, and some of them, after they had borne witness to the power of our Lord to save sinners, shed their life-blood on the field.

While that glorious work was going on in Gibraltar, there arose the usual enmity against its promoters, and some 'gentlemen' went to General O'Hara with an importunate prayer that he would put a stop to their proceedings; but the General seriously replied: 'Let them alone. I wish there were twenty for one of them; we should have fewer Court-martials in the Garrison.'

In August, 1796, the 28th Regiment, from England,

brought some good men, who obeyed a call to preach without waiting to be put on a Local Preachers' Plan. They preached with power, and were not silenced. One Commanding Officer did indeed issue an order that no man belonging to his regiment should attend the Methodist meetings, on pain of being punished for disobedience. Perhaps this hindered for a little while, but the preachers persevered without much interruption. Regiments went up the Mediterranean, to Malta, Menorca, Egypt, and elsewhere; and the Gibraltar Society received frequent reinforcements as other parties came from home.

But the little flock had no earthly shepherd, and a congregation could not have a place of meeting and be kept together without some cost and some kind of church government. Such a system was soon devised; the free-will offerings of individuals supplied money for rent, and seamen came to the aid of soldiers, from the *Hector* and the *Defence*, seventy-four-gun ships; the *Queen*, of ninety-eight guns; and the *Incendiary*, a fire-ship.

Persecution, too, was to do its work, as the fire purifies the gold; and some who should have been the first to encourage the confessors of Christ were the men who assailed them with inexorable hatred. Such were Mr. Wetherell, Garrison Chaplain, and Mr. Hughes, Chaplain to the Duke of Kent, at that time Governor. Calling the Methodists 'Democrats,' they communicated their enmity to a few others, and engaged three persons to sign a memorial to His Royal Highness, most humbly soliciting protection against what they affected to regard as aggressions against the Church of England. The Duke did not quite take this view of the matter,

nor did he understand it much better than the Chaplains, as appears from his reply to the memorialists. He said that it was far from his intention to interfere with their mode of Divine worship, or to deprive their sect of any indulgences or privileges which had been hitherto granted to it, so long as they continued to merit the same by a correct and faithful adherence to the true spirit and tenets of the Christian religion. But he intimated to them, that, for many reasons, he did not wish that their meetings should be so much frequented by the military part of the Garrison.

This document was written in October, 1802, and in it originated a system of repressive persecution which must now be noticed, and may be related the more freely as it exhibits the spirit of a past generation, happily contrasted with the present.

A letter from Mr. Robert Brand, a clerk in the Garrison, dated June 21st, 1803, so clearly describes the commencement of a long train of troubles that it must be quoted here. Mr. Brand was one of the preachers. His Royal Highness had sailed three weeks on return for England when the Colonel of the Queen's Regiment avowed himself unfriendly. He forbade all soldiers under his command to preach, or to attend the Methodist Chapel, under pain of being tried for disobedience. About six days after, on the 29th of May, Major-General Barnett sent a written summons to Mr. Burn, the Schoolmaster, to come to him at his office. On attending, without being charged with any crime, but as if he had been already accused, convicted, and condemned, Burn was commanded not to hold any more meetings, under pain of being sent to the prison of the Provost, and out of the town. On hearing of this,

Mr. Brand, with three of his friends, went to General Barnett, hoping to convince him that he had been acting under misapprehension; but the General was violently angry and overbearing. His language will not bear repeating.

As for Colonel Ramsey, of the Queen's, his most notable doings are summed up in the Report of a Court-martial under date of June 11th, 1803, copied for me from the Records of the Regiment.

PRESIDENT: Captain Parker.

MEMBERS: Lieutenant Scott, Lieutenant Rutter, Lieutenant Smith, Ensign Johnson.

PRISONERS: Corporals James Lamb and Richard Russell. Privates James Hampton, John Reeves, and John Fluccard, of the Queen's Regiment, confined by Sergeant-Major Wright for unsoldierlike conduct, in attending a Methodist meeting, contrary to Regimental Orders.

Evidence.—Sergeant-Major Wright informed the Court that last evening, the 10th instant, coming down the lane leading to the officers' quarters, he saw a number of men coming out of a house. Among the rest he saw the prisoners. Upon asking one of them (James Hampton), what he did there, he replied that he had been to meeting.

'Quarter-Master Sergeant Sunderland corroborated the above evidence.

'The prisoners, being put on their defence, acknowledged being at a meeting by themselves, for which they pleaded the Colonel's verbal permission, but denied being with the inhabitants.

'The Court having considered the evidence against

the prisoners, are of opinion that they are guilty of the crime laid to their charge, in breach of a regimental order, and do sentence Corporals Lamb and Russell to be reduced, and the whole to receive Five Hundred lashes each.

‘ *Approved,* LIEUTENANT-COLONEL RAMSEY,
‘ Commanding Officer, Queen’s Regiment.’

The corporals were reduced the same evening, *and actually received Two Hundred lashes each.* The rest were forgiven for the present, but with the threat that if they were found going into a religious meeting any more, the sentence would be put into execution without any further trial. The whole affair was reported to England and duly represented at the War Office, and, with but one slight exception which occurred several years afterwards, there has not been, to my knowledge, any such authorized persecution since. For some time, however, the Powers at Gibraltar were relentless, and for seven months after that notorious flogging one of the civilian congregation was always posted at the door to prevent any soldier from entering, however desirous he might be, lest he should suffer punishment for disobedience of orders. At the expiration of that time, General Fox assumed the command of the Garrison, and, on receiving an application from the leaders of the congregation, so far granted their prayer as to give them verbal permission to carry on their meetings, saying that he did not wish to turn a single soldier out of their chapel, *so long as they conducted themselves properly.*

Our little Society in Gibraltar had never been accused of any conduct that would render them unworthy of protection; but to the authorities of the

Garrison in those days, it was their well-doing that gave offence, and the flock needed a shepherd to instruct them, and to seek protection for them against oppression. The Conference of 1804, therefore, appointed the Rev. James M'Mullen to be their Minister. He landed in the month of September, and found the little Society reduced to twelve inhabitants, not a soldier daring to join their company. At that time pestilence was raging. Three of the twelve died ; and when Mr. M'Mullen wrote to England to report his arrival, the nine were spending the day in fasting and prayer. These were all spared, while thousands of the population died, as did the Missionary, after he had preached but once. His wife soon followed, and their infant child was left to the care of Mr. Michael Caulfield and his wife, who cherished the babe as if she were their own. These worthy people, whom I well knew and gratefully respected, lived to see the horrors of death and the abominations of persecution pass away, the cause of God revive and flourish, and the prevalent ungodliness that was, for the time, too gross and shameless for description, yield in a great degree to the force of Christian civilization.

After the lapse of four years from the arrival and death of Mr. M'Mullen, the Rev. William Griffith was sent out, in the hope that he might do the work which his predecessor would have attempted. A small piece of ground was purchased, and, under sanction of the Crown, made over to the Mission in 1809 ; and Providence Chapel, for so it was named by its founders, was dedicated to the worship of Almighty God early in 1811. By this time Gibraltar had become the chief seat of Methodism in the British Army ; and

in the order of Divine Providence it was here that a succession of events began which directly tended to bring it into its present relation with the Imperial Government.

Providence Chapel, at first a very unpretentious little building, in due time became known, on a larger scale, as a place of established worship, occupied by a congregation of devout worshippers, under the care of accredited ministers, a centre of hallowing influence to the British population in general; and in the Army no longer a few private soldiers and non-commissioned officers who dared to be confessors of Christ, but Officers of rank and their families knelt side by side at the Lord's table with men of their own regiments. A carefully-written diary of Captain F. M. Tripp, of the 26th Regiment, was put into my hand by a friend of the captain's some years after his departure from the Garrison, containing a very distinct account of his conversion during attendance in this place of worship, where he became a member of the Methodist Society, and so continued until his decease in England. An entry in this diary, made May 5th, 1819, is well worth notice. He says: 'Religious experience of all men is the same in substance. I know no people who have so much experience and enjoyment in religion as the Methodists. How excellent is the discipline which enfolds their little flocks from the common world!'

A second Wesleyan Minister, the Rev. W. Barber, fell victim to a pestilential fever on the 26th of October 1828. The Church-of-England Chaplain had already fallen, and Mr. Barber, after discharging the sadly mournful and laborious duties of the chaplaincy for a few days, was also numbered with the dead.

When spending a few weeks on the Rock in 1827, on my way towards England from Malta, I saw much of Mr. Barber. He was a deeply pious and devoted young man, the first Minister who thoroughly studied the Spanish language, that he might preach to Spaniards. He assembled a little congregation, consisting of respectable refugees from Spain and natives of the place, in his lodgings, earnestly sought their conversion, gave me the benefit of his example, and was beginning to reap the fruit of his labour as a real missionary, qualified by previous education for his peculiar work, when he was taken to his eternal rest.

CHAPTER II.

The old Burial Difficulty settled in Gibraltar by a Provision of Government—The liberal, but imperfect, General Order for the Army of July, 1839—A flagrant Act of Persecution occasions a successful Appeal to the Commander-in-Chief—Consequent Proceedings in Gibraltar—Conference with the General Officer Commanding—First Church Parade of Wesleyans as such—Presbyterians out of Scotland follow the Example of the Wesleyans.

WHEN I landed in Gibraltar, early in 1832, to take charge of that Mission, the English congregation consisted chiefly of soldiers, some other persons of humble rank in employ of Government, and a few of the native inhabitants. The General Officer commanding was Governor of the place, and I well remember my first interview with General Houston, when he told me gruffly that my flock should have his protection *so long as they deserved it*.

It seemed not unlikely that, under him, they would need other protection. Instances of gross intolerance were within recent memory, but his immediate predecessor, General Don, had given every one his right. During General Don's command, the Garrison Chaplain, who seemed to have mistaken the Christian Sacrament of Baptism for a ceremony of initiation into the Established Church of England, contrary to the teaching of that Church, and in contempt or ignorance of Canon Law, refused to read the Burial Service over the body of an infant whom the Wesleyan Minister had bap-

tized. After an altercation at the grave-side, the Chaplain yielded, but the parties aggrieved reported the occurrence to the General, who laid it before the Government at home with an expression of his own opinion which led to the removal of such matters, for the future, from the uncertainties of clerical caprice.

It was directed that the North-east part of the public cemetery on the Neutral Ground should be allotted to the Methodists ; that their Minister should be recognised as entitled to public protection, and provided, in common with other clergymen, with instructions as to the performance of certain duties. In order to render this recognition more marked and certain, it was also directed that he should receive the daily ration issued by the Commissariat to a Civil Officer. All this was carried into full effect.

But this recognition did not give the Minister any place in the Army, neither had the military members of his congregation any acknowledged right to liberty of worship. When off duty, they might go into their own church, for no one prevented them. So might they go into any den of licentiousness, for none prevented them. It was no longer a crime to go into a Methodist meeting, nor was any one degraded, or imprisoned, or flogged for such an act, as in the last century ; and this is all that could be said.

Yet the times were changing. Such blank intolerance could not last for ever ; and few persons within the Army, who cared for the liberty so dear to Englishmen, could have been much surprised, although some were little pleased, when General Lord Hill, Commanding in Chief, issued a General Order in July, 1839, worded as follows :—

‘Commanding Officers of Regiments are to be particularly attentive that no soldier, being a Roman Catholic, or of any religious persuasion differing from the Established Church, is to be compelled to attend the Divine worship of the Church of England; but that every soldier is to be at full liberty to attend the Worship of Almighty God according to the forms prescribed by his own religion, when military duty does not interfere.’

Clear as was the intention of this Order, it served only as the enunciation of a right principle. It acknowledged the right of the soldier to enjoy liberty of worship, but it did not instruct the Commanding Officer to enable him to exercise the right. It gave the officer no order, and where no order is given there is no authority conferred. Yet, so far as this Order went, I quietly resolved to watch for an opportunity to make some use of it, should that be possible.

But the Order appeared to be generally unwelcome, as tending to innovation in the Army. It is doubtful whether it was ever followed in a regimental order, nor could it well be until provision should be made for carrying it into practical effect. In Gibraltar it was not published to the Garrison, and soon it was broken in effect.

Three months after its official issue to the Army came the celebration of the first Centenary of Methodism. The festival was observed in all our Circuits and Stations throughout the world; and in Gibraltar, favoured by the goodwill of General (afterwards Field-Marshal) Sir Alexander Woodford, with the concurrence of the Chief of the Police, we held the first religious procession since the day of British

occupation of the Rock. The shops in its route were all shut, traffic was suspended, while our schools and the principal members of the congregation walked in order from Government House to the Neutral Ground, and back again ; and such attention was drawn to our history and affairs as awakened jealousy. The elders of the Church of Rome memorialized the Pope, praying for a Bishop, whose influence should counteract that of our heresy ; and, as might have been expected, some zealous members of the Church of England, but without any such cause as they, were touched with the same feeling ; but in one quarter only did it find any practical expression in civil society.

Early in November, a few days after our festival, some one came to my house with the startling intelligence that two members of one of our classes were under arrest in Barracks on account of being Methodists. The Barracks were shut for the night, but next morning before six o'clock I was outside the gate, waiting for the bugle to sound ; and no sooner was entrance free than I was inside, calling for the two captive brethren, who made speedy appearance, and gave me a clear account of their case. The Major, commanding the Regiment in the absence of the Lieutenant-Colonel, had chosen to harangue the men on the subject of religion, and threatened the few Wesleyans there with the forfeiture of his confidence if they went to such a place as a Methodist Chapel. One of them, a Corporal, had been appointed Clerk to the Garrison Chaplain, in consideration of his good character and aptness for the duty. Although a Wesleyan, he was by necessity a worshipper in the Church of England, and in the estimation of the

Chaplain himself his religious denomination and good Christian conduct had determined in his favour. But the Major charged him with hypocrisy, pretending to be a Church of England man. He therefore degraded him, on the spot, from being corporal; and when the Corporal degraded, and another member of our Church, presumed to answer for themselves, he confined them both to Barracks, under arrest for insolence.

Before breakfast I sent the General a copy of the deposition made to me by the Corporal and his companion, together with my complaint against the Major for persecution; but Sir Alexander instantly sent back my letter, with a refusal to allow me to interfere in military matters. This refusal was most opportune. The Chief authority in the Garrison, in refusing to hear my complaint, reduced me to the alternative of silent submission to the persecution of members of my Church, or direct appeal to the Commander-in-Chief.

It so happened that the Mail-boat, on return from Malta homeward, had dropped anchor in the Bay that morning, so that I had just time to copy my rejected letter to the General, enclose his answer, add a few words of my own to the Commander-in-Chief, and send a fair copy of the whole to Government House for the information of Sir Alexander. On the unexpected receipt of this direct appeal to superior authority, our Governor detained the Mail until night, called his staff together, and, on consultation with them, instructed the Major to draw up a defence of his conduct, and wrote what he considered to be a justification of his own. Thus an account of the whole affair, as represented by all parties, reached the Horse

Guards at once, and Lord Hill had nothing to do beyond taking advice on a very plain case. Without loss of time he answered the General, and sent me a copy of his answer.

His Lordship declared 'the intent and meaning of the General Order' above quoted to be, 'not only that every soldier should be at full liberty to attend the worship of Almighty God according to the form prescribed by his own religion, especially expressed in that Order, but carefully abstaining, in conformity with its spirit and letter, from every measure that might, even in appearance, have a tendency to violate the rights of conscience; so long as the conduct of the soldier was in strict accordance with a preservation of good order and military discipline.'

By this wise treatment of the case, a new leaf was turned over in one department of military administration, and I had to consider how to shape my course so as not only to arrive at a right understanding with the authorities at Gibraltar, but to attain for all our own brethren in the Army equal liberty with that enjoyed by members of the Church of England, and by them only.

I therefore immediately asked of Sir Alexander Woodford that he would make known to the Garrison the General Order of July. But he was annoyed at my appeal beyond him, and gave me no answer. Meanwhile our humble brethren in the troubled regiment were subjected to much vexatious treatment. The situation of the degraded Corporal became intolerable; he made up his mind to ask leave to purchase a discharge from the Service, and the savings which his thrift had enabled him to make served for effecting

the release. He was well qualified to teach an elementary school, and I found a situation for him in our mission school, in the capacity of Teacher. But how to get a sufficient recognition of our claim for religious liberty was the question to be settled in the Service.

As the General kept silence, and it was necessary that Lord Hill's answer should be known, I determined to divulge it myself, and accordingly, after the close of Divine service on the Sunday evening, I read to the congregation my official copy of that letter, adding only a brief sentence of grateful acknowledgment.

In the week following I proceeded to visit all the Barracks, collected the names of many men who, preferring to follow the religion of their parents, regarded themselves as Wesleyans, and advised them to return themselves as such in their regiments, and ask permission to attend in their own place of worship on Sunday mornings. A considerable number followed my advice. Having visited all the others, I went to the Artillery Barracks, intending there to close my visitation, but was stopped by the sentry at the gate, who said that he had orders not to admit any one in plain clothes.

By this time there was great excitement in the Garrison. My visitation of the Barracks, however necessary some such measure may have been, was unauthorized; the government of the place was military, and I was, unquestionably, a transgressor. I therefore hastened from the gate of the Moorish Castle-yard to present myself to the General, and ask him the reason of my repulse that morning.

He replied that it was not he who gave the sentry that order, and that I had done wrong by going into

the Barracks; that other clergymen might have been in the habit of going into them, although without any right to go unbidden, but neither they nor I should be allowed to do so any more. We should all alike be restrained from committing trespass. Of course I could not dispute his right to exercise full authority, and I neither could nor would refuse entire submission to His Excellency's commands, but rendered it with unabated personal respect. This done, we entered freely into the whole subject; and, without waiting to be asked, Sir Alexander expressed his intention to have the Wesleyans marched to Divine Service on Sunday mornings. From that moment our relations became as cordial as ever, and the Wesleyan soldiers in Gibraltar were from that time onward regularly marched to their own Church.

Yet throughout the Army there was no real change. Here and there, but very rarely indeed at first, a few Wesleyans were supposed to be paraded for their own places of worship; but this would be rather accidental, informal, and by the mere good nature of commanding officers, or, as at Woolwich, it was managed by letting the Wesleyans fall out with the Presbyterians, and considerable companies, so mixed, were returned as Presbyterians and marched to the Methodist Chapel. To whom the Head-moneys were paid for those services I never knew, nor cared to understand; it was not a money question raised at Gibraltar, nor did pecuniary considerations mingle with our care for the attainment of liberty of worship.

In the interest of this liberty much good was done. In the month of December, 1839, a Highland Regiment in Gibraltar, which had always been sent to

the services of the Church of England, was marched on a Sunday morning to the English Church. Thitherward they went, and were halted and formed outside, as usual before marching in. Now the moment was critical. The stand made for the Wesleyans was an example to be taken, and the Scotch were not the men to miss it. A spokesman came to the front, and addressed the officer in charge: 'Sir! We were ordered to march *to* this Church, and we are come. But we were not commanded to go *into* it, and we do not wish to go in, but desire to remain outside.' Officers and men were of the same mind. The whole strength was there, as nearly as possible. They all marched back to their quarters, and their Commanding Officer could only report the circumstance to the Officer in Chief command. He had left his Presbyterians in full liberty to worship God that day according to the form prescribed by their own Religion, and nothing could be said to the contrary.

I knew nothing of this until I heard that for that Regiment there was not the next Sunday any Church parade; and then, that the Regiment might not set an example of ungodliness, I proposed to a licentiate of the University of Edinburgh that he should volunteer to act as Chaplain, and accept the free use of our Church for assembling the men, until a better arrangement could be made. The arrangement was carried out accordingly, and so a Presbyterian Service began to be established on the Rock.

CHAPTER III.

Presbyterianism—War with Russia—Reformation of Military Service and Administration—A New Division of Army and Camp at Aldershot—Visits to the Camp, and Preparatory Correspondences and Efforts.

IN those early days there was no general recognition in the Army for Presbyterianism; for the exception made in favour of some Scotch regiments, while they were in Scotland, was no more than local. But this exclusion of the national religion of Scotland from due national consideration was felt to be a grievance. One of the Presbyterian ministers resident in Dublin, the Rev. Richard Dill, A.M., felt it his duty to bestir himself in the matter. Some petitions were sent to Parliament. The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland was 'overtured' by some of the Synods in May, 1839, and some interviews were had with General Lord Hill at that time, as also with other members of Her Majesty's Government in London. The General Order of June immediately followed, but in reality, the few good words of that Order, *afterwards* incorporated with the Queen's Regulations, gave no liberty of worship to soldiers not of 'the Queen's religion.' Only the Roman Catholics were excepted from this bondage; but they latterly managed to live above the law, which by their impunity, as would seem, should now be counted obsolete.

Wesleyans, therefore, had no more reason to complain than other non-established Protestants. So stood matters in 1842, when I embarked for England. Having completed the work which devolved on me in Gibraltar, I had not then any means of rendering direct service to our brethren in the army, nor was the public mind of Methodism prepared for any movement in that behalf. But an ever-abiding interest in the welfare of the soldier led me to watch for further opportunity of usefulness; and in the Conference of 1848 I cited the few words of the Order above quoted, that every soldier should be at full liberty to attend the worship of Almighty God according to the form prescribed by his own religion, and proposed that we should endeavour to get this Order carried into effect. I obtained a vote of consent to send a circular letter to ministers stationed in garrison towns, informing them of the permissive regulation, and advising them to apply to Commanding Officers for having Wesleyans marched accordingly. The Circular was sent, and perhaps read in some places, but it took no effect. It served me, however, as a trifling sanction whereon to rest any occasional commendation of the soldier to general sympathy, amidst the apathy which had stolen over the public mind during the long peace, when the existence of an army seemed to be almost forgotten by the general population of England.

But during the war with Russia, when the British Forces in the Crimea, ill prepared for service, badly equipped and poorly officered, had become the object of general compassion, indifference to the moral condition of the soldier was happily succeeded by a lively concern for his spiritual welfare. I caught that

opportunity for proposing that our Foreign Missionary Committee should send a minister to the seat of war. One was indeed named, and Secretary Lord Panmure gave him a free passage out, with authority to act in Camp. But the choice of suitable ministers was as imperfect in that time as the supplies of the Commissariat; and the change from the exhaustion of an Indian mission to the horrid grandeur of a campaign was too violent for our improvised Chaplain to sustain. Happily for him the war ended soon after his landing, and he returned forthwith without fairly coming into use.

The ascertained incapacity of the Army, after forty years of its comparative inaction, for the kind of warfare with which the forces of other nations were now familiar, rendered it necessary for Englishmen to be taught the latest art of war without delay; and while the shattered remnants of our brave battalions, victorious in spite of fearful disadvantages, received such an enthusiastic welcome home as their countrymen were sure to give them, it was resolved to establish a grand School of War, where the regiments could be massed, and General Officers might learn how to conduct such movements as were familiar in other armies, instead of finding themselves untaught, at the head of Brigades that had never before met entire on the same ground.

Every department of military service and administration too had to be reformed; and the first thing requisite to this intent was to purchase an extensive tract of uncultivated land, where a large permanent encampment could be formed, and space found for necessary exercises, for marchings out, and for mimic fight to prepare for real battle; where soldiers might

learn how to shift for themselves in an enemy's country, how to encounter formidable obstacles with diminished peril, and taste beforehand some of the hardships of a severe campaign. It was then intended to raise the spirit of the entire Service by such measures as were certainly devised, and have in part been carried out, in spite of some counteractive practices of certain old-school officers, which yet have to be more effectually resisted by the repeal of a demoralising Act of Parliament.

Some of our friends thought that in this event we should seek to minister the Gospel to our own men, and that this should be done statedly, agreeably to our established usages, and with careful regard to military discipline.

Seeing that no other person was appointed to do this work, or to see it done, I determined for myself to make the necessary inquiries, in hope that some suitable appointment might be eventually made. As soon as a few regiments were in their huts at Aldershot, and I gained information of one good man, a 'Primitive Methodist,' with the number and letter of his hut, I went down from London, and found him with his wife in married quarters. After gratefully enjoying their hospitality, and before seeking any other person, I found my way to Lieutenant-General Knollys, Commanding the Division, introduced myself, and begged his permission to go through the Camp, and endeavour to find any Wesleyans who might be there. Courteously thanking me for having sought his sanction before entering on my search, he gave me full permission, and then, taking my clue from my first acquaintance, the good Schoolmaster in Letter N, I soon found another stray

Wesleyan, and then another, and another old soldier, answering more or less directly to the name, and expressed to all of them my intention to obtain, if possible, a Minister who should be appointed to live near them, be their pastor, and unite them into one Society. Some were very glad; but others, weaned away from Methodism, and estranged from old connections, were shy and incommunicative. Most of them fancied that this could only be done by stealth and outside Camp, and that open Methodism would not be lawful in the Army. Some were afraid to confess that they ever had any connection with it. More than one refused to believe that I was a Wesleyan, but fancied I must be an impostor. Not a few betrayed a feeling that they had been heartlessly neglected since enlistment. They who had been in Canada contrasted the care for their souls manifested by Canadian Methodists with the negligence, as they believed, of the English. I endeavoured to assure them that time would show them our sincere regard.

At that time I did not expect the happiness of being myself appointed to the charge, but intended to press for the appointment of another. I had not received any commission to visit Aldershot; and an extremely imperfect inquiry which some one else had made in the neighbourhood, without knowing how to set about it, had led some to the conclusion that to preach to those soldiers would be impossible. But the profound interest awakened by the visitation, that morning, of those sons of Methodists, now veteran defenders of their country, and survivors of the thousands who had perished in the same Service, determined me to spare no effort. They had perished in what was made their

country's cause, and perhaps had thought themselves neglected by us who should have sought their salvation. Perhaps by many they were slighted, if not despised, and the reproaches of their survivors caused me bitter shame and grief. Now I had a tale to tell and an object to pursue; and although the subject was remote from the apprehension of most of those with whom I conversed, both lay and clerical, I did find lively sympathy in many.

My visits to the Camp and its vicinity were frequent, and in three or four weeks I was prepared to pay a second visit to General Knollys, and solicit him to sanction an arrangement for our Wesleyans to be marched on Sundays for Divine Service to some place that might be found for them. He would require time to consider. On a subject so new and so important he could not act without authority. He desired me to put my request in writing. After consulting with some of my brethren, and chiefly with the President of Conference, I wrote a letter to the General, dated March 17, 1856, in which were the following passages:

'There are in the Camp at Aldershot several Wesleyan Methodists of the Class that we may distinguish as communicants, and many more who have been brought up in our congregations. From time to time since the establishment of the Camp, desires have been intimated to us that we should preach to them on the Lord's Day. We are anxious to do so, in order to fulfil, as we think, an obvious duty, and venture to hope that a continuance of the ministrations to which they have been accustomed would be conducive to their moral and spiritual welfare. . . . All that we should venture to ask would be permission to send

a minister on Sundays to hold a service. . . . On behalf of the President of Conference, by whom I have been desired to lay this matter before you, as well as for our ministerial brethren in general, I am able to assure you that the most scrupulous care will be taken, not only to observe general regulations, but to place our proceedings under the direct cognizance of the Officer Commanding, and in every detail of arrangement to consult his wishes so far as they can be known.'

The reply, written by the General himself, April 30th, 1856, contains the following negative, in terms of strictest courtesy: 'I regret to inform you, with reference to your application to be allowed to preach in Camp to soldiers of the Wesleyan Connection, that it is not thought advisable to allow a precedent to be established for any forms of Divine Worship, or for other officiating ministers than those provided by authority, and the regulations of the Army.'

Nothing could be more decisive. The question had evidently been referred to superior authority, and could only be reconsidered by the same. There was not yet any case for an appeal in form, but as I had a private Channel of access to the Secretary of State for War, I was enabled to engage His Lordship's attention to the subject, and received from him, through my friend, the Honourable Arthur Kinnaid, the valuable suggestion that a site for the erection of a Church of our own might be obtained by purchase, outside Camp, in a neighbourhood which he indicated, within a reasonable distance. A Church being built, wherein, without any question, we could assemble a congregation, the attendance of soldiers under orders might be discussed at leisure. The soldiers' right was implied, at least, in

the Queen's Regulations; and I felt certain of an eventually satisfactory settlement of the question.

A few days after the suggestion the Conference of 1856 assembled, and my next business was to seek there the necessary sanction for collecting money for the purchase of land and the erection of a Church with the least possible delay, in view of a minister being appointed for Chaplain. The Conference, as is usual when any new measure is proposed, appointed a Committee to hear and report upon my plan. I laid before this Committee all the information I possessed, and besought their interest on behalf of the defenders of our country, enlisted from the homes of our own people, but receiving no ministration of the Gospel from ourselves, and for the most part abandoned to foreign and soul-destroying influences. The facts could not be disputed, and none could deny the duty incumbent on ourselves to do something, if possible, for their benefit. But the scheme must have seemed impracticable. I was too well known to all of them to be thought altogether an unreasoning enthusiast, yet on that particular occasion their prudence did seem necessary to counteract my haste, and they could not agree to take any report on which Conference could deliberate. But as their silence would be equivalent to disapproval, which, after all they did not wish to convey, there was a momentary hesitation, and my most zealous objector conceived the happy thought of leaving me to myself; and the Committee, considering that I was already in an informal correspondence with one of Her Majesty's Ministers, suggested that as they could not recommend the Conference to commit itself to my scheme, I had better be let alone to carry on

any correspondence by myself. The President, therefore, aware of the situation, when the Committee came in without a word to say, pleasantly expressed the prevailing opinion that the Conference should not in any way commit itself to correspondence with Government, and that there should be no minute on the subject, but that any correspondence that might take place should be left with me alone, and be so far equally without sanction and without disapproval. Nevertheless it was further understood that I might be at liberty to do my best, expecting of course that I should endeavour to do something. I might make an effort to raise money, and the London Ministers might act as a Committee, or appoint a Committee, to receive the money and direct its appropriation for the benefit of the Army.

This was quite enough. It was enough to give ecclesiastical sanction to all that might be done by us during the ensuing year, and the special and temporary Committee would be careful not to exceed its powers. It remained with myself to devise, to prompt, to venture, and to do my best, so far as Good Providence might guide and God might please to bless.

Not failing to see General Knollys, and maintain the best understanding with him, after an interview I wrote him an explanatory letter on September 6th, 1856, which will at once tell what the London Committee did, and show exactly the position taken on our first approach to the great work that followed.

‘SIR,—May I beg to inform you that the Wesleyan Conference has sanctioned the appointment of the

Rev. Peter Batchelor¹ to reside in the neighbourhood of Aldershot, and that measures are in progress for the purchase of ground, and the erection (for the present) of a temporary Church in the vicinity of the Camp for the accommodation of members of our communion, to whom he will be ready to minister.

‘We hope to be very soon able to receive the first congregation, and would now respectfully request that the usual arrangements may be made for marching to the Sunday morning service those who desire to worship there.

‘Where there are places of worship sufficiently near the Barracks for the attendance of those portions of the men who return themselves as Wesleyans, we have been much indebted to Officers Commanding, both in England and the Colonies, for their readiness in causing them to be duly marched on Sundays. There is no such place near Aldershot, but, considering the large number of soldiers in the Camp, we have determined to erect one, and maintain a minister at our own cost. This will be a free offering, made with the single desire of taking our share in the discharge of a common duty to the British Army, by providing the means of religious worship for those who have enlisted out of our own congregations all over the kingdom.

‘The request which I have now the honour to forward does not, as you will perceive, imply any departure from established usage. The Regulation on the subject, issued by Lord Hill (*Divine Service*, 13), directs that every soldier of any religious persuasion

¹ Mr. Batchelor had been sent to the Crimea towards the close of the war. He went to Aldershot, but felt unequal to the duties, and relinquished that position.

differing from the Established Church be at full liberty to attend the worship of Almighty God according to the form prescribed by his own religion. And as every soldier is required to worship somewhere, members of Wesleyan congregations desiring it, have, in every instance that I have seen or known, been paraded accordingly, no less than those mentioned in the Regulation following (14), which were the only Denominations contemplated previously to 1839. As the preparations are in rapid progress, perhaps I may be permitted to request the favour of a reply as early as convenient.—I have the honour, etc.,

‘W. H. RULE, D.D.’

Asking no gift, and not craving any compensation, we begged no permission. But I gratefully record the goodness of Lord Panmure, who wrote a note to the General asking him to facilitate my operations. I do not know in what terms the request was conveyed, but I do know that it could not imply that soldiers were to be marched to any services of ours, for Lord Panmure distinctly professed himself unable to sanction anything of the sort. My operations, however, were all preparatory, for many months. How hard was the seeking money from Circuit to Circuit, how stiffly I fought my way through straits of Committee, and how often I drew upon the night to accomplish the labours of the day, it would be trifling to tell, and I shall say no more about the ecclesiastical year 1856–57, until I open another Chapter with our entrance upon work at Aldershot.

CHAPTER IV.

Occupation of a temporary Church at Aldershot—Divisional Order for Attendance of Soldiers—Uncertainty of our Position—The Marquis of Downshire and his Militiamen—Hospital Visitation—Visits to some Prisoners—Indiscretion of some Strangers—Appointment of Roman Catholic Chaplains—Correspondence with General Peel.

ON a full acre of land in freehold, abutting on Cambridge Road, outside the Cavalry Barracks, in the South Camp, we erected a temporary iron Church, seated for seven hundred and fifty persons, to be rent free, with a commodious Chaplain's house, of similar structure, and room for other buildings, when wanted, all within one ring fence, at a total cost of about £4800, all expenses being included. The Rev. Robert Young, President of Conference (Morning Preacher), the Rev. Elijah Hoole, D.D. (Reader of Prayers), the Rev. Ebenezer E. Jenkins, M.A. (Evening Preacher), conducted the services at the dedication of the Church, on Friday, July 10th, 1857. Many friends of the cause attended these solemnities, and made liberal contributions towards the buildings.

They were not made aware that the occupation of the Church by a military congregation was not yet assured. They did not know that by return of the train which brought them that morning from London would be carried a very earnest letter from myself to the Secretary of State for War, who had not yet con-

sented to allow our men to be ordered to march thither on Sundays, and that there was an active but unfinished correspondence between Lord Panmure, General Knollys, and myself; they being unable to grant my desire without going beyond the law, and I being not yet able to persuade them to interpret the letter of the law according to what the spirit required should be. But, for my own part, I knew enough of their mind, and was sufficiently informed of the drift of circumstances, and felt sufficiently persuaded that God was on our side, to be confident that the soldiers would be there on Sundays. A friendly Bandmaster had lent us his band, so that we had no lack of hymnody on that happy day.

On the following Sunday I was the only preacher, and had both morning and evening services, with scarcely a soldier to be seen, and with a few stray, not to say wild, civilians; for there was not yet one dwelling-house roofed over on all the ground where now stands the Town of Aldershot. This was chilling, but no more than chilling; the chill gave way when the fire of a sure hope glowed within, and I could see the prospect bright before us when, two days later, I received a note from the Assistant Adjutant-General, Colonel Stewart Wood, inviting me to call at his office, that we might arrange for the hour of Service on Sunday mornings, and mentioning the hour which the General would like to suggest as most convenient.

The visit was most satisfactory. Colonel Wood, whom I then saw for the first time, was evidently well pleased to do me service. He drafted a Divisional Order for the Wesleyans to be marched to the Wesleyan Church in Cambridge Road on the next Sunday

at 9 A.M. I was invited to come to that Office on every occasion, and, during a residence of more than eight years at Aldershot, I found occasions very frequent. Colonel Wood remained there, on the Staff, for more than three years from that time, and constantly rendered me invaluable assistance. He taught me, a civilian, the principles of military discipline, so far as it concerned me to understand and uphold them; and as a beginner in the largest military establishment in the Empire, and in a peculiarly critical position, he kept me rightly informed in regard to the minute particulars of intercourse and correspondence; a kind of training which enabled me the more safely to deal with persons of all ranks, and to advise my brother-ministers on other stations in their frequent perplexities.

Among other and lesser things, we were all to learn that the Queen's Ministers, even if they were all agreed and all sincerely desirous on any essential point whatever, could not go beyond the Mutiny Act and the Queen's Regulations for the Army, and that these cannot be altered without the authority of Parliament. The civil Authority in the War Office cannot initiate or carry out any measure affecting the internal discipline of the Army without the entire concurrence of the Authority at the Horse Guards; and even there the Commander-in-Chief, however desirous to uphold Religious Liberty, could not act contrary to the spirit of the Service. Now the spirit of the Service requires absolute obedience, but absolute obedience cannot be required without reason, and such reason for any service cannot exist until there is created an obligation to obey. Even enlistment into the British Army is

voluntary. Compensation for the service is promised to the recruit, and is implied at least with the commission to the Officer. The moral obligation is strengthened by the oath which is voluntarily taken, and the sense of patriotism which is, or ought to be, innate. The Chaplain, before he takes his commission, knows what will be his rate of pay, and the services to be performed are specified in a paper that is put into his hand.

But we were offering gratuitous service. On the subject of pay we were utterly silent, and only asked permission to render the service, to satisfy our sense of spiritual duty to our own men. Not being paid, we could not be commanded. We should not be capable of rendering more than voluntary obedience, and therefore no Commanding Officer could enforce on us the discharge of our duty, or impose on us any penalty for disobedience or neglect. And as he could not govern without an authority, it might be impossible for him to protect. Our position was uncertain, and any error on our part, or any successful effort of an adversary, might in a moment dislodge us altogether. All of us, strangers to the Service, uninitiated, could not at once perceive all this, and the few who could had to encounter the effects of ignorance and misapprehension in those who could not.

At this point it might be objected that an overbearing and ungodly Commanding Officer might scowl upon a paid Chaplain, despise his person, interfere with his teaching, and even expect him to submit to some caprice of his own. So he might, if his power were absolute, as it is not. The commissioned Chaplain's person and office are protected by explicit regu-

lations, and an oppressed or injured officer, combatant or non-combatant, has always a way of redress; and without seeking for such redress, a man of self-respect and good sense will generally know how to bear himself superior to such annoyances. Besides all this, experience has well taught us that Chaplains in the British Army have not to complain of any interference with their religion, nor any disrespect to themselves, so long as they do their duty with diligence, and conduct themselves worthily of the Churches they represent.

But I am digressing from my story.

So long as the number of declared Wesleyans was minutely small, they were sheltered in obscurity, and the good-will of officers amply sheltered us in our small beginnings. So far as we were known, too, the good conduct of non-commissioned officers and men of established piety and usefulness secured for them the cheap and easy indulgence of being marched to hear their own ministers preach on Sunday mornings. But no sooner did the novel custom begin than it provoked resistance in some regiments.

Within the regular Army our advances were slowly made and gradually felt by superior officers, but the country gentlemen serving in the Militia took longer time to hear and understand. My first encounter on this ground took place at Aldershot with the Marquis of Downshire, Colonel of the Royal South Down Militia, when that regiment was in Camp, being embodied, with other Militia regiments, in consequence of the rebellion in India. His men had heard of the Soldier's privilege, and one of them came to me, on behalf of his brother Methodists, to ask if I would obtain for them the necessary permission. I called

on his Lordship in his rude hut one morning, and found him a perfect model of dignified military simplicity. I was announced as a gentleman who wished to see him on a matter of business. He had me shown in at once; and there he stood, with his shirt sleeves above his elbows, in the act of shaving, chin half smooth, and an orderly servant in attendance—he manifestly spurning the remotest sign of self-indulgence. Drooping his razor for a moment, he heard my request, politely listened, and quite as politely, but quite as positively, refused to grant it. He needed no assertion of authority. Every man in his regiment, as I understood, was a tenant of his own, born on his estate, loyally devoted to his service, and gratefully attached to his person. He said that they were all declared Protestants, and therefore all members of the Established Church of Ireland, and he would not consent to their departure from it. I could not debate with a gentleman at such a moment, nor at any time argue with a Commanding Officer in presence of his servant. I therefore made the briefest expression of regret, bowed, and withdrew.

The question was raised, not settled. I had to ponder the case at home, and consider how it might be handled with least hazard of mistake. My letter to his Lordship, dated Jan. 28th, 1858, lies before me in copy. I therein respectfully referred to the Queen's Regulations, quoted above, and to the General Orders of the Aldershot Division, just now recited. The men, as I understood, had entered themselves under another designation, either in ignorance of any provision being made for them as Wesleyans, or by some oversight, and therefore only asked for the rectification

of a mistake. I described the provision made for their attendance at Divine Worship and receiving pastoral attention, and asked for the favour of a reply. After waiting a week I begged his decision. His Lordship's answer was so characteristic, and, from his point of view, so full of good sense and right feeling, that it shall be transcribed entire. It is dated Feb. 5th, 1858.

‘DEAR SIR,—I have been so much engaged (and I had to go to London last night on business) that I have been totally unable to attend to your note of the 28th. I now, however, send you a return of thirteen men who say that they are Wesleyans, but who, when enrolled, returned themselves as Church of England men. I quite feel all you say about your mode of action toward Soldiers, for I have some of your Persuasion at and about Hillsborough, and never heard or saw anything but the most proper and upright conduct in them. All I want, and will have, on the present occasion, is that the men should not change their religion whenever it suits them, having sworn on attestation that they belonged to a different one. However, we must not be too stringent about the oath, which is, I daresay, often taken without thought in the anxiety to enlist.—Believe me, dear Sir, faithfully yours,
DOWNSHIRE.’

Many more than thirteen men eventually came, and I found we had great influence in the regiment. A large number were duly marched, or came at the voluntary services. An incident at their departure was impressive. I had seen them formed within

Camp for the march, and met them again on the way out. First rode the Marquis, who gave me a genial salutation; and when the rear was passing, some of our men raised for me a fervent Irish cheer, which rang through the line, and made a grand contrast with my first visit in the Colonel's hut, and a pleasant forecast of good times to come on both sides the channel.

By this time I thought the Hospitals must be ready for visitation. For some months I had not entered a ward. No patient had asked for a visit, and I had waited to make acquaintance with our people, learn the ways of the Camp, and become known, by report at least, to the Heads of Departments. As soon as I felt that I could not any longer delay the performance of a principal duty without culpable neglect, I called on the Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Gibson, afterwards Sir James Brown Gibson, K.C.B., Director-General of the Medical Department of the Army; stated my desire, and begged the favour of his information, instruction, or advice, that I might proceed with conformity to Hospital Regulations, and in such a manner as to deserve his approbation. He expressed pleasure in affording me every facility, and said that he would give instructions accordingly to all the Hospitals in the South and North Camps, and in the South Barracks, so that I might consider myself fully authorized to minister to all the Wesleyan patients from that time forward.

This gave me an immense advantage. My mornings were thenceforth chiefly occupied in visiting the sick—the very slightest indisposition places the soldier on sick list—making acquaintance with the men, getting their confidence, giving them seasonable advice

and instruction, and finding my way to their hearts. The work was rather heavy, but could be managed by taking it regularly ; it became very pleasant, and I set myself to learn how it could be most easily performed.

Having seen to the sick, I had to look after them that were in prison, for there were always some Wesleyan prisoners. As the Governor of the Military Prison told me, when he first showed me through the place, there were no cases there of disgraceful crime ; that is to say, no such offences as would be taken to a civil court, but breaches, often but slight, of military discipline, or petty misdemeanours. Hearing that one of our men was there, and wishing to see him, I applied to the Governor, who referred me to the Lieutenant-General Commanding, on whom I immediately called, and who directed me to send him a written application. The written answer informed me that the General permitted me to visit that prisoner, but could not give me permission to visit the prison, except when asked for, and then permitted. He afterwards explained to me that he had no authority to give an order on the subject, but he could use his discretion, and give me verbal permission to repeat my visits after being once permitted in the same case, unless he saw reason to withdraw that indulgence. He could not do more ; but we shall hear more in due time.

While endeavouring to discharge my duty towards the sick and the prisoners, and receiving effectual aid from the heads of departments, I was constantly reminded of the need of caution in regard to every particular that might affect discipline, and saw, as I could never see before, how, in military government,

things apparently trifling are often of incalculable consequence. The Camp was new, and not yet fully organized. The General in command, to whom I owe sincere gratitude for the confidence with which he was pleased to honour me, was himself in a new and very responsible position. Some of our most excellent and most zealous people were least informed of the peculiarities of the Service, and persons not well informed, could not be expected to understand everything by aid of common sense alone. One of them was very anxious to send a city missionary to carry on open-air preaching in the Camp. In vain did I tell him that such a thing could not be done; but he would give me no rest unless I would ask the General and let him know the answer. So I asked the General, and the answer was clear enough: 'Tell your friend that he may send whom he pleases. The gentleman may come into the Camp whenever he pleases, without any hinderance. But if he proceeds to preach, he will be taken by the hand, and quietly led out. We will treat him gently, but preach he shall not.' Once, while I was absent at Conference, and a Student from Richmond was supplying my place, with written authority, for the number of days required, and under my responsibility, some person of whom I had little or no knowledge came to spend a Sunday at Aldershot, called at my house, appeared in our Church, walked in among the Hospital huts in the afternoon, went into some of the wards, and gave several tracts to the sick, of such a sort as might be issued, and probably were issued, by the Peace Society. This was reported to the General, who thereupon thought it necessary to prohibit the distribution of tracts. After conversations with him

on the subject, an arrangement followed which rendered such prohibition unnecessary, and tracts approved by myself went under authority.

Thus far our way was clear, and we were happily exempt from any pecuniary difficulty, the cost of the voluntary chaplaincy at Aldershot being defrayed from one of our public funds; while our only care was to see our brethren in the army equally free with others to attend in the congregations of their own Church, and to receive the ministrations of their own pastors. We had no money question, as had the Presbyterians, and at that time perhaps many of our people would have objected to receive money from the State. But in the course of 1858 a movement of the Church of Rome for payment of priests appeared to some of us to make it our duty to assert our claim, not expecting to receive appointments or pay, but in anticipation of any future time when a negotiation with Government might be found necessary, in order to a continuance of our work.

During the discussion in the House of Commons on supplies, Major-General Peel, then Secretary of State for War, announced that the Queen had been advised to appoint Roman Catholic Chaplains in the Army, and to make the usual payment for their services to Roman Catholic priests. Parliament heard of this not as a thing proposed, but as a thing done, and there was no debate. Arrangement was made for first appointments of Chaplains of this denomination, and a significant emphasis was given to the Act by dating the Royal Warrant for the appointments on the Fifth of November, the day formerly set apart for thanksgiving for the deliverance of this Nation from the

Gunpowder Treason and Plot. The speech of General Peel led to conversations in the London Committee for the oversight of affairs, chiefly financial, at Aldershot, and afterwards in Conference ; but there was no motion introduced, and therefore no resolution on the subject.

After the Conference, without consultation with any one, and proceeding solely on my own account, I asked for an interview with the Secretary of State for War, but was refused. I then wrote a letter to General Peel, dated August 24th, 1858, in which I noticed the General Order of 1839, and Regulation following, which gave liberty of religious worship to soldiers of every denomination, described what we had done and were doing for the Wesleyans, intimated in general terms our claim for assistance towards meeting the heavy outlay we were making, and was careful to say: 'This claim could not have been urged a few weeks ago without asking the Government to depart from its accustomed rule in matters of religion ; but now that the claims of other Denominations are explicitly allowed, in proportion to their numbers in the Army, it is very strongly felt that the largest of all religious bodies in England, except the Church of England, cannot in justice be passed over.'

Then, in order to specify some demand, and supply something whereon, if he pleased, he might deliberate, and found a consent or a refusal, I concluded by saying: 'May I therefore bespeak your favourable consideration for an application for the appointment of a Wesleyan Chaplaincy at this Camp, and for any applications for Head-money which may come in the regular form from Wesleyan ministers elsewhere ?'

A letter from the War Office, on September 2nd,

1858, brought me the following singular statement : 'In reply I have to acquaint you that Chaplains to the Forces are only appointed from among the Clergy of the Established Churches of England, Scotland, and Ireland ; and that General Peel is therefore unable to accede to your application.—I am, etc., J. R. GODLEY.' On this refusal, of course, I had nothing to say ; but one word in the letter was so utterly unconstitutional, that I could not in conscience refrain from returning a few words of observation, and therefore wrote by return of Post : 'May I respectfully ask General Peel's attention to the fact that in manifest departure from the principle of appointing as Chaplains to the Forces only ministers of the *two* Established Churches of this Kingdom, numerous appointments have long been made from among the priesthood of a third community, which is not, and cannot be, one of the "Established Churches"?' I further expressed my own feeling on the unconstitutional character which the language employed by the Secretary of State for War gave to the procedure of the Government ; and on the 15th of September received a letter from Mr. Godley so written that it might serve for a retraction of the objectionable style of the one preceding : 'I am directed by Secretary Major-General Peel to point out to you that the recent regulations do not affect the system which has always prevailed of paying for their services to troops only the Clergy of the Church of England, and of the Presbyterian and Roman Catholic Churches,' and (now employing a form of official courtesy which was omitted in the former letter) 'to express to you his regret that it is not in his power to break through the established rules of the Service.'

With this closed for many years, to me and to all authorized Committees, the mention of money in correspondence with military authorities. It was not what we wanted, but the Queen's Warrant of 1858 had given a new relative position to parties, and a new aspect to the subject of appointment and pay. With regard to commissions, I never saw any reason why we should not receive them as well as the Clergy of other Churches ; but on this point I have not yet been called on to enter into any debate, nor should I see any need for a debate, if it were made a question.

CHAPTER V.

Extension of the Work—A stubborn Case in the Northern District
—Petty Vexations in many Directions—Question on Hospital
Visitation, and gratifying Settlement by the Duke of Cambridge
—Question in Conference as to the Designation ‘Wesleyan
Soldier’ well raised and set at Rest.

I HAD already opened correspondence with my clerical brethren in garrison towns, as occasion required; and the Conference of 1858 directed that instructions should be sent to the ministers resident in towns where regiments were quartered, in hope of extending our labours for the spiritual benefit of the Army. It therefore devolved upon me to prepare a Circular Letter which I sent to all the principal military stations, dated 11th October following.

1. The first clause, on *Divine Worship*, contains the General Order of 1839, as it stood in the Queen’s Regulations from year to year.

2. The second, on *Wesleyans*, was as follows: ‘Except when he is on duty, every Soldier is required to be on Church Parade on Sunday mornings, and is marched to the place of worship to which he professes to belong; but this profession is quite voluntary, and he must make it for himself, not any minister for him. By a “Wesleyan Soldier,” then, is not understood a communicant, or one who meets in class, but any one who is of a Wesleyan family, or who has been taught

in a Wesleyan School, or who, for any other sufficient reason, desires to place himself under the spiritual care of Wesleyan ministers, and returns his name accordingly. The number of persons of this class in the British Army is very large, and in some English Regiments probably preponderates over every other.'

3. *Arrival of Regiments.*—'When a Regiment, or part of a Regiment, of which you have no intelligence, comes into a town, it is desirable to ascertain what Wesleyan Officers or soldiers there are in it. As this may not have been previously done, prompt application is the more necessary.' Ample information is given as to the steps proper to be taken for obtaining the desired information; but experience very soon suggested considerable modification of this part of the Circular.

4. *Trustees.*—As the assistance of trustees was necessary for obtaining accommodation in our churches, the ministers were directed to communicate with them in the first instance. But as Presbyterian soldiers were sometimes sent with ours, it was very soon found necessary to take care to avoid confusion.

5. *Laymen.*—Ministers were advised to obtain the assistance of pious, judicious, and zealous laymen, at the same time that the resident or officiating minister would be the only person to communicate officially with the Officer Commanding.

6. *Commanding Officers.*—Considering the necessity of upholding military discipline, the concurrence of Commanding Officers should be solicited on every matter which might even accidentally interfere with the internal arrangements of a Garrison or of a Regiment, or with any law or usage of Her Majesty's

Service. On such points a civilian may often find reason to distrust his own judgment. Difference of opinion may arise between a Commanding Officer and a Minister, and not pass away after private communication; but I should earnestly advise the Minister to abstain as long as possible from making formal complaint to superior military Authorities. Such complaints can seldom be necessary, but are sometimes injurious. Commanding Officers are the proper channel of communication with the Government on matters concerning those under their command.

7. *Hospitals*.—The short paragraph then written soon became unnecessary or unsuitable.

8. *Schools and Bible Classes*.—Under this head I copied the War Office Order then in force for the guidance of Chaplains, and of which I could freely avail myself at Aldershot.

9. *Removals*.—‘When a Regiment is to be removed, you may obtain, on application, an official list of the Wesleyans that are in it. If you transmit this list early, by post, to the Minister resident nearest to their future station, with any information that you think it desirable he should possess, it will greatly assist him in proceeding to take them under his pastoral care. If this be not done, bodies of men may be altogether lost sight of.’

10. *Correspondence*.—‘Whenever you desire information or advice, I shall be careful to answer your letters as promptly as possible, and either give you, or endeavour to obtain for you, all possible assistance. Earnestly praying that the blessing of God may rest on our united endeavours to benefit the British Soldier, and to promote the welfare of the Army, by taking

our due share in preaching to those who serve therein the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.—I am, etc.,

‘W. H. RULE.’

This invitation brought me six more years of sharp work. Much of the correspondence was occasioned by the reluctance of Officers to have their men marched to our services. The Rev. M. C. Osborn, then stationed at York, and Lieutenant-Colonel Knox, Commanding 18th Hussars, in that city, were foremost and almost first among the combatants. Mr. Osborn, calm, firm, steady, favoured me with his communications with the Colonel and the General Commanding the Northern District. The gallant Colonel was no doubt a valiant soldier, having a will of his own, if ever mortal had. He was worth contending with, for his courage and dexterity, and Mr. Osborn, having taken up a strong position, was not to be beaten out of it. Colonel Knox's determination, however, could not hold out successfully in a false one. After some weeks he, failing to see any reason to change his opinion, and coolly ignoring the express decision of his General, Sir Harry Smith, settled the matter by a stroke of his pen, and I had the honour to receive the following from the Assistant Adjutant-General, Colonel Wilbraham: ‘I am directed by the Lieut.-General Commanding the Northern District to inform you that the misunderstanding relative to the attendance of the Soldiers of the 17th Hussars at the Wesleyan services has been set right, and that the Officer Commanding has received distinct instructions to have the Wesleyan Soldiers marched to their own place of worship.’ This was dated March 23rd, 1859.

There were several cases of the same kind, but scarcely any so stubbornly contested; and all, when brought for decision to superior military authority, were fairly settled. Petty vexations, instigated or directly carried on by clerical opponents, were innumerable, and from time to time had to be dealt with, or our efforts would have been thwarted utterly. I cannot allow myself to annoy the readers of these pages by dwelling on them. They are passed away. The troublers were long ago forgiven. The weariness of spirit consequent on incessant contest is now succeeded by gladness and thanksgiving. I shall therefore forget all that a faithful narrative of the introduction of Wesleyan Methodism into the British Army does not absolutely require to be told.

Much ground yet had to be cleared, and before the assemblage of the Conference of 1859 I had to report some gratifying occurrences to my temporary committee; especially in regard to the visitation of the sick, and the burial of the dead.

The Senior Chaplain in Camp, with whom I had been in friendly correspondence,—and we always continued to work together cordially, as I believe, for the welfare of the troops where there was no ecclesiastical barrier in our way,—was induced to apply to the General in Command to prevent me from visiting the Hospitals as did the commissioned Chaplains, and as I had been instructed by the Surgeon-General. As General Knollys paid no attention to his application, he could not report success to the chief of his own department, through whom, therefore, he appealed to the Secretary of State for War, who in due course passed over his appeal to the Commander-in-Chief, who, feeling him-

self bound to proceed according to regulation, if there were any regulation to the point, directed search to be made for any document that might serve to guide him. Such a document was found—an order of a predecessor in chief command, the Duke of Wellington, which allowed to a sick soldier the access of a ‘Dissenting Minister’ whom he might wish to see. In its day, that reluctant indulgence of the Iron Duke was considered very gracious, and I remember how thankfully some of our elders welcomed it. Neither His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge nor his advisers at the Horse Guards were of that opinion on the 18th of May 1859, as I afterwards came to understand. On the day following I received a note from the Assistant Adjutant-General at Aldershot, requesting me to call at his office; and there I found that our General had received a letter from the Duke, which he desired him to read to me, rather than communicate in writing, that it might not be put on record to our future disadvantage. Colonel Wood read the letter, which I heard in silence, and waited until my good friend broke the stillness. ‘I am dumb,’ said he; ‘I can say nothing. The Commander-in-Chief commands.’ To which, thanking him for the manner in which he communicated the unwelcome order, I could only reply that I would implicitly obey; and as it was impossible to ask the General to relax or change the order of the Commander-in-Chief, I must consider how it would be possible for me to get access to the Government. There was no one with whom I could confidently advise, nor any one to whom I could apply so fitly as to the Duke himself; so I took my pen at once and addressed him the following letter:—

‘SIR,—I have had the honour to receive the decision of your Royal Highness on a question which has been unexpectedly raised as to my visiting the Wesleyan Soldiers when in Hospital. To that adverse decision I render instant submission, for the single reason which must guide every one who desires to benefit the Soldier. As, however, the expulsion of myself from this Hospital is, virtually, the expulsion of all my brother ministers who stand in a similar relation to military men, and, although certainly not so intended, is a denial to many thousands of Wesleyan soldiers of a right which we had believed to be guaranteed to them, it now becomes my duty most respectfully to offer to your Royal Highness such a statement of the claims of the Wesleyan Methodists in the Army as may possibly lead to a reconsideration of the subject.

‘I feel confident that there cannot be the least intention to countenance intolerance, and should fail from the discharge of my own duty towards your Royal Highness, and to those whose principles I have now to represent, if I were to take any public step in order to the redress of what would be generally regarded as a wrong inflicted on one of the most numerous classes of Her Majesty’s subjects, without having first solicited some measure to obviate a very wide-spread dissatisfaction. Therefore, silently leaving several members of my flock on their beds in Hospital, and also refraining from all other correspondence on the subject, I venture to ask your Royal Highness to do me the honour of allowing me an interview at such a time as you may be pleased to appoint.

‘As this request is not made in the view of Aldershot alone, but in behalf of the millions who are

distinguished by the common name of Methodist, I await further commands with great anxiety, and beg to remain your Royal Highness' most obedient and most humble servant,

W. H. RULE, D.D.

'His Royal Highness Commanding in Chief.'

To this came a reply from the Deputy Adjutant-General, dated 'Horse Guards, S.W., 24th May, 1859.'

'SIR,—I am desired by the General Commanding in Chief to acknowledge the receipt of the letter which you addressed to His Royal Highness on the 19th instant, and to intimate to you in reply, that, on placing yourself in communication with Lieut.-General Knollys, you will find that an arrangement has been made on the subject to which your letter relates, which, it is hoped, will be perfectly satisfactory to all parties concerned.—I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient humble servant, W. F. FORSTER, D.A.-G.

'Rev. W. H. Rule, D.D.'

On receiving this reply, I immediately waited on General Knollys, who desired me to visit the Hospitals as usual, and was pleased to repeat the expressions of approval which he had often given me before, as to the manner in which that duty had been discharged. Only two days later, the following letter from the Duke's secretary unexpectedly completed His Royal Highness' answer to mine of the 19th:—

'HORSE GUARDS, 26th May, 1859.

'SIR,—With reference to the letter which you addressed to the General Commanding in Chief on

the 19th instant, respecting the question which had been raised respecting your visiting Wesleyan Soldiers when in Hospital, I am directed by His Royal Highness to inform you that the question as to the admission of Ministers other than those of the Church of England, Presbyterians, and Roman Catholics generally to Military Hospitals, has been reconsidered, and that His Royal Highness, being desirous of upholding the spirit of Christian charity and toleration which marks the Regulations of the Army, has requested General Officers, and other Officers in command at the military stations, to exercise their discretion as to the admission of Dissenting Ministers to the Military Hospitals under such Regulations as may be deemed proper—on the understanding, of course, that they are not constituted or recognised as Chaplains, and that any breach of Hospital or other regulations will involve the withdrawal of this privilege.

‘As there can be no doubt that, under the sanction of this authority, Lieut.-General Knollys will afford you all the facilities you may require for visiting the Wesleyan Soldiers in the General Hospital at Aldershot, and as His Royal Highness feels persuaded that all Officers in command will carry out the amended instruction referred to in the spirit in which it is given, the question may be considered settled, and you will perhaps, therefore, not think it necessary to come up to London for the purpose of an interview with His Royal Highness.—I have the honour to be,
Sir, your obedient servant, C. YORKE.

‘*Rev. W. H. Rule, D.D.*’

I was careful to acknowledge both these letters, and

first for myself, and then on behalf of my clerical brethren, to return thanks for this removal of an ancient restriction, and to profess an assurance that we should all cheerfully abide by the condition as to Hospital Regulations, a limitation which was undoubtedly just and necessary.

With regard to the reservation in the last letter as to Chaplaincies, it should be noted that we were not then asking for such appointments. I had indeed once made a request of the kind to Secretary General Peel, but it was rejected and not renewed; neither were we at that time prepared to make good such a claim. It must also be understood that on that subject there have been two opinions. Some, who sympathized politically with Dissenters, thought such appointments objectionable. Others feared that the subjection of a Chaplain to martial control would be fatal to freedom of spiritual ministration. But whatever Dissenters may think, in their way, we have our way, as they have theirs. And as to independence of conscience and freedom of ministrations, observation and experience during many years in regard to the Army have convinced us that there is not the shadow of a reason for any fear.

Everything went on satisfactorily at Aldershot during the remainder of our ecclesiastical year. There was, indeed, a slight misunderstanding at Aberdeen, but it arose from the novelty of our position, which caused the General Commanding the Forces in Scotland some embarrassment. When in Conference at Manchester, the Rev. John Drake, of Aberdeen, put his correspondence with Colonel Gordon, Commanding in Aberdeen, into my hands, and I wrote some neces-

sary explanation to Major-General Viscount Melville, from whom I had the honour to receive a satisfactory reply.

At this same Conference I was able to make a gratifying Report, but a sharp debate arose on the designation 'Wesleyan Soldier.' Some of the most excellent members of the Conference revolted from the sound, as with sacred horror. They were accustomed to confine the venerable name to consistent members of the Wesleyan Societies, devout attendants in the Class-meetings, and thereby accredited as worthy to partake of Holy Communion at the Lord's Table, the Communicants being distinct from the mere members of Congregation. Words were not wanting wherewith to condemn the application of this name to the red-coated drunkards, whose very presence in our towns was pestilential; and, considering the point of view taken by our brethren, their abhorrence of this apprehended desecration met with sincerely respectful appreciation.

But the answer to this righteous indignation was ready. It was replied that every Soldier and Officer in the British Army is required to attend Divine Service once every Sunday, unless inevitable military service prevents. That it may be known whither he ought to go, and to whose spiritual care he should be committed, he must declare on enlistment to what Religion he professes to belong. Many of the recruits who are constantly pouring in from all parts of the country, and will fill up the ranks made vacant by discharge when the term of service is ended, or by payment of purchase-money, or by desertion, or by death, are the sons of Methodists; some of them out

of work and lacking bread, and some of them becoming soldiers by free choice, not considering the service of their country to be dishonourable, and knowing that it will be moderately remunerative. Some, perhaps many, on the verge of confirmed vagrancy, enlisted under false names ; and if they are now alive, none but themselves can tell. But many that became in their youth wretched vagrants we had taken in our arms at the baptismal font, received into the congregation of Christ's flock, offered up for them our prayers, and gave them our benediction, not under the reservation that they would be abandoned by us to destruction if they turned out ill. Most, or all of us had at some time preached about the Prodigal Son, and perhaps had waxed eloquent about the father's love and the rejoicing of the Angels in the presence of God over sinners penitent.

Now the country provides for the thousands of our own children that each of them shall have a Bible of his own, and be made to attend at the stated worship of Almighty God. But what name of religion shall our children take ? Shall it be Church of England ? Surely not. That would be palpably untrue, and few of us would think of it. Shall it be Roman Catholic ? May God forbid ! Or shall it be Presbyterian ? This again would be untrue. Whatever some people who are not quick to distinguish differences may think, our clergy are not Presbyterian, our discipline is not Presbyterian, and our doctrine is not just that of the Church of Scotland. Moreover, if good brethren imagine that soldiers are to be all treated as drunkards, with what grace could this Conference approach the General Assembly, and ask them to

adopt our red-coated outcasts? But, in the name of decency and truth, we deny the allegation; and the truth is that whatever our children may be, they are ours. The law of the Army, which is the law of the land, requires that, whether they be good or bad, they should be distinguished by a name, and we cannot refuse them our own. By birth and education they belong to the Wesleyan Church, and as the case now stands, there is no choice. Excellent and zealous Methodists cannot withhold from them their proper name. In the Army they are declared Wesleyans, and we ask them to help us to provide such ministrations and such oversight that they may be put into the way of becoming worthy of the name we agree to cherish.

Yielding to the force of reason, of Christian Charity, and of fatherly affection, the dissentient brethren had no more to say, and I believe that now the matter is better understood.

I remember an illustrative incident in one of our earlier days at Aldershot. A private soldier called on me, complaining that his sergeant would not apply to the Captain of the Company to change the name of his religion, he being really a Wesleyan. I went to the Orderly-room, saw the Colonel, and reported the complaint. 'It cannot be, sir,' was the reply. 'That man is a scamp, and cannot possibly be a Wesleyan.' 'Very likely, sir,' was my rejoinder; 'very likely he is a scamp, but very probably his father at home is a good man. There are hundreds of Wesleyan scamps, just as bad, but I am here to find them out, and to do what I can to reclaim them.' 'You are right, Dr. Rule. Call the man up, Sergeant-Major.' No sooner

said than done. Here is the man. 'Are you a Wesleyan?' 'Yes, sir.' 'Do you wish to go to the Wesleyan Church?' 'Yes, sir.' 'Put him down Wesleyan.' I take this to be a typical case, and it was easily settled, and is not likely to be raised again.

CHAPTER VI.

Appointment by Conference of an Assistant Chaplain at Aldershot, which provokes great Jealousy—Our Way becomes embarrassed—Chaplain General uses restrictive Influence at the War Office—Discouragements multiply throughout the Army.

THE Conference of 1859 acceded to my earnest request for the appointment of an Assistant, to overtake the rapidly accumulating duties in the Camp without relaxing my other care of oversight and correspondence at home and abroad. The Rev. Charles Henry Kelly, who was entering on the third year of his probation, having spent the second as the President's Assistant, was recommended to me for this service, having given ample proof of fitness. He had already shown unwearied diligence in the performance of every duty. The manner in which he won the respect and confidence of all with whom he had any communication, the adaptation of his preaching to military congregations, and the consequent advancement of our influence in the Camp, aroused to a higher pitch the jealousy which had already been manifested in some quarters.

Having given the General timely information of his appointment, on Mr. Kelly's arrival I sent a written application for the needful sanction, without which he would not have been at liberty to enter on his work. But written authority could not be given to any person whatever who came to act in Camp without a written

authority having been sent from the Horse Guards; and all that our General could do was, using his discretion in our favour, to give me a verbal permission for Mr. Kelly to proceed jointly with myself, and under my responsibility. In this way he might act in Camp and visit the Hospitals. But for the direct sanction of Lord Panmure at the beginning, I should have been in the same predicament, and actually was so at the earliest opportunity my clerical antagonists could find, when the Senior Chaplain was induced to appeal against my visiting the Hospitals, until the General Commanding in Chief, in a regular way, and by a formal act, restored me.

Most watchful caution was now necessary on all sides. A conflict began in earnest which gave rise to much correspondence; and while the order of dates determines the course of my narrative, I shall be as sparing of details as possible, and touch only on the most salient points of interest as they arise.

Facilities were granted me less freely. When, for example, our Church required painting, and I applied for the use of a School-room on four Thursday evenings, I received the following memorandum from the Assistant Quartermaster-General, dated September 3rd, 1859: 'I am directed by the Lieut.-General Commanding to inform you that under the very special circumstances represented by you, he is willing for once to go beyond the authority he holds, and to allow you the use of D School-room, South Camp, for the Four (4) Thursday Evenings in this month, for the assemblage of the class of Wesleyan Soldiers on those evenings. The Lieut.-General, however, notifies

that this especial permission must not be construed into a precedent.'

I had found it necessary to apply to the Secretary of State for War for the use of a Chapel School in the North Camp for Divine Service on Sundays in June, when the Camp was very full. On the Sunday morning 860 men were in our Church outside the South Camp in two successive services; but in the North were hundreds more, compelled, on account of distance, to attend the ministrations of Strangers. I received a negative reply, written with apparently studied carelessness by a clerk in the Chaplain-General's Room, near three months later. The lack of official courtesy, however, was peculiar to the writer or dictater of the answer; and a second reply, dictated by Mr. Secretary Herbert, lately come to office, was written in a superior style, and a friendly intimation from another party enabled me to understand that it was not the Chaplain-General with whom I should be expected to correspond, but exclusively with military, not clerical, authority. Mr. Secretary Herbert soon proved himself our friend; but the Chaplain-General, styling himself 'Head of all the Religions in the Army,' would assert his claim to be the official adviser. When Mr. Gleig could quote an unrepealed Regulation or Order against us, the validity of his adverse document could not be disputed. We had hitherto met on terms of friendliness, and had not yet openly ceased from doing so; but henceforth I kept clear from any official correspondence with him.

In the Army elsewhere, at home and abroad, although our efforts were not relaxed, the prospect became overcast. Our Recruits and Soldiers were dis-

couraged from declaring themselves, or, if declaring, from continuing to declare themselves Wesleyans, or persevering in falling out on parade as such. I received frequent complaints, and had to report each complaint to the proper authority, where I was generally supported; but the hostile influence was felt by the men, who were often tried beyond their power to resist, and our doubtful position became increasingly unpleasant. At the same time we could not reasonably desire or expect the Secretary of State and the Commander-in-Chief to relax the existing law of the Service and lower the standard of discipline to suit our case. Neither ought we to ask or accept as a favour that which we considered due to us as a right. Therefore, as it had been left with me to initiate this movement, and, so far, to conduct all official correspondence, and as the lay and clerical members of the so-called Army Committee, being all civilians, knew nothing of Army matters, there was as yet no one with whom I could take counsel in any emergency, and within the Army it was with me a point of honour and propriety to have no conversation respecting difficulties with persons of any rank, except with the Authorities concerned; and our leading Wesleyan friends had to learn how to proceed, as, in course of events, affairs were brought to their knowledge, and the official treatment of those affairs gradually met their observation.

On the 24th of November, 1859, I laid before that Committee a full statement of the disabilities consequent on our false position, which they 'adopted,' and after long conversation the following Resolutions were placed on record:—

1. 'That no immediate steps be taken by this

Committee on this subject, and that a seasonable opportunity be sought to bring the question involved, and any procedure thereon, before a united meeting of the Committee for guarding our Privileges and the Army Committee, with a view to a Report to the next Conference.

2. 'That instructions be sent to all Garrison Towns, cautioning our Ministers and Trustees not to complicate the claim of the Connexion for the recognition of its services to Wesleyan Soldiers, and the payment of Head-money, by seeking for or receiving payments from any one connected with the Army as seat-rent.

‘CHARLES PREST, *Secretary.*’

But this was, in reality, the Committee of the Home Missions and Contingent Fund, with the addition of myself only for that occasion. That body derived its right to discuss our affairs from the fact that, regarding the Army work as a *contingency*—as indeed it was—it liberally and most opportunely charged itself with all the cost of current expenditure at Aldershot. It met now as an Army Committee; and for managing the temporalities of our estate at Aldershot, the original Committee of London Ministers and Gentlemen continued to act until March, 1861. The Rev. Charles Prest, Secretary of the Home Mission Committee, as of course, signed these Resolutions.

It was well that this Committee did not feel itself able to act on the subject which I brought before them; for a Home Mission directs its efforts to neglected portions of the population at home, and is in its nature proselyting. Its ostensible interference, therefore, if noticed at the War Office would have been

resisted, and at the Horse Guards might have provoked a veto on all our operations.

It was well for me that this Committee resolved to take no immediate steps on the subject of our disabilities in the Army, but were resigned to wait for some seasonable opportunity. Vexations were multiplying at home and abroad ; I had to attend to all of them, and, without losing a moment, as it suddenly occurred, represent each in the proper quarter, and not leave the demands of faithfulness to the cause of Religious Liberty to the tardy and often fruitless deliberations of a Committee, or wait for the whole matter to be quashed by civilian debaters in a Conference. Meanwhile events multiplied, these events led to special action, and in the Order of Providence the remedy was in due time to be wrought out in a way not anticipated by ourselves, and effected by the direct action of military authorities.

Recitals of persecution might be crowded into this Chapter, but I refrain from wearying the reader with details of the kind, beyond what will become necessary when relating the steps taken to obtain protection from the Government when the persecution became insufferable, and from that point my narrative will draw towards its close.

CHAPTER VII.

Ground allotted for Burials at Aldershot—Grant of Site for a Church at the Curragh—A Court of Inquiry into Complaints at Aldershot by Order of the Commander-in-Chief—Direction in Consequence of same given by His Royal Highness.

THE year 1860 opens with a significant event. We find ourselves provided with ground for the burial of our dead. Some time in the Autumn of 1859, the Colonel of a Cavalry regiment sent me the usual Form reporting the death of a Soldier of ours whom I had visited in Hospital, requiring me to appoint thereon the time for burial, with my signature. I appointed accordingly, and held myself ready to officiate at the funeral next day. In the interval, a junior Chaplain of the Church of England ran to my house in great haste, to entreat me not to attempt any such interference with duties which I had no right to perform. Not finding me at home, he hurried away with one of his brethren to the Assistant Adjutant-General, making loud protestations against the conduct of the Colonel, and begging to be protected against my dreaded innovation on their rights. Colonel Wood declined to communicate with those juniors, and desired the Senior Chaplain to call on him if he had anything to say. At the same time he sent for me, to ascertain what I also might have to say, and suggested that I should determine for myself what course I ought to take, but

advised that we who differed should consult together, and arrive at our own conclusion. I maintained my right to bury my own dead, but freely conceded that Ministers of the Church of England had right to object to Ministers of other Churches intruding on ground consecrated for their peculiar use; and after amicable consultation it was agreed that I should read the Burial Service in one of the Camp Churches, lead the Funeral procession to the Cemetery of the Church of England, and there bury it without any further ceremony. This could only be a temporary arrangement, but the General Commanding expressed his intention to vindicate our undoubted right in the most effectual way, by voluntarily recommending the Government to have ground enclosed contiguous to the general Burial-ground, open to it, without any mark of separation, and prepared for our occupation at public cost. General Knollys lost not a moment in applying to the Secretary of State for War, who instantly gave the necessary orders. The allotment was made; the hedge in extension of the common enclosure thrown round it; a road laid across, having its own gate for entrance, and trees planted. When all this was finished, the Chaplain who would have shut me out of the Hospitals, and then tried to exclude me from the Cemetery, was instructed to send an Orderly to see to the digging of the grave, and to assist the Wesleyan Minister, on every occasion of a funeral. Of course this service would be distasteful to my old friend and antagonist,¹ and was afterwards most imperfectly performed.

¹ Although antagonists, we could be friends. We differed on public grounds, but each of us understood that it was his duty to hold his

A Divisional Order was issued, directing Commanding Officers to communicate to myself information of the deaths of Wesleyans which might occur in their Regiments. But I had to complain that on proceeding to conduct the funerals I always found some serious cause of confusion and disorder, such as a grave dug in wrong ground, or no grave at all, or a grave well dug, but gate locked, key wanting; and once the funeral was locked out in drenching rain, until I could have the gate burst open. Peremptory orders were then given to the refractory Chaplain which compelled good order for a time.

The good-will of Her Majesty's Government continued, and our way was open to Mr. Sidney Herbert, who, as Secretary of State for War, was one of the best friends that the British Army ever had.

The last Conference had appointed two Ministers for the Wesleyans in the Curragh Camp, Ireland, and their operations were favourably regarded; but there were some material difficulties to be overcome, especially when endeavouring to build a Church for the troops.

A letter from the Superintendent of Irish Schools, dated from Dublin, Feb. 16th, 1860, covered correspondence of the Rev. Messrs. Matthews and Patterson with Lord Seaton, Commanding the Forces in Ireland, praying for a site for the purpose, but without success; leaving me to understand that assistance would be welcome. Having ascertained that application should be more properly made to the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, I found my way own. Not Mr. Sabin, but his successor, gave the trouble here complained of.

to the Chief Commissioner, verbally explained their situation, and showed him their need of a site for a Church and Chaplain's House. Being satisfied from the correspondence, and seeing that the case was fully known to the Military Authorities, including the Secretary of State himself, he immediately said they should have the free gift of 'an acre of land on the Common, and that he would himself see that they were put in possession. I next heard from themselves, that another acre would meet all their necessity. I paid another visit to Whitehall, and without any hesitation the Royal bounty added another acre to the gift.

But the favour shown us by the Government, while it aggravated the traditional opposition of the other Clerical party, encouraged my brethren to move at once without waiting for any more seasonable opportunity. I was therefore requested to draft a Memorial for presentation to the Secretary of State for War, with whom the Rev. S. D. Waddy, D.D., President of Conference, the Rev. Charles Prest, the Rev. W. Arthur, M.A., and I had the honour of an interview on the 21st of February 1860. As it contains the first official statement of our case seriously entertained by the highest Military Authorities, it shall be transcribed in full.

'To the Right Honourable Sidney Herbert, Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for War, the Memorial of the Committee appointed by the Wesleyan Methodist Conference for counsel and direction on affairs relating to Wesleyans in the Army.

'Sheweth that the recognition, by Her Majesty's

Government, of members of the Church of England, of Presbyterians, and of Roman Catholics in the British Army, professedly to the exclusion of all others, but practically to the exclusion of Wesleyans alone, presses heavily on large numbers of Wesleyans throughout the Service.

‘That while members of the three recognised communions are provided with the means of public worship and religious instruction, and while both ministers and members of the principal Dissenting denominations avail themselves of the provisions ostensibly made for the Church of Scotland, by accepting the designation of Presbyterian, the Wesleyans alone, who cannot be thus designated, are not only excluded from all such provision, but, when religious ministrations are procured for them by the help of voluntary contributions, are unjustly and untruly counted under one or other of the three names aforesaid. Nor is this all; for not only is their name suppressed, but they are often made to suffer the injury of an intolerance which Her Most Gracious Majesty’s Regulations do not justify, and which Decisions of the highest authority have discountenanced.

‘Your Memorialists also beg to represent that so long as there is no official return of Wesleyans in the Army, it will be impossible for them to enjoy perfect freedom of worship, or to be fully protected from intolerance; and they regret to be compelled to say that in many Regiments the denial of recognition gives occasion to the exercise of undue influences which counteract the intention of Her Majesty, that every Soldier shall be free to worship Almighty God according to the forms prescribed by his own religion.

‘Your Memorialists therefore earnestly and respectfully pray you to take such measures as shall enable Wesleyans serving in the Army to be at once returned under their proper religious designation, and effectually protected against the oppressive consequences of the system hitherto prevailing.

‘S. D. WADDY,

‘*President of Conference.*

‘CHARLES PREST,

‘*Secretary of Army Committee.*’

Instead of urging this prayer verbally, I preferred for myself to prepare and read some explanatory notes which Mr. Herbert requested me to leave with him for reference.¹ He also desired me to inform him of the next case of persecution which occurred, that he might call on the Commander-in-Chief to make it the subject of inquiry.

Just two days afterwards it was reported to me that two men of the second battalion of the 21st Regiment were put under arrest for attending a Wesleyan Service, and that others in the same battalion were prevented from attending. I reported this affair as I heard of it, and sent a copy of my letter to the Secretary of State to General Knollys. Mr. Herbert, in fulfilment of his promise, sent my communication to the Duke of Cambridge, and His Royal Highness sent down an order that a Court of Inquiry should be held thereon; and a similar Court on each case I might desire to produce. Some of my friends thought I had gone too far, and that the step I had taken would greatly irritate; but I had only gone the length

¹ See the Appendix.

prescribed by the Chief Authority after the Queen over the Army, and without any hesitation, having taken advice as to the cases to be investigated, I made four applications separately, for cases in 2 Bn. 21st Regiment, 2 Bn. 24th, 18th Hussars, and 5th Dragoon Guards. The Lieut.-General Commanding the Division appointed the Court, and instructed me how to act as Prosecutor in each Inquiry, according to the order established in such Courts. The Courts would be held successively for all the Inquiries under the Presidency of Major-General A. J. Lawrence, C.B., with Lieut.-Colonel Edward Moore, 1 Bn. 11th Regt., and Lieut.-Colonel R. P. Radcliffe, Royal Artillery. The sittings occupied Wednesday, 14th of March, 1860, and three days following, when it was adjourned until Monday the 19th, that the members might meet by themselves and prepare the Report. On the four days of inquiry the Rev. J. E. Sabin, the Senior Chaplain already referred to with reference to Hospital visitation and burials, was present, General Knollys having desired him to watch the proceedings.

From my own questions and those of the Court, and from my notes of the evidence, the following account of the proceedings is compiled.

1. Two Lance-Corporals of 2 Bn. 21st Regiment had told Mr. Kelly and myself that they had been put under arrest. It was proved that one was under arrest for a few hours, by the sole act of the Sergeant-Major, who released him without bringing him before the Commanding Officer. This Sergeant-Major was a Romanist, and made himself very busy with our men. He threatened another, but did no more. These two Corporals denied in Court all that they had said to us.

But Lance-Sergeant Atkinson gave clear witness confirmatory of the facts now proved, and was without delay made full Sergeant in reward of his honesty. I had great pleasure in expressing my assurance that Major Boldero, Commanding the Battalion, and the Adjutant, had not done anything approaching to persecution. The conduct of the Sergeant-Major is but an example of the inferior kind of agency that can be employed in petty troubling.

2. *2 Bn. 24th Regiment*.—Some Bandsmen had been taken from our Services, and sent to those of the Church of England. In proof, I produced correspondence which had passed between Major Bazalgette, Commanding, and myself, and delivered it to the Court. It then remained to ascertain at whose request, or by whose instigation, this had been done. I called on the Senior Chaplain, but he knew nothing. Another Chaplain, after much difficulty, confessed having made a visit to the Band-room. Mr. Sabin objected to any Chaplain being mixed up by questionings with such matters, but his objection was overruled by the Court. The instigation was certainly traced to this junior Chaplain, and such instigation was proved by very clear statements of the Rev. Francis Cannon, Presbyterian Chaplain, to have been habitual. The correspondence was read, with the evidence, and accepted by the Court.

3. *18th Hussars*, Lieut.-Colonel Knox Commanding. Colonel Knox, when at York, had refused to allow thirty-eight Wesleyans to be marched to their own place of worship. According to an old custom, the Recruits on enlistment had been merely asked whether they were Roman Catholic or Protestant. If the latter,

they were put down for the Church of England, and paraded and marched accordingly on Sundays. It was evident that he had no knowledge of the view taken of the whole subject at the War Office and Horse Guards, nor of the more liberal practice already observed in the Army; and he stated in this Court that his manner of dealing with his Regiment, on the subject of Religion, was to require men wishing to belong to another Religion to be examined by their (Church of England) Chaplain as to whether 'they understood the principles of that sect.' It did not appear that any men had submitted themselves to such examination, or hazarded the consequences of their Colonel's displeasure by pressing their claim for liberty of worship. One person, however, the Schoolmaster of the Regiment, always a known Wesleyan, was required to march the children to the Church of England Service, and, because he was a Wesleyan, was compelled to stand outside until the Service was concluded, and then march back to Barracks again, his own congregation having by this time finished their devotions, or nearly finished.

The vexatious treatment of Mr. Schoolmaster M'Mahon never ceased while the Regiment remained in York, and became a relentless persecution. When the 18th Hussars came to Aldershot the same treatment was continued. Here the Schoolmaster was subjected to frivolous charges, and was eventually kept under arrest for some weeks, until he succeeded in obtaining a transfer to the Royal Artillery. My object in calling for this Inquiry was that the conduct of the Colonel towards the Wesleyans under his command might be brought to view. The examination was

close and lengthened; the evidence was clear, and Lieut.-Colonel Knox acknowledged his mistake. He bore himself throughout the Inquiry as an officer and a gentleman while under a severe testing, and at the close of the Court, and whenever we met afterwards, we were as belligerents who can shake hands after a fair fight is over.

4. *5th Dragoon Guards and Major-General Lawrenson, Commanding the Cavalry Brigade.*—When this Regiment marched from Manchester to Aldershot in June, 1859, I received, in advance, a nominal list of 137 Wesleyans. To these men I paid the attention usual, and in this, as in every other duty, was effectively assisted by Mr. Kelly. The number steadily increased until nearly the whole Regiment received our ministrations. But the interference of General Lawrenson led to a considerable reduction of our number; it appeared that he had used an undue influence, and such influence I felt it my duty to resist. I therefore determined to submit this case to Inquiry. Having so determined, I consulted the Commanding Officer of the Regiment as to who should be summoned as witnesses. He advised me to call upon himself and the Adjutant. Nothing can tell the whole tale so well as the evidence of Major Calthorpe himself, of which I copy a part *verbatim* from my notes, as he delivered it in Court. I was never a stenographer, but I believe it to be substantially correct.

The Honourable Somerset J. G. Calthorpe, Major, of the 5th Dragoon Guards, states that he came to the Regiment on the evening of December 31st, 1859; and that his first duty as Commanding Officer was to order the Church Parade, at which he was present on Sunday

morning, January 1st. On that day there were 268 Wesleyans and only 14 Episcopalians. On the Monday or Tuesday General Lawrenson sent to ask how there were so many Wesleyans, and also inquired personally of Major Calthorpe. Major Calthorpe answered that he had heard that it was because Dr. Rule had been so much among them, and showed them so great attention. General Lawrenson could not think that this influence extended to the Officers, and he thought it bad example to the men that so many Officers should go; but that if any went to the Wesleyan Church from conscientious motives, 'let them go.' If not, he hoped the Officers would attend the Episcopalian Service. On Major Calthorpe asking the Sergeant-Major of the Regiment, at the time, how it came to pass that there was so little crime in the Regiment, he answered, 'It is because of Dr. Rule.' Major Calthorpe was informed that the number of Wesleyan attendants had been gradually increasing since the Regiment came into the Cavalry Barracks.

On Wednesday, January 4th, there was a Memorandum in Brigade Orders that the Major-General would wish to meet the Officers in the Mess-room next day, as he desired to speak to them. They assembled accordingly, and he said to them that he was surprised to find how few men went to the Episcopalian Service, and attributed the numbers who went to the Wesleyan Church to the example of the Officers themselves. He could hardly believe that gentlemen brought up in the Episcopalian faith could all of a sudden become Wesleyans as a matter of conviction, and therefore could only attribute it to the fact that the Episcopalian Service was held at a greater distance

off than the Wesleyan. If such were the case, he thought it was a very unworthy motive, and discreditable to the Officers. But he especially stated that if, on the other hand, any Officer was actuated by conscientious motives, he—General Lawrenson—was the last person in the world to wish to influence their religious opinion.

‘In reply to this address, Dr. Fyffe said that the General was mistaken, and, in regard to the soldiers, spoke of the large number of them who attended in the Wesleyan Church at the voluntary services.’

After this the General spoke with Major Calthorpe alone, and wished him to ascertain the feeling of the Regiment. The Major proposed to address the Regiment as the General had addressed the Officers. It was also proposed that there should be a service in one of the Riding Schools of the Cavalry Barracks. The General desired Major Calthorpe to be cautious as to what he said, so as to use no undue influence over the men.

After addressing the whole Regiment, the Major wrote what he had said, and so delivered the paper to the Court. It was an echo of what the General had said to the Officers.

But Major Calthorpe stated to the Court that since he made that address his opinion had considerably changed. He now thought that Dr. Rule had more influence over the men than he had been aware of; for, although the service was performed in the Riding School of the Regiment, a large number of the men still continued their attendance at the Wesleyan Service. On the 11th instant there were 178 Wesleyans and 167 Episcopalians, although now the distance to the

Episcopalian Service is less than half that to the Wesleyan. At this point his statements became so comparative and so personal that I refrained from taking notes of them.

The Chaplains were questioned as to what part they might have taken in altering the place of Sunday morning Service, and it was found that Mr. Sabin had suggested or agreed to the change in conversation with General Lawrenson.

The Adjutant was questioned as to the cause of the large increase of the Wesleyans in the 5th Dragoon Guards; but he had no information that could enable him to account for it. The men, he said, had not told him that they were invited. The answer, however, to one question threw sufficient light on the subject, as appears from the notes following:—

Court.—‘Are your non-commissioned Officers and Soldiers allowed to attend Service at any place different from that to which they belong?’

Adjutant.—‘The whole Regiment is paraded, and then the Denominations are called out, and men may fall out as they please.’

Court.—‘If a soldier of the 5th Dragoon Guards changes his religious persuasion, is it necessary for him to make a declaration to his Commanding Officer.’

Adjutant.—‘No such declaration is required. He is allowed to join on parade.’

This, undoubtedly, was an irregularity, and as such it was regarded by the Duke of Cambridge when it came to his knowledge.

I then delivered a written statement, showing a transfer of 135 non-commissioned Officers and men in the 5th Dragoon Guards to me from Manchester, and

I stated how all the Regiment, after their arrival, was marched to the Church of England Service when they were encamped on Cove Common. The Court heard the statement read, and desired me to sign it; this being done, the proceedings closed.

The Record of Proceedings and the Report of this Court of Inquiry were in due order sent up to the General Commanding in Chief; and on March 26th the following brief Sentence on the whole subject came in a letter from the War Office: 'The Secretary of State for War and the General Commanding in Chief do not see that Dr. Rule has any good reason for complaint.' Certainly, if I were questioned with reference to the superior military Authorities, and military men in general, I should say that I had much reason for satisfaction; my complaint would rest on other grounds. To the Commanding Officer of the 5th Dragoon Guards, however, the Duke of Cambridge sent an excellent Order, which I saw, but did not copy. 'It was said that as some irregularity (that described by Mr. Adjutant Hayes) had occurred in the Regiment, a non-commissioned Officer should be sent through each troop to take note of the Religion which every man might then choose to consider his own, and that, thenceforth, the men were to be marched to the Services they had chosen. But if, at any time, any man wished to change his Religion, he should mention his wish to the Captain of his Troop, who should immediately see him to the Orderly-room, and let him see the change recorded. Nothing could be wiser or better than this Order.

In consequence of this Order, as was to be expected, when men were not merely left to their choice at a

moment to march to this or that place of worship, but called up to choose deliberately to what denomination of Christians they would attach themselves, our number from that Regiment was diminished, yet still it remained considerable. After a short time the regiment was removed to Brighton, and there exposed to much greater demoralizing influence; but after finishing their time of service in that town, when they returned to Aldershot, and I had occasion to call at the Horse Guards and apply to the Adjutant-General of the Forces on their account, he, Sir James Yorke Scarlett, showed me, from the Return of the Regiment last received, that it contained 175 Wesleyans.

CHAPTER VIII.

Aggravated Enmity in consequence of the Inquiries at Aldershot—
Attempt to shut Mr. Kelly out of Camp frustrated in Reply to
Appeal presented by General Knollys to the Secretary of State and
the Commander-in-Chief—Departure of the General at the Close
of his Command—Appeal and Deputation to Secretary Sir George
Cornwall Lewis—Military Congregation at Chatham dispersed by
General Eyre.

OUR complaint, when we approached the Secretary of State for War, was not laid against persons. We were aggrieved by a system once absolutely exclusive in regard to religion, and then less rigorous, indeed, but within the Army the once dominant Church seemed as intolerant as ever. Not so all its ministers. The old intolerance was concentrated in the person of its principal representative, but up to the time of this Inquest had not been openly avowed. When, therefore, Mr. Secretary Herbert proposed to send my Reports of persecution in Regiments to the Duke of Cambridge, my complaint was only of those persons with whom I had to do, and it was only in the Court of Inquiry that clerical instigation came clearly into view. It now became evident that I had no good reason of complaint against any Officer, except it had been against the Lieut.-Colonel of the 18th Hussars, who perhaps had not been so instigated, and now acknowledged his own mistake.

After the judicial discovery of clerical interference,

the Chaplain-General and his more attached subordinates were most of them aroused to open hostility, which was directed against myself more than any other person; but our own Chaplains, and the Circuit ministers in Garrison towns and on Foreign Stations in the neighbourhood of troops, had to bear their share of annoyance. The conflict became sharper, but it was also shorter than if we had yielded to discouragement, and carried what some would call prudence to the length of pusillanimity. Or our opponents, having time given them, might have confined themselves to deliberate intrigue and the stealthy management so easy under the cloak of military forms when cleverly abused.

My faithful Colleague, Mr. Kelly, gave offence by reporting to me what had occurred in the 21st Regiment, from which resulted the Court of Inquiry, and Mr. Sabin reported him to the War Office as an unauthorized person who should not be allowed to enter into Camp. On the 16th of April, General Knollys received a letter from Mr. Secretary Herbert, directing that Mr. Kelly should be excluded from the Camp, because he was 'without authority.' In obedience to this order, and after suffering this expulsion quietly for a week, I wrote to the General, begging him to endeavour to obtain a reversal of the unmerited sentence. A few days later I was again requested to call at the Assistant Adjutant-General's Office, where Colonel Wood informed me of the Duke of Cambridge's approval of the General's admission of Mr. Kelly into Camp. The Duke's letter to General Knollys was directed by His Royal Highness to be preserved in that office, with my initials on the back, which I was requested to

place there in proof that it had been read by me. For this we were indebted to our constant friend, the General, who would not leave my letter to him, of April 23rd, to pass coldly through the routine of written correspondence, but waited until his next official visit to London, when he took it to the Secretary of State, and then to the General Commanding in Chief, and assured them both that no occasion had been given for the expulsion of my Assistant, either by him or by me.

This was one of the latest acts of General, afterwards Sir William Knollys, K.C.B., before he left the command of the Aldershot Division, after having seen the first Regiment march upon the ground, laid the first rudiment of military order in that wilderness, perfectly organized and admirably governed elements that appeared irretrievably discordant, and which few men could have reconciled. Inside and outside Camp alike, his departure was lamented. A new Town had rapidly grown up where there had not been a human habitation beyond here and there a miserable hut some distance off, and when he was about to leave, the people of the new Town asked me to beg that he would allow them to invite him to a public dinner. Most readily he consented, and invited them to assemble for the purpose in a suitable building within Camp; and there I had the privilege of invoking the Divine Blessing to rest upon the Feast, and gave utterance to our common gratitude for the care he had taken of our common interests, so far as his influence enabled him, as Chief of a great military establishment, to give the inhabitants protection from the evils that were to be dreaded if it were not for his care. On that occasion

the Queen signified her interest in the honour shown to one of Her most faithful servants by sending one of the principal members of the Royal Household to support the General. Sir William was immediately promoted to be Controller of the Prince of Wales' Household.

He was succeeded in command by General Sir John Pennefather, a brave old Soldier, but a very different person, whom we could not yet know. The whole Staff was quickly changed. The Senior Chaplain was changed, and our own experience was to be changed also.

On the next occasion of the funeral of a Wesleyan Soldier, the new Chaplain to whom the key of our ground was intrusted, first refused to have the grave dug, and, when compelled by authority to carry out his instructions, had a grave dug in the ground belonging to the Church of England, in order, as he must have thought, to prevent us from officiating at the interment. This new Chaplain, when I paid him the compliment of a visit at his arrival, told me plainly that I had too great a footing in the Camp, where I ought not to have any, and that he would do his utmost to *live* me down, *work* me down, and *pray* me down. Mr. Huleatt, no doubt, took his orders from Mr. Chaplain-General Gleig, such orders as I had reason to know were sent to Mr. Gleig's brethren throughout the Army, or at least to such of them as were likely to act accordingly.

The principal battle-field was Aldershot. First there, and eventually everywhere else, except when friendly officers could favour us, we were refused every facility for the performance of ordinary duties.

Our services were ignored, and we and our people were treated with contempt, in so far as that could be brought about by the instigation of military Chaplains and unfriendly parish priests. At length the omission of our services from Divisional Orders compelled me to write to the War Office on the general question.

I had not yet become aware that this expulsion from Orders extended beyond Camp, but I felt that my language ought to be sufficiently expressive of our feeling on the whole subject. A full year had passed away in this manner, and at this rate we should soon be beaten off all the ground. Sir John Pennefather had professed much goodwill, but was now become impracticable on every occasion. He found himself beset with unfriendly advisers, and between them and me he knew not how to decide, and probably cared little. He even said that he had instructions not to acknowledge Wesleyans nor to sanction the appearance of their name. Mr. Secretary Herbert, who knew our position, and in whom we could confide, after being raised to the Peerage as Lord Herbert of Lea, was deceased, and an entire stranger to us in this relation was in his place, Sir George Cornwall Lewis, to whom I wrote on September 19th, 1861, in terms unusually expressive of discontent.

‘As the Senior Minister on the station, I have the honour to submit for your consideration a recent change in the treatment of the Wesleyans in this Camp.

‘In July 1857, a Church which had been erected at our own cost for the free use of the Wesleyan Troops at Aldershot, with the full approval of the Secretary of State for War, was opened, and the men

were marched to their first service under the sanction of a Divisional Order. Such an Order was repeated weekly, without any intermission, until the 14th inst., when it was suddenly withdrawn. No reason whatever has been assigned to me for this measure, nor have I so much as been allowed a copy of the Order for its accomplishment. I therefore beg to appeal to you against it, as a mark of unmerited disfavour towards a numerous and most loyal portion of the British Army.

‘The only origin of such an Order which I can possibly conjecture is that, as Wesleyans are said not to be recognised in the Army, some persons who desire that this lack of recognition may be made very manifest, and that a full measure of contempt may be cast on the Wesleyan Soldier, in order to discourage him from the profession of his religion, must have advised this means to be taken with that end in view. The effect produced is a feeling of deep dissatisfaction, and a most lively sense of wrong.

‘The Wesleyan Conference appoints Ministers to devote themselves entirely to the care of our Military brethren on some principal Stations, and in Garrison Towns generally they are marched to us on Sundays; but the services we render are everywhere gratuitous, and in the very few instances where the trifling compensation of Head-money has been asked for, it has been uniformly refused.

‘We have not complained of serving without pay; but that now, after insertion in Garrison Orders of Divine Worship for Wesleyans has had the sanction of Military Usage for not less than twenty-two years, this necessary protection should be abruptly withdrawn

at the principal Military Station in the Empire, excites reasonable alarm. Leaving the General Question untouched, which will be laid before yourself without delay, by direction of the Conference, and not thinking it possible that such an Order as this at Aldershot can have had your sanction, I hasten to bring this matter to your knowledge, confident, that, as a Member of Her Majesty's Government, you will not give sanction to a measure which, however otherwise intended, is in its effect replete with injury and contempt.'

A letter in reply by Sir Edward Lugard, K.C.B., under Secretary of State for War, conveyed as clear a statement of the position now taken at the War Office as could be desired for determining our course, inasmuch as it set a seal of official confirmation on all the wrongs of which it had been our duty to complain. Sir Edward writes under date of October 12th, 1861; and, after advising me to state my grievance to the Commander-in-Chief, is instructed to say:—

'Sir George Lewis is the less disposed to interfere, as he has every reason to believe that the troops of the Wesleyan persuasion have received every consideration from the Military Authorities at Aldershot. Moreover, although the Queen's Regulations permit soldiers to attend the services prescribed by their own religious bodies, whatever these may be, three denominations only are distinctly recognised, and for these Chaplains are appointed, and parades ordered. If exception has heretofore been made at the Camp in favour of any other Religious body, the act was, in spirit if not in letter, in contravention of those Regulations, and, if continued, would have doubtless

led to great inconvenience by giving rise to similar claims on the part of every other Dissenting Body.'

After duly acknowledging this reply, and referring to the suggestion that I should refer the grievance to the Commander-in-Chief, I say:—

'This local question, however, is now so entirely dependent on the solution of the greater question as to what is due to the members and Ministers of the Wesleyan Church, which occupies a position in the country entirely distinct from that of every Dissenting Body, and numbers far above the largest of them, that I must leave others to bring its claims to the consideration of the Government.'

Since the date of my remonstrance to Sir George Cornwall Lewis, other circumstances had arisen in Chatham which imperatively urged us to seek for a settlement of the main question. The Conference of 1861 determined to establish another Chaplaincy at Chatham, and, for the first year, placed it under my direction, my well-tried Assistant at the Camp having to do duty on the new station. Major-General Eyre, commanding at Chatham, had already restricted Mr. Kelly in the performance of his duties in the Hospital; but, on my waiting on the General and pointing out to him the amended Instructions of the Duke of Cambridge in regard to Hospital visitation, to which Instructions the General's attention did not seem to have been drawn on any previous occasion, the restriction was immediately withdrawn. But on the 29th of October Mr. Kelly wrote me that efforts had been made at Chatham to induce the General to refuse to have the Wesleyans marched for parade service to the Lecture Hall which we had hired for their accom-

modation. The Vicar of Chatham, it was said, had been busy in trying to bring about the dispersion of this congregation, and had even gone to the proprietors of the building, and begged them to require us to quit, but without success. Then it would seem that he exhorted the General to carry out the project by his own authority; and the Major of Brigade paved the way by giving Mr. Kelly an intimation that the General would not order the Wesleyans to attend the Lecture Hall. From month to month General Eyre showed great restlessness, as if he were under some incitement foreign to his own better inclination; objecting to the assemblage of Soldiers for Divine Worship in a Lecture Hall, but assigning no reason for the objection beyond his own opinion that the place was not suitable.

At last, on Monday, March 3rd, 1862, more than four months after the first intimation, Mr. Kelly was summoned to the Brigade Office, and told that the General was determined not to allow the troops to be marched to the Hall again. His will was absolute. There could be no resistance. After what we had heard from the War Office there was no hope of redress there or anywhere else, unless our relative position could be improved. The Congregation was dispersed, so far as the General could disperse it, and, for the time, without remedy.

While the Chatham trouble was at its height, we found it necessary to approach the Government again as representatives of the Conference, claim the redress of grievances that were become insufferable, and ask for some arrangement that might prevent a recurrence of the like. We who had seen Mr. Sidney Herbert

on the 21st of February, 1860, with the addition of the Rev. Frederick Jobson, D.D., as one of the Secretaries of the Committee of Privileges, had an interview, by appointment, with Sir George Lewis on the 15th of November, 1861. I had been requested to prepare a statement of the whole case, in the form of a letter, to be signed by Mr. Prest, as Secretary of what had been now somewhat more definitely constituted an Army Committee. In this document we represented:

That there were large numbers of Wesleyans in the Army; and, wherever provision could be made for their accommodation, they were regularly marched to Divine Service in those places of worship where their own ministers officiated. Ministers also gave them such attention as other duties would allow, without receiving any pecuniary compensation in return. This, however, was not the first object of concern. On some principal stations the Wesleyan Conference had appointed ministers who gave the full service of Chaplains, and were maintained from such funds as were available for that purpose. The Conference had recorded an intention to increase the number of such appointments, and Wesleyan Methodists throughout the world were deeply interested in the question.

That we gratefully acknowledged the readiness with which many Commanding Officers seconded the efforts of those voluntary Chaplains and other ministers, so far as existing usages allowed; but it was our duty to state that those usages were increasingly found to be at variance with Her Majesty's gracious intention that every soldier should enjoy full religious liberty, as expressed in the Regulations for the Army.

That, for several years past, many thousands of

men, Wesleyans both by birth and education, had returned themselves under this denomination, and had attended Divine Worship accordingly; yet they were entered in the Regimental Returns as members of the Church of England, or as Presbyterians.

That this inaccuracy gave just cause of complaint; for not only was the existence of Wesleyans in the Army virtually denied in public documents, but their ministers were refused access to their Congregations within Government buildings. Unlike all others, their Congregations were required to march out of Barracks or Camp to Divine Service, without any consideration of the distance to be traversed, or the numbers to be assembled. Being unrecognised, our ministers could not but suffer some disadvantages, but these disadvantages were sometimes greatly aggravated.

At Gibraltar, for example, the mention of Divine Service for Wesleyans was withdrawn from Garrison Orders, after being included in those Orders for twenty-two years, and the late Secretary of State for War was said to have sanctioned the exclusion.

At Aldershot two ministers were entirely devoted to the service of the Camp. Their duties had been discharged with studious deference and submission to Military authority; but they find themselves more and more beset with vexatious restrictions. Here, too, Divine Service has been suddenly discontinued from Divisional Orders, without any reason being assigned or previous intimation given.

That Commanding Officers doubted whether they had power to grant Wesleyan Ministers even necessary facilities in order to the proper discharge of their ordinary duties.

That we were fully aware that Ministers of Religion who did not receive commissions as Chaplains to the Forces could not be recognised as such; but we begged to submit that it would be impossible to preserve to thousands of the British Army the practical enjoyment of that Religious Liberty which was guaranteed to them in the Queen's Regulations, unless their ministers were more distinctly recognised and protected.

The Committee, therefore, laid before the Secretary of State the following requests:—

1. That *Returns* be made, in Regimental States and other Official Documents, of the number of those Soldiers who describe themselves as Wesleyans.

2. That *Access* to Wesleyans in Camps and Barracks for purposes of Divine Worship, Religious Instruction and Pastoral Care, be given to their Ministers.

3. That Wesleyans have *Protection* for themselves and for their ministers against the control and interference of ministers of other Churches.

We were instructed to give very respectful expression to the hope that, by a favourable consideration of these requests, further public action, which the Conference and Committee were most anxious to avoid, might not be necessary; but it would be unavoidable unless Her Majesty's Government should remove the alleged causes of complaint.

After a lengthened conversation, Sir George Lewis promised to 'investigate' the matter, and send an answer to the Committee. In addition to the general statements of the letter, the Deputation gave much information in answer to inquiries by Sir George.

Notwithstanding these promises, nothing was heard from the War Office, beyond a bare negative after seven weeks of silence, nor was there any abatement of the grievances, which were now increased in all directions.

In Chatham, now made a point of attack in addition to Aldershot, General Eyre seemed to lend himself to our clerical opponents. On March 10th, 1862, our Military Congregation there was almost all dispersed by an absolute refusal of the General to allow the Wesleyans to go to the Hall, nor did they again assemble there until June 23rd, after being dispersed for sixteen weeks. From July, 1860, as already related, until June, 1862, as we shall now hear, the Chaplain-General of that time, having his room in the War Office, with official power there, and using his position as chief of the Chaplains' Department, by confidential Correspondence and authoritative directions to his subordinates throughout the Army—he and they and no small number of sympathizers of all ranks using numberless and nameless opportunities of annoyance, made possible by the peculiarities of the Service—produced such an amount of petty oppression as might have dispersed all the Congregations, after the one in Chatham, if He that was for us were not more than they that were against us.

But we were all this time gaining strong positions over a wide field, and the presence of a Power invisible was more and more manifest. On the removal of regiments, parties of our brethren were transferred from one part of the country or of the world to another, and it became my duty to watch all their movements, anticipate the departure of our men for the farther

stations with letters to the ministers who would care for them on their arrival, excepting only stations in some distant countries where there were no missionaries to receive them. Those adverse influences could not overtake them everywhere, nor could British Officers be counted on extensively by our adversaries as auxiliaries in the way of repression. In the War Office, too, however subtle might be the wakeful spirit, ever busy to thwart our endeavours, it was always felt that the Wesleyans, even when persecuted, were sufficiently numerous to claim respect, and it was well known that they were worthy of confidence and care. Each Secretary of State for War must be inevitably the representative of a political party, and almost in spite of himself might be friend or foe according to circumstances. But the Under Secretary of State was a man of business and a Soldier, not shifted with a Changing Cabinet, and to his office I had free access. At first I was introduced to Sir Benjamin Hawes, and after him to his immediate successor, Sir Edward Lugard. These both rendered me such aid as fell within the limits of official discipline, when difficulties arose of the nature already intimated, and could be easily removed. With such counsellors and friends, and endeavouring to be watchful against impatience, I was preserved from personal misunderstandings. My brother ministers confided to me their local troubles, for which I had to seek remedy, they accepted my advices on entering into new relations with Soldiers, and they did their best as fellow-workers in promotion of the holy cause. The work of correspondence was incessant, but God was with us.

In the Admiralty we found no opposition, except on one matter of comparative unimportance which arose for the moment from a temporary suspension of the usual allowance of Head-money for the Marines; and for this we did not think it well to appeal to the Government while the great question of Religious Liberty was unsettled. The Commandant of Royal Marines in Chatham would not suffer himself to be approached by those influences which overpowered the General Commanding the Garrison, but who could command no more than that he firmly stood by his own. While General Eyre was persuaded not to permit his soldiers to go to the Lecture Hall, Colonel Lemon of the Chatham Division, with unwavering punctuality, marched his hundreds of Marines thither every Sunday, without requiring any solicitude on our part. As for the men, with no incentive whatever beyond their own sense of wrong, they were not slow to express their disapproval of the grievance their brethren in another part of the Service were suffering. Prayer was offered for effectual redress, and of pastoral diligence there was not anywhere the slightest relaxation.

Consequently, the Bush burned unconsumed, and Methodism spread throughout the Army, as it now spreads also in the Navy. Soldiers converted to God carried about with them the leaven of godliness, which lay deep in the hearts of many, and could not be taken from them.

CHAPTER IX.

Late and negative Reply of Secretary of State to our Address of November 15th, 1861—Chaplain-General assumes exclusive Control of Scripture Readers in the Army—Affair in Chatham reported in vain—Allowances on account of Royal Marines discontinued—Persistent Silence at War Office, in Spite of Remonstrances—Last Remonstrance quite unheeded—Action in Parliament reluctantly contemplated—Opportune Interposition of Lord Shaftesbury with Secretary of State—Congregation at Chatham restored to its place of Assemblage—‘Other Protestants’ added to the three Denominations previously recognised—Commander-in-Chief found to have been on our Side—Tardy Compliance of the adverse Party with amended Regulations—My Retirement from active Work in connection with the Army at the Conference of 1865.

ON January 3rd, 1862, in reply to our Address presented to him (November 15th, 1861), Sir George Cornwall Lewis directed the Secretary of our Army Committee to be informed that he had given his careful consideration to the Representations therein contained regarding the position and claims of the members of the Wesleyan persuasion (*sic*) in the Army, and requested him to inform the Committee that, with every desire to meet their wishes, he ‘has come to the conclusion that the practical difficulties in the way of making the proposed alterations are such as to render it advisable to adhere to the existing arrangements in regard to the recognised denominations.’

This conclusion animated our opponents, and notably the Chaplain-General, who at this unhappy juncture

made a special effort to appropriate to the exclusive service of the Church of England the whole body of Army Scripture Readers, most of whom, if not all, were at that time Wesleyans, as they had been when non-commissioned officers. One by one, these good men, being superintended by Anglican Chaplains, were persuaded, or, if persuasion was insufficient, were compelled, to absent themselves from their own worship, contrary to the original constitution, rules, and practice of the Soldiers' Friend Society. At the invitation of the first promoter, a Brigadier-General in Camp, I took part in the formation of that Society. Some pious officers of rank readily joined us, as did the Chaplain-General, by invitation, and at once assumed the Presidency, as it were *ex officio*. He made no difficulty of regarding the new Society as undenominational, because the Army itself consisted of men of various religions. As one of the founders and framers, I had taken my full part in preparing the Rules of the Society; he and I were equally diligent in the performance of that initial work, and no two members were more steadily agreed than we. Having deliberately and unanimously completed the rules, we took equal part with our colleagues in selecting the Readers, and I heard him instruct them all in succession in what he professed to consider the catholicity of their work, the equal respect they should pay to all, leaving the members of the several 'Religions' to their own 'Pastors.' So far was he from showing unfriendliness, that he even requested me to examine all the Religious Tracts that should be sanctioned for circulation in the Army, with a view to the exclusion of any that might be objectionable on the common ground that we desired to occupy as Evangelical

Christians. Nothing could be more calculated to disarm us all of suspicion; yet, under cover of this 'catholicity,' he was quietly so corresponding with the chaplains on various stations that complaints came to me from several readers that they found it impossible to be excused from going to the Parade Services of the Church of England. In private conversations I called his attention to this departure from our constitution and breach of rules; but he defended every case in detail, suddenly took occasion at a Public Meeting to declare that he found it 'difficult to work with Non-conformists,' and when the sense of our Committee was pronounced against those proceedings of his, he stood upon his authority, which no officer present could presume to dispute in form; and as I could not remain there without resisting, I quietly withdrew, stating my reason in regretful correspondence, and avoiding the maintenance of conflict where nothing should disturb the work of peace. There was indeed a conflict from which I could not shrink, but it was to be conducted practically upon other ground.

It gives me sincere pain to disclose such facts as these, and to find myself speaking in these pages as if Methodism and the Church of England, as it is still called, were in open enmity; whereas we were only in battle in that Church with a party, and our part in the contest was not on the side of aggression, but defence. And I must be careful now to guard against the appearance of setting down the Church of England as generally intolerant or irrecoverably persecuting, for I believe nothing of the kind. Some of us think her too shy, too timorous, too narrow, and sometimes perhaps too proud, but she will find her level, and

Methodism will find hers. Our Lord in Heaven will lift us both up or cast us down, even as He ever does exalt the humble and abase the proud. Which is which He best knows.

Now let me take up my thread again.

Coincident with those proceedings on the part of the Anglican chaplaincy with regard to lay agency in the Army, was the action of the Vicar of Chatham and General Eyre; and on March 4th, 1862, it became my duty to report to Sir George Lewis the dispersion of our Military Congregation in that place, and ask protection after that act of violence. No notice was taken of this appeal. I therefore wrote again ten days later, and offered to hire a neighbouring Chapel, where our men might assemble, if that place might be considered more suitable than the Hall. But on that day week, instead of getting an answer from the War Office, we received information from the Colonel Commandant of Marines at Chatham that the long-accustomed allowance of Head-money for three hundred Marines, who worshipped with us in the Hall, was to be discontinued, as a Circular of 1858, by which it had been authorized, was only intended to apply to Clergymen of the Church of England, Church of Rome, and Presbyterians.

This was as significant a blow as the Chief of the War Office could inflict, or see inflicted by the Admiralty; and not until the last day of March did I receive, in a letter from Sir Edward Lugard, a sentence in reply to my two appeals: 'I am in reply to acquaint you that the subject is under consideration, and that the decision of the Secretary of State will be communicated to you shortly.' At the

same time Mr. Prest, as Secretary of the Army Committee, was sent for by Sir Edward Lugard and Lord de Grey and Ripon, with whom he had an interview, and they promised him to consult with Sir George Lewis; but Sir George kept profound silence. Nor was this all. In a communication to me at Aldershot, on a local matter, on April 21st, Sir John Pennefather expressed regret that he was not permitted to recognise officially the word 'Wesleyan' in any public documents, returns, or reports. Once again, on the 25th of April, after waiting from March 31st, I made my last appeal to the Secretary of State, remonstrating against the absolute prohibition now permitted by the War Office; but no answer came, and I gave up the idea of trying any more.

But what more should be done?

To retreat in silence could not be thought of. Months ago some of our Committee men had suggested an introduction of the question into Parliament, but such a measure was not formally proposed; and for my own part I had always felt intense repugnance to public agitation, and I had not so much as moved a Member of Parliament to put a question to the representative of Government. But as time passed away, and our people's interests were not to be slighted, nor their patience to be utterly worn out, I felt convinced that we could not refrain from more public action any longer, and was actually proceeding to take the first step, when one day in the Lobby of the House of Commons, in conversation with a friend who would most readily have taken the question in hand, we were led into what proved to be a better course by engaging the Earl of Shaftesbury to aid us

with his counsel and his influence. This I did the same hour; and never had I seen his Lordship more in earnest, except perhaps once on a similar question of Religious Liberty. With equal promptitude and energy he made himself felt at the War Office, and Lord de Grey and Ripon, then with Sir Edward Lugard, Under Secretary of State, repeated to him the same assurance which he had given us before. But, not resting in promises for a moment, Lord Shaftesbury made himself master of the whole subject, receiving from me such information as was necessary, and so advocated the cause of the scattered congregation as to give no rest to the Powers that were, until they became certain that unless redress were afforded speedily a cry of indignation would be raised which no promises would silence. The Secretary of State, with sealed lips, had left us, notwithstanding all our earnestness, in a state of unabated suspense, until we could only calculate what should be our next resource, whether the question should be fairly opened in the House of Commons, or whether we should go from the Minister for War, who seemed impracticable, to the First Minister himself; and we could not for a moment doubt that Lord Palmerston, if directly approached, would give the subject honest and just consideration. But such a measure was not necessary. Lord Shaftesbury had the matter in hand, and would not let it drop. Repeated intimations from himself informed me that he was in active communication with the Heads of both War Office and Horse Guards, until he received, and communicated to myself, an assurance that the Chatham question would forthwith be settled satisfactorily. At the same time, various in-

dications in other directions gave close observers reason to surmise that influences from the Horse Guards were felt within the Army itself to be far more favourable than for two years past, and were in perfect consistence with all we had hitherto experienced from the Duke of Cambridge.

Not least of these indications was a private letter from Sir James Yorke Scarlett, Adjutant-General, to Headquarters at Aldershot, asking for information or advice with reference to a proposal for adding another Religious Denomination to the three already recognised in the Army. In this letter the existing state of things was described as an embarrassment; and the answer sent up to the Horse Guards was decidedly favourable to the proposal. It will be remembered that this proposal mentioned by the Adjutant-General was in direct agreement with the first of the three requests which we laid before the Secretary of State on November 15th, 1861. Sir George Lewis, among other objections, alleged the difficulty of finding a name that could be given to a fourth denomination; but he thought that if any name could be found to suit—although that was doubtful—it might be *Non-conformist*. Our Deputation consisted of four persons. Two of the number, without pausing to reflect, gently assented; the third dissented, and I, the fourth, not choosing to drift away into a discussion of the sort, kept silence, reserving my opinion for a time when it might be made more opportunely. As the question of the Adjutant-General of the Forces was not kept secret, but the subject had been made known to ourselves, I wrote forthwith an unofficial letter to Sir Edward Lugard, dated May 31st, 1862, to the following effect.

I apologized for addressing the Under Secretary of State unofficially, but trusted in his kindness for indulgence.

We rejoiced to hear, through our Secretary, that it was in contemplation to meet our case by adding a fourth Column to the Army Returns of Religious Denominations, a measure which would engage our sincere gratitude; and on one point of detail only I ventured to confess some anxiety.

I did not think it likely that the Conference would press for the adoption of the word 'Wesleyan' at the head of that column, if the Government were not prepared to go so far. Our desire was that our men and their Ministers should be protected in their freedom of worship from vexatious interferences; and the Authorities of the Army had, with extremely rare local exceptions, given us no reason to apprehend that they would wish the contrary.

But there was fear of the word 'Nonconformist,' if made to include Wesleyans. Practically, it means *Dissenter*. One who is called Nonconformist or Dissenter naturally falls into a hostile position towards the Church of England; whereas the normal Wesleyan cares not for the Church and State controversy on either side, regarding it as political rather than religious. If, however, we were described as Nonconformists, our position of neutrality would be lost; we should, in course of time, become, to some extent, Political Dissenters, and the purely religious character of our Church would be fatally impaired. We elder men might not live to see the utmost consequence, but, in my own position, I could not help asking permission to interpose a word on the side of caution. *We did*

not wish to bring an element of controversy into the Army. Neither did we wish to increase such an element in the religion of the country by the adoption of a new name for ourselves.

Might I be allowed to suggest, for example, that the Fourth Column in the Returns should be headed 'Others,' or 'Other Protestants,' or in any *general* way, leaving the Denomination to be specified in detail?

In point of fact, the Dissenters from the Church of England were, in the Army, intimately associated with the Presbyterians, and, unless invited to fall out of their ranks, would probably prefer to continue there. That, however, was not a matter on which it was my business to speak.

On June 17th Sir Edward Lugard wrote me from the War Office, by direction of the Secretary of State for War, to acquaint me that his decision upon the question of the attendance of the Wesleyan Soldiers at the Lecture Hall in Chatham, as well as upon other points connected with the ministrations of the Wesleyan Clergy to Soldiers in Hospital, had been communicated to the Rev. C. Prest, for the information of the Wesleyan Conference.

The letter to Mr. Prest ('Clergy General No. 596, War Office, 17th June, 1862') is a document of so great importance in relation to all that had preceded, and as introductory to whatever might follow, that it must be given here in literal copy.

'SIR,—With reference to your letter of the 1st May, and previous correspondence respecting the position of Wesleyans in the Army, I am directed by the Secretary of State for War to state that it has been

decided by him, with the concurrence of the General Commanding in Chief, that the Wesleyan Soldiers should be marched to the Lecture Hall at Chatham on Sundays, provided it be not too distant from the Barracks. And with respect to the practice complained of, in returning as Episcopalians or Presbyterians Soldiers in Hospital belonging to the Wesleyan persuasion, I am to acquaint you that Sir George Lewis has intimated his opinion to the General Commanding in Chief that the Wesleyan Soldiers ought not to be classified under any of the three denominations into which the Army is at present divided; but that a fourth class should be formed under the title of "Other Protestants," to include all men who are neither Episcopalians, Roman Catholics, nor Presbyterians—this class to be borne on the monthly Regimental Returns rendered to the Horse Guards, and the name of the Denomination placed over the beds of such Patients in Hospital as may belong to that class. In this suggestion His Royal Highness has signified his concurrence, and Orders have been issued for carrying both arrangements into effect accordingly.

'Sir George Lewis trusts that his decision will be regarded by you as a satisfactory termination of the complaints which you have brought under his notice.—I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant,

' EDWARD LUGARD.

' *The Rev. Chas. Prest.*'

A day or two later, in a casual conversation with Sir Edward Lugard, I received an intimation that the Duke of Cambridge had taken much interest in our position for some time past, and would be glad to hear

if the decision as to the Fourth Column gave me satisfaction. I begged him to do me the honour of assuring His Royal Highness of my entire satisfaction and sincere thankfulness. Indeed, the first of our Three Requests was granted; which was as much as could be expected for the time.

In January, 1863, as soon, perhaps, as new Forms could be everywhere ready for use in the Regiments, the Services for 'Other Protestants' were detailed in Divisional and Garrison Orders.

In February, 1863, when the Militiamen were about to be called out for training, I drew the attention of the Army Committee to the desirableness of including the Militia in our care for the benefit of soldiers, and obtained authority for sending a circular letter to Ministers resident in County Towns, drawing their attention to the subject. My letter contained the following statement with regard to the Militia of England and Wales:—

'While so much is done to promote the cause of Christ in the Standing Army, this part of our National Forces ought not to be overlooked. From the ranks of the Militia the Regiments on constant service are largely replenished; and as the Militia occupies an intermediate position in relation to our Camps and Garrisons on the one hand, and to our homes on the other, we should use every legitimate opportunity of bringing its members under the influence of such ministrations of the Gospel as those to which they have been previously accustomed.

'In England and Wales—to say nothing of Scotland, Ireland, and the Channel Islands—there are ninety-three Militia regiments. The legal number

of private Militiamen in these regiments is *eighty thousand*, exclusive of Officers, non-commissioned Officers, and drummers. Each regiment has a permanent Staff stationed at the place where its arms are kept. The Staff consists of the Adjutant, the Sergeant-Major, and the Sergeants, Corporals, and Drummers; the number of these persons may be from thirty-five to forty, according to the strength of the regiment. It is more than probable that some members of every staff are Wesleyans, in the sense in which such designations are understood in the Army, who ought to be invited to worship with our congregations.

‘All newly enrolled or enlisted men are required to spend not less than twenty-eight days at the headquarters of the regiment on joining it, and are therefore marched, with the Staff, to Divine Service on Sunday mornings. Certainly such of these as belong to Wesleyan families should proceed to their own place of worship, and be encouraged to maintain an honourable attachment to the form of religion in which they were brought up.

‘Once every year the whole regiment is assembled at its headquarters, for training, during not less than twenty-one days. On three Sundays, therefore, they are marched to Church; but hitherto the Wesleyans have not been taken to their *own* Church, but paraded for the Church of England, and thereby induced to think that while attired as Militiamen their religious rights were held in abeyance, and their accustomed religious opportunities withdrawn. But we may henceforth preserve them from this injury, on at least seven weeks of the first year, and three weeks in each of the four years following, in the case of

every private. To members of a Militia Staff the alienation and injury are without intermission. These men live as if the religion of their fathers was to be disowned by persons in public service, and, however *unintentionally*, propagate the same notion through all who come to them for training.

‘It must be noted that Militiamen, when taking the first drill, and when under the annual training, as well as the Sergeants and others on the Staff, are under military law—that law at once binds them to march to Divine Service, and sets them free to attend at the place of worship which they consider to be their own. On us, however, as their Ministers, it devolves to see that our men are instructed as to their right, and assisted for their enjoyment of it.’

From only fourteen Militia Regiments were men sent to our services on this first application to the Lieutenant-Colonels Commandant, who were slow to understand the statement conveyed in the last paragraph of this letter; and in the year following the resistance became so stout that it was necessary to bring the matter before the governing Authority; and on April 20th, 1864, the Marquis of Hartington, then Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for War, issued a circular to Officers Commanding Militia Regiments in Great Britain, calling their attention to Articles 18 and 19 in the Queen’s Regulations of 1859, respecting the attendance of soldiers of the Army at Divine Worship, and to acquaint them that these Articles were to be considered applicable to Disembodied Regiments of Militia. This letter settled the question once for all, and gave Liberty of Worship to our brethren serving in the Militia.

The same Hand which was leading us from stage to stage of duty, now opened our way into the Military Prisons. Observing that the Prison Ministers' Act of 1863 empowered Civil Magistrates to permit other Ministers than those of the Church of England to minister to their co-religionists in Borough and County Prisons, and considering that a General Officer Commanding a Division of Army should have equal power in respect to a Military Prison, I applied for permission to visit the Wesleyans imprisoned in the Camp at Aldershot, and for the exemption of such prisoners from visitation by other Chaplains. The compliance of Earl de Grey and Ripon, by that time himself Secretary of State for War, was conveyed to me by a letter of October 19th, 1863, under the condition that whatever duty a commissioned Chaplain of the Church of England was required to perform for members of his Church, I should equally perform for mine. I gladly undertook the duty under this condition, and at the time appointed every week, together with the Chaplain of the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Priest, met in the Governor's room in the Prison, where each of us wrote the report of his visits and services, and such observations as we had to make; the whole to be initialled by the Field Officer of the day as duty done. I wrote at once to each of my brethren appointed to Garrisons, advising each of them to make a similar application, which they all did, and with equal success.

Some of our most important services and useful conversations were held with men guilty of military offences, at moments when they were most accessible to the counsels and admonitions of their minister, as he showed himself their friend. Never did I meet

with soldiers more readily impressed, or mindful of my efforts to do them good.

The following appointments of Ministers to Military Stations by the Conference of 1863 were sent to the Secretary of State for War:—

Aldershot Camp.—William H. Rule, D.D., Nehemiah Curnock, jun.

Chatham Garrison.—Charles H. Kelly.

Portsmouth Garrison.—Humphrey Jutsum.

Shorncliff Camp.—Joseph Webster.

The Curragh Camp (Ireland).—Samuel Patterson.

Kurrachee (India).—Benjamin Broadley.

Barrackpore (India).—Daniel Pearson.

On receiving these names, Sir Edward Lugard, under date of September 7th, 1863, informed our Secretary, the Rev. C. Prest, that they had been sent by Earl de Grey to the Duke of Cambridge, and that His Royal Highness had caused all these appointments to be communicated to the Officers commanding on the several stations, with directions to afford them facilities. 'Facilities,' we know, means little, and does not even indicate the little it may mean. It denotes courtesy, but admits not right. This we were to learn by experience, but we had no reason whatever to complain of the Government as at this time administered.

Matters having thus fallen into a new and better course, I had no more to do than to persevere in spiritual work and in the organization of our Army Department, with Aldershot as the base of operation, from the Conference of 1862, where we reported the attainment of a Fourth Column, until 1865, when, with energies impaired, and age advancing, I withdrew from official responsibilities, and retired into the com-

parative privacy of Circuit life, thankful for what had been done, and hopeful for what yet might be achieved. My best hope has been realized, and this precious work is greatly prospered in other hands. The crisis of 1862 was followed by another crisis in 1881, and I leave it for another pen to trace the story of Methodism in the Army during an interval of sixteen years, and under a brighter phase than it bore when I began.

It must not be forgotten that when Her most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria ascended the throne, there was no religious liberty in the British Army, and that the first line of tolerance written in our Military Law was placed there very early in her reign. Our first battle was fought, as it were, under her direct cognizance, and a satisfactory connection between Methodism and the Army was established by Her Majesty with the Royal Warrant of June 25th, 1881. To have witnessed the accomplishment of this fact, I account to be one of the crowning blessings of my life.

W. H. R.

APPENDIX.

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THE Memorial addressed to Mr. Secretary Herbert on the 21st of February, 1860, consisted of brief, but important statements, which required clearer and more detailed explanation than could have been easily given *viva voce*, or, if so given, could have been remembered. The paper that was written to supply the necessary information, and was left with Mr. Herbert, contained a distinct account of our position in the Army at that time, but would have encumbered the preceding narrative, and is therefore preserved in this place.

1. The Memorial speaks of *Large numbers of Wesleyans*.

It is admitted that Wesleyans are not numerous in Scotland, but they are rather numerous in Ireland, and very numerous in England and the Colonies. The comparative strength of the various Denominations in England and Wales is ascertained by the Census (1851) of Religious Worship, and especially by the Census of Education, the one representing Congregations, and the other Sunday Schools.

The Census of Religious Worship shows :—

Church of England,	5,292,551=48·56 of total.
Wesleyan and other Methodists,	2,417,356=22·18 „
Independents and Baptists,	2,144,249=19·67 „
Calvinistic Methodists, Hunting- donians, etc.,	442,129=04·05 „
Various Protestant Sects, such as Quakers, Unitarians, etc.,	83,413= 0·76 „
Presbyterians,	80,510= 0·73 „
Romanists and others not Protestant,	435,898= 4·00 „
Total,	10,896,106

Or more briefly :—

Church of England, . . .	48·56
Dissenters, . . .	25·26
Wesleyans, . . .	22·18
Romanists, . . .	4·00
	100

The Census of Sunday Schools shows :—

Church of England,	935,892=39·63 of total.
Wesleyan and other Methodists,	637,900=27·02 „
Independents and Baptists,	529,988=22·44 „
Calvinistic Methodists,	112,740=04·77 „
Various Sects,	95,772=04·55 „
Presbyterians,	14,462=00·61 „
Romanists, etc.,	34,286=01·45 „
	2,361,040

Or more briefly :—

Church of England, . . .	39·43
Dissenters, . . .	32·37
Wesleyans, . . .	27·02
Romanists, . . .	1·48
	100

Comparing Wesleyans with others, if the numbers in schools were to correspond with the numbers in congregations, they ought to be—

Church of England, . . .	59·15, or 19·42 more per cent.
Dissenters, . . .	32·51, or 00·14 „

And it should be noted that the Army is recruited from the classes that fill the schools, rather than from those that fill the congregations.

It is not possible to make any adequate statement of the number of Wesleyans in the Army, or even on any one Military Station. At *Aldershot*, for example, our Church is situated outside the Western extremity of the Camp, the actual distance from the Barracks being considerably increased by a wall of great length. The huts of the South Camp are all distant, some of them very remote; and the North Camp is so far away that only very few unusually

earnest men will be marched thence. Yet the actual attendance there exhibits an average of 737 for the last ten weeks. Supposing that half the troops are on Church parade on the same day, this would represent 1474 returning themselves as Wesleyans in the whole Camp, which is manifestly too small a number. The number that should be returned as Wesleyans is certainly much larger, but they are transferred to some other denomination in the Clerical returns transmitted to the War Office.

Considerable parties are marched to the Wesleyan services on several Military Stations; but scarcely anywhere, perhaps not anywhere, is there accommodation for the number that would attend in more favourable circumstances, or even for those who now express their desire to attend their own place of worship in spite of every discouragement arising from the non-recognition that we complain of. In *Canterbury* about 300 are present every Sunday, at *Portsmouth* about 310, and so on at many other Stations; but it is generally impossible to accommodate those who desire to do so. In *Plymouth* the Trustees of one of the Chapels are about to expend £500 to provide more seats for the Soldiers; but it is generally felt that while the Head-money is given to Dissenters, it would be unreasonable to expect Wesleyans, to whom that is refused, to lay out large sums of money for this purpose. In some cases the room required could not possibly be provided from any local resources; as at Chatham, for example, or at Woolwich, where there are always many hundreds of our men, while only 200 at Brompton, and 170 at Woolwich, can be received into the congregations. Even these, as we suppose, are returned as 'Presbyterians,' and paid for under that name to Presbyterian or Dissenting Ministers, while the majority are compelled to attend on ministers whom they cannot recognise as their own.

2. The Memorial states that '*both ministers and members of the principal Dissenting Denominations avail themselves of the provisions ostensibly made for the Church of Scotland, by accepting the designation of "Presbyterian."*' This I understand to be the case at Canterbury with Mr. Cresswell, at Colchester with Mr. Davids, at Gosport with Mr. Meadows, and at Woolwich with Mr. Thompson. Doubtless there is a considerable list of such names at the War Office.

The comparative number of Chaplains, and the sums granted to officiating clergymen, should be noted here. In the Army List in May last there were Chaplains to the Forces:—

On General Service, . . .	57
To Colleges, Garrisons, etc., . . .	15
To Regiments of Yeomanry, . . .	12
	—
Church of England, . . .	84
Roman Catholic, . . .	18
Presbyterian, . . .	6
Wesleyan, . . .	None
	—
Receiving handsome pay, . . .	108 in all.

The grants to officiating clergymen were as follows in 1856:—

Church of England, . . .	£30,440
Roman Catholics, . . .	6,375
Presbyterian, . . .	4,592
Wesleyan, . . .	Nothing
	—
Total, . . .	£41,407

3. The Memorial complains of '*an intolerance which Her Majesty's Regulations do not justify.*' Regiments could be named where Commanding Officers prevent Wesleyans from attending at their own places of worship. The usual pretext is that, after having enlisted as members of the Church of England, or as Presbyterians, the men have no right to 'change their religion.' Such Officers cannot but know that it is made impossible for a Wesleyan Recruit to retain his proper designation, that not being recognised in the Army. Compulsory attendance at other Churches is often carried to a flagrant excess; as at one Station in Scotland, where the Officer Commanding the Battalion is said to enforce a most arbitrary and unauthorized regulation of his own, that no one shall be marched to the Wesleyan Church in the morning, who will not bind himself to attend also in the evening at the service which military custom renders voluntary. At a place in the North of England the Officer Commanding a Cavalry Regiment enforces some similar system, by which he reduces the number of Wesleyans to five. For this there is

not even a partial remedy without incessant, painful, and injurious litigation.

4. The Memorial further complains that Wesleyans are often made to suffer the injury of an intolerance '*which decisions of the highest authority have discountenanced.*' In November, 1839, I had occasion to appeal to General Lord Hill, Commander-in-Chief, against an act of persecution in Gibraltar. His Lordship replied that 'the intent and meaning of the general Order' which is incorporated with the Queen's Regulations was 'not only that every soldier should be at full liberty to attend the worship of Almighty God according to the form prescribed by his own religion, especially expressed in that Order, but carefully abstaining, in conformity with its spirit and letter, from any measure that might, even in appearance, have a tendency to violate the right of conscience, so long as the conduct of the soldier was in strict accordance with the preservation of good order and military discipline. His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge has recently given a decision in regard to the visitation of Military Hospitals by Ministers of other Churches than the three recognised, which again proves that it has not been the desire of the Heads of the Army to perpetuate the intolerance which continually results from the denial of recognition to the most numerous body of Protestant Christians in England after the Church of England.' (Since this note was written an attempt was made to limit the access of the Wesleyan Minister at Colchester to such patients only as might send for him. After laying the case before the Adjutant-General, for the information of the Commander-in-Chief, I had the honour to receive the answer of His Royal Highness, to the effect that Wesleyan Ministers, not waiting for any summons, are at liberty to go to the Hospitals and ascertain that Wesleyans are there, that they may be visited accordingly.)

The Regulations for Religious Instruction, issued by the last Secretary of State for War, expressly admit Ministers not of the three favoured Churches to give instruction, within Barracks, to the children of soldiers marched to their respective places of Worship, and to the soldiers themselves.

A recent grant of Burial ground within the Camp at Aldershot, for persons not members of any of the three

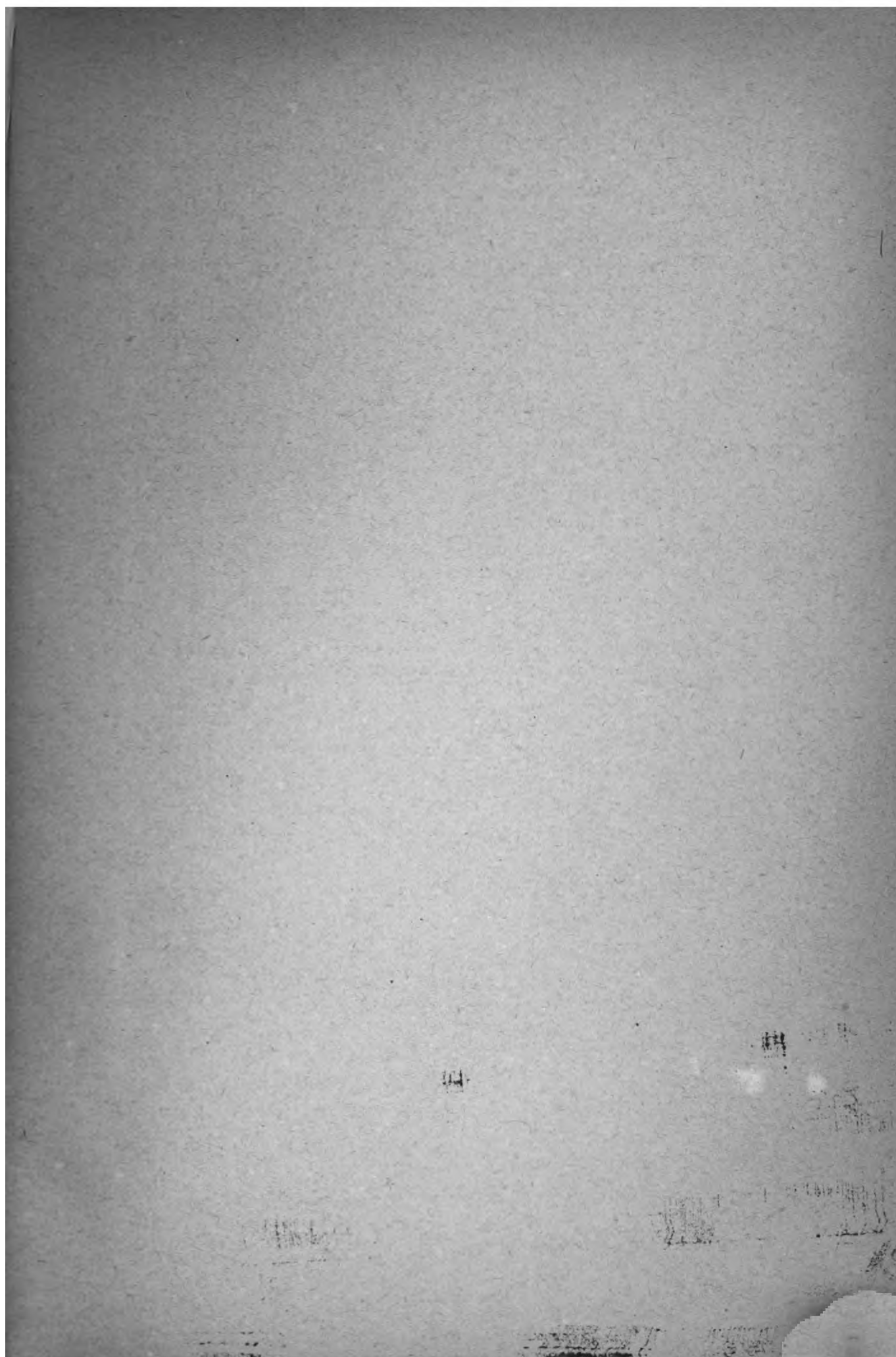
Churches said to be recognised, is another instance of practical recognition.

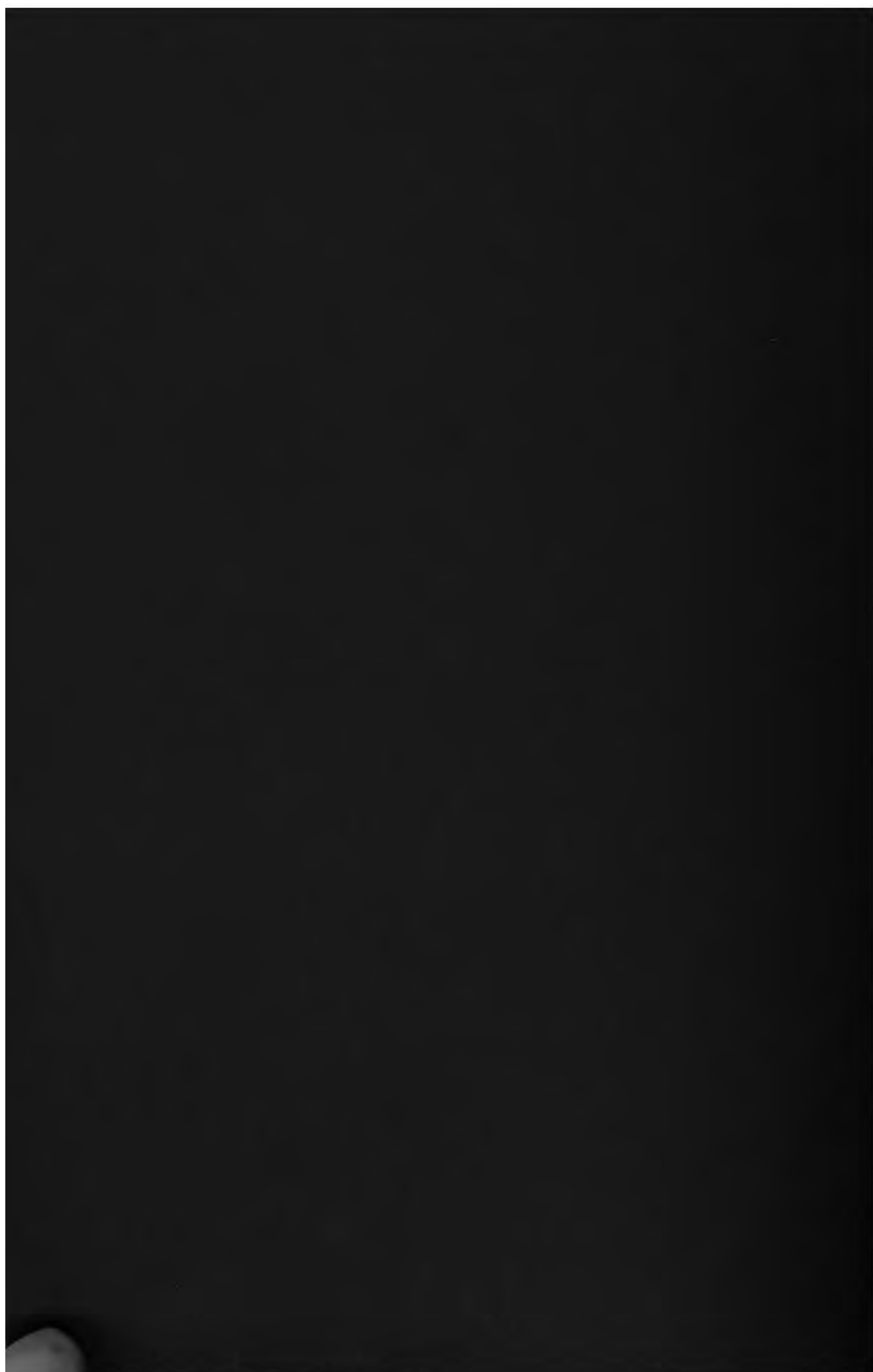
Such an instance, also, is the detail of Wesleyan Services in the Divisional Orders at Aldershot, and in similar Orders elsewhere constantly issued.

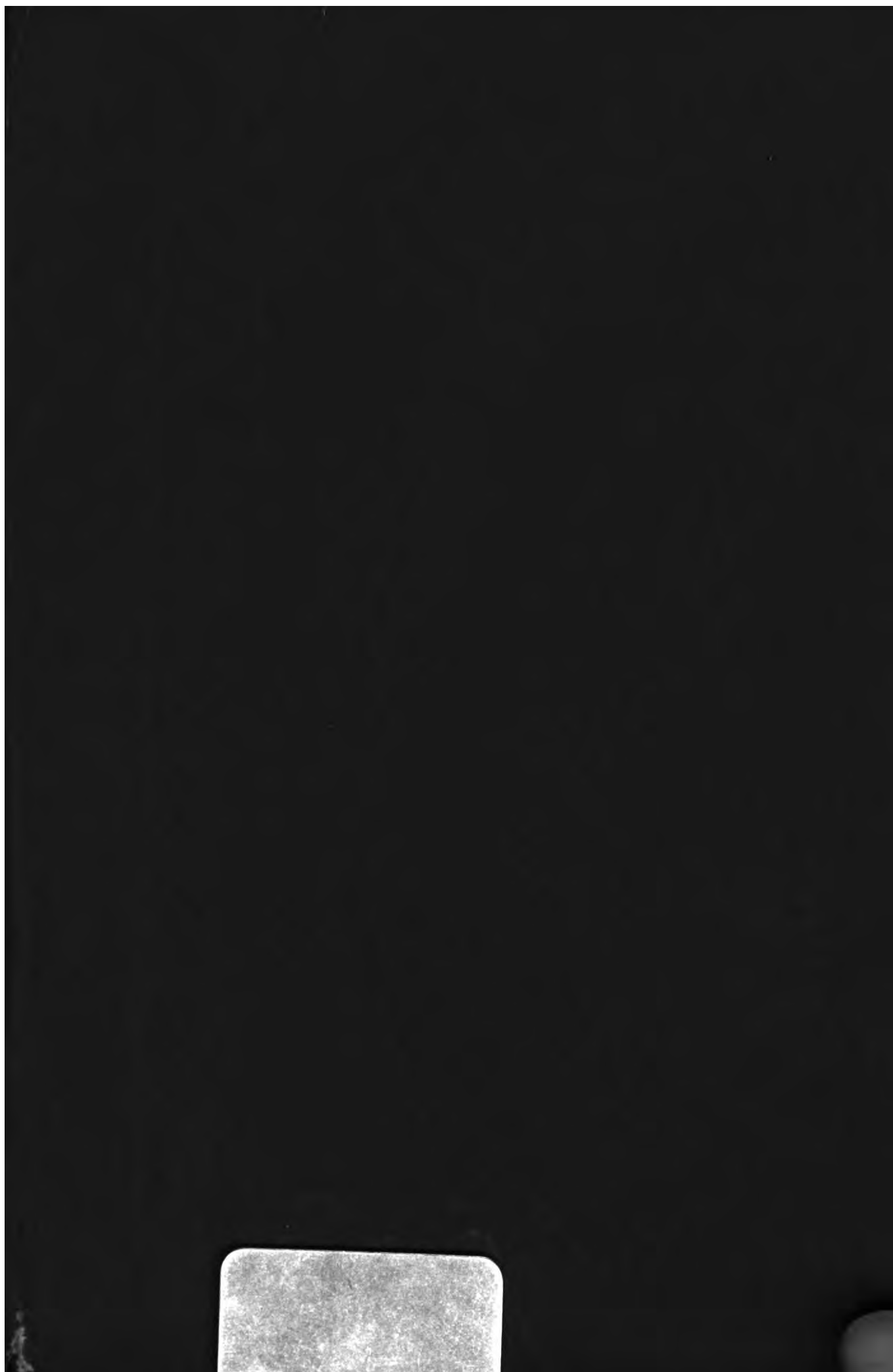
A concession of General Peel, when Secretary of State for War, leaving it to the discretion of General Knollys to allow the Wesleyans to be paraded for Divine Service within Camp on Woolmer Common,—who ordered them to be paraded accordingly,—contrasts with the continued refusal of permission for them to assemble within the remote North Camp at Aldershot, because, as it is said, they are not recognised.

Yet the fullest recognition and support would not be wholly without precedent. For fifty years past, the Wesleyan Minister in Gibraltar has received a daily ration in recognition of his services in that Garrison. Head-money on account of Marines has been paid to Wesleyan Ministers in Plymouth, Portsmouth, and Gosport, by order of the Lords of the Admiralty, for several years past.

W. H. RULE, D.D.,
Aldershot, Feb. 12th, 1860.







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