

MONDAY SCHOOL

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John Wesley—His Appearance, Character, and Work.

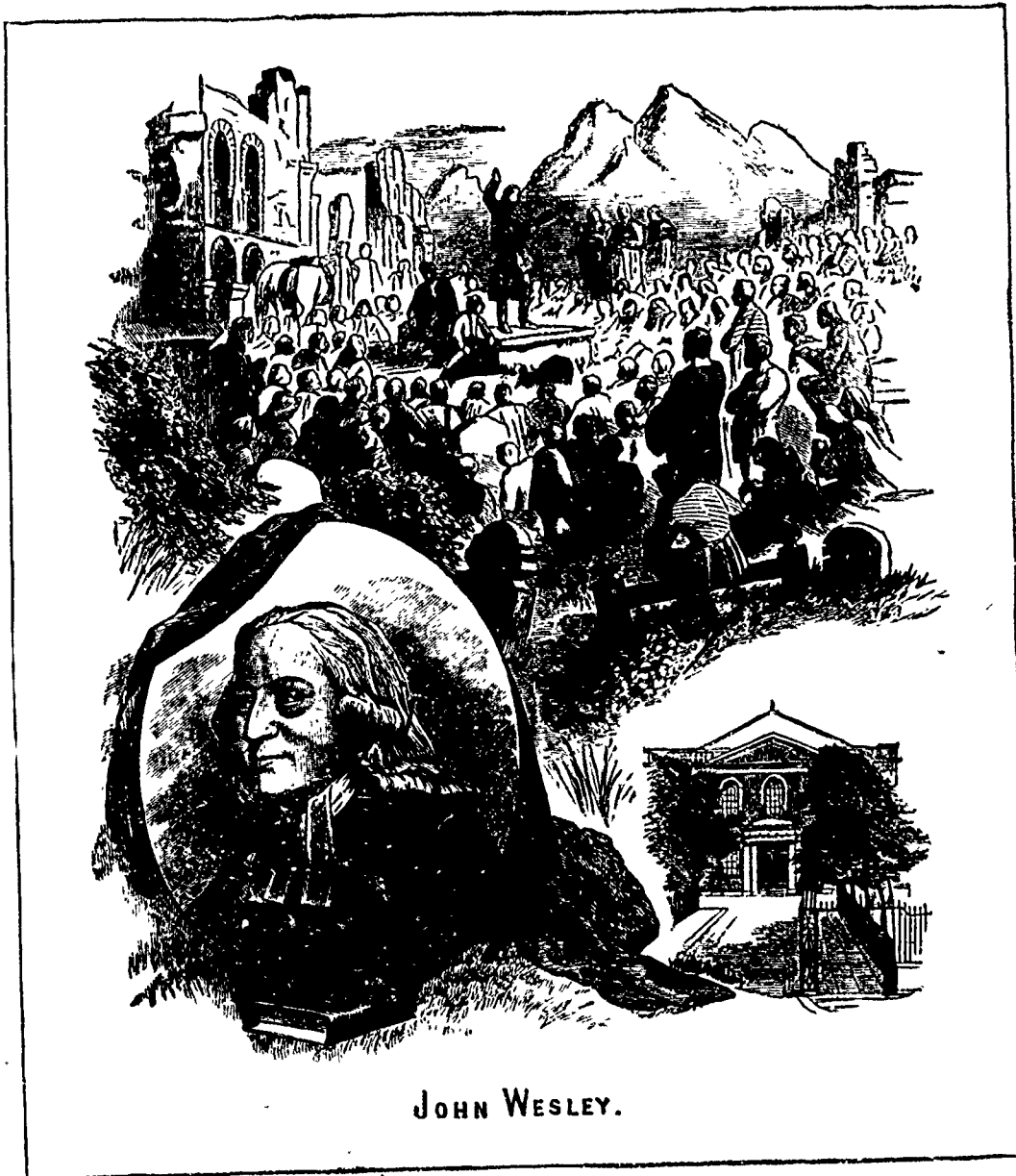
JOHN WESLEY, like all the Epworth family, was short of stature. He measured not quite five feet six inches, and weighed one hundred and twenty-five pounds. He seemed not to have an atom of superfluous flesh, but was muscular and strong. His face was remarkably fine, even to old age. A clear, smooth forehead, an aquiline nose, an eye the brightest and most piercing that can be conceived, conspired to render him a venerable and most interesting figure. In youth his hair was black; in old age, when it was white as snow, it added fresh grace to his appearance, which was like that of an apostle. He wore a narrow plaited stock, and a coat with a small, upright collar. He allowed himself no knee-buckles, and no silk or velvet in any part of his dress.

Wesley was scrupulously neat in his person and habits. Henry Moore never saw a book misplaced, or a scrap of paper lying about his study in London. His punctuality and exactness enabled him to transact the enormous work which rested

on him for half a century with perfect composure. He once told a friend that he had no time to be in a hurry. "Though I am always in haste, I am never in a hurry, because I never undertake any more work than I can get through with perfect calmness of spirit."

He wrote to all who sought his counsel, and had, perhaps, a greater number of pious correspondents than any man of his century. He did everything deliberately, because he had no time to spend in going over it again. Moore says he was the slowest writer he ever saw.

Wesley on one occasion said to his brother Charles' youngest son: "Sammy, be punctual. Whenever I am to go to a place, the first thing I do is to get



ready; then what time remains is all my own." His coachman was expected to be at the door exactly at the moment fixed. If anything detained his carriage, Wesley would walk on till it overtook him. Every minute, both of day and night, had its appointed work. "Joshua, when I go to bed, I go to bed to sleep, and not to talk," was his rebuke to a young preacher who once shared his room, and wished to steal some of Wesley's precious moments of repose for conversation on some difficult problems. To one who asked him how it was that he got through so much work in so short a time, he answered: "Brother, I do only one thing at a time, and I do it with all my might."

Wesley was greatly beloved in the homes where

courtesy may be blended with the most perfect piety. In his conversation we might be at a loss whether to admire most his fine classical taste, his extensive knowledge of men and things, or his overflowing goodness of heart. While the grave and serious were charmed with his wisdom, his sportive sallies of innocent mirth delighted even the young and thoughtless; and both saw, in his uninterrupted cheerfulness, the excellency of true religion. No cynical remarks on the levity of youth embittered his discourses. No applause retrospect to past times marked his present discontent. In him even old age appeared delightful, like an evening without a cloud; and it was impossible to observe him without wishing fervently:

he was entertained during his long itinerancy. He would spend an hour after dinner with his friends, pouring forth his rich store of anecdotes, to the delight of young and old. "He was always at home, and quite at liberty." He generally closed the conversation with two or three verses of some hymn strikingly appropriate to the occasion, and made everyone feel at ease by his unaffected courtesy and his varied conversation. Two years before his death, his friend, Alexander Knox, had an opportunity of spending some days in his company. He endeavoured to form an impartial judgment of the venerable evangelist. The result was, that every moment afforded fresh reasons for esteem and veneration. "So fine an old man I never saw! The happiness of his mind beamed forth in his countenance. Every look showed how fully he enjoyed 'the gay remembrance of a life well spent.' Wherever Wesley went, he diffused a portion of his own felicity. Easy and affable in his demeanour, he accommodated himself to every sort of company, and showed how happily the most finished