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THE FOUNDERS OF METHODISM.*

BY THE EDITOR.



HERE was a man sent from God whose name was John." It is remarkable how often in the history of the Church this saying has been fulfilled. Besides the brave-souled John the Baptist, we have John the Evangelist, the Golden-Mouthed John Chrysostom, John of Damascus, John of Bologna, John Wycliffe, John Huss, John Knox, John Calvin, John Milton, John the Constant of Saxony, and well-nigh twoscore of other Johns famous in ecclesiastical history. And not the least of this galaxy of glorious names, John Wesley, the two-hundredth anniversary of whose birth to-day all the world honours. We condense into a few paragraphs some of the salient features of his life.

The Wesleys were of an ancient family, probably, as is inferred from the "scallop shell" upon their coat of arms, descended from crusading ancestors. It is remarkable that both the father and grandfather of the Rev. Samuel Wesley were clergymen of the Established Church, who, refusing to obey the Act of Uniformity, were driven from their homes and pulpits. By

* For the numerous engravings which illustrate these articles we are indebted to many sources, chiefly to the splendid edition of Wesley's Journals issued by the Wesleyan Conference Office, under the title "Wesley his own Biographer."



THE REV. SAMUEL WESLEY.

John Wesley's father.

the Five Mile Act they were prohibited from approaching their former parishes or any borough town. Driven from place to place, fugitives and outcasts for conscience' sake, they preached wherever they could, enduring persecutions similar to those with which the early Methodists were afterwards so familiar. Four times was the father of Samuel Wesley thrown into prison—once for six, and again for three months; and at length he sank into the grave at the early age of thirty-four. His aged father, heart-broken by his griefs and sorrows, soon followed him to heaven.

The poetical faculty with which John and, especially, Charles Wesley, were so highly endowed, was