

## Whitefield's Journals

W. Kelly.

Whitefield's journals, to which is prefixed his "Short Account" and "Farther Account," with appreciations, etc. Edited by William Wale, London: Henry J. Drane, Ye Olde St. Bride's Presse, Salisbury House, Salisbury Square. Fleet Street, E.C.

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In this day of revival efforts, American and Welsh, Mr. W. Wale has reproduced for the first time since 1756 the journals of one more blessed thus than any since his day, as Wh. too led the way in preaching the simple gospel wherever he found an open door, but chiefly out of doors. By none was he more opposed and reviled than by his own fellow- churchmen, though he never left the Anglican Establishment and always claimed to be an English clergyman. It is clear however that he was regardless of the parochial system and the Canons, valuing chiefly the Articles, but in heart owning every soul that loved the Lord, and seeking the salvation of the lost wherever he found them, not only over Great Britain and Ireland, etc., but in America which he visited at least seven times when the voyage was incomparably more tedious and trying than of late years. He knew little beyond the glad tidings, and God's love both sovereign and in relationship, with its obligations and effects on the heart and the walk. But his devoted and self-denying zeal in that service of the Lord had no superior if equal in modern times. And his journals vividly reflect his heart and his labours, whatever the few drawbacks which one has no care to specify as is easily done by those who are immeasurably inferior in weightier matters.

George Whitefield was admitted a poor scholar or servitor of Pembroke College, Oxford, in 1733 (as he was born in Gloucester in 1711), and soon joined the Wesleys and their few associates in the University, earnest but dark spiritually and called Methodists even then, knowing truth no better than T. à Kempis and the heterodox W. Law. By Bp. Benson of Gloucester he was ordained deacon in 1736. His preaching from the very first made an extraordinary impression; yet then more from his impassioned earnestness than from his growing sense of grace in which he ere long far outran J. and C.

Wesley and almost all the rest of his friends. No doubt his most powerful, flexible, and expressive voice concurred with his warm affections to form a vessel suited to his gift from above. He was even before J. W. in preaching in the open air, as he did first on Hannam Mount to the colliers of Kingswood, near Bristol. Later at Blackheath and at Kennington it is said that he was heard by not less than 30,000 at one time. Even the grossest infidels like Bolingbroke, Chesterfield and Hume listened with awe and emotion; and great were the results among the anxious and the simple.

The Journals do not carry us down to the rupture with Wesley who clung to Arminianism; but its warmth cooled down so far that Whitefield spoke of his desire that Wesley should preach his funeral sermon, as Wesley did for his long-severed friend. Yet in fact Whitefield died near Boston, Mass., on the 30th Sept., 1770, worn out even at that early age by toils beyond man's endurance with impunity. His sermons give but a faint sense of his preaching; but three volumes of his letters extend to the week of his death, and with his discourses and tracts, make up six volumes, published in 1771.

I doubt much that the great preacher would have sanctioned the appreciations of men however popular, not sound in the faith, though he would have valued that of W. Cowper.