unexpected and unaccountable, the boy got round to a win­dow in the front of the house, and was taken out by one man's leaping on the shoulders of another, and thus getting within his reach. Immediately on his rescue from this very perilous situation, the roof fell in. This extraordinary escape explains a certain device, in a print of John Wesley, en­graved by Vertue in the year 1745, from a painting by Williams. It represents a house in flames, with this motto from the prophet, “ Is he not a brand plucked out of the burning?” Many have supposed this device to be merely emblematical of his spiritual deliverance ; but from this cir­cumstance it is apparent that it has a primary as well as a secondary meaning ; it is real as well as allusive.

In the year 1713 he was entered a scholar at the Char­ter-house in London, where he continued seven years under the tuition of Dr Walker, and of the Rev. Andrew Tooke, author of the Pantheon. In his seventeenth year he was sent to Christ Church at Oxford. In 1726 he was elected a fellow of Lincoln College, and took the degree of A. Μ. in 1727. He was afterwards appointed a tutor of his college. He discovered very early an elegant turn for poetry. Some of his gayer poetical effusions are proofs of a lively fancy and a fine classical taste ; and some translations from the Latin poets, while at college, are allowed to have great merit. He had early a strong impression, like Count Zinzendorf, of his designation to some extraordinary work. This impression received additional force from some do­mestic incidents, all which his active fancy turned to his own account. His wonderful preservation, already noticed, naturally tended to cherish the idea of his being designed by Providence to accomplish some purpose or other that was out of the ordinary course of human events.

The reading of the writings of Mr William Law, the ce­lebrated author of Christian Perfection, and of a Serious Address to the Christian World, contributed to lead John Wesley and his brother Charles, with a few of their young fellow-students, into a more than common strictness of reli­gious life. They received the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper every week, observed all the fasts of the church, visited the prisons, rose at four in the morning, and refrained from all amusements. From the exact method in which they disposed of every hour, they acquired the appellation of *Methodists ;* by which their followers have been ever since distinguished.

From Dr Potter, bishop of Oxford, he received deacon’s orders in 1725, and priest’s in 1728. For some time he officiated as his father’s curate. But the boundaries of this island were soon deemed by Wesley too confined for a zeal which displayed the piety of an apostle, and of an intrepi­dity to which few missionaries had been superior. In 1735 he embarked for Georgia, one of our colonies, which was at that time in a state of political infancy ; and the great object of this voyage was to preach the gospel to the Indian na­tions in the vicinity of that province. He returned to Eng­land in 1737. Of his spiritual labours, both in this country and in America, he himself has given a very copious ac­count, in a series of Journals printed at different periods. These journals drew upon our laborious preacher and his coadjutors some severe animadversions from two prelates, Dr Lavington, bishop of Exeter, and Dr Warburton, bishop of Gloucester. The former published, in three parts, the Enthusiasm of the Methodists and Papists compared ; the third part of this performance containing a personal charge of immoral conduct. Mr Wesley, in his vindication, pub­lished a letter to his lordship, which produced a reply from the latter. Bishop Warburton’s attack is contained in his celebrated treatise, entitled “ The Doctrine of Grace : or, the Office and Operations of the Holy Spirit vindicated from the Insults of Infidelity, and the Abuses of Fanati­cism : concluding with some thoughts, humbly offered to the consideration of the Established Clergy, with regard to

the right Method of defending Religion against the At­tacks of either party.” Lond. 1762, 2 vols. 8vo. There is much acute reasoning, and much poignant and sprightly wit, in his Doctrine of Grace ; but there is too much levity in it for a grave bishop, and too much abuse for a candid Christian. On this occasion Wesley published a letter to the bishop, in which, with great temper and moderation, as well as with great ingenuity and address, he endeavoured to shelter himself from his lordship’s attacks, not only under the authority of the holy Scriptures, but of the church itself as by law established.

On his return from Georgia, Mr Wesley paid a visit to Count Zinzendorf, the celebrated founder of the sect of Moravians or Hernhutters, at Hernhut in Upper Lusatia. In the following year he appeared again in England, and with his brother Charles, at the head of the Methodists. He preached his first field sermon at Bristol, on the 2d of April 1738, from which time his disciples have continued to in­crease. In 1741 a serious altercation took place between him and Whitefield. In 1744, attempting to preach at an inn at Taunton, he was regularly silenced by the magistrates. Although he chiefly resided for the remainder of his life in the metropolis, he occasionally travelled through every part of Great Britain and Ireland, establishing congregations in each kingdom. In 1750 he married a lady, from whom he was afterwards separated. By this lady, who died in 1781, he had no children. He had been gradually declining for three years before his death ; yet he still rose at four in the morning, and preached, and travelled, and wrote as usual. He preached at Leatherhead in Surrey, on the Wednesday before that event. On the Friday following, appeared the first symptoms of his approaching dissolution. The four succeeding days he spent in praising God ; and he left this scene, at a quarter before ten in the morning of the 2d of March 1791, in the 88th year of his age. His remains, after lying in a kind of state at his chapel in the City Road, dressed in the sacerdotal robes which he usually wore, and on his head the old clerical cap, a Bible in one hand, and a white handkerchief in the other, were, agreeably to his own directions, and after the manner of the interment of Mr Whitefield, deposited in the cemetery behind his chapel, on the morning of the 9th March, amid an innumerable con­course of his friends and admirers, many of whom appeared in deep mourning on the occasion.

Wesley was a very various and voluminous writer. Di­vinity, both devotional and controversial, biography, history, philosophy, politics, and poetry, were all, at different times, the subjects of his pen ; and whatever opinion may be en­tertained of his theological sentiments, it is impossible to deny him the merit of having done very extensive good among the lower classes of people. He certainly possessed great abilities, and a fluency which was well accommodated to his hearers, and highly acceptable to them.

WESSEL’S Islands, a chain of islands which extends north-eastward from the north coast of New Holland, thir­teen leagues, at the entrance of the Gulf of Carpentaria, on the west side. The inhabitants are barbarous in the ex­treme, and go about naked. The northern extremity is in lat. 11. 18. S.

WEST, one of the cardinal points of the horizon, diame­trically opposite to the east ; and strictly defined the inter­section of the prime vertical with the horizon on that side the sun sets in.

West, *Gilbert,* was the son of Dr West, prebendary of Winchester, who published an edition of Pindar in 1697. He studied at Winchester and Eton, and from thence was placed in Christ Church, Oxford. His studious and serious turn inclined him to take orders ; but Lord Cobham, his maternal uncle, diverted him from that pursuit, and gave him a cornetcy in his own regiment. This profession he soon quitted on account of an opening of another nature,