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## 'Catching the Infection of His Zeal:'<sup>1</sup> Francis Johnston, a Baptist Voice in the mid-Nineteenth Century Scottish Evangelical Debate on the Work of the Holy Spirit

### ABSTRACT

In the nineteenth century there was a growing divide between Evangelical Protestants in their understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit. Traditionally revival had been seen as a sovereign work of God that took place without the necessity of direct human intervention, except for appeals in prayer. However, under the influence of American Evangelist Charles Finney a new understanding was promoted that suggested that if certain measures were adopted then evidence of a revival could be expected. In Scotland the most prominent advocate of this new understanding of this subject was Presbyterian clergyman James Morison. Another adherent of these views was John Kirk an Independent minister. These two individuals were the key influences on Scottish Baptist leader Francis Johnston, whose zealous adoption of the new measures caused serious division in Baptist ranks in Scotland in the 1840s and 1850s. This study considers the background to Johnston's adoption of a fresh understanding of this subject and interprets his conduct in this period. It also evaluates his interaction with colleagues and explains his reconciliation with other leading Scottish Baptists in the early 1860s. The impact of the 1859 revival was the critical factor that brought Scottish Baptists closer together in their understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit.

The nineteenth century had seen a growing divide between Evangelical Protestants in their understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit. Religious revivals were traditionally seen apparently as largely spontaneous in character and perceived as sovereign acts of God in response to the appeals of God's people.<sup>2</sup> Some of the most recent

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<sup>1</sup> W. Landels, 'Denominational Reminiscences by an Old Baptist', III, *Scottish Baptist Magazine*, (Vol. 12.10, October 1886): 268.

<sup>2</sup> See *The Revivals of Religion Addresses by Scottish Evangelical Leaders delivered in Glasgow in 1840*, (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1984 [1840]).

studies in the nineteenth century revivals have discovered that these movements are considerably more complex in their origins than had been believed by earlier scholars.<sup>3</sup> Prior to the 1840s a majority of Scottish Evangelicals would have affirmed the definition of revival, given by New England minister Solomon Stoddard in 1712, that revival was understood to refer to ‘some special seasons wherein God doth in a remarkable manner revive religion among his people.’<sup>4</sup> However, revivals were normally located in local communities in which there was evidence of enthusiastic and deep-rooted practical piety, as in, for example, the eighteenth century New England awakening associated with Jonathan Edwards. These revivals did not normally occur in less fertile religious environments.<sup>5</sup> There was at times a concern that enthusiasm for evangelistic work was perceived as being associated with erroneous notions. James Haldane, secretary of the Baptist Home Missionary Society for Scotland (BHMS), in 1832 assured Scottish Baptist churches of the adherence to the historic Reformed faith by the preachers employed by this home mission agency. Haldane declared that:

The conversion of the soul is the exclusive prerogative of the Almighty. Paul and Apollos were but instruments whom he condescended to employ; and while engaged in the work, their eyes were towards him...They felt more powerfully their obligations to the Lord, who by His Almighty power, had plucked them as brands from the burning.<sup>6</sup>

The most prominent leader of this evangelistic agency wished to communicate that the best approach to adopt when seeking future religious revival was to stay true to the traditional and long held beliefs and practices amongst Reformed Evangelicals in Scotland.

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<sup>3</sup> For example, K.S. Jeffrey, ‘Making Sense of the 1859 Revival in the North-East of Scotland’, in A. Walker & K. Aune (eds), *On Revival A Critical Examination*, (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2003), 105-118. K.S. Jeffrey, *When the Lord Walked the Land: The 1858-62 Revival in the North East of Scotland*, (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2002). For a representative earlier view see J. Kent, *Holding the Fort: Studies in Victorian Revivalism*, (London: Epworth, 1978), 71 and J.E. Orr, *The Second Evangelical Awakening*, (London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1949), 58-77.

<sup>4</sup> S. Stoddard, ‘The Benefit of the Gospel’, in *The Efficacy of the Fear of Hell, to Restrain Men from Sin*, (Boston, 1713), cited by M.J. Crawford, *Seasons of Grace: Colonial New England’s Revival Tradition in Its British Context*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 110.

<sup>5</sup> This point is discussed in S. Piggin, *Firestorm of the Lord: The History of and Prospects for Revival in the Church and the World*, (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2000), 45-49.

<sup>6</sup> J.A. Haldane, ‘To The Preachers Of The Baptist Home Missionary Society’, in *Baptist Home Missionary Society Reports*, (Edinburgh: J&D. Collie, 1832) app. 29-38.

A new era in the religious history of Scotland began with the appearance of the publications of American revivalist preacher Charles Finney.<sup>7</sup> His *Lectures on Revivals of Religion* had been published in America in 1835, but was only freely available in Scotland in 1839. John Kirk, who was later one of the most prominent supporters of Finney in Scotland, recalling the revolt there against traditional Calvinism in the 1830s, stated that there were two books that were particularly influential in stimulating this process. The first was Andrew Reed and James Matheson's *Visit to the American Churches*, whose descriptions of revivalist meetings in America led enthusiasts such as Kirk to imitate these practices in Scotland<sup>8</sup>, and of even greater value, Finney's *Lectures on Revivals*, that was both widely circulated and inexpensive to purchase.<sup>9</sup> The standard biography of John Kirk, *Memoirs of Rev. John Kirk D.D.*, noted that:

This remarkable revival...was inspired continually from abroad and around. Prof Finney's *Oberlin Evangelist* was regularly read by many of the leading workers and much influenced their methods and aims. Mr Kirk was then to some extent a pupil of Finney, though they had never met.' (Kirk did meet Finney later in 1859. The American Evangelist occupied his pulpit in Edinburgh that year for approximately three months.)<sup>10</sup> It is important to state that Charles Finney was the most important outside influence on the growth and development of these newer revivalist ideas in Scotland. The significance of this influence had been often overlooked due to the overshadowing importance of the 1843 Disruption in the Church of Scotland, in which a far greater number of people were involved, though it could be argued that the effects of Finney's influence on the churches in Scotland had been equally substantial.

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<sup>7</sup> The best account of the views of Finney is found in D.L. Weddle, *The Law as Gospel: Revival and Reform in the Theology of Charles G. Finney*, (London: Scarecrows Press, 1985).

<sup>8</sup> A. Reed & J. Matheson, *A Narrative of the Visit to the American Churches*, (2 Vols; London: Jackson and Walford, 1835, Vol. 1, 294-298; Vol. 2, 1-50, 64-78). H. Kirk, *Memoirs of Rev. John Kirk D.D.*, (Edinburgh, 1888), 138-154.

<sup>9</sup> *Christian News*, 2 September 1865, cited by R. Carwardine, *Trans-Atlantic Revivalism: Popular Evangelicalism in Britain and America, 1790-1865*, (London: Greenwood Press, 1978), 97.

<sup>10</sup> G.M. Rosell & R.A.G. Dupois (eds), *The Memoirs of Charles G. Finney*, (Zondervan: Academic Books, 1989), 591, records that 'Finney commenced preaching on Sunday 21 August and continued to 6 November 1859', E. Finney, 'A Journal Kept by Mrs Elizabeth Ford Atkinson Finney during a Visit to England in 1859-1860', 50-53, ms in the Special Collections, Oberlin College Library, as the source of this reference.

Finney's book, *Lectures on Revivals*, promoted the idea that conversions could be encouraged by the adoption of certain practices such as the isolated 'anxious seat', on which needy sinners had been placed. Although this book appeared to encourage Welsh Christians in 1839-43 in their promotion of traditional revival practices, which in some cases had affinities with the newer measures,<sup>11</sup> it has been suggested that it was a different story in Scotland, where enthusiasm for the new ideas began to emerge following the Kilsyth Revival of 1839.<sup>12</sup> These new measures, however, did not appear to be in evidence in the events at the Parish Church at the centre of the revival.<sup>13</sup> By contrast, the tensions between members of the United Secession Church in the town led eventually to a division and the formation of an Independent Evangelical Church associated with these new opinions that were being spread by a number of the younger ministers in this denomination, the most prominent of whom was James Morison. This Kilsyth cause was formally constituted in 1848.<sup>14</sup> The opinions of Finney were not uncritically accepted by his Scottish supporters, but they provided a springboard for a fresh evaluation of many traditionally accepted beliefs.

One Scottish minister who was greatly indebted to Finney was James Morison.<sup>15</sup> The Kilmarnock minister was so excited about his discoveries that he discussed their importance in a letter to his father Robert Morison, a United Secession Church minister, in 1838. 'I do strenuously advise you to get Finney's lectures on Revivals, and preach like him; I have reaped more benefit from the book than from all other

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<sup>11</sup> R. Carwardine, 'The Welsh Evangelical Community and "Finney's Revival"', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, (Vol. 29.4, 1978): 463-480; See also Carwardine, *Trans-Atlantic Revivalism*, 85-94; and Crawford, *Seasons of Grace*, 244.

<sup>12</sup> D.W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 116.

<sup>13</sup> W.J. Couper, *Scottish Revivals*, (Dundee: James P. Mathew & Co., 1918), 118-129; though I. A. Muirhead, 'The Revival as a Dimension of Scottish Church History', *Records of the Scottish Church History Society*, (Vol. 20, 1978): 182-3, 195; implied that the newer measures were more in evidence than Couper had suggested. However, evidence of a more intense spirituality and greater fervency in preaching does not prove that parish minister William Chalmers Burns had accepted Finneyite opinions about the means of creating revivals.

<sup>14</sup> J. Hutchison, *Weavers, Miners and the Open Book A History of Kilsyth*, (Cumbernauld: James Hutchison, 1986), 106-107.

<sup>15</sup> K.B.E. Roxburgh, 'James Morison (1816-1893)', *Records of the Scottish Church History Society*, (Vol. 32, 2002): 132-133, provides a helpful discussion of some of the similarities and differences between the views of Finney and Morison.

human compositions put together'.<sup>16</sup> James Morison had had a similar doctrinal pilgrimage to Charles Finney. The two men had both been brought up in traditional Calvinistic Presbyterian circles and had begun their ministry believing in the Reformed doctrine of election, before later discarding it.<sup>17</sup> The old ideas associated with the consequences of a belief in the doctrine of original sin were also rejected by both men.<sup>18</sup> Likewise the necessity for a supernatural work of the Spirit in a person's heart before conversion was also rejected.<sup>19</sup> Finney, in his 1835 *Lectures on Revivals of Religion*, declared: 'A revival is not a miracle, nor dependent on a miracle, in any sense. It is a purely philosophical result of the right use of the constituted means'.<sup>20</sup> James Morison had already drawn the attention of his peers to his independent mind when he had chosen to oppose his own denomination's belief in the eternal Sonship of Christ.<sup>21</sup> These rationalistic influences had also made inroads into Scottish Baptist ranks in this era. An article in the Baptist Union of Scotland periodical *The Evangelist*, in April 1851, also denied the validity of the traditional understanding of this doctrine.<sup>22</sup> This was not the first time that this opinion had been held within Baptist circles in Scotland. In the earlier

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<sup>16</sup> W. Adamson, *The Life of the Rev. James Morison*, (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1898), 55. A contrasting view was presented in the 1840 *Revival of Religion Addresses*, which included these words in the preface: 'It is because our American brethren have so frequently mistaken what is at most only concomitant, or merely adjunct or consequent, for what is essential to conversion, that they have fallen into such multifarious errors and abuses, in their zealous attempts to 'get up' and 'conduct' revivals.', xvii.

<sup>17</sup> Adamson, *James Morison*, 79. G.W. Gale, *Autobiography of Rev. George Gale*, (New York: n.p., 1964), 186, 274, cited by K.J. Hardman, *Charles Grandison Finney 1792-1875*, (Darlington: Evangelical Press, 1990 [1987]), 52.

<sup>18</sup> Ferguson, *A History of the Evangelical Union*, (Glasgow: Thomas Morison, 1876), 63. Hardman, *Charles Grandison Finney*, 15-21. For a fuller explanation of Morison's rejection of this doctrine, see J. Morison, 'Original Sin', *Evangelical Repository*, second series, (Vol. 1.4, June 1859): 270, 272. For Finney see C.G. Finney, *Sermons on Gospel Themes* (ed.), R.M. Friedrich, (Grand Rapids: Alethea in Heart, 2002 [1876]), 98-111. In the New England context Nathaniel Taylor had prepared the way for this view with his 1818 pamphlet, *Man, a Free Agent Without the Aids of Divine Grace*. This point was noted by N.A. Hardesty, *Your Daughters Shall Prophecy: Revivalism and Feminism in the Age of Finney*, (New York: Carlson, 1991), 30, though Finney developed Taylor's position by insisting that the sinner had 'a natural capacity for faith', Weddle, *Law as Gospel*, 188-189. John Kirk also rejected the traditional understanding of this issue, Kirk, *John Kirk*, 375.

<sup>19</sup> Ferguson, *Evangelical Union*, 61.

<sup>20</sup> C.G. Finney, *Lectures on Revivals of Religion* (ed.), W.G. McLoughlin, (Cambridge: Harvard University, Belknap Press, 1960), 13.

<sup>21</sup> Adamson, *James Morison*, 41-43.

<sup>22</sup> *The Evangelist*, (Vol. 6.4, April 1851): 79.

part of the nineteenth century a ‘correct understanding’ of the nature of Christ’s Sonship was perceived as a mark of either heterodoxy or orthodoxy within Scotch Baptist circles.<sup>23</sup> A further parallel between Morison and the Scotch Baptists was concerning the nature of true faith. Morison, in his booklet *Saving Faith*, taught that faith is a simple act of belief in Christ which must not be confused with its effects,<sup>24</sup> a view shared by Sandemanians, the members of the Glasite denomination in Scotland, led by John Glas and his son-in-law Robert Sandeman.<sup>25</sup> Morison referred to the disputations on the nature of true faith between Andrew Fuller<sup>26</sup> and Archibald McLean,<sup>27</sup> making it plain that he took the side of McLean on this matter.<sup>28</sup> He declared that ‘faith is just the same as belief,<sup>29</sup> and though he recognised the need for the work of the Holy Spirit in the conversion of sinners, it was ‘in no mechanical way . . . and must be accomplished by moral means . . . through the truth as it is in Jesus.’ Morison denied that regeneration occurs prior to faith. Because saving faith is a belief of the truth, the preacher must do everything in his power to present the gospel to the minds of his hearers that they may understand, believe and be saved.<sup>30</sup> Morison was a consistent rationalist who required doctrinal statements to be both biblical and rational. Although he built upon ideas advanced by the Glasites and Scotch Baptists, and especially Finney,<sup>31</sup> Morison himself had a significant influence on fellow Scottish Christians in the nineteenth century.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> J. Williamson, *Some Reminiscences of The Old Baptist Church Pleasance*, (Edinburgh: John Anderson, 1901), 15. See also B.R. Talbot, *Search for a Common Identity: The Origins of the Baptist Union of Scotland*, (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2003), 63-64.

<sup>24</sup> J. Morison, *Saving Faith*, (Kilmarnock: J. Davie, 1842), 50-51.

<sup>25</sup> D.B. Murray, ‘Sandeman, Robert (1718-71)’, in N.M. de S. Cameron (ed.), *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993) 744.

<sup>26</sup> J. Belcher (ed.), *The Complete Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller*, 3 Vols, (Harrisonburg: Sprinkle, 1988 [1844]), Vol.2, 561-647.

<sup>27</sup> W. Jones (ed.), *The Miscellaneous Works of Archibald McLean*, 6 Vols, (London: William Jones, 1823), Vol.2, 1-127.

<sup>28</sup> Morison, *Saving Faith*, 50-51.

<sup>29</sup> Morison, *Saving Faith*, 4.

<sup>30</sup> Morison, *Saving Faith*, 49-50. See also J. Morison, ‘Nature of the Holy Spirit’s Work: Or are the influences of the Spirit Direct or Mediate’, *Evangelical Repository*, (Vol. 2.6, June 1856): 238—258; and ‘Does Scripture teach that the Influences of the Holy Spirit are Resistible?’ (Vol. 3.10, June 1857): 121-134.

<sup>31</sup> C.E. Hambrick-Stowe, *Charles G. Finney and the Spirit of American Evangelicalism*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 258-259, reveals some differences between Finney and Morison, implying that the latter man employed a more rigorously rational approach to theological issues.

<sup>32</sup> Morison’s influence on Francis Johnston and other Scottish Baptists is noted in Roxburgh, *James Morison*, 138-140, and Talbot, *Common Identity*, 229-276.

Another important Scottish theologian who would be influential upon Baptist leader Francis Johnston was John Kirk, minister of Hamilton Independent Church from 1839 to 1845, then an Evangelical Union (EU) minister in Edinburgh from 1845, settling in Broughton EU Chapel, in that city, in 1846 until his retirement in 1876.<sup>33</sup> Johnston had moved to Edinburgh in 1845 to found a new Baptist congregation that would be in sympathy with his views, after his attempts to impose his opinions on his Cupar charge had been without success.<sup>34</sup> The closeness of their geographical location and a similar theological pilgrimage made it inevitable that Johnston and Kirk would at the very least have been aware of the contribution each had been making in the contemporary theological debates. Kirk in the 1840s was a young minister with strong opinions that were very forcefully expressed. His 'new views' caused considerable unease within the network of Scottish Independent churches.<sup>35</sup> Here the controversy was not directly related to the Atonement debate in the United Secession Church; instead it centred on the extent and nature of the work of the Holy Spirit in conversion. Kirk passionately rejected the distinctive Calvinistic doctrines that were commonly associated with the Independent tradition. By contrast, he focussed on the universal love of God, a universal atonement and the influence of the Holy Spirit being brought to bear equally on every person without distinction or exception.<sup>36</sup> It was, though, the publication in 1842 of *The Way of Life Made Plain* that brought Kirk to the attention of his denomination. This is a popular rather than an academic study of Christian doctrine. It was 'to the common people that his heart especially turns'. This work was a compilation of thirteen 'lectures' that were originally distributed as individual tracts in the district where he served as a minister.<sup>37</sup> It is most probable that this book served as a model for

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<sup>33</sup> N. Needham, 'Kirk, John (1813-86)', in Cameron, *Dictionary of Scottish Church History*, 460.

<sup>34</sup> R.B. Hannen, 'Francis Johnston', *Scottish Baptist Magazine*, (Vol. 66.7, July 1940): 5. It is probable that a proportion of Johnston's congregation of Morisonian Baptists had previously attended as hearers at Kirk's church due to the lack of a Baptist cause in Edinburgh that espoused this theological perspective. See Kirk, *John Kirk*, 226.

<sup>35</sup> It led to the expulsion of nine ministerial students from their Theological Academy in 1844. They had faced an additional examination in the autumn of 1843 regarding their beliefs, which had been viewed (correctly) as sympathetic to the opinions being promoted by Kirk. See W. Adamson, *The Life of Fergus Ferguson*, (Glasgow: Thomas D. Morris, 1900), 36-48, and *The Expulsion of Nine Students from the Glasgow Theological Academy*, (Glasgow: G. Gallie, 1844).

<sup>36</sup> Adamson, *Fergus Ferguson*, 37.

<sup>37</sup> J. Kirk, *The Way of Life Made Plain*, (Glasgow, 1842), Preface, v-viii. Kirk, *John Kirk*, 193-202.

Johnston's most controversial publication, *The Work of God and the Work of Man in Conversion*, published in 1848.<sup>38</sup> Johnston's book was also aimed at the common man rather than the academic community and was a compilation of fourteen 'lectures' on similar themes. Kirk was unafraid of controversy and where it might lead and his Baptist contemporary was a minister with a similar disposition. As a result Kirk within Scottish Independent circles and Johnston in Baptist ranks would cause breaches of fellowship within their constituencies that would take a number of years to heal.

Kirk, like Morison, held to a Sandemanian view of faith. There are a good number of references to 'simple belief' throughout *The Way of Life Made Plain*.<sup>39</sup> In Lecture nine, 'The Holy Spirit alone overcomes man's enmity to the truth of God', Kirk rejects the traditional Reformed view of a supernatural intervention in the human mind and heart by the Holy Spirit to predispose an individual to respond to the gospel proclamation. He declares that 'you can undergo no change but in the simple way of believing'... and followed it up with a question: 'Why does it require Omnipotence to bring about what is nothing more than the belief of a simple truth?' 'The Spirit's work with the unbeliever must be an 'external work', because until an unbeliever turns from his unbelief 'the Holy Spirit of the Lord is excluded from your mind and his work is necessarily from without.' The question that then arises is this: In what way does God speak to people? The answer given by Kirk is that 'God regards himself as speaking when his word is spoken by man.'<sup>40</sup> The idea of an effectual call from God or any form of irresistible grace was discussed in Lecture ten of his book. Kirk declared; 'You must remember that while his power is unlimited, its exercise is limited by the nature of the mind with which he deals. He has pleased to make man a moral being and not a stone and it is no dishonour to his power to say, that he cannot influence a stone as he influences a mind...if, after God has brought the utmost amount of motive to bear on man which he is capable of receiving, and still he is unchanged, it is no disparagement to turn and ask, 'What more could I have done?...' Kirk also stated that each person was 'absolutely free' in the choices they could make.<sup>41</sup> Johnston's understanding of this doctrine was the same as that of Kirk. In the Baptist minister's eighth lecture on man's ability to turn to God and

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<sup>38</sup> F. Johnston, *The Work of God and the Work of Man in Conversion*, (Edinburgh: W. Innes & A. Muirhead, 1848).

<sup>39</sup> Kirk, *Way of Life Made Plain*, for example, 24, 32, 73, 74, 95.

<sup>40</sup> Kirk, *Way of Life Made Plain*, 68-79, but see also 61-68 where similar points are made on this subject.

<sup>41</sup> Kirk, *Way of Life Made Plain*, 80-86.

believe the gospel there is the following statement. 'You will never get the Holy Spirit till you take Jesus. When you receive the truth of the Spirit, then you receive the Spirit of truth, but not till then. Do not, dear friend, be deluded with the notion that you are as passive as a stone...'.<sup>42</sup> This approach to commending the Christian faith was very attractive to a significant proportion of working-class people attending Scottish churches in the mid nineteenth century who had struggled to comprehend some of the doctrines propounded by preachers holding to the standard Reformed views.

Lecture six in Kirk's book, 'Christ Jesus is, in the same sense, and to the same extent, the propitiation for the sins of the whole of mankind', addresses the issue of the extent of the atonement using I John 2:2 as the basis for his discussion of various biblical texts. The author leaves his readers in no doubt as to where his sympathies lie.

All the sophistry in earth and hell combined, will never be able to make that "whole world" anything less than that same "whole world" which the same Spirit says "lieth in wickedness". If, therefore, anyone excludes *you* from "the whole world" for which Jesus died, he must also exclude you from that which "lieth in the wicked one".<sup>43</sup>

Kirk's motivation for promoting these 'new' ideas in mid-nineteenth century Scotland was primarily evangelistic. Some proponents of Reformed opinions, in his view, had been reluctant to invite people to respond to the gospel message. The justification for the controversy he and other Morisonians had created was this - the large number of people who had professed faith through hearing this interpretation of the Christian faith.<sup>44</sup> For example, Kirk himself was aware of 'many hundreds' who had 'found peace and a total change of character and experience' through reading the separate 'treatises' that made up this book. He also had another aim in producing this work - to show 'earnest Christians' how to more effectively in sharing their faith and 'so be better able to bring it successfully home'.<sup>45</sup> Johnston had used the same reasoning for insisting that the home evangelistic work of his Morisonian Baptist Union must be kept separate from the operations of the BHMS, a society whose leaders and preachers held to an Evangelical Calvinistic interpretation of the Christian faith. He believed that given time it would

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<sup>42</sup> Johnston, *Work of God and Work of Man*, 123.

<sup>43</sup> Kirk, *Way of Life Made Plain*, 44-52.

<sup>44</sup> A similar interpretation of the justification for Morisonian theology is given in H.F. Henderson, *The Religious Controversies of Scotland*, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1905), 182-193.

<sup>45</sup> Kirk, *Way of Life Made Plain*, Preface, vi-viii.

be self-evident that the new approach to evangelistic work would produce more converts and therefore ‘we shall more effectively and rapidly advance the cause of God in the land.’<sup>46</sup> Johnston’s confidence was misplaced, but the atmosphere of the mid-1840s following the formation of the Free Church of Scotland through the Disruption of May 1843, together with the genesis of the Evangelical Union and the start of the co-operative meetings of the Churches of Christ, all within a twelve month period, could only be described as a revolutionary change in the allegiances of a significant number of Scottish Christians.<sup>47</sup>

Johnston’s book, *The Work of God and the Work of Man in Conversion*, was produced as a conscious challenge to the existing views of theological orthodoxy on the part of some of his colleagues in Scottish Baptist ranks.<sup>48</sup> It was also no coincidence that this work appeared at the same time as Johnston and some of his colleagues had dramatically reshaped the Baptist Union of Scotland as a militant Morisonian body. Theological differences between the Scottish Baptist ministers had not been at the heart of disputes between the Baptist Union and the BHMS in the 1840s. Differences in methodology between men of different generations and personality conflicts had taken priority at that time. This was to change after August 1849 when the editorship of *The Evangelist*, transferred from James Taylor, a Baptist minister who had moved to a charge in Birmingham, and who was a moderate Arminian, to William Landels, minister of Cupar Baptist Church and a Morisonian.<sup>49</sup> Taylor had taken on too many responsibilities and his health had broken down.

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<sup>46</sup> Words taken from a motion agreed by delegates at the Baptist Union of Scotland Annual Meeting in Perth, August 1846, n.p., MS in the possession of Bristo Baptist Church, Edinburgh. More details are given in Talbot, *Common Identity*, 249-251.

<sup>47</sup> A similar confidence was found in the wider social and political context at that time. In Parliament in the previous two decades there had been the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829; the Reform Bill of 1832; the Abolition of Slavery in the British Colonies in 1833; the Poor Law of 1834; the restoration of the rights of municipalities in 1835 and the foundation of a system of national education in 1839. Henderson’s summary of these social trends was apt; ‘Brotherhood, equality, and fair-play were clamouring loudly at every closed door, and refusing to be turned away. A corresponding claim, quite independent of politics, was being made in the name of Christian theology. Here also it was demanded that the doors of privilege be thrown open. The conception of a God who maintained His Church and provided redemption for the favoured few was being declared an intolerable anachronism. Freedom for all, food for all, education for all, and salvation for all, were now coming to be the national watchwords.’ Henderson, *Religious Controversies*, 182-183.

<sup>48</sup> Johnston, *Work of God and Work of Man*, 3-4.

<sup>49</sup> *The Evangelist*, (Vol. 5.5, May 1850): 99-100; (Vol. 5.10, September 1850): 176.

Under his editorship, the magazine had maintained a careful avoidance of controversial issues and a policy of co-operation between Baptists of different theological persuasions. William Landels, had a very different approach. Noting that the Union had adopted *The Evangelist* as its publication, Landels decided that progress would be made most effectively by having a clear doctrinal position to advance. His doctrinal limits excluded the majority of Scottish Baptists. Landels was encouraged in this matter by Francis Johnston, the Union's inspirational leader, and by Thomas Hughes Milner, an Edinburgh Silk Mercer, Draper and Haberdasher,<sup>50</sup> who was a lay member of Johnston's congregation in Edinburgh, and who was to succeed Landels as editor of *The Evangelist*. The January 1850 editorial address was a clear statement of the new public position of the Union. Noting that a formal decision had been taken on the matter in April 1849 at the annual meeting of the Baptist Union at Cupar, Landel's church, the following resolution was passed:

That from January 1850, *The Evangelist* be taken under the sanction and management of the Union; and be recognised as the Union's organ. It will henceforth be employed in defending and propagating the three great scriptural doctrines, which the brethren in the Union generally are understood to hold – The love of God to – The death of Christ for - The influence of the Spirit on – all men. This doctrinal triplet we now adopt as our motto, and intend to inscribe on the front page of every future number, as an indication of its nature and design. We regard it as presenting the only consistent view of the character of the Triune God...And the better to secure this, we respectfully request our brethren to assist us, by contributing carefully written papers, in which these doctrines, in their bearings are explained, illustrated and applied, and shall refuse insertion to all such papers as do not harmonise therewith...<sup>51</sup>

The contrast between this theological stance and that presented by the committee of the 1827 Baptist Union of Scotland was marked. In 1827 the Baptist Union committee could count on almost unanimous approval from Scottish Baptists for their broadly Reformed position.<sup>52</sup> The 1849 Union, by contrast, knew that this Arminian declaration of faith was a source of division. This small group of Baptist leaders had deliberately chosen to take this step knowing that it would lose them

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<sup>50</sup> *Post Office Annual Directory 1849-1850*, (Edinburgh: Johnstone, Ballantyne & Co., 1849), 90.

<sup>51</sup> *The Evangelist*, (Vol. 5.1, January 1850): 1.

<sup>52</sup> Talbot, *Common Identity*, 203.

some of their existing supporters. There was, however, an honest admission that they knew what they were doing:

We have counted the cost. Our principles we cannot renounce for friendship's sake...We calculate on the defection of those friends, with whom we differ in sentiment...The spread of truth, so important, is worthy of labour, of self-denial, and sacrifice...We ask no favour.<sup>53</sup>

Landels was editor of *The Evangelist* from September 1849 to May 1850. He was obliged to follow Taylor's conciliatory approach in the remaining issues of 1849, but became free to change that approach in the 1850 issues. He was asked to resign in April 1850 after receiving a call to a Baptist church in Birmingham. He at first refused to accede to this request, but upon the threat of the withdrawal of financial support from the Baptist Union he admitted defeat. The reason for requesting his resignation was that he would be living outside Scotland and this rendered his position as editor of a Scottish periodical untenable. Readers of the May issue of *The Evangelist* were given an opportunity to read about this unhappy incident.<sup>54</sup> It may also be pertinent to this decision to note that there was a significant and steady decline in the circulation figures for *The Evangelist* after the change of editorial policy in January 1850.<sup>55</sup> The readership of this denominational periodical, therefore, must have previously included a significant proportion of Calvinists who could not accept the new confrontational approach. The Baptist Union men were clearly prepared to lose their ties with Calvinistic brethren, but this issue indicated that they could not work in a satisfactory manner with each other.

Francis Johnston was a complex character who combined zeal for the promotion of the Baptist cause in Scotland with an equal zeal to put right the perceived faults of his fellow Baptists. His conflicts with some of his Scottish colleagues will illustrate why this attempt at union would ultimately founder. One individual to face censure was Peter Grant, a lawyer and lay-pastor of an 'English' Baptist Church in Stirling. Grant had written a booklet entitled, *A Brief Review of a Recent Publication entitled, 'The Work of God and the Work of Man in Conversion'*, in response to this highly controversial book produced in 1848 by Francis Johnston. The Johnston book attracted criticism from many Scottish Baptists besides

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<sup>53</sup> W. Landels, 'Editorial Address', *The Evangelist*, (Vol. 5.1, January 1850): 1-2.

<sup>54</sup> *The Evangelist*, (Vol. 5.5, May 1850): 99-100.

<sup>55</sup> Minute Book of the Executive Committee of the Baptist Union of Scotland and Theological Academy, September 1850 to August 1855, 11 February 1852, MS in the Scottish Baptist History Archive, Baptist House, Glasgow.

Peter Grant, but it is the Stirling pastor to whom Johnston responded in the pages of *The Evangelist*. There were five instalments in successive issues from August to December 1850. Johnston's manuscript would have been published earlier, but the editor of *The Evangelist* who first received it in the spring or summer of 1849, James Taylor, refused to publish it on the grounds that 'enough had been said on that subject'. This was a wise decision. A less discerning editor, Thomas Milner, was willing to publish his pastor's remarks.<sup>56</sup> It is important to ask why Johnston's book had caused so much alarm amongst his fellow Scottish Baptists.

Peter Grant, together with other Calvinistic Baptists, had been concerned about the spread of new theological ideas in Scotland associated with James Morison and the Evangelical Union. Mainstream evangelical Calvinists like Peter Grant tended to follow Andrew Fuller's line in his debates with Archibald McLean regarding faith and to reject the other newer ideas associated with Morison and his colleagues. In 1827 Scottish Baptists had been in almost total agreement about theological matters, their disagreements being confined to ecclesiological issues. Now it appeared that the very foundational doctrines of the faith were being undermined. In such a context as this it is not surprising that Johnston's book aroused strong responses within the Scottish Baptist constituency.

It is important to be aware that Johnston had completely rejected the Calvinistic understanding of God, humanity and salvation. Some modern writers, unlike his contemporaries, appear to underestimate the significance of this development.<sup>57</sup> Johnston in his debate with Peter Grant admits that he is an Arminian and that Grant is a Calvinist and that the traditional differences between these two systems regarding the doctrine of salvation are upheld in their writings.<sup>58</sup> Francis Johnston, however, is unwilling to accept the main charges brought by Grant against him. Grant's fundamental criticism refers to the apparent equality of roles in the process of conversion undertaken by man and God:

in treating of the glorious work of the new creation, thus to place God and man side by side, and as being, as far as the terms go, compeers, and on a footing, is an exceeding violation of reverence and right feeling towards God...the doctrine of the lectures

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<sup>56</sup> *The Evangelist*, (Vol. 5.8, August 1850): 150.

<sup>57</sup> E.g. D.B. Murray, 'Johnstone, Francis', in D.M. Lewis (ed.), *Dictionary of Evangelical Biography 1730-1860*, (2 Vols; Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1995), Vol. 1, 616.

<sup>58</sup> F. Johnston, 'Reply to Mr Grant IV', *The Evangelist*, (Vol. 5.11, November 1850): 221.

indicates views and feelings tending to the utter subversion of the grace of God.<sup>59</sup>

At the heart of the issue is the debate over the manner in which the Holy Spirit brings people to faith in Jesus Christ. Peter Grant assumed that Johnston followed Finney and Morison in denying the supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit in conversion as the determinative factor as to whether a person was brought to faith. The claim was denied by Johnston, though his book appeared to confirm the suspicions of his opponents. He argued that the Holy Spirit inspired the writers of Holy Scripture and they passed on the sacred writings to the members of the church who are commissioned to preach it to the world. 'It is thus that the Holy Spirit is at work for the conversion of man to God.'<sup>60</sup> The idea of the Holy Spirit working directly and actively on a human being in opening the mind and bringing it to respond to the gospel, as understood in Reformed theology, was decisively rejected. The effectual call of the Spirit is a doctrine of devils, a doctrine in which Satan and his angels and agents delight, as being so subservient to their hellish purposes in deceiving and destroying millions of souls. It behoves the people of God therefore to set their faces against it as a flint.<sup>61</sup>

Johnston appears to believe, echoing Finney, that if the right human methodology is used that there will be a mass turning of the people in the land to the Christian faith. 'Of one thing the writer is certain, that were the doctrines here stated universally preached, there would be a universal revival of religion in our churches.'<sup>62</sup> The notion of one religious prescription to cure all the spiritual ills of Scotland would be challenged by the religious revival of the late 1850s and early 1860s. However, in the 1840s the men of Morisonian opinions were supremely confident that they would win the competition for the spiritual allegiance of a growing proportion of Scottish Christians

It was only to be expected that other Scottish Baptists besides Peter Grant would declare their opposition to Johnston's theology. Jonathan Watson in a public lecture in June 1852, given to the Tabernacle congregation in Edinburgh, spoke by contrast of:

the indispensable need of the Holy Spirit's influences for our personal establishment and general usefulness.' He exposed the

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<sup>59</sup> *The Primitive Church Magazine (P.C.M.)*, New Series, (Vol. 6.2, February 1849): 67-68.

<sup>60</sup> Johnston, *Work of God and Work of Man*, 20.

<sup>61</sup> Johnston, *Work of God and Work of Man*, 112-113.

<sup>62</sup> Johnston, *Work of God and Work of Man*, 206.

modern views of the Spirit's work, and contended earnestly for the great truth, so plainly revealed in the Bible, that when Paul had planted, and Apollos watered, God must, for only he can, give the increase.<sup>63</sup>

Another prominent Baptist minister to speak out against the views propounded in Johnston's book was Alexander McLeod. After commending some churches for their orthodox faith McLeod then contrasts that with others known to him:

are there not others of undisguised and undisguisable Pelagian opinions? And does not Pelagianism deny that it behoves 'the ungodly and sinners' to be illuminated and converted by the special operation of the Holy Spirit? While professing to admit 'the belief of truth' do they not stoutly deny 'the sanctification of the Spirit - the washing of regeneration - the renewing of the Holy Ghost?' of which the Lord himself said to Nicodemus, 'except a man be born of the Spirit he cannot see the kingdom of God?' Is this denial of the Holy Spirit less dangerous or less ungodly and pernicious than the rejection of our Lord's Divine glory and atoning sacrifice?<sup>64</sup>

Johnston had the opportunity to correct any mistakes in Grant's critique of his book on the work of the Spirit in conversion, but instead appeared to confirm his opponent's position. He admitted that 'Faith is the work of man as well as the gift of God',<sup>65</sup> and that the working of the Holy Spirit during the ministry of Jesus on earth was solely 'the Father drawing souls simply through Christ's doctrines and miracles. We ask, were not these the means through which God exerted or put forth that influence which alone could bring them to Christ?'<sup>66</sup> Far from reassuring fellow Baptists by his extended reply to Grant's accusations, Johnston only confirmed suspicions that he had departed from Christian orthodoxy. This understanding of the situation ensured that there was no possibility of the views of the various types of Scottish Baptists being contained in a single Baptist Union of Scotland in the 1850s.

This conclusion was reluctantly drawn by several Scottish Calvinistic Baptist ministers in the early 1850s after the separatist declaration of the Union's magazine, *The Evangelist*, in January 1850. A

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<sup>63</sup> *PCM*, New Series, (Vol. 9.8, August 1852): 232-233.

<sup>64</sup> *PCM*, New Series, (Vol. 12.6, June 1855): 169-172.

<sup>65</sup> Johnston, 'Reply to Mr Grant chapter I', *The Evangelist*, (Vol. 5.8, August 1850): 152.

<sup>66</sup> Johnston, 'Reply to Mr Grant chapter IV', 221-222.

group of men led by Henry John Betts, the successor of James Haldane as pastor at the Tabernacle Church in Edinburgh, sought to have fellowship with like-minded English Calvinistic Baptists. They supported a little known society called 'The Baptist Evangelical Society', (BES)<sup>67</sup> and its magazine *The Primitive Church Magazine (PCM)*. The BES was never intended to form the basis of a separate denomination, as a declaration, dated April 1845, made plain: 'It was never contemplated that brethren or churches, uniting with it, should be expected to withdraw, in consequence of doing so, either from local organisations, or denominational institutions'.<sup>68</sup> In June 1857, a doctrinal basis was recorded that made plain that the *PCM* would continue to proclaim the traditional Calvinistic theology held historically by Particular Baptists.<sup>69</sup> Supporters of this Society were never going to feel comfortable in the Baptist Union organised by Johnston. An anonymous Scottish supporter of the *PCM* hinted at the dissension in the ranks of the Baptist Union of Scotland as a result of the publication of Johnston's controversial book.

All holding evangelical doctrine (and even some who are still of Mr J.[Johnston]'s party) are unanimous in pronouncing his book erroneous, insidious, and of evil tendency...Most sincerely do we regret the position of the theological tutor of the Baptist Union of Scotland. Some of the best supporters of his theological school, it is said, will support it no more.<sup>70</sup>

One of Johnston's admirers who was a member of the BES, Peter Grant, minister of Grantown-on-Spey Baptist Church, had been concerned about the Cupar minister's theology in 1846, long before the damage caused by his 1848 treatise. In a letter to his son William, Peter Grant expresses his hopes and also his fears for Johnston's future:

If the Lord preserves Johnston from erroneous views you will see that he will be one of the cleverest men of our denomination. I am not sorry that you cultivate acquaintance with him, I hope it will not offend anyone.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> G.R. Breed, *The Baptist Evangelical Society*, (Dunstable: Fauconberg Press, 1988).

<sup>68</sup> Breed, *Baptist Evangelical Society*, 10. See G.R. Breed, *Particular Baptists in Victorian England and their Strict Communion Organizations*, (Didcot: Baptist Historical Society, 2003), for the wider context of the work of this group of Baptists in the United Kingdom. For details of Scottish supporters of this cause, see Talbot, *Common Identity*, 271-272.

<sup>69</sup> *PCM*, New Series, (Vol. 14.6, June 1857): 151.

<sup>70</sup> *PCM*, New Series, (Vol. 6.3, March 1849): 91-92.

<sup>71</sup> Peter Grant to William Grant, 17 November 1846, Grant ms, held in a private collection of Grant papers.

Peter Grant was a most perceptive minister who had seen before many of his colleagues the direction in which Johnston was going. Johnston, unfortunately, had surrounded himself with men of like mind and had alienated colleagues who could have helped him focus his gifts and enthusiasm in a more beneficial direction. There was a sense of inevitability about Johnston's resignation from his work in Scotland in January 1856 and the acceptance of a new pastorate in Cambridge. This step closed the door on a painful episode in Scottish Baptist history.

After some time for reflection, a small group of Scottish Baptist leaders began, in September 1856, to search for new ways to build bridges to overcome the old causes of division within their denomination.<sup>72</sup> *The Freeman*, the English Baptist periodical, contained the following comment on the relationships between Baptists in Scotland in 1858. 'We congratulate them on the fact that a more genial and unitive spirit has of late appeared amongst them.'<sup>73</sup> The focus of attention in this denomination, together with other Evangelical Protestants, was now firmly on the revival of religion that had been evident in the USA from 1857<sup>74</sup> and had now been witnessed in Northern Ireland and Scotland. It is important to note that this revival was probably the first truly national revival in Scotland,<sup>75</sup> with a corresponding impact on the work of the different churches. As a result of the focus on the revival of spiritual life within the churches, the increasingly sterile debate over the significance of the Holy Spirit's work in the conversion of sinners began to subside, in favour of the proponents of traditional opinions, who had stressed the necessity of an active regenerating work in the human heart prior to conversion. This development was, however, accompanied by the emergence of a more pietistical and less doctrinal form of Evangelicalism, not only within Baptist ranks, but also within the other Protestant denominations in Scotland.<sup>76</sup>

The connection between Baptists in Scotland and the revival was made plain in the 1859 annual report. The report, which was read at a business meeting, referred to the origin of the Association as having

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<sup>72</sup> Talbot, *Common Identity*, chapter eight.

<sup>73</sup> *The Freeman*, (Vol. 4, 1 December 1858): 731.

<sup>74</sup> J.E. Orr, *The Event of the Century The 1857-1858 Awakening*, (ed.), R.O. Roberts, (Wheaton: International Awakening Press, 1989), 47-67. K.T. Long, *The Revival of 1857-58: Interpreting an American Religious Awakening*, (New York, 1998), 12-18. Orr, though, traces the start of the revival earlier than Long and in other urban centres, prior to the start of the Fulton Street Prayer meetings in New York.

<sup>75</sup> Jeffrey, *When the Lord Walked the Land*, 2.

<sup>76</sup> Talbot, *Common Identity*, 291-293. For similar developments on a wider scale, see Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 151-180.

arisen out of an earnest desire on the part of members of the churches for a larger outpouring of the Spirit of God, and to the coincidence that at the very time the same desire had taken possession of the hearts of Christians in America, Sweden, and elsewhere, which had been followed by actual Revival in these countries, and now in this. The report gratefully acknowledged that many of the churches connected with the Baptist denomination had participated in these tokens of God's mercy and grace.<sup>77</sup>

The revival reports in *The Freeman* during 1859 from John Williams, a Glasgow Baptist minister, indicate that it was a pan-denominational phenomenon. Prayer meetings in Glasgow, for example, were held under the auspices of the 'committee of the Glasgow Auxiliary of the Evangelical Alliance'. In Helensburgh Presbyterians, Baptists and Independents united in earnest prayer and formed a large crowd of people. Many individuals were converted and baptised by Baptist minister George Dunn in Drumclare near Airdrie.<sup>78</sup> 'A great awakening has taken place in the North of Scotland, embracing almost all the parishes between Aberdeen and Inverness - a distance upwards of 100 miles'. The impact in Thurso, a town of 3,000 people, resulted in 150 people being added to the membership of two unnamed local congregations. A large increase of this proportion had never been recorded in their previous history. Ayrshire had seen a significant change in social behaviour with a dramatic fall in the number of cases of public disorder for the police to handle. Maybole was singled out as a good example of a town affected by the revival.<sup>79</sup> Eyemouth in Berwickshire had seen 'a remarkable outpouring of the Holy Spirit'. The local population had been only 2,000 people, but almost every home had been affected by the revival. Every night of the week the four churches, Baptist, Methodist, Free Church and United Presbyterian, had been open for prayer meetings with seats quickly taken. 'The most cordial union exists among the ministers of the town, as well as among all Christians. Denominationalism is out of sight, and all are co-operating most heartily on behalf of Christ alone!'<sup>80</sup> A similar account was reported later in nearby Berwick upon Tweed.<sup>81</sup> Arminian and Calvinistic Baptists were

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<sup>77</sup> *The Freeman*, (Vol. 5, 2 November 1859): 665.

<sup>78</sup> *The Freeman*, (Vol. 5, 26 October 1859): 649-650. Another account of these events was given in W. Reid, *Authentic Records of Revival Now in Progress in the United Kingdom*, (London: James Nisbet And Co., 1860), 391-400.

<sup>79</sup> *The Freeman*, (Vol. 5, 7 December 1859): 744-745.

<sup>80</sup> *The Freeman*, (Vol. 5, 21 December 1859): 778. See also Reid, *Authentic Records of Revival*, 321-335.

<sup>81</sup> *The Revival*, (Vol. 5.104, 20 July 1861): 21.

united in favour of the 1859 Revival. The growth in the churches at this time would act as an incentive to further united efforts in prayer and evangelistic activity. The 1861 annual report declared that the SBA '...was designed to promote the cause of revivals'.<sup>82</sup> When the focus was on shared activities such as prayer and evangelism, as mentioned in this context, the ties between Scottish Baptists were becoming more firmly established. The 1856 assembly of the SBA linked these two activities. It stated:

The objects of the association were - first, to promote the revival of spiritual religion in the denomination...The chairman made several remarks on each of these objects, but dwelt particularly on the first, showing the necessity there was for increased earnestness and activity on the part of the ministers, deacons, and members. Addresses of a practical character...were afterwards delivered.<sup>83</sup>

In the context of revival blessings from God the theological differences between Baptists, and those between Baptists and other evangelical Christians, appeared to be much smaller than had previously been thought. William Tulloch, the president of the Baptist Union of Scotland in 1881, in his Presidential address, highlighted what he believed was one of the main sources of encouragement that strengthened ties between Baptists in Scotland.

The Union was in fact born of a revival...Quickened souls in all the churches...having been providentially led to co-operate in special efforts on behalf of the perishing, both ministers and people felt how good it was to work together for their common Lord. This excited in the minds of some of us a strong desire to see the body to which we belonged...take its part in so noble a work... The breath of heaven, which was then imparting new spiritual life to multitudes, could breathe on the Baptist churches too, and drawing together the scattered members of the body make them instinct with the life of God.<sup>84</sup>

Promoting the cause of the revival clearly brought many Scottish Baptists closer together and as a result it strengthened the support for the work of the SBA.

The former secretary of the Baptist Union of Scotland, Francis Johnston, had taken some time to reflect on his leadership of the Baptist

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<sup>82</sup> *The Freeman*, (Vol. 7, 30 October 1861): 697.

<sup>83</sup> *The Freeman*, (Vol. 2, 29 October 1856): 649.

<sup>84</sup> W. Tulloch, 'Presidential Address', *The Fourteenth Annual Report of the Baptist Union of Scotland*, (Glasgow: Baptist Union of Scotland, 1882), 42.

Union of Scotland and its disastrous collapse in the early 1850s. A more humble and wiser Johnston sought to rebuild the links with fellow Baptists that resulted in him regaining the confidence of his colleagues.<sup>85</sup> At the March 1861 committee meeting of the BHMS there was an historic motion presented with the intention of restoring the name of Francis Johnston to its Edinburgh committee.<sup>86</sup> Henry Dickie, BHMS secretary and James Paterson, minister of Hope Street Baptist Church, Glasgow, had spent some time with Johnston in reflecting on key theological issues and discussing the content of his sermons since his return to Scotland. In a remarkable transformation of his views Johnston made the following written statements of his new understanding of divine truth. First in respect of his controversial book he stated:

All passages which it is impossible to harmonise with the absolute necessity of the Holy Spirits' work in the faith and regeneration of the sinner, I myself renounce and blot out. This acknowledgement I freely and frankly make, and hope my brethren will accept.<sup>87</sup>

Having been presented with a copy of the unofficial Calvinistic basis of faith drawn up by James Haldane as a guide for BHMS workers, Johnston made the following assessment of its teaching. 'I have read the late Mr James Haldane's letter to the Missionaries, and regard it as a most excellent statement of divine truth.'<sup>88</sup> This shift on key theological issues led to Johnston's restoration to fellowship with his colleagues. Credit must go to Henry Dickie and James Paterson for their willingness to offer the hand of friendship to Johnston. Some contemporary supporters of Johnston denied he had changed his opinions,<sup>89</sup> but this is unsustainable in the light of the primary evidence from Johnston's correspondence. The former union secretary would be involved in future attempts to unite Scottish Baptists, but with a significantly modified theology and a more conciliatory approach towards his colleagues.

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<sup>85</sup> 'Contrasting Interpretations of Baptist Identity in Nineteenth Century Scotland: The Contributions of Rev. Francis Johnston, Rev. Jonathan Watson and Dr James Paterson', unpublished paper delivered at the Third International Conference on Baptist Studies, at the International Baptist Theological Seminary, Prague, 2003, 6-12.

<sup>86</sup> The details of Johnston's correspondence and the committee deliberations are given in the Appendix to the *Report of the Baptist Home Missionary Society for Scotland*, (Edinburgh: D. & R. Collier, 1861), 17-18.

<sup>87</sup> Francis Johnston, to Henry Dickie, 28 August 1860.

<sup>88</sup> Francis Johnston, to Henry Dickie, 14 May 1860. For James Haldane's document – see n.8 on p. 2.

<sup>89</sup> For example, Samuel Newnam, 'Francis Johnston', *Scottish Baptist Magazine*, (Vol. 6.6, June 1880): 87.

There had been a time of great theological turmoil and conflict in the ranks of Evangelical Protestants during the mid-nineteenth century. James Morison in the United Secession Church, John Kirk amongst the Independent Churches and Francis Johnston from the Baptist Union of Scotland were amongst the most prominent proponents of the newer views in theological circles, with respect to the work of the Holy Spirit. Johnston, the primary focus of this study, was probably the least influential of the three within Scottish Evangelicalism, not least because he was a minister within the ranks of one of the smaller denominations. Johnston had the grace to recognise that in his zeal to promote his cause he had overstepped the mark and alienated colleagues who wished to work with him. His reconciliation and restoration to service in Scotland was a fitting finale to his career. The last word ought to be given to one of his closest friends, William Landels, who said this of Johnston:

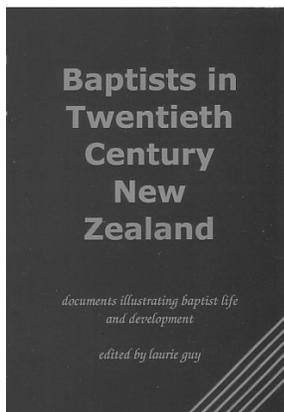
His faults sprang more from an excessive zeal for what he believed... His excessive zeal sometimes led him to forget – so engrossed was he in his work – that those who differed from him might not like to have their own beliefs assailed, and that the statement of his views at unsuitable times might justly give offence to those who were possibly as conscientious as himself. This peculiarity roused prejudices against him in the minds of some; but it did not hinder others from catching the infection of his zeal... He might not always be sound; but he was always clear...<sup>90</sup>

**Brian Talbot**  
**Carbrain Baptist Church,**  
**Cumbernauld, Scotland**

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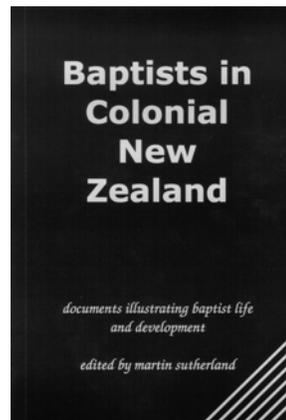
<sup>90</sup> W. Landels, 'Denominational Reminiscences by an Old Baptist,' III, *Scottish Baptist Magazine*, (Vol. 12.10, October 1886): 268.

## **New Zealand Baptists - in their own words!**



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## **Educating Baptists: The Legacy of Basil Manly Jr.**

### **ABSTRACT**

The word ‘schism’ evokes strong feelings among Baptists worldwide. From the split of southern Baptists in the United States from the Triennial Convention in 1845 to the separation of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship from the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) in 1990 to the recent withdrawal of the SBC from the Baptist World Alliance in 2004, Baptists have experienced their share of division. As new Baptist groups of the twenty-first century continue to define themselves, it is helpful to examine the ways in which former Baptists survived and even thrived after division. Basil Manly, Jr. (1825-1892) provides a lens through which to view one such period in Baptist history, especially with regard to how schism affected Baptist pedagogy. Manly proved a pioneer in Baptist education in the southern United States and provides a helpful case study for Baptists worldwide in reevaluating educational models.

Basil Manly, Jr. lived during a time of great turmoil in America.<sup>1</sup> He experienced the secession of the southern Baptists from the Triennial Convention in 1845 and the secession of the southern states. He lived through the tumultuous times of the Civil War and the period in the southern United States that followed the War known as Reconstruction. Manly also endured countless splits within his own denomination regarding issues such as missions, Sunday School, music, and education. Put simply, the period during which he lived was full of schism. Throughout these difficult times, Manly proved a committed southerner and a committed Baptist, dedicating his time, energy, and talents to the survival of both.

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<sup>1</sup> It is helpful to remember that American Baptists were not the only ones facing possible schism during the nineteenth century. British Baptists had many of the same, or similar, debates about missions, education, communion, and church music. The main difference is that British Baptists did not split; their conversations regarding church polity and theology actually strengthened the denomination. Perhaps this was simply the result of not being on the eve of civil war. Another explanation, however, is that the efforts of famous nineteenth-century British preachers such as Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-1892) helped keep the denomination united. For a more thorough discussion of Baptists in Britain in the nineteenth century, see chapter seven in Bill J. Leonard, *Baptist Ways: A History*, (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 2003): 139-157.

The many splits, though certainly painful, yielded countless opportunities for young men in the southern United States. The divisions between bodies in the North and South left a gap in southern life that had to be filled immediately. All of the seminaries Baptists attended, most of the publishing companies they used, and the denominational bodies such as their missionary sending agency were located in the North. Consequently, following the secession of southern Baptists from the Triennial Convention in 1845, denominational leaders found themselves building up their programs from scratch. They needed hymn books, educational programs, educational materials, and perhaps most importantly, seminaries to train their future ministers. Young men like Basil Manly, Jr. provided the kind of leadership that southern Baptists needed during this transitional period in American history. Manly, like many others, rose to the occasion.

Manly contributed significantly to the history of Baptists during his lifetime. More specifically, he helped shape the future of Baptist worship in the southern United States through his educational efforts. Manly believed education to be key to understanding and living the Christian life. He promoted congregational singing, Sunday Schools, and theological education as part of this emphasis on education, viewing all three under the rubric of religious education.<sup>2</sup> These three things represent areas that caused disputes among Baptists. Thus, one's positions on these issues determined one's membership in the many Baptist groups that developed in the United States. Manly's views, in line with the group known as regular Baptists, became the predominant view of the Southern Baptist Convention. In particular, he helped shape the character of this group during its early days through his contributions to hymnody, Sunday School, and theological education. In all of these areas, he promoted the greater cause of religious education, believing it to promote right worship.

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<sup>2</sup> My treatment of hymnody as an educational category parallels recent trends in scholarship to seriously consider the role of hymns in shaping religious belief and practice. For examples of the scholarship that has shaped my understanding of hymnology, see Stephen A. Marini, *Sacred Song in America: Religion, Music, and Public Culture*, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2003); Edith L. Blumhofer and Mark A. Noll, eds., *Singing the Lord's Song in a Strange Land: Hymnody in the History of North American Protestantism*, (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2004); and Richard J. Mouw and Mark A. Noll, *Wonderful Words of Life: Hymns in American Protestant History and Theology*, (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004). For a briefer treatment, see Stephen Marini, 'Hymnody as History: Early Evangelical Hymns and the Recovery of American Popular Religion', *Church History*, Vol. 71 (June 2002): 273 and following.

### Hymnody

Next to the Bible, hymns and hymn books prove to be some of the most instrumental sources for shaping Baptist theology.<sup>3</sup> Since most Baptists do not possess an official book of worship, hymnals shape group identity and express belief through worship.<sup>4</sup> Reflecting portions of Baptist history and heritage and reinforcing doctrines and scriptural truths through song, they serve as pedagogical tools for educating the general congregation. Basil Manly, Jr. understood this important function of hymns and throughout his life sought to promote the act of congregational singing in worship. Along with his father Basil Manly, Sr., he pioneered hymnody among Baptists in the South, publishing the famous southern hymnal *The Baptist Psalmody: A Selection of Hymns for the Worship of God* in 1850.<sup>5</sup> Basil Manly, Jr. also assisted with many other hymn publications that followed this first and most extensive volume.

From an early age, hymns proved influential on Manly, Jr. In a letter to his brother Charles, he recalled, 'I can remember some feelings when I must have been 8 or 9 – in connection with the singing of the chorus "I'm on my journey home, etc."'”<sup>6</sup> Also evident in his correspondence is his understanding of music and its structure. Manly, Jr. questioned his father about whether 'we Southern folks' needed a 'Hymn Book "better suited to the wants of the denomination" than the *Psalmist* itself.'<sup>7</sup> This discussion soon resulted in the Southern Baptists'

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<sup>3</sup> For a discussion of the theological implications of hymns, see Hugh T. McElrath, 'The Hymnbook as a Compendium of Theology', *Review and Expositor*, Vol. 87 (Winter 1990): 11-31. McElrath argues that 'Fundamentally...hymns are theological utterances.' (11) While I agree that hymns do provide historical data regarding group theology, there exists no simple one-to-one correspondence between hymns and theology. Rather, hymns are informed by a variety of factors that include theology, but not to the exclusion of other socio-historical factors such as region, context, race, and class. While McElrath notes, for example, that the issues of gender language and militaristic language affect how new hymns are written, he fails to adequately acknowledge the multiplicity of factors that go into the production of a hymn collection.

<sup>4</sup> For a helpful discussion of the history of Baptist church music from its beginnings in Great Britain, see Hugh T. McElrath, 'Turning Points in the Story of Baptist Church Music', *Baptist History and Heritage*, Vol. 19 (January 1984): 4-16.

<sup>5</sup> Paul A. Richardson, 'Basil Manly, Jr.: Southern Baptist Pioneer in Hymnody', *Baptist History and Heritage*, Vol. 27 (April 1992): 19-30.

<sup>6</sup> Basil Manly, Jr. quoted in Richardson, 'Basil Manly, Jr.: Southern Baptist Pioneer in Hymnody', 20.

<sup>7</sup> Richardson, 'Basil Manly, Jr.: Southern Baptist Pioneer in Hymnody', 20.

first hymn book, *The Baptist Psalmody*. Through this work, the Manlys sought to provide the South with ‘a complete Hymn Book for public and private worship.’<sup>8</sup> The Southern Baptist Publication Society published the work, the largest hymn book ever produced by Southern Baptists. Basil Manly, Jr. contributed nine texts to the work, while over half of the hymns included were written by Isaac Watts.<sup>9</sup> Manly noted his tedious work on ‘the arrangement of the hymns in a systematic textual order’ complete with ‘indexes both of subjects & Scripture, especially the latter.’<sup>10</sup> This ensured that hymns could be chosen to complement the text being preached, thus reinforcing the topic or doctrinal emphasis.<sup>11</sup> Basil Manly, Jr.’s extensive work on these indices demonstrated his belief that hymns possess the potential for educating Christians and furthered his commitment to such religious education. The labor proved well spent as *The Baptist Psalmody* met with extraordinary success among Baptists in the South. Its estimated sales totaled more than 50,000 as southern ministers and congregations embraced it as their own.<sup>12</sup> The hymn book marked the beginning of Basil Manly, Jr.’s contribution to southern hymnody and promotion of church music in the South.

After the success of *The Baptist Psalmody*, Manly decided that a tune book for use in the church might be beneficial. He joined forces with A. Brooks Everett to compile *Baptist Chorals: A Tune and Hymn Book Designed to Promote General Congregational Singing*. The tune book was structured for use with the two most common hymnals at the time: *The Baptist Psalmody* and *The Psalmist*.<sup>13</sup> Paul Richardson notes that Manly selected the texts, wrote the preface, and provided a condensed index of subjects. Manly also included two of his own hymn texts and composed two new tunes.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Richardson, ‘Basil Manly, Jr.: Southern Baptist Pioneer in Hymnody’, 21.

<sup>9</sup> Basil Manly and B. Manly, Jr., *The Baptist Psalmody: A Selection of Hymns for the Worship of God* (Charleston: Southern Baptist Publication Society, 1850). The work contained 1,295 entries followed by a list of sixteen doxologies.

<sup>10</sup> Basil Manly, Jr. quoted in Richardson, ‘Basil Manly, Jr.: Southern Baptist Pioneer in Hymnody’, 22.

<sup>11</sup> Manly and Manly, Jr., *The Baptist Psalmody*. A study of Manly, Jr.’s scripture index revealed that all but six of the 66 books in the Bible are represented in the hymnal. The six that books not referenced are: Nehemiah, Obadiah, Jonah, Philemon, II John, and III John.

<sup>12</sup> Richardson, ‘Basil Manly, Jr.: Southern Baptist Pioneer in Hymnody’, 23.

<sup>13</sup> B. Manly, Jr. and A. Brooks Everett, *Baptist Chorals: A Tune and Hymn Book Designed to Promote General Congregational Singing: Containing One Hundred and Sixty-Four Tunes, Adapted to about Four Hundred Choice Hymns* (Richmond: T.J. Starke and Company, 1859).

<sup>14</sup> Richardson, ‘Basil Manly, Jr.: Southern Baptist Pioneer in Hymnody’, 24.

Manly's introduction to *Baptist Chorals* provides the clearest picture of his views on the importance of music and hymns.<sup>15</sup> He noted several mistakes in people's opinions about the 'singing of God's praise' including: the belief that singing is 'intended primarily to please the auditors rather than to praise God' and 'that no particular obligation rests on any to join in it.' Manly pointed out that 'the Bible distinctly commands singing' and 'that the Church of Christ in all ages have practised [sic] singing as a regular part of the worship of God.'<sup>16</sup> Because music has so shaped Christianity, Manly concluded that 'From the devotional compositions of Christians in all periods a much more accurate sketch may be derived of the doctrines really impressed on the mind, and translated into the life, than from the regular creed or confessions of faith.'<sup>17</sup> In other words, theological truths are conveyed through music. Hymns serve as another way to teach the congregation right doctrine. Manly further advanced this notion in his statement that 'Good singing is a powerful auxiliary of preaching.'<sup>18</sup> Here and in the words that follow he demonstrated that music was crucial to the act of worship, acknowledging the ability of music to reach those that preaching cannot. Manly charged all that would use this tune book to train the young to sing and to join in the praise of God through song.<sup>19</sup> He then ended his introduction, encouraging Christians everywhere to live out the words of the apostle Paul in Colossians 3:16, to *teach* one another through psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, and to sing to the Lord.

Manly continued contributing to the cause of congregational singing throughout his life. He wrote hymns, composed hymn tunes, and edited/compiled other musical handbooks for use in Sunday School and worship. Perhaps his most famous hymn is 'Soldiers of Christ, in truth arrayed,' written for the first commencement of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Students and faculty still sing this hymn at every commencement and alumni reunion.<sup>20</sup> The final hymn collection in which Basil Manly, Jr. played a part was *Manly's Choice*, a small collection

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<sup>15</sup> B. Manly, Jr. and A. Brooks Everett, *Baptist Chorals*, ii-iii. Also, Paul Richardson notes that this represents 'the first published essay on the nature and purpose of congregational song.' Paul Richardson, 'Basil Manly, Jr.: Southern Baptist Pioneer in Hymnody', 24.

<sup>16</sup> B. Manly, Jr. and A. Brooks Everett, *Baptist Chorals*, ii.

<sup>17</sup> B. Manly, Jr. and A. Brooks Everett, *Baptist Chorals*, iii.

<sup>18</sup> B. Manly, Jr. and A. Brooks Everett, *Baptist Chorals*, iii.

<sup>19</sup> B. Manly, Jr. and A. Brooks Everett, *Baptist Chorals*, iii.

<sup>20</sup> Hugh T. McElrath, 'Church Music at Southern,' *Review and Expositor* Vol. 82 (Winter 1985): 101-10.

of 254 hymns that he considered ‘tested and approved by successive generations of those who loved the Lord.’<sup>21</sup> He hoped that through the publication and distribution of this collection the old hymns would be recovered in the life of the church. He noted his appreciation for new songs while emphasizing the importance of not abandoning the songs of the past:

...[M]y attention has been directed specially to the subject of hymnology all my ministerial life. I think I know what our people need, and what they desire. To meet that need and that desire the present work is offered. It is cheap, and of convenient size for the pocket; it contains no trash, and no real sentiment or unsound doctrine: and while of course in so small a collection many good hymns and some general favorites must be omitted, not one is inserted which is not judged worthy of a special place among the *choice* hymns of the language.<sup>22</sup>

Manly’s collection contained none of his own texts, but he did insert six of his own tunes. His preface indicated his goals in assembling this last work: 1) ‘to promote universal congregational singing’ and 2) ‘to do something towards the elevation and general culture of musical and poetic taste among Baptist people whom I love, and to whom the best labors of my life have been given.’<sup>23</sup> Indeed, Manly kept these goals close at heart throughout his career, evidence of his strong belief in the pedagogical function of church music.<sup>24</sup>

### **Sunday School**

Of course, Manly not only believed in the need to educate individuals through hymns, he also advocated the direct religious education of children and adults through Sunday School. As a forerunner in the Baptist Sunday School movement, he did much to ensure the success of Sunday School in Baptist churches in the South. Manly spoke at

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<sup>21</sup> Basil Manly, Jr. quoted in Richardson ‘Basil Manly, Jr.: Southern Baptist Pioneer in Hymnody’, 27.

<sup>22</sup> Richardson, ‘Basil Manly, Jr.: Southern Baptist Pioneer in Hymnody’, 27.

<sup>23</sup> Basil Manly, Jr. quoted in McElrath, ‘Church Music at Southern’, 102.

<sup>24</sup> Space precludes me from dealing with Manly’s many other contributions to hymnody. For example, as President of the Baptist Sunday School Board during the Civil War, he managed the production and distribution of *The Little Sunday School Hymn Book* and *The Confederate Sunday School Hymnal*. Manly also wrote tunes for *Kind Words*, a song book published by the Sunday School Board and served as a member of the editorial committees for the 1871 hymnal *The Baptist Praise Book* and *The Baptist Hymnal* of 1883.

Conventions and before publication societies, wrote Sunday School literature, encouraged the formation of associational committees to promote Sunday School, and served as president of the first Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. His hard work through these and other means enabled him to see Sunday School grow from being held in a minority of Baptist churches in the South to perhaps half at the time of his death.<sup>25</sup> Such tireless work ensured the survival of Sunday School as the primary educational program of Southern Baptists for years to come.

Manly's greatest contribution to the Baptist Sunday School movement came in the form of the treatise he wrote in 1858. Entitled *A Sunday School in Every Baptist Church*, this work circulated among Baptists in the South.<sup>26</sup> Since the Manly name held much weight among this constituency and since the publisher of the treatise (the Southern Baptist Publication Society) was reputable, it exhibited great influence. Here, Manly laid out the general premise surrounding Sunday School followed by a comparison of its costs to its profits. He concluded that its profits far outweighed its costs, listing seven benefits of developing a Sunday School program in the church. Some of the profits cited are: reaching those who might not be reached by any other means, great benefits for the church members (for example, 'healthful spiritual exercise' through the study of scripture) and drawing out the gifts of those who might become ministers of the gospel.<sup>27</sup> Sunday School provided the perfect opportunity for religious instruction, presenting an easy way to initiate children into the worshipping community of the church. Manly further believed in the benefit of Southern Baptists publishing their own literature for this program.

Baptists needed Sunday School materials, and Manly's involvement ensured appropriate and affordable literature. He worked with the publication societies to get lessons published, writing many Sunday School lessons and songs himself, often to the neglect of his other teaching responsibilities. Such was the extent of his belief in its importance. His *Little Lessons for Little People* represents one such educational effort on his part. Written in the catechetical style popular in the day, Manly hoped that it would encourage children to learn the Scriptures and to be good.<sup>28</sup> He asked a variety of questions from the

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<sup>25</sup> H. Leon McBeth, ed., *A Sourcebook for Baptist Heritage* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1990), 291.

<sup>26</sup> McBeth, *A Sourcebook for Baptist Heritage*, 291.

<sup>27</sup> McBeth, *A Sourcebook for Baptist Heritage*, 291-295.

<sup>28</sup> McBeth, *A Sourcebook for Baptist Heritage*, 291, 296.

obvious (who made the world? God) to the more theological (who is meant by the seed of the woman? Jesus Christ), indoctrinating children from an early age with the ABCs of Baptist thought.<sup>29</sup>

Manly offered his talents and influence willingly, whether they were solicited or not. In August of 1869, he wrote to his brothers Charles and Fuller about recent manuscripts he had sent to the Sunday School Board for publication. These contributions later composed a child's question book on the Gospels for use in Sunday School.<sup>30</sup> On one occasion, he records being asked to help with the beginning of a Sunday School Baptist Weekly. He appeared somewhat surprised at being asked, and complains about some of the proposals for the enterprise. In the end, however, he confessed to his brothers, 'I should like to see a good weekly.'<sup>31</sup> His desire to see the movement flourish took precedence over his need to control the direction of a publication. This attitude dominated his work for Sunday School and Bible distribution. Manly worked with people both in and out of the Baptist denomination for the furtherance of the cause.<sup>32</sup>

Individuals also consulted Manly to offer speeches and to facilitate associational programs to promote Sunday School. Manly's strong belief in the validity of missions fit hand in hand with his willingness to coordinate efforts to spread the reach of Sunday School. For example, Manly proved instrumental in organizing and encouraging the start of associational groups dedicated to both causes. The resolutions of the Tyger River Baptist Association dated August 14, 1869 offers an example of one such group. The resolutions consisted of three sections that Manly forwarded to his brother Charles. The members decided to appoint one brother in each church 'to work for the interest of Sabbath

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<sup>29</sup> McBeth, *A Sourcebook for Baptist Heritage*, 296-297.

<sup>30</sup> Letter, Basil Manly, Jr. to Charles Manly and Fuller Manly, 29 August 1869, Basil Manly, Jr. papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC.

<sup>31</sup> Letter, Basil Manly, Jr. to Charles Manly and Fuller Manly, 29 September 1869, Basil Manly, Jr. papers.

<sup>32</sup> Letter, Basil Manly, Jr. to Charles Manly, 8 December 1873, Basil Manly, Jr. papers. Manly wrote: 'I believe I wrote you that I took a little trip to Louisv. to speak [indistinguishable] – Bible Society, a branch [of the] American Bible Society. I co-operate cheerfully with the Society though many of our Baptist people hold aloof. I don't make much fuss, or fight about it – but go on & do all I can for the cause. I am President our [indistinguishable] Bible Society. I do this for gratitude of past [indistinguishable] & also on principle, because the Bible must be distributed, because nobody else is doing it so energetically or can do it so effectively & economically here as home as this organization.'

Schools in their churches' who were responsible for 'looking out for such persons as may be destitute of the Scriptures with a view to this being supplied with the same.' They also appointed Basil Manly, Jr. the chairman of the committee made up of the representatives from each church. As the leader of this committee, Manly agreed to 'procure Bibles and Testaments, and to furnish them to those that may need and apply for them.' Finally, the committee resolved that those appointed to the above tasks should 'be especially instructed to inquire among the colored persons for such destitution, and to supply, if possible, all such as can read, and desire them.'<sup>33</sup> The stress placed on getting the Bibles into the hands of the people supported another common Baptist belief, that of the priesthood of the believer. Manly believed, with the people in the Tyger Baptist Association, that religious education through Sunday Schools and Scripture reading was a key to winning souls for Christ.

By active participation in such organizations, Manly demonstrated his commitment to the Sunday School movement. The fact that he forwarded the resolutions (accompanied by an explanatory note) to his brother Charles further suggests his strong belief in missions, and in particular, this form of spreading the gospel (i.e. he believed in religious education through Sunday School and the distribution of scripture). The letter to his brother elaborated upon the success of the associational model given in the resolutions and explained how Manly procured the necessary Bibles. Basil encouraged his brother to organize a similar program in his area, giving him the information necessary to begin. Manly also noted that the Tyger River Baptist Association had already requested, and expected to receive, 250 Bibles and 250 Testaments from the American Bible Society.<sup>34</sup> A treatise was no longer necessary to prove the importance of Sunday School to those who would later be known as Southern Baptists. The eleven years between Manly's 1858 treatise and these resolutions of 1869 offer a good indication of the growing validity of Sunday School among Baptists in the South.

### **Theological Education**

Manly's interest in education was evident at an early age. He commenced work at the University of Alabama at the age of 14, graduating at the top of his class in 1844. From there, he traveled to Boston to study at Newton Seminary, leaving to complete his coursework at Princeton due

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<sup>33</sup> Letter, Basil Manly, Jr. to Charles Manly, 14 October 1869, Basil Manly, Jr. papers.

<sup>34</sup> Letter, Basil Manly, Jr. to Charles Manly, 14 October 1869.

to rising conflict between northern and southern Baptists.<sup>35</sup> Following graduation, Manly returned to Alabama to pastor, and then took a pastorate in Richmond. It was not too long, however, before he returned to academia, this time as President of the newly founded Richmond Female Institute.<sup>36</sup> He stayed there until the founding of another institution, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, prompted him to leave. With the exception of a seven year hiatus when he served as President of Georgetown College in Georgetown Kentucky, Manly taught at Southern until the end of his life.<sup>37</sup>

Southern Baptist Theological Seminary began in 1859 and was first located in Greenville, South Carolina. Manly served on its first faculty and is largely responsible for the school's confession of faith, 'The Abstract of Principles.' These articles, written into the school's charter on April 30, 1858, provided a theological standard for the school and were 'the first confession of faith formally adopted by any Southern Baptist group.'<sup>38</sup> About the task of writing this confession he noted, 'I have looked over the older ones and my notion is to make a bran [sic] new one – but with a historical basis.'<sup>39</sup> So Manly consulted the earliest Baptist confessions, from 1643 and 1689, in his efforts to write a comprehensive statement of faith. He desired a more condensed version, a statement that got the former confessions 'down to an essence.'<sup>40</sup> The final confession addressed 20 components from 'The Scriptures' to 'The Judgment' with everything from 'The Trinity,' 'Repentance,' 'The

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<sup>35</sup> Hugh Wamble, 'A Student Sees a Coming Split Among Baptists: Basil Manly, Jr. at Newton Seminary, 1844-5', *Baptist History and Heritage* Vol. 5 (July 1970): 123-130.

<sup>36</sup> Richardson, 'Basil Manly, Jr.: Southern Baptist Pioneer in Hymnody', 19.

<sup>37</sup> Joel F. Drinkard and Page H. Kelley, '125 Years of Old Testament Study at Southern', *Review and Expositor* Vol. 82 (Winter 1985): 7-19.

<sup>38</sup> McBeth, *A Sourcebook*, 305, 312. The Abstract of Principles is part of the Fundamental Laws of the Seminary. They are preceded by the following statement: 'Every Professor of the Institution shall be a member of a regular Baptist Church; and all persons accepting Professorships in this Seminary, shall be considered by such acceptance, as engaging to teach in accordance with, and not contrary to, the Abstract of Principles hereinafter laid down.' In light of this statement, it appears that having faculty sign the Baptist Faith and Message is not as far as some think from the founding principles of the seminaries. The difference lies in the nature of the statements. Manly's Abstract of Principles draws from older confessions of faith such as the Westminster Confession.

<sup>39</sup> Letter, Basil Manly, Jr., to Charles Manly, 1 March 1858 and 15 March 1858, Basil Manly, Jr. papers.

<sup>40</sup> Letter, Basil Manly, Jr., to Charles Manly, 1 March 1858 and 15 March 1858, Basil Manly, Jr. papers. Manly also notes that the second statement, that from 1689 'is mainly copied from the Westminster.'

Church,' and 'Baptism' discussed in between.<sup>41</sup> Thus Manly succeeded in providing a comprehensive confession of faith for the first theological school for Baptists in the South.

Manly had long advocated the founding of such a school for Baptists in the South and was excited at the possibility of serving among its first faculty. He and his father both saw the value of having education readily available for southern Baptist ministers, especially following the secession of many of the southern states from the Union. In his history of Southern Seminary, William Mueller commented on Manly: 'While not as great a scholar as John A. Broadus, he deserves a high place of honor in the esteem of our denomination as one of the pioneers of theological education.'<sup>42</sup> Manly, too, noted some of his shortcomings as a professor, expressing his particular concern about his ability in Hebrew. In one letter to his father, he wrote: 'My work in [the] Seminary is going on pleasantly, & I hope usefully. I am learning Hebrew myself, slowly – and my class is learning it, still more slowly of course. But I trust we will know something of it – after a while.'<sup>43</sup> In addition to his responsibilities as the Hebrew instructor, Manly taught the other components found in the Old Testament rubric. Biblical Introduction included: Biblical Criticism, the Canon of Scripture, Inspiration, Biblical Archeology, and an introduction to each book of Scripture.<sup>44</sup> His plate was indeed full.

The addition of Crawford H. Toy to the faculty ten years later, in 1869, lightened Manly's load in Old Testament, but he then picked up Polemics and Homiletics to help the professors in other fields. Shortly after this change in his teaching schedule, Manly accepted the presidency of Georgetown College.<sup>45</sup> While he was at Georgetown, much controversy plagued his former student, Toy. Toy's classes were the most popular among students at Southern, but the influence of Darwin and German biblical higher criticism on Toy's thinking proved problematic for some of the other faculty members. Toy resigned in May of 1879 as a result of continued controversy surrounding his views of

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<sup>41</sup> McBeth, *A Sourcebook*, 312-315.

<sup>42</sup> William Mueller, quoted in Drinkard and Kelley, '125 Years of Old Testament Study at Southern', 8.

<sup>43</sup> Letter, Basil Manly, Jr., to Basil Manly, Sr., 29 December 1860, Basil Manly, Jr. papers.

<sup>44</sup> Drinkard and Kelley, '125 Years of Old Testament Study at Southern', 8. Among Manly's first students at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary was Crawford H. Toy. According to Drinkard and Kelley, Toy was Manly's best pupil and they helped one another master the Hebrew language.

<sup>45</sup> Drinkard and Kelley, '125 Years of Old Testament Study at Southern', 9.

scriptural interpretation, leaving an open spot for Manly's return.<sup>46</sup> Manly remained at Georgetown a short time before returning to his position in the Old Testament department at Southern. By the time that Manly returned to Southern's faculty, Toy was gone and the seminary had relocated to Louisville, Kentucky.<sup>47</sup>

The absence of Toy on faculty did not result in an immediate end to the controversy. Manly knew that he could be subjected to the same criticism and made his decisions accordingly. As he stated:

If I agree with him, I shall be censured for unsoundness, if I differ, I shall be thought to be actuated by prejudice or narrow views....There is nothing for it but just to go ahead and try to do right, for folks will talk.<sup>48</sup>

One of the efforts to keep the peace made by Manly shortly after his return to Southern was the introduction of a course 'on the connection between the Bible and the Modern Physical Sciences.'<sup>49</sup>

During his later years at Southern, Manly wrote a book on his view of the inspiration of scripture entitled *The Bible Doctrine of Inspiration: Explained and Vindicated*. This represents another effort by Manly to distance himself from his former student and define his own unique position. Manly claimed that the question of inspiration is 'one of fact, and not of theory' and that 'the Bible statements and the Bible phenomena are the decisive considerations in the case.'<sup>50</sup> He thus set out to offer a rendering of his thoughts on this fact. His work explained his position (plenary inspiration) over against five other popular views held at the time. Plenary inspiration claims that 'the Bible as a whole is the Word of God, so that in every part of Scripture there is both infallible truth and divine authority.'<sup>51</sup> As James Leo Garrett, Jr. rightly noted, however, Manly's doctrine of inspiration acknowledged the 'evidences of human authorship' and the ability of opinions not necessarily sanctioned by the Bible to be expressed.<sup>52</sup> Most importantly for this essay is the fact

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<sup>46</sup> Drinkard and Kelley, '125 Years of Old Testament Study at Southern', 11-12.

<sup>47</sup> Drinkard and Kelley, '125 Years of Old Testament Study at Southern', 12-13.

<sup>48</sup> Basil Manly, Jr., quoted in Drinkard and Kelley, '125 Years of Old Testament Study at Southern', 12.

<sup>49</sup> *Seminary Catalog*, 1882-1883, quoted in Drinkard and Kelley, '125 Years of Old Testament Study at Southern', 12.

<sup>50</sup> Basil Manly, Jr. *The Bible Doctrine of Inspiration: Explained and Vindicated*, (New York: A.C. Armstrong and Son, 1888), preface.

<sup>51</sup> Basil Manly, Jr. *The Bible Doctrine of Inspiration: Explained and Vindicated*, 59.

<sup>52</sup> James Leo Garrett, Jr. 'Representative Modern Baptist Understandings of Biblical Inspiration', *Review and Expositor* Vol. 71 (Spring 1974): 179-195.

that Manly's book demonstrated his commitment to educating the masses. The very structure of his work suggests instruction. He carefully leads the reader through an explanation of the doctrine of inspiration, proofs of inspiration, and objections to inspiration. Throughout the work, his intention to teach the average layperson remains central. Manly desired to encourage others to think deeply about God.

Throughout his career at Southern, Manly remained focused on the primary goal of providing theological education to those seeking to enter parish ministry. As W.O. Carver noted, Manly was a great Christian 'of extraordinary saintliness of character, purity of life, and of gentle strength.'<sup>53</sup> He pioneered theological education for Baptists in the South and remained loyal to the cause until he died. Manly hoped that the presence of a Baptist seminary in the South would ensure more theologically trained pastors leading the congregations. Manly saw his job as that of training people to be pastors, while never forgetting the importance of actually having enough pastors. In fact, he once expressed concern in a letter to his brother about the number of his colleagues entering into the educational enterprise in the South over the pastorate. He noted: 'If we all get to be Professors & Presidents & such, it will be not a bad plan for some of us to get back to be preachers again.'<sup>54</sup> Thus, while he valued education of all forms, he never forgot the greater importance of the pastoral role.

### Conclusion

Basil Manly, Jr. played a crucial role in establishing the importance of religious education among Baptists. Baptists today can continue to reap the benefits of his hard work and dedication to the cause of religious education by reevaluating their own educational paradigms. From his work in hymnology, Baptists learn the value of continually writing new hymns for the church as well as the importance of evaluating old hymns in light of newly discovered truth. In addition, they are reminded of the importance of congregational singing to the life and learning of the church. Baptists are also indebted to Manly for his diligent work in the Sunday School movement. His selfless service ensured the survival of this teaching ministry of the church, a movement that has encouraged countless individuals to become Christians, to study scripture, and to use

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<sup>53</sup> W.O. Carver quoted in Drinkard and Kelley, '125 Years of Old Testament Study at Southern', 13.

<sup>54</sup> Letter, Basil Manly, Jr., to Charles Manly, 19 September 1857, Basil Manly, Jr. papers.

their gifts in the ministry of the church. Finally, Manly's work in theological education teaches Baptists the importance of searching scripture with a critical eye and sometimes in its original language. It also leaves a legacy of solid theological education upon which to base future centers of ministerial training.

A trained preacher, Manly spent most of his life training others for ministry. He also sought to teach laypeople about God, educating Christians about the life they had been called to live. His work in promoting hymnology, Sunday School, and theological education provides a model for Baptists today trying to fill some of the same gaps in education. Recent splits in the denomination have left some groups without the support of the primary infrastructure, making educational enterprises increasingly difficult to maintain. Moderate Baptists in the southern United States, for example, are still building educational structures, particularly in the sphere of theological education.

As Baptists continue to redefine themselves over the next few decades, they would do well to follow the example set by Basil Manly, Jr. He labored to establish educational programs among southern Baptists, wanting them to have the best tools with which to reach people with the gospel. Manly refused, however, to let denominational boundaries confine his work for the growth and education of the church. He also worked with the American Bible Society despite the reserve demonstrated by other Baptists. He chose to put the cause of education ahead of denominational politics, aligning himself with the ABS 'because the Bible must be distributed, because nobody else is doing it so energetically or can do it so effectively & economically here as [sic] home as this organization.'<sup>55</sup> As the Baptist community worldwide continues to face doctrinal controversy, may it be possible to focus on the things held in common so that greater work can be done.

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<sup>55</sup> Letter, Basil Manly, Jr. to Charles Manly, 8 December 1873, Basil Manly, Jr. papers.

## **Approaches to Ministerial Training Among New South Wales Baptists: Initial Lines of Enquiry**

### **ABSTRACT**

The author identifies a number of lines of inquiry, which when drawn together, it is argued, define the dominant approach to ministerial training among New South Wales Baptists by the end of 1920. These lines of inquiry include: the level of education required of ministers; the priority of preaching, evangelism, apologetics and Bible knowledge; the desire of centralised authorities to oversee the training of all those involved in preaching and teaching; the propagation of baptism by immersion only linked to closed church membership as essential to Baptist identity; the proclamation of Dispensational Premillennial teaching of the Second Coming; caution about any ecumenical approach that might compromise NSW Baptist identity; and lack of finances that affected the approach to ministerial training.

By the end of 1920 the approach to ministerial training in NSW had consolidated to focus on the production of preachers, trained to be effective as evangelists and apologists with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. They were not to be scholarly pastors. Five years of ministerial training was required to produce ministers who would propagate the NSW Baptist identity, which included baptism of believers only by immersion linked to closed church membership and proclamation of a Dispensational Premillennial understanding of the Second Coming of Christ. These ministers began as Home Mission agents and would continue after their graduation under the authority of the Home Mission committee.

This paper investigates the guiding principles that appear to have informed theological education among NSW Baptists from the beginning of the Baptist Union of NSW in 1867 to the resignation of the first Principal of that state's theological college at the 1920 Annual Assembly. From this preliminary investigation a number of lines of enquiry emerge that appear to inform future directions of theological education among NSW Baptists, especially as they are expressed in the various Principal's principles of theological education.

A number of conflicting themes can be identified in the approach adopted by NSW Baptists toward theological education in the early period up to c.1900, those themes becoming more extreme in their expression between 1900 and 1916. It is suggested that the dramatic failure of Rev Alexander Gordon as the first Principal of the NSW Baptist Theological College saw these themes coalesce in opposition to both Principal Gordon and his chief supporter Rev A.J. Waldo. The themes will provide the framework for a future paper on the philosophy of theological education that dominated the Principalship of G.H. Morling.

### **1867-1900: Early approaches to ministerial training.**

What were NSW Baptists attitudes towards theological education c.1867? Fourth among the five Objects of the Baptist Association: ‘the training of suitable men for the ministry’, the second Object was ‘to originate and strengthen the Baptist Churches without in any way interfering with the independent character of such Churches’.<sup>1</sup> While a number of intriguing lines of inquiry issue from the Objects of the NSW Baptist Association, the one that is of importance to this investigation is the order in which the Objects are placed. Is it significant? Does it reflect a priority in the thinking of the people who wrote and agreed to them?

At the second Annual Assembly of NSW Baptists in September 1868, the Rev Dr Hobbs read to the Assembly a previously published circular letter which was adopted by the Delegates for publication as expressing the view of NSW Baptists on ministry.<sup>2</sup> Hobbs noted the ‘ever increasing’ spiritual needs of the colony, the advances in infrastructures, particularly the railways, that are opening the way into the interior, and difficulty NSW Baptists face to ‘maintain our present position, not to speak of these new spheres, without fresh supplies of Ministers’.<sup>3</sup> These fresh supplies of Ministers could not be drawn from ‘a Baptist College’ as in England or America, as there were at that time no Baptist Colleges in Australia. Hobbs made clear he was not advocating Ministry by those who were theologically untrained: ‘in the advancing state of education, it would be a dangerous thing to have an uneducated

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<sup>1</sup> ‘Basis or Constitution (of NSW Association of Baptist Churches)’, *Minute Book 1867-78. NSW Baptist Association*, folio.7.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Dr Hobbs -Circular Letter’, *Minute Book 1867-78, NSW Baptist Association*, between folios 22-23.

<sup>3</sup> Hobbs, 6.

Ministry'.<sup>4</sup> There were fervent young Baptist men in the colony whom Hobbs urged to 'avail themselves of every facility for acquiring knowledge'<sup>5</sup> to engage in ministry, and the primary focus of that ministry was to be evangelism. Yet Hobbs' view of ministry was not exclusively about the conversion of sinners, it appears to have included an aspect of correcting the errors of all who held different views on baptism to NSW Baptists: 'In all charity, but with all plainness, and firmness, it is our duty to point out to our brethren their errors in this matter. The truth on this point will not be taught unless we teach it, and errors will not be abandoned *unless we expose them* [italics in original]'.<sup>6</sup> Dr Hobbs went on to quote approvingly from an un-named source 'We have no greater partiality for immersion than others, but we would baptize in ink if Christ commanded it'.<sup>7</sup> For NSW Baptists the command of Christ to baptize by immersion was the basis for their evangelistic zeal concerning this doctrine.

The first line of enquiry concerning Baptist Ministry in NSW has been identified in the 'Circular Letter' of Dr Hobbs, the contrast of an educated ministry with the dangers of those who are theologically untrained. This educated Baptist ministry will be evangelistic towards those who are not yet converted, and will defend the Baptist position on full immersion Baptism.

Between April and June 1870 correspondence between Mr C. Amos, the West Maitland Baptist Church and the Committee of the Baptist Union of NSW demonstrates the tension between the autonomy of the local church appointing its own minister and the centralising tendency inherent in a Committee of the Baptist Union determining who was fit to 'exercise the functions of the ministry' among NSW Baptists. The West Maitland Church supported the application of Mr Amos to become a recognised minister of the NSW Baptist Union; the Committee declined his application, the specific reasons not being given. Nevertheless the West Maitland Church went ahead and appointed Mr Amos as their pastor! At that year's Annual Assembly Rev R. Morton, after decrying the spiritual weakness of NSW Baptists and their lack of evangelistic zeal, is reported to have cited with approval the saying 'There is a danger of being killed by an overdose of Congregationalism'.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Hobbs, 6.

<sup>5</sup> Hobbs, 6.

<sup>6</sup> Hobbs, 7.

<sup>7</sup> Hobbs, 7.

<sup>8</sup> 'Annual Report of (3<sup>rd</sup>) Assembly, 12, *Minute Book 1867-78, NSW Baptist Association* between folios 34 & 35.

Rev J. Greenwood, later champion of educational reforms to secular schooling in NSW, the Chairman of the Committee for 1870-1871, in a somewhat more conciliatory tone stated ‘A review of our past history in this land induces your committee to urge the importance of measures being taken to see that qualified men are accredited as ministers of our Body, and hopes at no very distant date to supply young brethren in every other sense qualified for ministerial work, those educational advantages which, whilst not held by us to be essential to usefulness, are highly desiderated as important aids’.<sup>9</sup> Greenwood is also less belligerent towards other denominations, being optimistic about the rise of ‘religious toleration and demise of established religion’, and urged an interpretation of the basis of Union of NSW to ‘allow maximum divergencies [sic]... where their lives prove that they are disciples of Jesus Christ’.<sup>10</sup> Here is a second line of enquiry. Within Baptist circles in 1870 there appears to be disagreement about the degree to which Baptists can allow diversity within their own ranks on the basis of Baptist autonomy. Also there appears to be disagreement about the degree to which Baptists might work with other denominations. How should the training of ministers reflect this issue? That ministers should be educated, that much was agreed by the Committee, and some in the churches. But how were the ministers to be educated, and was there room for untrained men in positions of ministerial oversight to be accredited as ministers?

At the Committee meeting on 23 December 1870, ‘Mr I.H. Palmer gave notice of motion for next meeting: “That it is desirable to consider the feasibility of training young men amongst us for the ministry.”’<sup>11</sup> This feasibility study took shape as ‘The Baptist Education Institute of NSW’ which began its work on 28 November 1871 with Rev James Greenwood as its President, and Revs A. Webb, F. Hibberd, G. Sheppard and A. Burdett as Tutors. The purpose of the Baptist Education Institute was to train ministers, evangelists and lay preachers. The first report of the President of this Institute in 1872 described the aim of the class as ‘preliminary training for the work of ministry’.<sup>12</sup> The young men read on a weekly rotation system a sermon, paper or essay, the emphasis being on sermons, as the President reported thirty-two

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<sup>9</sup> ‘Committee Report’ Appendix, *Minute Book 1867-78, NSW Baptist Association, between folios 46-47.*

<sup>10</sup> James Greenwood – Chairman’s Address’, iii, p.v, *Minute Book 1867-78, NSW Baptist Association, between folios 46-47.*

<sup>11</sup> *Minute Book 1867-78, NSW Baptist Association, folio 48.*

<sup>12</sup> ‘Report of the Baptist Education Institute of NSW, 8’, *Minute Book 1867-78, NSW Baptist Association, between folios 94-95.*

sermons had been read at the thirty-six meetings the Institute had held since commencing. While some improvement had been achieved the President and Tutors considered more could be achieved by introducing the study of English Grammar, and foreshadowing the introduction of Latin. Unfortunately of the 22 students enrolled at the time of making his report, the President had to acknowledge that on average only 9-10 students were now attending the weekly meetings.

While the theme of the Chairman's address to the 1872 Assembly was the 'divinely qualified ministry' emphasising the need for an educated ministry,<sup>13</sup> there is no report from the Baptist Education Institute to that Assembly or to any future Assembly.

By 1876 the Executive Committee of the Union had shifted its emphasis from training educated ministers for the churches to commissioning evangelists to promote growth in country areas. In July 1877 *The Banner of Truth*, published 'under the direction of the Baptist Union of New South Wales', reported that the Executive Committee had appointed Mr T.H. Jagers in the capacity of Evangelist to the Bega and Moruya districts.<sup>14</sup> Jagers' appointment occurred a 'little more than twelve months' since the Executive Committee 'began to make an honest attempt to meet the want of the vast interior' of the Colony.<sup>15</sup> The first evangelist appointed was Mr Thomas Llewellyn who in 1877 was active in the Wellington district. Ministerial training was however not forgotten at this time, as the Executive Committee were in negotiation with Camden College, the Congregational College in Sydney, concerning the 'terms upon which our students were to be received ... and also the course of study'.<sup>16</sup> The division between accredited ministers, evangelists and lay preachers appeared to be established as three separate streams. Tracing the interaction between these three forms of ministry provides another line of inquiry in the formation of attitudes among Baptists concerning ministerial training.

Tension about the use of the Baptist Evangelists Fund became evident during the 1885 Assembly when Mr White moved that the fund be closed and funds redirected to the Church Extension Fund. The record of the debate published in *The Banner of Truth* indicates that the city churches wanted access to the funds to assist church planting in

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<sup>13</sup> 'Rev Allan Webb – Chairman's Address', 9-14, *Minute Book 1867-78*, NSW Baptist Association, between folios 94-95.

<sup>14</sup> *The Banner of Truth*, Vol. 1, No. 10, July 1877, 4.

<sup>15</sup> *The Banner of Truth*, Vol. 1, No. 10, July 1877, 8.

<sup>16</sup> *Minute Book 1867-1878*, NSW Baptist Association, folio 183.

Sydney.<sup>17</sup> Planting churches in Sydney was a priority, and using Home Mission Agents as pastors to those churches became the accepted pattern to provided ministerial oversight. However, Home Mission Agents were not considered by the Union Executive to be fully trained and recognised ministers, they were apprentices proving their aptitude, who would then under the authority of the Union Executive be placed at either the Congregational or Presbyterian theological colleges in Sydney. One such candidate for the ministry is identified in the 1885 Assembly records, Mr D. Davis who continued his training at Camden College, his education being funded through the Student Fund in 1885.<sup>18</sup> He was pastor of the Home Mission church plant at Woollahra, (received as a member of the Union at the 1885 annual session) and was assisted by lay preachers in his ministry.<sup>19</sup>

This fifteenth annual session (1885) was noteworthy for another matter, the strengthening of the Executive's powers over the appointment of ministers. In an editorial of *The Banner of Truth*, Rev F. Hibberd reviewed the achievements of the Annual Sessions of the Baptist Union of New South Wales since its inception in 1870.<sup>20</sup> His assessment of the state of the Union by 1873 was none too flattering: 'very fruitful in resolutions, but barren in performances'. The Union began to progress in the right direction according to Hibberd in 1875 when: 'Instead of being satisfied with public questions and communion with each other, the representatives of it began to see that a Union has powers and commensurate responsibilities, for which it is answerable to the Great Head of the Church'.<sup>21</sup> Rev C. Bright, , who had trained at Rawdon College, recently arrived in the colony to fill the vacant pastorate of the Bathurst St church, received glowing praise in the Annual Report of 1885.<sup>22</sup> He also features in the minutes of the Annual Session, especially as the mover of two motions regarding Churches. The first concerned the admission of a congregation as a member church of the Union which required that the Executive Committee be consulted and a resolution taken by them on admitting churches. This was carried by the Annual Session. The second motion concerned the appointment of ministers: 'Any Church which receives monetary aid from the Union

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<sup>17</sup> 'Baptist Union of New South Wales: Fifteenth Annual Session: Minutes of Proceedings', *The Banner of Truth*, Vol. 19, Nos 11-12, Sept-Oct 1885, 129.

<sup>18</sup> 'Fifteenth Annual Session: Minutes of Proceedings', 131.

<sup>19</sup> 'Annual Report', *The Banner of Truth*, Vol. 19, Nos 11-12, Sept-Oct 1885, 141

<sup>20</sup> 'The Baptists in N.S. Wales', *The Banner of Truth*, Vol. 19, Nos 11-12, Sept-Oct 1885, 121-122.

<sup>21</sup> 'The Baptists in N.S. Wales', 122.

<sup>22</sup> 'Annual Report', *The Banner of Truth*, Vol. 19, Nos 11-12, Sept-Oct 1885, 141.

for the erection of a place of worship, or for other purposes, wishing to secure the services of a Pastor, shall be guided therein by the opinion of the Executive Committee, a meeting of which shall be called and a resolution taken on the subject'.<sup>23</sup> This motion was also supported by Mr White, and after debate was carried fourteen votes to eleven. The Executive Committee now had a clear mandate to influence the appointment of ministers of any church subsidised by the Union. A draft of the constitution for the Home Mission Society was published in the December edition of *The Baptist* in 1892, outlining the use of Home Mission Agents as church planters, rather than itinerant evangelists, who were accountable to the Home Missionary Society Committee,<sup>24</sup> and a Committee of Advice as approved by the 1892 Annual Session published its objects which reinforced the Union Executives role in facilitating 'the settlement and removal of Ministers' and reporting on the 'credentials of Ministers seeking admission to the Union'.<sup>25</sup>

With such authority came responsibility to invest in the training of ministers. However, it was not until 1889 that the Executive formed an Examination Committee to undertake the testing of potential ministerial candidates. This morphed into the Education Committee in 1892, which examined its first students under its guidance in 1893, Miss Mary Morris and Mr Percy Nall, Sunday School teachers; Mr William Chaseling and Mr H. Halmarick, Home Mission Agents at churches at Cumnock and Plattsburg respectively.<sup>26</sup> In December 1892 the first half yearly report of a new Baptist Preachers' Society was printed in *The Baptist*, the new 'Organ of the Baptist Denomination in N.S.W.'<sup>27</sup> Two members of this lay preachers' society, Mr J. Parker and Mr F.B. Bryant applied to the Executive Committee to be received as ministerial students. Mr Parker had been supplying the pulpit at Leichardt and Granville on a regular basis and with the approval of the congregations. Neither of these men was listed presenting themselves for examination by the Education Committee. Yet the Committee had as its object the education of Sunday School Teachers, Lay-Preachers, and Candidates for the ministry.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> 'Baptist Union of New South Wales: Fifteenth Annual Session: Minutes of Proceedings', *The Banner of Truth*, Vol. 19, Nos 11-12, Sept-Oct 1885, 130.

<sup>24</sup> 'Draft Constitution of NSW Home Missionary Society', *The Baptist*, New Series Vol. 1 No.12, 3.

<sup>25</sup> 'Committee of Advice', *The Baptist*, New Series, Vol. 2, No. 1, January 1893, 9.

<sup>26</sup> 'Notices', *The Baptist*, New Series Vol. 2, No 12, Dec 1893, 190.

<sup>27</sup> 'Baptist Preachers' Society – First Half Yearly Report', *The Baptist*, New Series, Vol. 1, No.12, 1.

<sup>28</sup> 'Proposed scheme of education for our students', *The Baptist*, New Series Vol. 2, No. 1, 7.

In 1893 the case of James Worboys' appointment as pastor of the Bathurst Church created some lively correspondence in *The Baptist*. In a stinging letter, signed 'S', published in the October edition, Worboys and the Bathurst Church were castigated for not consulting the Union Executive concerning Worboys' appointment as pastor. Further, Worboys was challenged that he had not undertaken any ministerial training prior to his appointment. The correspondent wrote: 'It would seem to be a proof of the existence and prevalence, among a certain class of prejudice against culture in the pulpit. It is true that ignorance has no sympathy with true culture. Often heard is the hue and cry which judges of a man on no other ground than that he is a scholar'.<sup>29</sup> A highly educated ministry was further endorsed by an un-named correspondent in the December edition, where preaching the Gospel as 'spiritual insurance' was contrasted with the high calling of ministry 'the building up of character into a beautiful and symmetrical whole'. In this preaching 'there is room for the play of the loftiest genius, and the richest culture'.<sup>30</sup> 'Simply a layman' responded in January 1894 arguing for Gospel preaching inspired by the Holy Spirit as the essential part of ministry, while conceding 'external aids to efficiency' as something a 'spiritual man' welcomes, yet such a man 'knows that it is not in these his great strength lieth'.<sup>31</sup> Aiming at the 'inflexible Church polity' of the Baptist Union as defended by 'S', 'Simply a layman' argues for 'a little more elasticity and readiness to acknowledge the really essential elements of ministerial usefulness where they exist, even though the time and ability to pursue successfully a long course of study may be lacking. Ministerial status, whatever it implies, is doubtless a valuable possession, but ministerial efficiency may exist without it, and where that is the case it is neither fair, politic or Scriptural to withhold it'.<sup>32</sup> In this exchange of views the lines are drawn between those whose philosophy of training valued high standards of education, and those who saw ministry as more reliant on the Spirit with an emphasis on preaching salvation to sinners.

1894 saw the first Education Committee, also known as the Student's Aid Committee, ministerial candidate recommended and accepted into the Victorian Baptist Theological College, Mr Charles Thomas Way, who was already working with approval as an evangelist

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<sup>29</sup> 'Correspondence', *The Baptist*, New Series Vol 2, No. 10, 160.

<sup>30</sup> 'Culture in the Pulpit', *The Baptist*, New Series, Vol. 2, No. 12, December 1893, 185.

<sup>31</sup> 'Culture and the Pulpit', *The Baptist*, New Series, Vol. 3, No. 1, January 1894, 5.

<sup>32</sup> 'Culture and the Pulpit', 5

with the Central Methodist Mission.<sup>33</sup> In the same edition of *The Baptist*, the Committee felt compelled, due to ‘popular misunderstanding’ to clarify the ‘exact character and scope’ of its work:

We are not appointed with the view of training young men for the Christian ministry. The members are not elected as Professors to teach promising young preachers theology, homiletics, and other sciences. Our special work is to guide the reading, supervise the studies and periodically examine the work done by students.<sup>34</sup>

Students associated with the Committee were ‘Home Mission workers, Sunday School teachers, Lay Preachers, and a few who hope some day to enter College where they may be trained for efficient Christian service at home or abroad.’ There were four set texts for first year students of the Committee.<sup>35</sup> While the Committee was encouraged by the numbers of young men applying for ministerial training, the Secretary Rev E. Price felt constrained to point out that the desire for training ‘cannot always be encouraged’. In the Committee’s view high academic standards were the cornerstone to ministerial training, and many who ‘offer themselves for ministerial labour ... shrink from those disciplinary tasks which alone can fit them for permanent and effective Christian service’.<sup>36</sup>

When educationally qualified candidates presented themselves the Education Committee recommended them to attend theological college for ministerial training. However, not every such student went to a Baptist College, as the career of Mr Percy Nall demonstrates.<sup>37</sup> Other

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<sup>33</sup> ‘The Student’s Aid Committee’, *The Baptist*, New Series, Vol. 3, No. 3, March 1894, 44; ‘Executive Committee – Resume of Minutes’, *The Baptist*, New Series, Vol. 3, No.4, 60. It cost 1 pound 1 shilling for Mr Way’s first term fees, though the Petersham Church agreed to pay the cost. ‘Executive Committee – Resume of Minutes’, *The Baptist*, New Series, Vol. 3, No. 6. 87.

<sup>34</sup> ‘The Student’s Aid Committee’, 87.

<sup>35</sup> Moule’s *Outlines of Christian Theology* (first seven chapters); *The Old Testament and its contents* by Professor Robertson; *The New Testament and its writers* by Rev A. McClymont; and Stalker’s *Life of St Paul* with slight variations in special cases. ‘The Student’s Aid Committee’, *The Baptist*, New Series, Vol. 3, No. 3, March 1894, 44

<sup>36</sup> ‘Education Committee’s Annual Report’, *The Baptist*, New Series, Vol. 3, No. 10, 162.

<sup>37</sup> Percy Nall was accepted as a ministerial candidate in January 1895, with a view to attending Camden College, but for un-stated reasons, was not able to continue his candidature at their college, nevertheless the Congregational College advocated his acceptance at the Presbyterian College, where he successfully completed his first year of theological studies, attending lectures

students for the ministry like Mr A. J. Waldock became Home Missionary agents under the direction of the Education Committee for the whole of their theological training.<sup>38</sup>

There continued to be intermittent appeals in *The Baptist* for the revival of the role of Union evangelist,<sup>39</sup> and to foster the work of lay preachers.<sup>40</sup> By 1900 ministerial training was firmly in the hands of those who affirmed the priority of formal theological college education and the reality of centralised direction of ministerial training. Those churches that sought to appoint pastors who were not formally trained were under pressure to conform. However, there continued to be a lack of trained ministers in NSW and in some quarters the failure to utilise lay preachers and evangelists was considered a hindrance to the growth of Baptist work in the colony.<sup>41</sup> Yet NSW Baptists did not discuss establishing their own theological college at this time to meet their need for trained ministers. Rather there was in 1897 discussion concerning the idea of a 'central college for the training of Australian students' which was still being fostered in 1902, though ultimately it came to naught.<sup>42</sup>

### 1900-1916: The Rise of the Education Committee

In 1901-2 the Annual Session of the Union accepted some by-law changes to the constitution of the Education Committee that gave churches a role to play in the acceptance of candidates by the Committee and reinforced that accepted candidates were 'to conform to such

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without charge. *The Baptist*, New Series, Vol. 4, No.1, 5; Vol. 4, No.4, 50; Vol. 4, No. 5, 67; Vol. 4, No. 11, 141.

<sup>38</sup> R.B. Henson, *And One Was a Doctor: A Life of Rev Dr A J Waldock*, Baptist Historical Studies No. 7, 13-15, 18. A.J. Waldock was recognised as a minister at the annual Assembly in 1897 having completed the prescribed course of the Education Committee, but not having attended any theological college.

<sup>39</sup> 'Correspondence -James Worboys', *The Baptist*, New Series, Vol. 4, No. 1 January 1895, 4.

<sup>40</sup> 'Correspondence - Anaxagoras', *The Baptist*, New Series, Vol. 5, No.3, March 1896; 'Correspondence - Chas Howard', *The Baptist*, New Series, Vol. 5, No. 5, May 1896. Howard pointed out that to his knowledge there had been three previous attempts to establish a lay preachers association, but all had 'for different reasons ... collapsed'.

<sup>41</sup> 'More Labourers Wanted', *The Baptist*, New Series, Vol. 5, No. 7, 76. The author compares the effective work of lay preachers in Victorian Baptist work with the lack of lay preachers in NSW and the evident ineffectiveness of the NSW Baptist work.

<sup>42</sup> A.C. Prior, *Some Fell on Good Ground*, The Baptist Union of New South Wales, Sydney, 1966, 231; 'Annual Report of Executive Committee', *1902-3 Year Book: Baptist Churches of NSW*, 12.

regulations as now exist, or may here after be framed'.<sup>43</sup> Was this a conciliatory move on the part of the Education Committee in the face of on-going tension over the level of education required of ministers? Rev W.A. Southwell, who had been outspoken about over emphasising education, presented the Annual Sermon at the 1902-3 Assembly in which he was exceedingly suspicious of higher learning and 'critical experts lapsing into infidelity',<sup>44</sup> a theme continued in 1904-5 by Rev W.R. Hiddlestone who broadened the attack from Higher Criticism to education generally: 'Philosophy, poetry, art, sociology, ethics etc are all well in their place, but not in the pulpit'.<sup>45</sup> An apparent resolution of this tension seems to have transpired by 1906-7. In the *1905-6 Year Book* the Education Committee reported an over abundance of applicants, many with such a 'rudimentary' knowledge of English that the Committee was forced to introduce entrance examination to eliminate 'inferior material', and to strictly confine its work to ministerial students.<sup>46</sup> In the same period a Preachers' Society was formed, so that in the *1906-7 Year Book* the Executive Committee reported that the Education Committee were *only* dealing with ministerial students, all other students of the Committee were now under the authority of the Preachers' Society.<sup>47</sup> With a more focused aim, the Education Committee established a new curriculum for its students, prepared a scheme to establish a Baptist College in NSW and to raise the educational standards of its students. In 1907 it was able to report that 'the much needed increase in the standard has reduced the number of inferior applicants'.<sup>48</sup>

University education was now considered the desired norm for training ministerial candidates. Mr Herbert Priestly reinforced this position in his Presidential Address 'Our secondary needs':

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<sup>43</sup> *1901-2 Year Book: Baptist Churches of NSW*, 16, 43.

<sup>44</sup> 'By Faith, not by Sight – Rev W.A. Southwell', *1902-3 Year Book: Baptist Churches of NSW*, 10.

<sup>45</sup> 'Annual Sermon', *1904-5 Year Book: Baptist Churches of NSW*, 12.

<sup>46</sup> 'Education Committee' *1905-06 Year Book Baptist Churches of NSW*, 61.

<sup>47</sup> 'Executive Committee' *1906-07 Year Book: Baptist Churches of NSW*, 22.

<sup>48</sup> 'Education Committee – Annual Report', 77. The entrance examination was now set at the level of the Sydney University Junior Standard in English and one other subject from the History of England, any language, or any branch of science. First year students were urged to take Logic and Science at the University of Sydney, while completing Baptist History and Doctrine (Bartlett's *Early Church History*; Rooke *On Baptism*), Church History (Lindsay's *History of the Reformation*); Second year students to study Theology (Denney), Introduction to the Old and New Testaments (Robertson & McClymon), Homiletics (Date), Christian Evidence (Row); Third year students: Theology (Dale on *The Atonement*), Ethics (MacKenzie), Psychology (James – smaller book), Apologetics (A.B. Bruce).

The days 'when want of learning kept the laymen low' are happily past. The school master is abroad, and the standard of education is now very much higher than a few decades ago. Every advance in the educational attainments of the pew makes a greater demand upon the culture and intellectuality of the pulpit, and if the Churches desire to retain their hold on the intellectual classes, those who are set apart to teach and to preach will need to be men of wisdom, understanding, and largeness of heart, honest, logical thinkers, and capable leaders. We have such men in our midst, would to God that we had more of them; men of broad views and sound judgement, fearless champions of the right, humble servants of the Great Teacher, and deep students of His Word. We need to realise that piety, although a primary and all important requisite in a preacher, can never take the place of incapacity for unless a man is thoroughly equipped for his work, mentally as well as spiritually, he may become an obstacle instead of an aid to progress.<sup>49</sup>

The following year, Rev W.M. Cartwright, a member of the Education Committee, in his Presidential Address echoed the theme of Mr Priestly. While condemning the 'New Theology' and 'Higher Criticism', he nevertheless castigated those who supported a 'sickly pietism that imagines the Spirit to more effectively operate through ignorance than through knowledge'.<sup>50</sup> His summary might well act as a definition of the Education Committee's philosophy of ministerial training: 'there are abundant reasons for assiduously fostering a spirit controlled scholarship that shall be at the service of our churches'.<sup>51</sup> By 1912 a ministerial candidate could expect to undertake 5 years of study, two under the Committee and Home Mission, and three years study at the Victorian Baptist College.<sup>52</sup> By 1913 the Education Committee had 31 students under its care, ten of whom were students at the Victorian Baptist College where University study was an integral part of a students study programme, and those who showed aptitude at University were encouraged to 'do higher academic work'.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> 'Annual Sermon' 1907-8 *Year Book: Baptist Churches of NSW*, 31.

<sup>50</sup> 'Our work in the light of Today – Rev W.M. Cartwright', 1908-9 *Year Book: Baptist Churches of NSW*, 29.

<sup>51</sup> 'Our work in the light of Today – Rev W.M. Cartwright', 31.

<sup>52</sup> 'Education Committee Annual Report', 1911-12 *Year Book: Baptist Churches of NSW*, 90.

<sup>53</sup> 'Education Committee. Annual Report, 1914', *New South Wales Baptist Year Book and Handbook of Baptist Information 1914-15*, 84-86.

Nevertheless, lack of funds hampered the Education Committee's work to raise the educational standards of its candidates. In 1907-8 the Committee had 22 students under its care and only a grant of 7 pounds to fund its work. As Mr Barbour Secretary of the Committee pointed out: 'the funds for the Philosophy course at the University for one student amount to more than this'.<sup>54</sup>

Alexander Gordon, secretary of the Victorian Baptist College till 1908, was an enthusiastic supporter of well trained ministers, and presented a 'position paper' at the inaugural Australasian Baptist Congress in Sydney, September 1908. The Congress resolved 'that ministerial candidates should have first passed at least four subjects in the matriculation or its equivalent, and that they should study secular university subjects as well as theological subjects'.<sup>55</sup> This Australasian Congress reignited discussion of the formation of an Australian Baptist College; however differences of opinion between Victoria and New South Wales saw the idea founder. Otzen implies that New South Wales Baptists decided to open their own college in response to what they felt to be a betrayal of an agreement reached with all the states in 1912,<sup>56</sup> while Rogers indicates it was in June 1915 when a letter from the Victorian Baptist Union proposed changes in the financial arrangements for the future training of NSW Baptist students at the Victorian College that precipitated the formation of the NSW Baptist College.<sup>57</sup>

One who would continue from the Education Committee to the College Council was Rev B. Gawthrop. As President of the NSW Baptist Union in 1914 he took a mediating position between simply relying on a 'highly educated ministry' to do all the work of apologetics, soul winning, and teaching, at the same time urging the need for a 'teaching ministry' that could teach theology to the young people especially. While being careful to state he was not criticising or discounting 'simple gospel preaching', he challenged his hearers to the danger 'of conventionality and formalism which may dominate us in this matter of preaching and revivalism as much as in ritual'.<sup>58</sup>

By September 1915 at the NSW Baptist Annual Assembly a constitution for the NSW Baptist Theological College had been debated,

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<sup>54</sup> 'Education Committee Report', *1907-8 Year Book: Baptist Churches of NSW*, 79.

<sup>55</sup> M. Otzen, *Whiteley. The Baptist College of Victoria 1891-1991*, Hyland House, 1991, 49.

<sup>56</sup> Otzen, 63.

<sup>57</sup> R. Rogers, 'Alexander Gordon, M.A. A Christian gentleman', *The Baptist Recorder*, No. 91, May 2005, 4-5.

<sup>58</sup> *NSW Baptist Yearbook 1914-15*, 25.

amended and approved, and Rev C.J. Tinsley had moved that Alexander Gordon be appointed Principal of the college for a three year term.<sup>59</sup> Tinsley admitted he had not always been a supporter of the Victorian Baptist College, but had through the 'able and self-sacrificing work of men like the Rev A. Gordon ...' experienced a 'radical conversion' to the work and ethos of the Victorian College.<sup>60</sup> Would this be a lasting conversion or would the ethos of his Pastor's College training re-emerge? Gordon was approached and accepted the invitation to be the first principal of the NSW Baptist College in a letter to the Union Executive dated 9 November 1915, arriving in Sydney 13 January 1916.<sup>61</sup>

### **1916-1920 The Principalship of Alexander Gordon**

Gordon's first report as Principal focused the broad object of the College in its constitution from training 'students for the ministry of the Gospel' to training 'preachers – those whom God has called, and to whom He has granted gifts – preachers with visions of the greatness and glory and powers of the everlasting Gospel. We desire the College to secure an out-standing reputation on this basis ...'.<sup>62</sup> Ministerial students, those in their third, fourth and fifth years of study, undertook some university studies along with their college studies:

- (a) Biblical Theology – The Person and Work of Christ Jesus; (b) Greek New Testament – the 1<sup>st</sup> Epistle of John; (c) Old Testament Exegesis – a portion of I Samuel and Habakkuk; (d) Apologetics – Revelation and Inspiration; (e) Christian Psychology – Prof. Stalker's book as an introduction; (f) Church History – the Reformation Period; (g) Church polity – the study of Baptist Church Principles; (h) Greek – the Grammar; (i) Bible Introduction; (j) Homiletics and Preaching.<sup>63</sup>

Gordon had the assistance of Revs A.J. Waldock, B. Gawthrop and A.J. Packer, but not C.J. Tinsley who was unable to fulfil his desire to assist due to illness.<sup>64</sup> All these ministers were members of the College Council, A.J. Waldock being the President.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Rogers, 5.

<sup>60</sup> Rogers, 4.

<sup>61</sup> Rogers, 5.

<sup>62</sup> 'Principal's Report', *New South Wales Baptist Year Book and Handbook of Baptist Information 1916-17*, 83.

<sup>63</sup> 'Principal's Report: 1916-17', 82.

<sup>64</sup> 'Principal's Report: 1916-17', 82.

<sup>65</sup> 'Committees for 1916-17', *NSW Baptist Year Book 1916-17*, 117.

The report of the College Council focused on the welcome offered to the Gordons, and thanks offered to the Victorian Baptist College for the effective training of the NSW men sent there. A list of prize winners from the NSW students was also presented, one G.A (sic) Morling having won prizes for elocution and apologetics.<sup>66</sup> The emphasis on the importance of University training for NSW Baptist ministers is noted in a reference to the location of the Harris Street Church classrooms, 'within easy walking distance of the University'.<sup>67</sup> Training of candidates for Foreign Mission fields was added to the charter of the fledgling college, the Federal Mission Board being responsible for payment of their fees.<sup>68</sup> Further consideration was given to a proposal by the Inter-State Board 'to secure a uniform standard of ministerial education throughout the Commonwealth', an ideal the College Council was in favour of, but not in the form presented by the Board.<sup>69</sup> Evidently, the NSW Baptist College was confident in its understanding of what constituted ideal ministerial training and how it should be undertaken. The College saw itself as responsible for the theological training of both Foreign Missionary and home ministerial candidates, closely linked to a well grounded University level undergraduate degree. But did it still have some remnant of the early Education Committee philosophy concerning a much broader training for ministry, including the training of Lay Preachers?

The College Council reported the visit of Principal Gordon and the Secretary of the College Council, Rev A.J. Parker, to the Baptist Preachers' Society, commenting they hoped 'that much good will result from the conference.'<sup>70</sup> That year's annual report of the Baptist Preachers' Society, their 10<sup>th</sup> since reforming, also mentioned the visit. Their report indicated their vitality and usefulness to the denomination despite the small size of their society. Though the previous year they suffered the loss of four members through death, they had nonetheless provided preaching for 475 services: 335 in Baptist churches, the rest spread across Congregational and Methodist churches in the main.<sup>71</sup> Yet all was not well. In November 1916, Higlett noted in his diary that on a visit to the Preachers' Society he found it 'out of harmony with A.J.

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<sup>66</sup> 'Report of College Council', *NSW Baptist Year Book 1916-17*, 84-85.

<sup>67</sup> 'Report of College Council: 1916-17', 85.

<sup>68</sup> 'Report of College Council', 85.

<sup>69</sup> 'Report of College Council', 86.

<sup>70</sup> 'Baptist Preacher's Society – Report for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> August, 1916', *NSW Baptist Year Book 1916-17*, 102.

<sup>71</sup> 'Baptist Preacher's Society – Report for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> August, 1916', 102.

Waldock and others'.<sup>72</sup> Was this the first sign of differences emerging between the College's philosophy of ministry and others in the wider Baptist community, or simply that A.J. Waldock's plans for a more efficient and centralised Union of Churches envisaged the independent Baptist Preachers' Society to come under the auspices of an official department of the Union?

In the *1917-18 Year Book*, and again in the *1918-1919 Year Book*, there is no report from the Baptist Preacher's Society; while in 1919 the College's Principal with the approval of the College Council announced the successful commencement of evening classes for the training of lay preachers.<sup>73</sup> In his Annual report for 1919-20 Waldock makes mention of the 'faithful and devoted service' rendered to the Home Mission by the 'Lay Preachers' Auxiliary'.<sup>74</sup> In 1920-21 both the College Council and Principal's reports mention the on going work of the evening classes. 'The tutors for these classes are Rev H Cubis BA, (English), Rev G. A. Craike (Bible Study), and the Principal (Preaching). It is anticipated that these classes will continue to grow in numbers and usefulness.'<sup>75</sup>

Among those people who viewed theological training of preachers with suspicion, this extension of the College's influence might well have been seen in a negative light.

In his second year as Principal (1917-18) Gordon introduced a 'series of innovations' to the College curriculum: the engagement of an elocution teacher, which was not achieved until the next year, when Mr A Bearpark Dimelow became the Voice Production tutor;<sup>76</sup> the setting of weekly written tests of expression; and a three year course in Bible Introduction, aimed at 'exact knowledge of the contents and definite teaching of the various books', an innovation Gordon attached 'considerable importance to'.<sup>77</sup> Otherwise the curriculum continued in broadly the same categories as the previous year, students also taking some subjects at Sydney University. Another innovation was a change in the by-laws that facilitated accepting interstate students for training.<sup>78</sup> A.J. Waldock, and A.J. Parker continued as tutors, while for a second year C.J. Tinsley could not teach Bible Introduction as he had hoped.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Rogers, 7.

<sup>73</sup> *NSW Baptist Year Book 1919-20*, 65.

<sup>74</sup> *NSW Baptist Year Book 1919-20*, 32.

<sup>75</sup> *NSW Baptist Year Book 1920-21*, 53.

<sup>76</sup> *NSW Baptist Year Book 1918-1919*, 66.

<sup>77</sup> *NSW Baptist Year Book 1917-1918*, 90.

<sup>78</sup> *NSW Baptist Year Book 1917-1918*, 88.

<sup>79</sup> *NSW Baptist Year Book 1917-1918*, 90.

At the conclusion of their report the College Council focused on the College as an academic institution for the training of those in ministry:

Our College is not simply an academy; it is that and more; it is an impassioned and organised attempt to set before our students the highest spiritual ideals of the Christian ministry, and to furnish them with the equipment most likely to make that ministry more influential and effective.<sup>80</sup>

The Principal outlined his understanding of the purpose of the College as 'the training of men so that they shall go forth thoroughly furnished, wise and able exponents of the Word of God, constrained by the grandeur and power of the Gospel.'<sup>81</sup> The view of ministry being propagated under Principal Gordon and the College Council was one committed to the proclamation of the Gospel based on the exposition of the Word of God that used all the facilities of the academy.

There were some changes in the College Council for 1918-19. A.J. Waldock was elected President of the Union for its Jubilee Year, and as such was not President of the College Council. That honour went to C.J. Tinsley. There was also a change in Secretary from A.J. Parker to H. Clark. Revs B. Gawthrop, W.P. Phillips and D. Steed were replaced on the Council by Revs W Cleugh Black, S. Sharp, while Mr F.P. Thompson replaced Mr R.J. Middleton.

Other changes included changes to the by-laws governing student training. Students would now spend four of their five years training for ministry at the College. 'One year at least is prescribed in the Home Mission field, with the first year examination at the close. The second year course will be superseded by a preliminary year in the College'.<sup>82</sup>

There are hints in the Principal's Report that some pressure was brought to bear on the College about its philosophy of ministry training. Principal Gordon appears to defend the view that ministerial training is about diversity based on the individual student's gifts. 'The College is not a mould but a living school with the object of developing distinct personality in the ministry. At the same time the goal is one – the proclamation of the Gospel in all its grandeur and a burning enthusiasm for the extension of the Kingdom.'<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> *NSW Baptist Year Book 1917-1918*, 90.

<sup>81</sup> *NSW Baptist Year Book 1917-1918*, 88.

<sup>82</sup> *NSW Baptist Year Book 1918-19*, 66.

<sup>83</sup> *NSW Baptist Year Book 1918-19*, 67.

There is also a defensive air to his remark concerning the students as preachers:

Their passion for preaching has not lessened, rather it has deepened. As a result of their studies, their apprehension of the Divine Revelation ay have grown, but correspondingly their confidence in proclaiming it and their sense of dependence on the Holy Spirit have also grown. Taken as a whole the quality of preaching power in the College ranks above the average, some giving exceptional promise.<sup>84</sup>

Students continued to follow the curriculum, though Principal Gordon felt constrained to highlight that A.J. Waldock had not taught Church Polity that session, as it was scheduled 'every alternate year'.<sup>85</sup> Church Polity, however, did not appear in the curriculum for 1919-20 as it should if Principal Gordon's policy had been followed.<sup>86</sup> Was there perhaps another source of discontent with the College that Principal Gordon was facing, the propagation of non-Baptistic views of church governance? Was there an emphasis on ecumenical endeavour at the expense of NSW Baptist identity?

Henson suggests that A.J. Waldock was pursuing a centralising policy for NSW Baptists that challenged the principle of Independency strongly held among NSW Baptists. At the 1918 Annual Assembly Waldock proposed the formation of a Finance Committee to finalise all departmental budgets for the Union, and to have authority to assess the churches for their contribution. The proposal was shelved.<sup>87</sup> Was the Principal's comment about Church Polity a defensive one suggesting the College was not propagating Waldock's radical polity ideas? It does seem however, that issues of Baptist identity were causing concern, perhaps even among members of the College Council. In the College Council's 1920-21 report it states: 'The question of the policy of the College having arisen, it was remitted to a special select committee of the Council, consisting of the officers of the College, and the Revs W. Cleugh Black and A.J. Waldock.'<sup>88</sup> Issues of Baptist identity appear to be prominent in the review of the policy of the College. The College Council made two recommendations, the first to added to the curriculum two text-books, Cramp's 'History of the Baptists,' and Rooke on 'Baptism', the second to specifically include in the curriculum lectures on the History of the

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<sup>84</sup> *NSW Baptist Year Book 1918-19*, 68.

<sup>85</sup> *NSW Baptist Year Book 1918-19*, 68-69.

<sup>86</sup> *NSW Baptist Year Book 1919-20*, 65.

<sup>87</sup> Henson, 48.

<sup>88</sup> *NSW Baptist Handbook 1920-21*, 54.

Baptists and Baptism, as well as books of the Old Testament and Second Advent teaching.<sup>89</sup> By 1920 perhaps Principal Gordon was also under suspicion of being too broad in his churchmanship. Rogers indicates that Principal Gordon had been consulted by members of the NSW Baptist Executive over the South Australian Baptist Church Union resolution in 1918,<sup>90</sup> but apparently was not consulted in December 1919 when the Executive vote to reject the South Australian proposal.<sup>91</sup> In June 1920 when eight Baptists were chosen to represent NSW Baptists at a gathering of Sydney Protestants to discuss the 'menace of Rome', Principal Gordon was not among the chosen.<sup>92</sup>

In 1918 this was in the future, and Alexander Gordon was elected to a second three year term as Principal of the College.

There is a sense in the College reports for 1919-20 that Rev. C.J. Tinsley as President of the College Council brought fresh energy and drive to that position, perhaps also some level of competition with Principal Gordon as to who would direct the philosophy of the College. Rev. C.J. Tinsley introduced a College Dinner as a fund raising event, which was underwritten by Mr W. Buckingham, a member of the College Council and deacon of Tinsley's at Stanmore Church, to the sum of 500 pounds. The College Council report notes the speakers at the Dinner as Tinsley, Waldock, F.J. Wyles (past student) and Pastor J. Hunter (present student).<sup>93</sup> Conspicuous by his absence is the College Principal. At the College Commencement service, the Principal is again conspicuous by his absence, Tinsley as President speaks for the College.<sup>94</sup>

The University accomplishments' of the College students features prominently in both the Council's and Principal's 1919-20 reports. Not only do current students undertake University studies, but recent graduates are also completing their Bachelor of Arts degrees. Principal Gordon cites with a degree of pride from a letter of Professor Wood: 'I am somewhat amazed by this appearance of a group of theological students among the best of our scholars'.<sup>95</sup> Nevertheless, academic achievement is firmly located in the larger picture of ministry preparation as evidenced by the Principal's comment:

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<sup>89</sup> *NSW Baptist Handbook 1920-21*, 54.

<sup>90</sup> Rogers, 8.

<sup>91</sup> Rogers, 11.

<sup>92</sup> Rogers, 9.

<sup>93</sup> *NSW Baptist Yearbook 1919-20*, 65.

<sup>94</sup> *NSW Baptist Yearbook 1919-20*, 65.

<sup>95</sup> *NSW Baptist Yearbook 1919-20*, 68.

In conjunction with their studies at the College and the University, they preach regularly, and I rejoice to say that reports witness to the excellence of their ministrations. ... it lies in direct line with my objective – that the College shall maintain the reputation of sending forth men mentally and spiritually equipped, real, live preachers of the Word.<sup>96</sup>

Rev W. Cleugh Black, who had re-joined the College Council in 1918-19, was also President of the NSW Baptist Union in 1919, and had commenced his Presidential address with some strident words against over emphasising academia: 'You will not, therefore, expect from me any scholastic contribution; you will not be called to follow along labyrinthine paths of learning'.<sup>97</sup> He goes on to 'repudiate those spies of Satan, those iconoclasts of hell, destructive critics'<sup>98</sup> who have especially 'derided and discredited' a premillennial view of the Second Coming of Christ. In the same sermon he attacks the present machinery of the denomination, 'to see whether the time had arrived to replace a creaking bar call Independency, by an interlocking system of Interdependency. In other words, I wish to advocate district Associations and Churches, to my mind, our only hope if the denomination is to carry out a vigorous and victorious Home Mission policy.'<sup>99</sup>

In this sermon we see a number of lines of our inquiry coming together, a check on the degree to which ministry training is reliant on the academy, Baptist polity, and an emphasis on efficient evangelism primarily through preaching of the Gospel within the framework of a specific view of the Second Coming.

Growing tensions within the College Council leading up to the Annual Assembly of 1920 are another line of inquiry to be followed. Rev. W. Cleugh Black's attack on academia, coupled with W. White's 1927 comment that he 'regarded education as it related to training of ministerial students as like electricity, a very good thing if properly controlled but dangerous if it got out of control'<sup>100</sup> suggests not all on the College Council were in favour of too great an emphasis on University training. Tensions regarding the College's teaching of Second Coming doctrine may also be implicit in Rev. W. Cleugh Black's Presidential sermon. While it may not have been Principal Gordon he was attacking, given he presents Principal Gordon's position as more in

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<sup>96</sup> *NSW Baptist Yearbook 1919-20*, 67.

<sup>97</sup> *NSW Baptist Yearbook 1919-20*, 1.

<sup>98</sup> *NSW Baptist Yearbook 1919-20*, 3.

<sup>99</sup> *NSW Baptist Yearbook 1919-20*, 18.

<sup>100</sup> Rogers, 16.

line with the majority of NSW Baptists than A.J. Waldock or W. Higlett,<sup>101</sup> the situation was exacerbated by Principal Gordon appearing to defend opponents of a Dispensational Premillennial position. As Chairman of the Advisory Council Principal Gordon censured one of the leading proponents of a Dispensational Premillennial interpretation of the Second Coming, Rev W. Lamb, who had been engaged in a heated controversy with a recent graduate of the College Rev D.R. Mitchell.<sup>102</sup> The broad churchmanship of Principal Gordon had also been identified as an issue by the Executive of the Union, some of whom were also members of the College Council.

It is not possible to identify exactly where the 'question of the policy of the College' had arisen, but it found expression in the College Council report for 1920-21. The curriculum of Principal Gordon was endorsed with some additions, as have been noted above. The College Council report suggests that members had observed a falling off of support for the College by the regrettably low attendance at the College Commencement Service and the response of the Churches on College Sunday:

It is to be regretted, however, that some of the churches do not give that place to the advocacy of the claims and needs of the College which it justly deserves. The College Council desires to secure not only the financial help of all our churches, but also their earnest sympathy and prayers on behalf of the Principal, tutors, students and Council in this highly important and responsible work.<sup>103</sup>

It is of interest to note that one of those Churches that did not record an offering for the College by the close of that financial year was Stanmore,<sup>104</sup> where the President of the College Council had been pastor since 1902. Nor had the College Council President paid his own annual contribution by the time the accounts were audited.

It would appear that between the writing and printing of the College Council report and 23<sup>rd</sup> September when Principal Gordon presented a letter of resignation to the Assembly immediately after the reception of the College reports, Principal Gordon had determined he had lost the confidence of the President of the College Council. He had consulted the Honorary legal advisor of the Union, Mr A.J.H. Palmer,

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<sup>101</sup> Rogers, 15-16.

<sup>102</sup> Rogers, 16.

<sup>103</sup> *NSW Baptist Yearbook 1920-21*, 53.

<sup>104</sup> *NSW Baptist Yearbook 1920-21*, 61.

who also acted as Treasurer of the College Council, about the mechanics of resigning, and then had spoken with the President of the College Council, Rev C.J. Tinsley, who according to Principal Gordon informed him that resigning 'was the right course'.<sup>105</sup> Had Tinsley recanted his conversion to Victoria's approach to ministerial training due to pressure from other Pastor's College graduates such as W. Cleugh Black, or had Gordon's association with Waldock, and the associated pressures of curriculum matters such as teaching on Baptist polity, baptism, the Second Coming, suggested to him that the College Council could not pursue its mission if Gordon was to remain? Or was the failure of NSW Baptists to support the Union Jubilee Fund proposed in 1918, during under the Presidency of Waldock, and the associated failure to support an endowment fund for the fledgling College sufficient for Gordon to conclude that NSW Baptists had a different agenda for ministerial training to himself.

There were forces arrayed against Rev. A.J. Waldock, who were also members of the College Council: F.P. Thompson, Revs W. Cleugh Black and L. Sale-Harrison, along with W. White. In 1901-2 Sale-Harrison supported by W. White had lost a vote for election as Union Secretary to Waldock.<sup>106</sup> On September 14 1920 Rev. W. Cleugh Black presented a report on the state of the churches of the northern rivers that reflected negatively on the management of Waldock as President of Home Mission, the report received on the motion of F.P. Thompson and Rev Sale-Harrison. While Waldock successfully defended himself before a joint sitting of the Executive & Home Mission Committees, in ally Rev. W. Higlett noted in his diary 'A night of special meeting of Home Mission and Executive. Grave developments – a desire on part of some who desire to get rid of Waldock and Gordon from office.'<sup>107</sup>

When Principal Gordon wrote his annual report he may have thought of it as a policy paper to win back the confidence of NSW Baptists. It is a stirring declaration of the philosophy and aims he had for the College.

The report focused on the preparation of individual men as independent, scholarly thinkers who would also be evangelistic preachers. He continued to introduce changes; he 'prescribed certain books for private study, my object being to help the students in acquiring facility in reading and forming their own judgments regarding what they

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<sup>105</sup> Rogers, 14.

<sup>106</sup> Henson, 27.

<sup>107</sup> Henson, 51-52.

read.<sup>108</sup> Yet he appeared cautious when speaking of College students' attendance at University, noting a number of times in the report that 'not all' students attend University.<sup>109</sup>

Yet his basic philosophy of ministerial education remained the same, echoing sentiments he has made as early as 1908:

In order to a clear understanding, it will not be out of place to first remind you of a guiding principle. All men have not the same gifts, nor are qualified to follow the same methods. "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are diversities of ministrations, and the same Lord." Hence the idea of the College is not to produce men after some single human type. There is only one standard type, the mind and spirit of the Lord, which leaves room for endless individual varieties. The purpose of the College is to provide the basis for a wide and practical knowledge of the Scriptures, to train the student to think for himself and to think rightly, to develop as far as possible the individual gifts, so that each man shall be at his possible best for the great work. At the same time, the goal is one – proclamation of the Gospel, its far-reaching applications to every avenue of life, and a real live enthusiasm for the extension of the Kingdom in the souls of men.<sup>110</sup>

With the resignation of Principal Gordon the various lines of inquiry have been played out to the point where it is possible to articulate the dominant approach to ministerial training among NSW Baptists, especially those who were members of Union Committees. Ministerial training was to be tightly managed by a combination of the College Council, Home Mission Committee and the Union Executive. The curriculum focused on the formation of preachers, evangelistic and apologetically equipped preachers who based their preaching on a thorough knowledge of the Word of God. University training was no longer considered essential, even desirable for the majority of ministerial students. Primarily the College existed for training ministerial candidates for churches in NSW, though mission candidates were also to be trained, and candidates from other States. While this was the primary function of the College, it nevertheless continued to pursue the philosophy of the earlier Education Committee to oversee the training of lay preachers. Teaching in the College was to clearly echo NSW Baptist emphases,

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<sup>108</sup> *NSW Baptist Yearbook 1920-21*, 56.

<sup>109</sup> *NSW Baptist Yearbook 1920-21*, 56, 58.

<sup>110</sup> *NSW Baptist Yearbook 1920-21*, 55.

especially closed membership linked to baptism of believers only by immersion, and a Dispensational Premillennial understanding of the Second Coming. The centralising of authority evident in the wider NSW Baptist setting since the inception of the Union found expression in the tightening control over ministerial students as the College worked with the Home Mission Committee to supply ministers for the expanded Baptist work both in urban and rural settings.

Was this approach to ministerial training among NSW Baptist to remain unchanged across the 40 years of Rev. G.H. Morling's principalship? To answer that question, a subsequent study will continue to follow the above lines of inquiry across the Morling years.

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## **‘Romanists’ for Rum, Baptists Against Booze: Two Churches in the Struggle Over Prohibition in 1919<sup>1</sup>**

### **ABSTRACT**

This article focuses on two referenda held on the issue of prohibition in New Zealand in 1919. It especially examines the attitudes of the Baptist and Roman Catholic churches on the issue of alcohol and their roles in the prohibition debate. For their part Baptists of that era were totally anti-alcohol and strongly supportive of prohibition. Catholics, on the other hand, felt under particular emotional stress at that time, largely because of ongoing chaos in Ireland (the motherland of many New Zealand Catholics) and because of increased anti-Catholicism fostered by the Protestant Political Association which emerged in 1917. In that context the Catholic hierarchy was more inclined to portray the prohibition movement in Catholic-versus-Protestant terms and, with greater than normal vigour, to urge Catholic faithful to oppose prohibition. The prohibition movement came within a few thousand votes of success at the two referenda. Because Catholics were so strongly urged to oppose prohibition, it is suggested that not only did returning soldiers keep New Zealand ‘wet’ – the Catholic vote also kept New Zealand ‘wet’.

The early twentieth-century campaign for prohibition of the sale of alcohol in New Zealand was part of a multi-faceted drive to create a pure society. Alcohol was unequivocally deemed evil and the only solution to its mischief was to ban it completely. The crusade against alcohol was in many ways a religious crusade, a crusade to bring in the kingdom of God. And it nearly succeeded. The critical year was 1919. In that year not one but two referenda were held on the issue of prohibition.

The roots of this unusual development lay in a recommendation of the National Efficiency Board (a wartime body to aid the economy

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<sup>1</sup> The term ‘Romanists’ was commonly employed by Protestants as a description of Catholics in anti-Catholic contexts. James Liston, later bishop and archbishop, described the term as ‘that “vulgar word used by the uneducated”’: *Otago Daily Times*, 15 December 1917, 10. I also express here my appreciation to Hugh Laracy and Nicholas Reid who read earlier drafts of this article.

and promote national efficiency) in July 1917 that the greatest efficiency would be promoted by national prohibition.<sup>2</sup> As the war came to a close, a petition pressured parliament to create a referendum along the lines of the National Efficiency Board's recommendations. The result was a special continuance-versus-prohibition poll in April 1919, followed by a three-way choice of prohibition or national continuance or state ownership at the time of general elections in December 1919. In the April referendum the prohibition vote trailed national continuance by only 10,000 votes out of more than 500,000 cast. In the December referendum, prohibition received 49.8% of the vote, just 3263 votes short of the bare majority needed.<sup>3</sup> Thus prohibition came within a whisker of success in both polls.

From one point of view it was the returned soldiers who decided the issue. In the April 1919 poll, prohibition won on election night by more than 10,000 votes. However, when the returning soldiers' votes came in a few days later, the result went the other way. The returning soldiers had rejected prohibition by a majority of nearly four to one.<sup>4</sup>

It is, nevertheless, equally valid to consider the role of the churches in the struggle. The Methodist, Presbyterian, Congregationalist, Salvation Army and Baptist churches were all lined up in support of prohibition. The post-war Anglican Church was wavering from its typical position of moderation such that in 1922 a couple of its diocesan synods adopted resolutions supporting prohibition (albeit on a split vote).<sup>5</sup> The only church to weigh in emphatically against prohibition was the Catholic Church. Given its emphasis that loyal Catholics would vote against prohibition and given the wafer-thin closeness of the two elections, it may be argued that it was the Catholic Church that kept New Zealand from going dry in 1919.<sup>6</sup> At the time of the two referenda Catholics comprised approximately 14% of the national population. It

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<sup>2</sup> National Efficiency Board Report 1917, *Appendix to the Journal of the House of Representatives* [AJHR], 1917, vol. II, H43A, 12.

<sup>3</sup> For these statistics see J. Cocker & J.M. Murray (eds), *Temperance and Prohibition in New Zealand*, London: Epworth, 1930) 126-7.

<sup>4</sup> R.M. Burdon, *The New Dominion: A Social and Political History of New Zealand 1918-39*, (Wellington: Reed, 1965), 21.

<sup>5</sup> Christchurch and Auckland Synods.

<sup>6</sup> See also argument that Catholic and Anglican stances were crucial in earlier prohibition referenda: A.R. Grigg, 'Prohibition, the Church and Labour: A Programme for Social Reform, 1890-1914', *New Zealand Journal of History* (NZJH), 15, 2 (1981) 135-54 at 146-7. Note how in 1922 *NZ Tablet* (NZT) could assume that the great majority of Catholics voted against prohibition 'as usual': NZT, 14 December 1922, 18.

required only 1632 Catholics (2.3% of Catholic voters) to be influenced by the Catholic hierarchy to change their vote and vote against prohibition in the December 1919 referendum to cause prohibition to fail.

If the prohibition cause was a moral crusade that would help bring in the kingdom of God, how would the Protestant churches react to apparent resistance of the Catholic Church to God's righteous cause? The matter needed sensitive handling. The prohibitionist movement needed to foster the small amount of support it received from Catholic quarters. No way could the prohibition cause be seen a 'No Popery' movement.<sup>7</sup> At the same time, however, there was a tendency for Protestant prohibitionists to see Catholicism as linked with the liquor industry.<sup>8</sup> Conversely there was a tendency for Catholics to see prohibition as a Protestant cause and as having anti-Catholic dimensions.<sup>9</sup> Thus there was significant Catholic-Protestant cleavage on prohibition, and this was interlinked with division over other issues. The balance of this article will explore the contrasting stances of the Baptist and the Catholic Churches in the prohibition struggle and note the prevailing Catholic-Protestant ill-will that fuelled their attitudes.<sup>10</sup>

We will begin with the Baptist position. Congregational autonomy and non-hierarchical ecclesiology indicate that any central union cannot dictate to local churches and individual members. From their early beginnings Baptists have stressed that the conscience should not be coerced. They have lived in the tension that the Bible is authoritative, but there is liberty of conscience. In terms of Baptist understandings of church, even though most Baptists may have been anti-alcohol, one might expect openness of perspective to other Baptists holding a counter-perspective to the majority one, especially given Saint Paul's specific acknowledgement of liberty of conscience in matters of food (and, by implication, drink) in Romans 14.1-6?

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<sup>7</sup> *NZ Baptist (NZB)*, February 1920, 28.

<sup>8</sup> See Catholic reaction to charges by Baptist minister, R.S. Gray, of an unholy alliance between 'the Liquor Party and the Roman Catholics': *NZT*, 14 December 1905, 1-2.

<sup>9</sup> See for example, an Irish article subsequently reproduced in *NZT* asserting that the Prohibition movement was 'essentially Protestant' and threatened the Mass: J.M. Prendergast, 'The Ethics of Total Prohibition', *NZT*, 30 November 1922, 9-11.

<sup>10</sup> In selecting the Baptist Church I am using it to typify Protestant prohibitionist sentiment. I could equally have chosen another church such as the Methodist Church for this purpose.

However, liberty of conscience has sometimes been a vaunted myth in Baptist history because the collective Baptist body has worked out what the Bible says on a topic and other viewpoints are frozen out. Increasingly this was the case in relation to alcohol. When Baptists first came to New Zealand in the second half of the nineteenth century, they came with divided attitudes on the issue of alcohol (reflected in a divided perspective on the use of alcoholic wine at communion).<sup>11</sup> This was because the English Baptist Church was then similarly divided, with the Temperance movement gradually becoming an English Baptist majority stance only in the second half of the nineteenth century and moving to its state of almost total dominance of English Baptist outlook on alcohol by the end of that century.<sup>12</sup> It is significant too that in moving to a total abstinence stance, English Baptists, because of their strong sense of the principle of the separation of church and state and of liberty of conscience, were reluctant as a body, to use the power of the state to impose prohibition on the nation as a whole.<sup>13</sup>

While New Zealand Baptists may at first have had diversity regarding alcohol this did not last long. The nation's desire to avoid the evils of old Europe and to become a 'better Britain', likely fostered New Zealand Baptist moves to seek a totally anti-alcohol society.<sup>14</sup> The New Zealand Baptist Union president, the Hon. Thomas Dick, acknowledged in 1885 that a few years earlier, New Zealand Baptist temperance supporters were a minority and had only recently become a bare majority. He argued, however, that 'within a few years those who touch strong drink among church members will be the rare exception'. He went on to call on the three-year-old denomination to mass its forces against 'that gigantic atrocity, that diabolical conspiracy . . . the traffic in intoxication', which 'must be destroyed root and branch'.<sup>15</sup> In 1889 the New Zealand Baptist annual conference commended the temperance question 'to the earnest support of all our Churches'.<sup>16</sup> In 1901 that same body affirmed its conviction 'that of all the suggested measures for

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<sup>11</sup> Paul Tonson, *A Handful of Grain: The Centenary History of the Baptist Union of N.Z.: Volume I: 1851-1882*, (Wellington: NZ Baptist Historical Society, 1982) 79.

<sup>12</sup> Joe L. Coker, 'Social Conscience and Political Power', *Pacific Journal of Baptist Research*, 1, (1, 2005): 20-38 at 29ff.

<sup>13</sup> Joe L. Coker, 36, 37; also D.W. Bebbington, 'The Baptist Conscience in the Nineteenth Century', *BQ*, XXXIV, 1 (1991-2) 13-24 at 17, 19-20.

<sup>14</sup> On the notion of New Zealand seeking to be a 'better Britain' see, James Belich, *Paradise Reforged: A History of the New Zealanders from the 1880s to the Year 2000* (Auckland: Penguin, 2001) 27-31, 76-86, 170-3.

<sup>15</sup> *NZB*, November 1885, 164-5.

<sup>16</sup> *NZB*, January 1890, 11.

coping with the [liquor] evil, the total abolition of the liquor traffic is the only effective remedy'.<sup>17</sup> The editor of *NZ Baptist* could confidently assert in September 1907 that the forthcoming annual conference would indicate 'our unabated and unrelenting hostility to intemperance'.<sup>18</sup> New Zealand Baptists now spoke with one voice on the alcohol issue. Not only were they personally opposed to alcohol; they felt no restraint against using the power of the state to eliminate it altogether from society.

In the first two decades and more of the twentieth century, New Zealand Baptists were rock-solid against any consumption of alcohol for themselves or for the nation, with no contrary view given public expression. Not a letter or a hint appeared in the monthly *NZ Baptist* containing any suggestion that a contrary position might validly be possible or that any good Christian held such a position. Repeatedly the editor slammed alcohol as 'white slavery',<sup>19</sup> as 'Herod',<sup>20</sup> as 'the great Hun',<sup>21</sup> as 'the cannibal trade',<sup>22</sup> as 'a cancer',<sup>23</sup> as 'wet damnation'.<sup>24</sup> Sermons of various preachers on the topic were printed in the *NZ Baptist*, all anti-alcohol: it was 'the devil's stronghold', 'a vicious habit'.<sup>25</sup> If there was any question of the overall Baptist position on the issue, the answer was clear at its national conference in October 1918, with one evening given over to a prohibition rally, with the meeting being described as 'full of fire'.<sup>26</sup>

The early-twentieth-century, one-sided Baptist stance relating to alcohol can also be seen in a list of questions asked of candidates for the Baptist ministry in 1924. One of these asked candidates to state particulars of ways in which they had endeavoured to be useful to others and listed about seven possibilities as a check-list. One of the possibilities was 'Temperance Propaganda'.<sup>27</sup> Its specific mention carried the

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<sup>17</sup> Supplement to *NZB*, January 1902, 12.

<sup>18</sup> *NZB*, September 1907, 233.

<sup>19</sup> *NZB*, July 1918, 100; April 1919, 57.

<sup>20</sup> *NZB*, August 1918, 117.

<sup>21</sup> *NZB*, September 1918, 129; January 1919, 1; also in sermon of Rev. W.S. Rollings: *NZB*, February 1919, 27.

<sup>22</sup> *NZB*, November 1918, 166.

<sup>23</sup> *NZB*, April 1919, 56.

<sup>24</sup> *NZB*, April 1919, 57.

<sup>25</sup> Rev. W.S. Rollings in *NZB*, February 1919, 26, 28.

<sup>26</sup> *NZB*, November 1918, 166.

<sup>27</sup> *New Zealand Baptist Union Handbook* 1924-1925, 24. In that context temperance typically meant prohibition or total abstinence from alcohol.

implication that no good Baptist would be other than a supporter of ‘Temperance Propaganda’.

In the 1919 referenda, it was virtually unthinkable from a Baptist perspective that a good Christian could support any position other than prohibition. Again and again, Rev. J.J. North, as editor of *NZ Baptist*, rammed home the point:

- ‘[W]e adjure every man and woman whom our voice can reach, to throw themselves into this most urgent and most hopeful of social efforts’.<sup>28</sup>
- ‘We are sure that it [prohibition] ought to have a place in every pray and every preach [sic] between now and the decision [the April referendum, two months away].’<sup>29</sup>
- ‘Are you working and praying for Prohibition on April 10<sup>th</sup>?’<sup>30</sup>
- ‘This reform is of God. . . . To me, Christ calls in this opportunity of giving the final knock-out of this evil, as plainly as he ever called in Galilee. . . . Who will dare refuse to come to the help of the Lord against the mighty? My soul, be not of their number.’<sup>31</sup>
- ‘That any man who uses the Christian name should vote for the liquor traffic is to us unthinkable.’<sup>32</sup>

Not content with recently emerging from one war, Baptists were ready for a new one in the struggle for a better world. In fact the military and moral wars were interlinked. The German-American association, which was formed early in the war ostensibly to promote friendly relations between the two countries, was, according to North, actually a tool of Germany to keep America out of the recent war. The association was ‘largely financed by the great brewing concerns of America’, something not surprising given that ‘the Kaiser was one of the chief shareholders in American brewery stock’.<sup>33</sup> The prohibition-versus-liquor struggle was a ‘war’ between good and evil, an attack on the ‘devil’s stronghold’.<sup>34</sup> The ‘dagger must be driven home’.<sup>35</sup> The ‘triumph’ of

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<sup>28</sup> *NZB*, September 1918, 129.

<sup>29</sup> *NZB*, February 1919, 17.

<sup>30</sup> *NZB*, March 1919, 33.

<sup>31</sup> *NZB*, April 1919, 56-58.

<sup>32</sup> *NZB*, December 1919, 177.

<sup>33</sup> *NZB*, February 1919, 27.

<sup>34</sup> *NZB*, February 1919, 26.

<sup>35</sup> *NZB*, January 1919, 1.

prohibition in America' was 'as a peal of the archangel's trump which heralds the coming triumph of Christ's kingdom; or as one of the footfalls of the Christ Himself in his mightiest and final advent into the world of our humanity'.<sup>36</sup> 'It looks as though North America is to be the first earthly home of the City of God.'<sup>37</sup> We must follow: 'It is up to all lovers of their country to arise and dedicate their powers to this crusade which has a world sweep and a world goal; and which is led by the world-conquering Christ.'<sup>38</sup>

The Catholic Church was largely on the other side of the fight from the Baptists in relation to prohibition. Again and again, its archbishop, Francis Redwood, urged Catholics not to vote for prohibition. In his urgings, Redwood implied that Catholics who did not follow his advice were being disloyal to the church. In a hierarchical approach to authority, he had not only the high-ground of his office; he also had a clear statement of the Australasian archbishops in October 1918 against supporting prohibition.<sup>39</sup> Redwood used extreme language in rallying the faithful. So too did the fiery Irish-focused editor of the Catholic newspaper, the *NZ Tablet*, Father James Kelly. Why this intensity of heat?

From one point of view it was simply a question of how to deal with evil – qualified evil. Redwood noted in 1919 that alcohol per se was not evil. It was a good gift of God, even though much abused. Redwood's rhetoric even rose to the heights of claiming that 'the legitimate, temperate, and scientific use of alcohol in health and disease has saved more lives than any other element known to man, except only air, water, and food'.<sup>40</sup>

The problem with alcohol was not its moderate use but its abuse.<sup>41</sup> How could alcohol be evil when Jesus himself not only drank but assisted others to drink by turning water into wine?<sup>42</sup> Wine was a 'gift from God'.<sup>43</sup> To hold otherwise was a heresy - the Manichean heresy of

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<sup>36</sup> *NZB*, February 1919, 25.

<sup>37</sup> Article of Rev. W.S. Rollings, *NZB*, March 1919, 36.

<sup>38</sup> Article of Rev. W.S. Rollings, *NZB*, March 1919, 37.

<sup>39</sup> For the text of this statement see *NZT*, 5 December 1918, 15.

<sup>40</sup> *NZT*, 11 December, 1919, 26.

<sup>41</sup> *NZT*, 22 August 1918, 15; 7 November 1918, 14; 5 December 1918, 15 (statement of the Australian archbishops).

<sup>42</sup> *NZT*, 15 August 1918, 17; 3 October 1918, 15; 27 March 1919, 15; 10 April 1919, 25; 11 December 1919, 26.

<sup>43</sup> *NZT*, 27 March 1919, 15.

denying the goodness of the material world.<sup>44</sup> Temperance was a ‘virtue pleasing to God’ when sought voluntarily.<sup>45</sup> Even total abstinence was a worthy position to hold when embraced voluntarily: ‘mount the water waggon by all means; but mount it as a free man and not as the slave of a servile state’.<sup>46</sup> Total abstinence was not wrong; what was wrong was to impose this on all and sundry through prohibition.<sup>47</sup> In fact prohibition might actually weaken morality by fostering sly-grogging, hypocrisy and lawlessness.<sup>48</sup>

The proper solution to abuse of a good gift was proper use, not prohibition altogether. While drunkenness was bad, indeed a serious sin, ‘legislation never made and never will make a people moral’.<sup>49</sup> What the Church could do was provide instruction.<sup>50</sup> Moral principles needed to be internalized, with the following of conscience through voluntary restraint and self-discipline: ‘true reform must come from within’.<sup>51</sup> Prohibition was ‘unjust aggression on human liberty’, frustrating the possibility of a voluntary embracing of virtue.<sup>52</sup> In a nutshell, prohibition was repeatedly asserted to be ‘tyranny’, an attack on liberty.<sup>53</sup> If change was needed, then state control, not prohibition, was the best solution.<sup>54</sup>

The intensity of the rhetoric against prohibition as expressed by both Archbishop Redwood and the editor of *NZ Tablet* may well suggest that there was more at stake than simply the issue of the best way to deal with the admittedly widespread evil that stemmed from excessive drinking. In the two preceding referenda on national prohibition the Catholic Church in 1911 had spoken out against prohibition but not to the extent or with the intensity that it did in 1919, while in 1914 it seems to have largely ignored the prohibition referendum. The referenda of April 1919, December 1919, 1922 and 1925 are quite different in this

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<sup>44</sup> *NZT*, 8 August 1918, 14; 15 August 1918, 15; 19 September 1918, 14; 7 November 1918, 14.

<sup>45</sup> *NZT*, 15 August 1918, 17.

<sup>46</sup> *NZT*, 10 October 1918, 15; also 3 October 1918, 15.

<sup>47</sup> *NZT*, 31 October 1918, 14.

<sup>48</sup> *NZT*, 19 September 1918, 15; 10 April 1919, 25; 11 December 1919, 26.

<sup>49</sup> *NZT*, 15 August 1918, 17.

<sup>50</sup> *NZT*, 15 August 1918, 17; also 11 December 1919, 25.

<sup>51</sup> *NZT*, 22 August 1918, 15; 5 December 1918, 15; 10 April 1919, 26.

<sup>52</sup> *NZT*, 3 October 1918, 17; 22 August 1918, 15; 7 November 1918, 14.

<sup>53</sup> *NZT*, 8 August 1918, 14; 22 August 1918, 15; 29 August 1918, 15; 27 March 1919, 15; 10 April 1919, 26; 13 November 1919, 15.

<sup>54</sup> *NZT*, 29 August 1918, 15; 5 December 1918, 15; 27 March 1919, 15 (the latter two references drawing attention to a suggestion of the Australasian archbishops).

regard. Again and again Catholics are warned, with extensive reasoning, against voting for prohibition. Why the difference starting in 1919?

The year 1919 was a time of intense Catholic-Protestant rivalry.<sup>55</sup> The two religious blocks had engaged in major struggle earlier in the decade over the issue of the teaching of religion in schools. Another flash-point was acute Protestant resentment at the 1907 *Ne Temere* Catholic decree which refused to accept the validity in Catholic terms of a mixed Catholic-Protestant marriage where the ceremony was not held in a Catholic church. This persisting resentment eventually resulted in the government passing an amendment to the Marriage Act in 1920 making it illegal to question the legitimacy of any state-sanctioned marriage.

A further deeply felt point of Catholic-Protestant tension concerned Ireland, the beloved homeland of so many New Zealand Catholics. Its struggles for independence and the counter-struggles of its predominantly Protestant north meant that guerrilla warfare, terrorism and assassinations were racking that land especially in the period 1918-1922. The result was that New Zealand Irish Catholics (140,000 strong) were under 'special strain' and therefore likely to be particularly sensitive to actual or imagined religious threat.<sup>56</sup> The intensity of religious and nationalistic feelings over Ireland later led to Bishop [James Liston](#), the coadjutor Catholic bishop of Auckland, being prosecuted for sedition because at a St Patrick's Day gathering in 1922 he not only praised the 'martyrs' of the Easter Rising in 1916 but allegedly claimed that they had been 'murdered by foreign troops'.<sup>57</sup> It is significant that when *NZ Tablet* warned against Protestant menace to the Mass in writing against prohibition in 1922, it brought in the Irish dimension in referring to New Zealand as a 'land of wowsers and Orangemen'.<sup>58</sup>

Evidence of Catholic-Protestant ill-will on the Protestant side can be seen in the formation in 1917 of the vitriolic, anti-Catholic, Protestant

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<sup>55</sup> See thesis of C.J. van der Krogt, 'More a Part than Apart: the Catholic Community in New Zealand Society 1918-1940', PhD thesis, Massey University, 1994, iv, contrasting intense sectarian strife during and immediately after World War One with subsequent warmer relations.

<sup>56</sup> This was a point made in 1920 by R.A. Wright, M.P., in urging in 1920 that the Marriage Act amendment, which in his view was 'aimed definitely at the Roman Catholic Church', not be passed at a time when there was 'special strain upon the loyalty of the Irish': *New Zealand Parliamentary Debates* (NZPD), 1920, 189, 616.

<sup>57</sup> On this incident see Rory Sweetman, *Bishop in the Dock: The Sedition Trial of James Liston*, (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1997).

<sup>58</sup> NZT, 30 November 1922, 18-19 at 19.

Political Association, by a Baptist minister, Howard Elliott.<sup>59</sup> In 1919 this organisation was at the height of its influence, with a claimed national membership of 200,000 in 225 branches.<sup>60</sup> While Baptists distanced themselves from Elliott, they did not distance themselves from intemperate anti-Catholic language. For example, the J.J. North, editor *NZ Baptist*, had the words ‘the Roman menace’ as part of a bold type heading in June 1918.<sup>61</sup> That this was not an isolated phrase can be seen in the way North repeatedly used the word ‘hate’ in describing Catholic-Protestant and Rome-Britain relationships in his 1922 book, *Roman Catholicism: ‘Roots and Fruits’*.<sup>62</sup> That this was not the intemperate language of an isolated extremist can be seen in Professor John Dickie of the Presbyterian Knox College (later principal of its Theological Hall) twice using the word ‘menace’ to describe the Roman Catholic Church in his two-page foreword to North’s book.<sup>63</sup> It is significant that it was the Baptist Church that was the one denomination to come out fully in support of the 1920 amendment to the Marriage Act and of Rev. Howard Elliott’s efforts to secure this amendment.<sup>64</sup> The lifelong intensity of North’s hostility to Roman Catholicism is evident in his valedictory address on ceasing to be the principal of the New Zealand Baptist Theological College at the annual assembly of the Baptist Union in 1945, listing ‘Romanism’ as a particular ‘bête noire’ as it was ‘the most dangerous perversion of the Christian religion that there is’.<sup>65</sup> Baptists and Catholics might occasionally have warm relationships.<sup>66</sup> More likely, however, was distrust and even enmity.

This article has been arguing that the immediately post-World-War-One period was one of particularly heightened Catholic-Protestant

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<sup>59</sup> Elliott left his Baptist pastorate to found the Protestant Political Association. However, he continued in some standing with the Baptist denomination being on the denomination’s active military chaplains’ list until 1929 and on its ministers but ‘out of pastoral charge’ list until 1932: see various New Zealand Baptist Union Handbooks.

<sup>60</sup> M. King, *The Penguin History of New Zealand*, (Auckland: Penguin, 2003) 316.

<sup>61</sup> NZB, June 1918, 83. The editor was Rev. J.J. North. He became principal of N.Z. Baptist Theological College in 1926.

<sup>62</sup> J.J. North, *Roman Catholicism: ‘Roots and Fruits’*, (Napier: N. Pub. 1922), 1, 2, 7, 8, 10 *et passim*.

<sup>63</sup> North *Roman Catholicism*, 1.

<sup>64</sup> NZB, November, 1920, 164; New Zealand Baptist Handbook, 1920-1921, 26.

<sup>65</sup> NZB, December 1945, 303.

<sup>66</sup> For example, a warm letter dated 5 June 1919 from Baptist pastor Knowles Kempton to Bishop Cleary, responding to the latter’s ‘beautiful message’ of goodwill as the former was about to leave Auckland for a pastorate in Dunedin: Auckland Catholic Diocesan Archives (ACDA): Cle 89-2.

animosity. The Catholic stance on prohibition needs to be considered against this backdrop of pervasive Catholic-Protestant rivalry and tension, spilling over at times into hatred and bitterness. In that context, prohibition looked to a lot of Catholics like a Protestant cause. Should Catholics then support it?

One crucial matter was the central importance to Catholics of the mass and the central role of wine within the mass. Would prohibition indirectly be an attack on Catholic worship by cutting off its communion wine? There were a few signs that this could be the case. One was the fact that when individual American states adopted prohibition around this time (prior to nationwide prohibition in 1920), a couple of the states initially made no exemption for communion wine, though this lack of exemption was quickly rectified.<sup>67</sup> However, this showed that alleged threat to the Catholic mass was no figment of the imagination and this evidence was repeatedly raised to show the specific threat to the Catholic Church that prohibition might bring.<sup>68</sup>

Closer to home, an apparent statement of an Australian temperance lecturer, Rev. B.S. Hammond, in Ashburton in November 1911, that clauses in temperance legislation exempting alcohol used for religious purposes would likely be repealed about ten years after the original legislation was passed, suggested threat to the Catholic mass. This isolated comment led to the *NZ Tablet* warning just prior to the 1911 referendum on national prohibition that for the purposes of the mass the Catholic Church 'insists strictly' that 'the fermented juice of the grape must be used' and that 'the bare possibility of being deprived of the Mass is a prospect which no good Catholic can regard with equanimity'.<sup>69</sup>

In 1918 and 1919 *NZ Tablet* was still raking over the old Hammond statement in conspiratorial tones: the 'official lecturer' for the prohibitionists had 'let the cat out of the bag' about the ultimate goal of cutting off alcohol even for communion.<sup>70</sup> Notwithstanding repeated

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<sup>67</sup> Charles Todd, a leading lay Catholic prohibition champion of that time, named Arizona and Oklahoma as initially adopting 'bone-dry' prohibition in 1916-1917 but quickly making legislative amendment to allow for alcohol for sacramental purposes: C. Todd, *Prohibition and the Catholics*, Dunedin, 1919, 12.

<sup>68</sup> *NZT*, 8 August 1918, 14; 15 August 1918, 15; 29 August 1918, 15; 3 October 1918, 15; 27 March, 1919, 15; 10 April 1919, 26.

<sup>69</sup> *NZT*, 30 November 1911, 9-10.

<sup>70</sup> *NZT*, 8 August 1918, 15; 15 August 1918, 15; see also 29 August 1918, 8-9; 5 September 1918, 15; 12 September 1918, 15; 3 October 1918, 15; 31 October 1918, 14; 3 April 1918, 14; 10 April 1919, 26, 27.

denials of the prohibitionist New Zealand Alliance that this was its policy, coupled with an affirmation of its settled view that any prohibition legislation must include ongoing exemption to cover communion wine, Catholic assertion that Hammond's 1911 statement demonstrated ongoing prohibitionist intent persisted.<sup>71</sup> The persistent emphasis by Redwood and the *Tablet* editor on the threat to the Catholic mass despite these prohibitionist denials may well suggest that the two were subtly emphasising sectarian dimensions to the issue of prohibition – that prohibition was in fact a disguised attack on Catholicism.<sup>72</sup>

Could the prohibitionists be trusted? 'We have learned the ways of the wowsers in the past to know that no promises of his can be trusted, and that he would leave no stone unturned to injure us'.<sup>73</sup> Again and again *NZ Tablet* labelled prohibitionists as extremists. They were 'the fanatics of our day'.<sup>74</sup> Archbishop Redwood was later to warn that there were in the ranks of the Prohibitionists 'bitter enemies of the Catholic Church and of the Mass'.<sup>75</sup>

When Archbishop Redwood urged Catholics to vote against prohibition in the April 1919 election, he presented the core of prohibitionist sentiment as stemming from 'a handful of fanatics' and warned the faithful against becoming 'the slave of a false system inspired by narrow-mindedness and fanaticism'.<sup>76</sup> Redwood ensured that his views not only appeared in *NZ Tablet* but would also be read out in all parishes by sending 100 copies of his letter to each diocese with the request that the letter be read from the pulpit in each church on the Sunday prior to the referendum. In his letter to his bishops Redwood indicated that he was 'telling' Catholics 'how to vote'.<sup>77</sup> The fact that Archbishop Redwood's expressed opposition to prohibition was at its height in 1919 compared with his actions at other liquor polls before 1919 may suggest that his stance was fuelled by the tenuous Catholic-Protestant climate of that particular time period.

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<sup>71</sup> See letter of the general secretary of the New Zealand Alliance, John Dawson to Bishop Cleary dated 21 November 1918 (ACDA, Cle 89-2 / 219). See also letter of prohibitionist Catholic layman Charles Todd, *NZT*, 26 September 1918, 31; also the *Month*, 15 November 1919, 15.

<sup>72</sup> V.d. Krogt, 375.

<sup>73</sup> *NZT*, 12 September 1918, 15.

<sup>74</sup> *NZT*, 15 August 1918, 15; 22 August 1918, 15, 17; 19 September 1918, 15; 31 October 1918, 14.

<sup>75</sup> *NZT*, 30 November, 1922, 29-30 at 30.

<sup>76</sup> *NZT*, 10 April 1919, 26, 27.

<sup>77</sup> V.d. Krogt, 361-2.

Around this time *NZ Tablet* saw the prohibition movement as an anti-Catholic 'No-Popery party', who would 'leave no stone unturned to make a Prohibition law a weapon of attack against Catholics'.<sup>78</sup> 'Methodists and Baptists' were named as the instigators of prohibition in America, the *NZ Tablet* editor then going on to state: 'from Lloyd George to Howard Elliott we know what to expect from them in the way of fair play and reasonableness'.<sup>79</sup> The intensely anti-Catholic Elliott was still on official lists as a Baptist minister. Lloyd George, Prime Minister of Britain and strong supporter of prohibition, was seen as having Baptist identity.<sup>80</sup> A week after this reference to Lloyd George, the editor of *NZ Tablet* made an obscure reference in discussing communion wine and prohibition to 'Churches which have made Baptist or Jewish Premiers their rulers on earth', again probably another reference to 'Baptist' Lloyd George.<sup>81</sup> Whatever the particular meaning, the *NZ Tablet* editor was clearly linking prohibition and Baptists, and stigmatizing both.

Certainly there was smoke if not fire from the Baptists to fuel the suspicions of Catholics. Baptists were prepared to recognize some measure of prohibitionist support from Catholic quarters: a Father Cronin as a prohibition campaigner, a 'foremost R.C. layman in Dunedin' [= Charles Todd], Dr A.B. O'Brien, 'one of the very foremost' of Catholic laymen in Christchurch, and Bishop Cleary's 'advocacy' of prohibition in Auckland.<sup>82</sup> However, when the *NZ Baptist* gave credit for those Catholic efforts on behalf of prohibition it was in the context of publishing a strongly anti-Catholic letter from the Protestant Political Association leader, Rev. Howard Elliott. In replying to Elliott, *NZ Baptist* editor, J.J. North, while warning against prohibition becoming a 'No Popery campaign', declared: 'we are very hostile to Romanism'.<sup>83</sup> Furthermore when North was bemoaning the selfish voters who had robbed prohibition of its rightful victory in April 1919, he asserted that their viewpoint about alcohol was: "'Oi loikes it, and oi'l have it".<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> *NZT*, 8 August 1918, 14; 15 August 1918, 15; 27 March 1919, 15; 3 April 1919, 14.

<sup>79</sup> *NZT*, 29 August 1918, 15.

<sup>80</sup> New Zealand Baptists claimed Lloyd George as a Baptist even though his Baptist identity and perspective, especially in relation to his sexual morality, were much more tenuous in his adult years: see sermon, 'Lloyd George and Liquor', *NZB*, August 1918, 116-18; also North, *Roman Catholicism*, 11.

<sup>81</sup> *NZT*, 5 September 1918, 15.

<sup>82</sup> *NZB*, March 1919, 33; April 1919, 56; February 1920, 28.

<sup>83</sup> *NZB*, February 1920, 28.

<sup>84</sup> *NZB*, May 1919, 66.

There is enough of the 'Oirish' (linked in New Zealand minds with Catholicism) in the statement to sense anti-Catholic sentiment between the lines. It is not surprising in that environment if Catholics viewed the prohibition crusade as having an anti-Catholic dimension.

Voting for prohibition appeared to be ruled out for loyal and faithful Catholics. 'Never', thundered *NZ Tablet*, 'under any circumstances, as you are Catholics, vote for Prohibition'.<sup>85</sup> The bishops had spoken: 'be guided by the bishops'.<sup>86</sup> The view of *NZ Tablet* was that the October 1918 Australasian archbishops' statement warning against prohibition was an 'authoritative declaration of the guides of the Catholic Church in the Southern Hemisphere'.<sup>87</sup> Granted, 'the pronouncement does not bind in conscience', but 'for loyal Catholics it will be accepted with the respect due to the superior wisdom of the men from whom it emanated'.<sup>88</sup>

Archbishop Redwood used all the moral influence he could muster in a letter written to clergy to be passed on to their congregations immediately prior to the April 1919 poll:

The clergy and people of this archdiocese and of the other dioceses naturally look to their Metropolitan for right guidance on the matter of Prohibition – National Prohibition – with which this Dominion is threatened. I hope such a calamity will never befall it. . . . I call therefore upon all Catholics in the Dominion to vote dead against National Prohibition, as they value common sense, liberty, and the sacred claims of their Holy Faith. . . . Let him cast his vote patriotically and religiously against it, in this and every other election.<sup>89</sup>

Redwood made a similar appeal to his flock, this time directly through the pages of *NZ Tablet*, on the eve of the December 1919 referendum:

Catholics need not be reminded of the danger to our Holy Religion if Prohibition is once carried. We exhort them, as we did in the past, to see to it that they never put the Altar and the Mass in the perilous position of dependence on the frail and worthless promises of politicians. What we said on that point last April ought to be remembered now; and as Catholics did then, so we

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<sup>85</sup> *NZT*, 12 September 1918, 15; also 3 October 1918, 15.

<sup>86</sup> *NZT*, 31 October 1918, 14.

<sup>87</sup> *NZT*, 5 December 1918, 15.

<sup>88</sup> *NZT*, 27 March 1919, 14; 3 April 1919, 14.

<sup>89</sup> *NZT*, 10 April 1919, 25, 27.

are confident that they will next week vote loyally for religion, for personal liberty, and for right reason.<sup>90</sup>

At first glance all this looks like almost irresistible pressure in a hierarchical church for all good Catholics to vote against prohibition. That, however, is not the total story. In the first place a key Catholic layman, Charles Todd, was heavily involved in the New Zealand Alliance, later even becoming its president in 1926-1928. He was active in sponsoring overseas Catholic speakers to lecture on prohibition to New Zealand audiences. One such was an American priest, Father George Zurcher, in 1922. Todd paid all his expenses and salary and kept him totally separate from the NZ Alliance 'so that there will be no room for idle tongues to connect him up with Methodists, Baptists etc and thus detract from his good work'.<sup>91</sup>

In addition Todd argued for prohibition in correspondence to *NZ Tablet*. To his credit, its editor, James Kelly, printed at least three of his letters, even though he then proceeded to attack Todd's arguments at length so that the faithful might be in no doubt how much credence should be given to those views.<sup>92</sup> Todd was later to complain that he could not get his letters published in *NZ Tablet* because its editor was seeking to 'advance the interests of the trade' and attacking Catholic prohibitionists;<sup>93</sup> but *NZ Tablet* did at least give him some space earlier on. In order to get his message out in 1919 Todd published his own book in that year: *Prohibition and the Catholics*. He accepted that it was 'a Manichaeian error' to declare alcohol as evil in itself. In response to the argument that Jesus drank alcohol, Todd rejected the view that Christians today should slavishly follow Jesus: 'they are not walking in the Master's footsteps when they forsake their friendly donkey to ride in "cheap and nasty cars"'. We should follow the spirit and principles of Jesus' teaching. Drunkenness was rife in the twentieth century in a way that it was not in the time of Jesus. It was the function of the state to promote the common good and the economic and social well-being of the community, and prohibition would do this.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> *NZT*, 11 December 1919, 26.

<sup>91</sup> Letter, Charles Todd to Bishop Cleary, n.d. [early 1922]: ACDA, Cle 85-2.

<sup>92</sup> For Todd's letters and *NZT* editorial attack of Todd's views see *NZT*, 26 September 1918, 30; 3 October 1918, 15-17; 14 October 1918, 15; 17 October 1918, 34-35; 24 October, 1918, 15, 17; 20 March 1919, 14.

<sup>93</sup> Todd, 1919, 2. Later still, in 1925, Todd complained in the *Month*, 3 November 1925, that *NZT* reneged on a prior agreement to run a paid advertisement from him.

<sup>94</sup> *Month*, 12, 6, 15.

Bishop Cleary of Auckland was probably even more important than the lay activist Charles Todd in articulating a stance alternative to the dominantly anti-prohibition Catholic viewpoint. Even prior to becoming bishop, he had shown sympathy for the prohibition movement while editor of *NZ Tablet*, 1898-1910. In December 1902 he received a letter signed by '200 Catholics' attached to the prohibition cause expressing 'heartfelt thanks and appreciation' for his pro-prohibitionist sympathies:

Unfortunately like most Catholic Colonials descended from grand old Irish parentage, there are among your humble subscribers some who have tasted the hardship and bitterness of drink; it is therefore all the more pleasing to us when we find a co-religionist priest taking the worthy stand you have done in trying to abolish the greatest curse that ever visited our fair land, or disturbed our domestic happiness.<sup>95</sup>

Cleary was, however, often very circumspect with regard to his views on prohibition after he became bishop. When a prohibition speaker claimed that Cleary had said in 1918 that he would vote prohibition, Cleary denied that he had made such a statement, notwithstanding his sympathies in that direction.<sup>96</sup>

While Cleary had amicable relationships with the New Zealand Alliance he was very cautious that this should not get him into trouble. Thus when he wrote in 1918 to Rev. R.S. Gray (a Baptist who was then a fulltime campaigner for prohibition and was shortly to become president of the Alliance), noting that there was no official Catholic paper in New Zealand, he declared: "This statement is certain and authoritative; but naturally, I do not wish my name to be brought into any public statement on the subject, by any person, and this reply is given subject to that condition."<sup>97</sup> Moreover, Cleary moved against allowing a Catholic welcome or the exercise of priestly functions of celebrating mass etc. to any itinerant Catholic priests who gave prohibition lectures, either as employees of any prohibition organization or without proper Catholic authorization.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Letter of '200 Catholics' to Father Cleary, 10 December 1902: ACDA, Cle – 2.

<sup>96</sup> On this see *NZT*, 17 October 1918, 14.

<sup>97</sup> Letter Cleary to Gray dated 20 August 1918: ACDA, Cle 89-1/39 (emphasis original).

<sup>98</sup> See for example his letter to his priests in relation to Father Cronin dated 12 March 1919 and his letter to his coadjutor bishop, Liston, dated 23 November

There was a clear difference between Cleary and his archbishop, Francis Redwood, on the issue of prohibition. When a Catholic layman wrote to Cleary as editor of the *Month* in 1926 criticizing Redwood's stance on the issue, Cleary wrote him a private reply headed with the words, 'NOT FOR PUBLICATION', the letter then beginning:

It would not be correct for me to publish anything involving an adverse criticism of an old and venerated Prelate, especially on a matter on which both he and the rest of us, ecclesiastics and laymen, are free to form and follow their own conscious opinions.<sup>99</sup>

Cleary had to walk a fine line on the prohibition issue. Not only did his archbishop hold an anti-prohibition stance but this was also the collective viewpoint of the Australasian archbishops. How much wriggle room did this leave Cleary? Just enough for him to articulate a measure of support for prohibition without being directive on the matter or clashing head-on with the majority and more authoritative point of view.

A major stress of Cleary was that what Catholics needed to focus on was principles. How these then translated into specific policy was over to each Catholic. Within the framework of the principles there was freedom of conscience.

What were the principles of his church? Cleary spelt them out as soon as he started the *Month*, which he continued to edit, in 1918; and he spelt them out twice more, just prior to each of the two 1919 referenda:

- Rejection of the view that alcohol was an evil thing in itself
- Recognition of the right use of alcohol while thundering against its abuses
- Belief in prohibition for individuals or communities who did not know how to use alcoholic liquor in moderation
- 'She [the church] steadily counsels her children to practise total abstinence', with Pope Pius X (pope 1903-14) and other popes having given special blessings to 'the total abstinence movements in many lands'

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1922, supporting Liston's stance against Father George Zurcher: ACDA: Cle 85-2.

<sup>99</sup> Letter from Cleary to E.M. Gibson dated 6 January 1926: ACDA: Cle 85-2 (emphasis in heading original).

- Rights of worship (the continuance of availability of communion wine) and rights in justice (adequate compensation for liquor interests where prohibition was enforced)

Apart from any qualifications in these principles ‘there is nothing in Catholic theology against the public conscience endeavouring to remedy or diminish intemperance either by prohibition or by State ownership and control’.<sup>100</sup>

We can note significant contrasts between Cleary’s views in the *Month* and an alternative statement of Catholic principles in the rival Catholic newspaper, *NZ Tablet*.<sup>101</sup> Part of the difference was in the tenor of the statements. While recognising its dangers, *NZ Tablet* material was much more affirmative about the positive aspects of alcohol, recognising that it ‘has always been a feature of convivial meetings and a conventional sign of hospitality and goodwill’. A key difference between the *Month* and the *Tablet* statements is that whereas the *Month* saw prohibition as an appropriate response for Catholics, the *Tablet* ruled it out: ‘Catholics ought to advocate Temperance or even Total Abstinence; but they ought to have nothing to do with the Prohibition movement’, first because it brought potential attack on the Catholic Church in its train, and secondly because it was an undue attack on human rights and liberty.<sup>102</sup>

Prior to the two referenda, Cleary articulated the evils associated with alcohol: vice, crime, disease, domestic strife and economic loss.<sup>103</sup> At the same time, Cleary was astute in the way he portrayed the ‘enemy’. This was not alcohol per se. Too many Catholics drank to some extent for that to be the best strategy. Rather it was the powerful, unscrupulous, devious *liquor industry* – ‘the trade’, an institution that was distant from ‘us’.<sup>104</sup> Two aspects of the trade in particular promoted excessive drinking: tied houses and individuals taking their turn to buy drinks for their whole group under the custom of ‘treating’ or ‘shouting’ a round of drinks.<sup>105</sup> In Cleary’s view, ‘the evils of the drink traffic, within our Diocese, have gone far beyond the limits of toleration. . . . [W]ith our dying breath we would declare it our conscientious belief that there is a

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<sup>100</sup> *Month*, 15 July 1918, 18; 15 March 1919, 6; 15 November 1919, 13.

<sup>101</sup> *NZT*, 7 November 1918, 14. *NZT* drew the principles from a Father Keating’s pamphlet, published by the London Catholic Truth Society.

<sup>102</sup> *NZT*, 7 November 1918, 14.

<sup>103</sup> *Month*, 15 March 1919, 6; 15 November 1919, 13.

<sup>104</sup> *Month*, 15 July 1918, 16; 15 May 1919, 6, 9; 15 July 1919, 4; 15 November 1919, 13.

<sup>105</sup> *Month*, 15 July 1918, 16; 15 March 1919, 5.

real, solid hope in National Prohibition for the deep physical and moral and economic mischiefs of the licensed and unlicensed traffic in alcoholic liquors'.<sup>106</sup>

Despite the evils of the system, Cleary readily acknowledged that Catholics had freedom of conscience in their response to the issue.<sup>107</sup> At the same time the Catholic Church was not a pro-alcohol church: it was built 'on a rock, not upon a vat'.<sup>108</sup> The best solution was to 'mount the water wagon and stay there! Such total abstinence . . . has the warm approval and blessing of a series of Supreme Pontiffs of our Church'.<sup>109</sup>

This article has indicated diversity of perspective within the Catholic Church in New Zealand in 1919 over the prohibition issue. At the same time the weight of New Zealand Catholic Church authority was clearly against prohibition. In comparison with Archbishop Redwood and the editor of *NZ Tablet*, each of whom was outspokenly anti-prohibitionist, Cleary had to articulate his pro-prohibition views sensitively, moderately and cautiously. The less visceral tone of his articulated views likely made them far less influential. The two differing Catholic opinions both urged liberty on the issue. For Cleary, this meant that a good Catholic could vote either way. For Redwood and *NZ Tablet* it meant a vote against prohibition. The greater part of the Catholic vote will have lined up with Archbishop Redwood in opposing prohibition. Baptists, in contrast, though they were ostensible champions of liberty, in fact provided little liberty in talk or in practice. The strength of group pressure, articulating one perspective only, meant that contrary opinions either did not arise or remained concealed. The Baptist monolithic stance over alcohol was strengthened by a sense that Catholic-Protestant differences on the matter in 1919 were in some measure another round of their ongoing struggles over other issues. On the 1919 prohibition issue it was the Catholics who won, and their vote was significant in keeping New Zealand wet.

At that time, however, sectarian bitterness was being fuelled by Rev. Howard Elliott, who won a key anti-Catholic victory the following year in the amending of the Marriage Act. We note further, however, that a great majority of New Zealand Catholics were significantly of Irish background. A perusal of the Catholic magazines of that period shows both their deep love of Ireland and their gut-wrenching heartache over

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<sup>106</sup> *Month*, 15 November 1919, 13.

<sup>107</sup> *Month*, 15 March 1919, 6-7; 15 April 1919, 6; 15 November 1919, 15-16.

<sup>108</sup> *Month*, 15 May 1919, 6. See, however, close linkages between the liquor industry and Archbishop Redwood in 1922 in v.d. Krogt, 365.

<sup>109</sup> *Month*, 15 March 1919, 7.

the Irish struggle first with Britain and then in their own civil war, 1918-1922.<sup>110</sup> That struggle was seen in both British-Irish and also Catholic-Protestant terms. Inflamed feelings on that issue likely stiffened New Zealand Catholic resolve to resist further Protestant attack on their liberty and on their church in the prohibition struggle.

Returning soldiers kept New Zealand wet. So also did the Catholic Church. Can we go one step further and suggest that Baptist zealots in New Zealand like Howard Elliott and anti-British freedom fighters like De Valera in Ireland also kept New Zealand wet?

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<sup>110</sup> Material showing the level of connection between *NZT* and Ireland can be seen in Heather McNamara, 'The New Zealand Tablet and the Irish Catholic Press Worldwide, 1898-1923', *New Zealand Journal of History*, 37, 2 (2003) 153-67 at 153 *et passim*.

## Reviews

**L.J. Vander Zee. *Christ, Baptism and the Lord's Supper: Recovering the Sacraments for Evangelical Worship*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2004. (249pp.)**

One could legitimately assume that a denomination named after a sacrament would have a focused and theologically robust doctrine of that sacrament. It is thus ironic that Baptists, so obviously named after one of the two Protestant sacraments, are somewhat ambivalent about their sacramentology. While most Baptist churches still insist on believer's baptism many pastors and laity would struggle to give a theological account of the sacraments. In contrast, Reformation denominations are insistent that the sacraments are theologically crucial to the Church and its ministry and thus have a developed sacramentology. In contrast to Baptists, the Reformation tradition places great emphasis on infant baptism, arguing that this practice best supports the theology and tradition of the Scriptures and the Church.

The fundamental issue behind these divergent understandings of the sacraments has to do with the nature of the finished work of Christ and its application to believers. Baptists stress the individual acceptance of faith by the believer and thus insist upon a *believer's* baptism as the so-called 'outward confession of an inward faith'. The Lord's Supper becomes a ceremony of acceptance and commemoration of Christ. Older traditions such as the Reformed stress the corporate nature of the sacraments and thus place more emphasis on the idea of covenant and community belonging. For this tradition baptism is a sign and a *seal* of faith, a so-called 'means of grace' which not only signifies grace but also imparts it to the recipient. Likewise, the Lord's Supper is a means of grace and has more to do with a covenant renewal ceremony than an individual's commemoration. If the recipient of baptism is an infant, then they grow into the faith that has been signified and sealed but do so as part of the covenant community. This, they argue, is theologically superior to the Baptist practice as it is a more direct symbol and sign of Christ's redeeming work *for* and *on behalf* of the 'sinner'. For the former the sacraments are an ordinance marking a *believer's* profession of faith. For the latter they are a sign and seal of *God's* act of grace. This is, at least, how Leonard Vander Zee puts it.

Vander Zee, pastor of a Christian Reformed Church in Indiana, USA, attempts to bring these two traditions, Baptist and Reformed, into dialogue in order to reach a common consensus on what the sacraments are, what they stand for, and how best they should be administered and partaken of. He calls for clarity on the issue and for understanding from both sides. He even concludes that Baptists and Reformed Christians can share a common communion despite divergent practices. He would ask Baptist churches to consider the possibility of allowing infant baptism to those who asked for it as long as the recipient, minister, and congregation understood the theology behind the sacraments.

Fundamental to Vander Zee's proposal is the assertion that Christ is the quintessential sacrament. The two sacraments are the divinely sanctioned means by which believers share in their union with Christ. As such the sacraments operate in four ways: (1) by the power of the Holy Spirit, (2) through physical elements, (3) when united with the word, and (4) when received in faith. The first three features offer no real controversy between Baptists and Reformed understandings of the sacraments; it is the fourth that currently divides the two. The former understand faith as something humans have or exercise as a result of their own (libertarian) free will, while the latter prefer to think of faith itself as a gift of grace which is then freely offered back to God. Vander Zee defines faith in consistent Reformed fashion as follows:

God has accomplished our salvation in Jesus Christ for the whole human race before faith receives it. Faith is simply the opening of our eyes and hearts to this astounding truth: that we have been made new persons in Christ. Faith receives, faith grasps, faith trusts waqht God has done in Christ. Faith does not make it happen, for it has happened long before our faith was there to receive it. In fact, it is not a human work at all, though it seems to be...Faith plays no causal role whatsoever. It participates in salvation without in nay way displacing the primary work of the Holy Spirit. (p63).

Given this understanding of faith one may more clearly see why Baptists and Reformed disagree over the nature of the sacraments. The issue no longer revolves around what age one must be to partake of the sacrament, or what the specific nature of the sacrament is. Rather, the nature of *faith* is what is at issue. 'In the Reformation tradition (apart from the Anabaptists), the gospel sacraments are much more than naked signs. They are signs and seals of God's grace to us in Jesus Christ, symbols that carry with them what they symbolize' (p68). It is this which is crucial, according to Vander Zee.

*Christ, Baptism and the Lord's Supper* provides a fascinating, informative, and theologically stimulating argument that is ecumenical in its tone and yet strongly Reformed in its theological orientation. It is specifically written for Evangelicals who are Baptist or Reformed with the intent of stimulating further dialogue between the two on sacramentology and developing closer reciprocal relations where in the past there has been bitter dispute. Baptists may not like the idea of infant baptism and Vander Zee's arguments will probably fail to persuade them otherwise. But what Vander Zee does so well is to pinpoint what theological issues are actually at stake here, and then present a challenging and robust defence of his reading of Scripture and the tradition. It is precisely works such as this which Baptist theologians and pastors should be reading and interacting with so as to lead their denomination ever deeper into the mysteries of the faith.

**D.G. Hart. *Deconstructing Evangelicalism: Conservative Protestantism in the Age of Billy Graham*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004. (224pp.)**

The primary thesis of Hart's work is that modern 'evangelicalism' is a fiction. According to Hart, certain fundamentalist ('neo-evangelical') leaders of various denominations in North America constructed the notion of an evangelical identity in the 1940s in order to counter liberal Christianity on that continent and initiate a conservative Protestant face-lift (p13). The leaders in this new movement called 'evangelicalism' included Harold Ockenga, Carl Henry, John Warwick Montgomery, and most importantly Billy Graham. Together these men, and many others, created such associations as the Evangelical Foreign Missionary Association (1945), The Evangelical Theological Society (1949), the World Evangelical Fellowship (1951), and 'the mother of all these endeavors' (p24) the National Association of Evangelicals (1942). In addition to these associations many institutions arose to support the growing movement, foremost of which was Fuller Theological Seminary, founded in 1947, which functioned as the think tank for the movement. The magazine *Christianity Today*, founded in 1956, continues to be one of the more successful forums for the dissemination of evangelical ideas. In Hart's estimation, 'One of the interesting features of this organizational growth was the use of the term *evangelical* to describe these agencies and efforts. Almost by sheer tenacity neo-evangelicals had created a new religious identity, and *evangelical* was its designation' (p24).

Hart defines the identity or ‘recipe’ of evangelicalism as follows: ‘Combine two cups of inerrancy, one cup of conversion, and a pinch of doctrinal affirmations; form into a patchwork of parachurch agencies, religious celebrities, and churches; season with peppy music professionally performed; and bake every generation’ (p183). By 1976, the *Time* ‘year of the evangelical’, the construction of ‘evangelicalism’ was complete. Two decades later, however, and so-called ‘evangelicalism’ is, in Hart’s estimation, in serious trouble. One solution is offered by Hart in light of this ‘crisis’: ‘Instead of trying to fix evangelicalism, born-again Protestants would be better off if they abandoned the category altogether’ (p16). The rest of Hart’s work sets itself the task of defending this thesis and solution.

Hart is director of academic projects and faculty development at the Intercollegiate Studies Institute in Wilmington, Delaware. His past appointments include director of the Institute for the Study of American Evangelicals at Wheaton College and academic dean and professor of church history at Westminster Theological Seminary, in California. As such, this is a bold and controversial work written by someone who is both sympathetic to evangelicalism, indeed he can be called an evangelical himself, but also one who wishes to call the church back to its denominational roots and in that movement find renewed strength. Hart’s work appears amidst a current wave of literature which asks ‘evangelicals’ to regain a sense of tradition and not merely opt for the latest and greatest. According to Hart this means recapturing the essence of what it may mean to be Presbyterian, or Anglican, or Baptist, for instance. Hart argues that ‘evangelicalism is, [a]t its best...a sentiment. At its worst, it is a solvent of tradition because religious traditions are too narrow for evangelical purposes; they are too dogmatic and therefore too confining’ (p187). In fact Hart appeals to the recent work of Baptist minister and professor at Loyola University, D.H. Williams, who argues a similar point in *Retrieving the Tradition and Renewing Evangelicalism* (1999).

What Hart is most concerned about in his analysis of ‘evangelicalism’ is the way in which, because ‘evangelicalism’ is a transdenominational movement and not a ‘church’, it tends to splinter because it lacks the discipline and rigor of the church: ‘Evangelicalism is a seemingly large and influential religious body, but it lacks an institutional center, intellectual coherence, and devotional direction’ (p176). This has resulted in an entire generation of conservative Protestants dislocated from mainline churches. Far better, argues Hart, that the term ‘evangelical’ be given away by academics and pastors alike and that the old ways are returned to, whatever that may mean denominationally. Presumably, Baptists would reclaim their own

theological tradition in distinction from Presbyterians, for arguments sake, and in the ongoing dialogue between the two groups the church on earth would be strengthened and nourished.

What are we to make of this work and Hart's claims? Evident throughout his critique is a rather glaring inconsistency. While his thesis is that evangelicalism is a fiction, an abstraction, a non-entity he continues to speak of *evangelicals* and *evangelicalism*, referring to its key figures, institutions, and theology. Clearly *something* exists and that something can legitimately be called *evangelicalism*. Hart's work never finally succeeds in convincing the reader of his thesis. This does not mean this is not a good book! Quite the contrary. This is a provocative historical critique of a movement which Baptists generally inhabit. As such it is worth reading and interacting with Hart's diagnosis, even if one is not convinced in the final instance. The call to reclaim the Great Tradition of the church, to return to a robust denomination identity (whatever that denomination may be), and the urgent call to rigorous theological thinking are all to be applauded and we would do well to heed this call. But to abandon evangelicalism will take more convincing than Hart provides, regardless of how beautiful the prose is or how provocative the argument.

