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Editor:

Martin Sutherland
Laidlaw College,
Auckland, New Zealand

Book Reviews Editor:

Myk Habets
Carey Baptist College,
PO Box 12149,
Auckland, New Zealand

Editorial Panel:

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Morling College

Graeme Chatfield
Morling College

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Staking a Claim: Establishing a Baptist College in New Zealand 1926-1933

ABSTRACT

It took Baptists 75 years to find a way to secure their own training establishment in New Zealand. The Baptist College which held its first classes in Auckland in 1926 was a tiny venture. Its success was by no means guaranteed and its challenges were many. This essay traces the first years of the college's operation. Key to its success was the personality and reputation of its Principal, J.J. North. North, however, was not universally approved. The 1920s was a decade of theological controversy in New Zealand and especially in Auckland. North had to negotiate his way through that maze, find a permanent home for the college and establish his own patterns of teaching and training. The onset of the Great Depression complicated the task still further. Despite these pressures, the new venture flourished in its own terms and laid foundations for a generation of Baptist ministers.

On Wednesday 3 March, 1926 the Baptist College of New Zealand was officially inaugurated at a service and a public meeting at the Auckland Tabernacle. It was, as are all such occasions, an opportunity for celebration and congratulation. The leaders of the denomination were present in force and there were greetings from Presbyterian Congregational and Methodist colleagues as well as from the new Bible College, until recently itself based in the Tabernacle buildings. Telegrams from supporters throughout New Zealand were read, prayers were offered and a the first group of students was proudly photographed by the steps at the side entrance to the Tabernacle.

A Baptist Manifesto

Amidst all the ceremony the key figure was J.J. North. He avowed that listening to the effusive welcomes had been ‘one of the most embarrassing hours of his life’.¹ Yet the opportunity to make his stamp on the new venture was not to be passed up. His address was reprinted in the Baptist under the heading ‘A Baptist Manifesto’. It is an important insight into North and the dreams he harboured for the fledgling college.

North’s first assertion was the need for local training. This was a concern he had been expressing for a quarter of a century. Imported ministers would never meet the needs of New Zealand Baptists as ‘they are not racy of the soil.’ The official training scheme had not proved adequate and to rely on the untrained was not satisfactory. Citing St Paul, Augustine and Martin Luther as evidence, North justified his cause. ‘Let those who suspect college as homes of dullness and criticism reflect on the history of the past....He who rails at knowledge rails at God. No man is reverent unless he cultivates all his faculties. The imperative need of an educated minister is beyond challenge.’

This was doubly true for Baptists. In a pointed analysis North argued that unlike other denominations, Baptists could not rely on national identity or tradition to attract followers. ‘The Baptist Church stands four-square on a “case”,’ and an effective preacher must ‘both know Christ and know the thought currents that flow through his age.’ The college, accordingly ‘will be Baptist to the core’. There is a Baptist outlook, there are Baptist principles that run through the whole realm of theological thought. These will be emphasised. ‘We have not founded a colourless College.’ The principles turn on the Baptist respect for ‘the sacredness of the individual’. There can therefore be no coercion into faith, in particular no choosing on behalf of children, ‘for forced faith is heretical, though it be formally orthodox.’ Along with their preaching, Baptists thus also fight for liberty of conscience and for better social conditions, both of which create the circumstances for ‘true choice’. As far as students were concerned, North wanted whole people. He wanted ‘to develop personality, and not simply furnish expert sermon-makers.’

The college, then, must reflect all these values.

The dream is of an institution, presently to be properly housed, which pulses with light and life and love, an institution to which the most chivalrous of the youth of our churches will be drawn,

¹ NZB April 1926: 87.

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that they may adventure for Christ in the high places of that field which is the world.²

The new venture faced a number of serious challenges. North had earlier pointed this out to the readers of the *N.Z. Baptist*. 'The New Zealand Baptist College has at present no capital and no income. It does not possess so much as an office chair.' Premises and a library were yet to be secured and income of £1000 would be necessary.³ It is perhaps a measure of the enthusiasm of the denomination for this bold project that none of these challenges would prove insurmountable. The library would gradually grow, mostly by donation. As will be seen below, the question of a dedicated 'home' for the college would be addressed earlier than was anticipated. The problem of income, though never relieved by a large endowment, would rarely threaten the operations of the college.

Would enough students of high calibre present themselves for training? The waning of the earlier official scheme had in part reflected a reluctance of students to commit to full-time training in Dunedin. Would the momentum of a new model and a new location be enough to attract the 'chivalrous youth' North sought?

The First Students

Visitors to the Carey Baptist College site in Penrose today are immediately confronted with a near life-size picture of the first college students, taken at the inauguration in March 1926. The composition of this group is interesting and reflects many of the themes which surround the early years of the college.

The most striking figure in the photograph is also the most surprising. At first glance the presence of a woman among the foundation students at the theological college of an essentially conservative denomination is unexpected. The reality is a little less revolutionary. Thelma Gandy came from Wellington and was admitted to the college with a view to training for the mission field. There is no suggestion in the records that she might be a minister in New Zealand Baptist churches. Later in 1926, prospective missionary nurse, Margaret Livingstone would also study at the college before leaving for India. The studentships of these two women forced consideration of the question of 'Lady students'. In February 1927 the Committee recorded that 'some doubt having been expressed concerning the wisdom of mixed classes in

² For North's Address see *NZB* April 1926:96-97, cf 87.

³ *NZB* February 1925:29

our college, it was decided to consider each case on its merits.⁴ This masterful decision not to decide typifies the college's approach to the question. On the one hand, there would never be a bar placed on women students; on the other, it would be nearly 30 years before the next woman student officially entered. It remained, as Thelma Gandy later reflected, 'essentially a man's world'.⁵ Gandy completed her theological course but, largely for health reasons, did not proceed to the field. She became a teacher, never married and continued to support college students until shortly before her death in 1997.

Among the men a range of backgrounds, interests and subsequent histories is found. B.N. ('Bun') Eade and E.W. (Eddie) Grigg were both missionary students who had begun studies under the old scheme. Eade, originally from Hawera, would go on to distinguished service in India. Grigg, from the Ponsonby church, would serve briefly in India then enter New Zealand ministry. He would eventually withdraw for health reasons. Vic Hudson was from Palmerston North and, like Eade and Grigg, was presenting himself for missionary training. He was in his first year of study but would withdraw at the end of 1927 due to personal circumstances which made continuance impossible. Also coming in as a missionary student was Eric Batts. Batts, a member of Kemp's Auckland Tabernacle, had spent a year at the Bible Training Institute. He would later relate his discussions with Kemp about transferring to the Baptist college.

We sought the advice of our pastor again, fully expecting disapproval and insistence upon the completion of the Institute course. But no....He foresaw the possibilities and probabilities, the increased opportunities, the larger scope, and urged change.⁶

Batts too, apparently saw new possibilities and turned his attention to Pastoral Ministry, going on to serve in a number of churches in New Zealand.

J.T. (Jim) Crozier came from Invercargill but had spent a year at the Bible Training Institute. Apparently a determined individualist, Crozier was accepted with the proviso that he be counseled 'regarding the ideals of student discipline and relationship'.⁷ He would become one of the sharpest thinkers in the denomination and would serve the Roslyn church for some 40 years. B.M. (Barney) Wilson, son of the Pastor at

⁴ College Committee Minutes (CM), 22 February 1927, f. 91.

⁵ Letter, Thelma Gandy to R.J. Thompson, 18 February 1976, NZBRHS B.15 /54

⁶ NZB October 1933: 298

⁷ CM ff 64-5.

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Grange Rd, Auckland, was a third to come from a year at the B.T.I.. He would not complete the full course but would later have a ministry in Australia. R.L. (Len) Fursdon of Morrinsville completed a two years at the college, followed by a further two-year extra-mural programme of study. J.E. (Ewen) Simpson had begun study under the old scheme. Initially accepted for missionary work he, like Batts, Fursdon and Crozier, would have an important ministry in New Zealand.

North sought to integrate this group, with their widely differing training stages and needs, by means of almost individual attention in the first year. Importantly, of the nine foundation students, six were (at least initially) in preparation for overseas missionary service. As valued as this aim clearly was by the denomination, the proportion was a sign of the fragility of the new venture. The college was commencing just three students, one third, focused on Pastoral Ministry training. It was a sign that North would face an uphill battle as he sought to realise his vision.

The Odour of 'Modernism'

Students would not be the only measure of North's challenge. The late 1920s were a time of great theological controversy among Christians worldwide. 'Modernism' was matched by the rise, particularly in the United States, of 'Fundamentalism'. The effects would soon be felt in New Zealand. Joseph Kemp, who had encountered the tension first hand in his American ministry, was a determined anti-modernist. North was temperamentally unable to stay away from vigorous debate and as editor of the denominational newspaper he could hardly avoid comment. During 1926 he made a number of references to the controversy. In June, describing it as 'the bitter fight of the day', he criticised the attitudes of both sides. However he made it plain that he felt that new discoveries in science, including 'the light on human origins,...have one way or another, to be accommodated to the indestructible faith of Christ.'⁸ This sent disturbing signals to some of his correspondents, who sought a more definite denunciation of modernist error.⁹ When North declared his approval of theistic evolution, lingering doubts as to his soundness hardened into outright suspicion.¹⁰

⁸ *NZB*, June 1926:152. See also *NZB* December 1926:336-337.

⁹ See *NZB*, July 1926:189 and August 1926:200.

¹⁰ *NZB*, August 1928:208-209.

In January 1927, emboldened by the promise of a new college site, North re-stated his vision for the college in terms not likely to allay fears of conservative critics.

The new college must be Baptist to the core, because it must be Christian to the core. We want to make men conversant with the great things of the Faith and we want that faith in its whole extent applied to the whole life of the whole man, and to the whole community. With windows open to all the light which comes from every quarter, and with a fine chivalry, and with an unaffected belief in the sincerity of men who differ from us, we want to see our College fulfill its mission.¹¹

North could be as determined a 'valiant for truth' as anyone. He was especially hard on any weakness in preaching, lambasting on one occasion 'the "this is how it seems to me" heresy'.¹² This was not enough to remove the aura of modernism which would stay with him. Matters seem to have come to surface towards the end of 1927. At the Annual Conference in October, a powerful ally found it necessary to come to North's defence. The report of the college debate features an endorsement from Joseph Kemp.

Rev. Joseph W. Kemp made a speech that stirred the conference very deeply. He resented very deeply aspersions that had been made against the 'soundness' of Principal North. He declared that if North was a modernist, so in the same sense was he. He did not always agree in details with his friend, but they stood together for the great evangelical verities, and he would not hesitate to place anyone for whom he cared under the Principal for theological training.¹³

This boost from such an impeccably conservative source seems only to have blunted objections briefly. During 1928 North was again defending his position in the face of 'problems of college'.

We do not believe in a college in which men are taught to repeat the shibboleths of their tutors, and of their sect. We do not believe that orthodoxy can be administered in tabloid forms, and secured with smart little catch cries....We do not allow that the Christian faith is open to serious revision. It is a firm foundation, and it stands sure. We do feel in every fibre of our being the

¹¹ *NZB*, January 1927:2

¹² *NZB*, March 1927:80-81.

¹³ *NZB*, November 1927:330.

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urgent need of relating Christ and the implications of his Gospel to the thoughts and problems of our age.¹⁴

This was as clear a statement of his approach as North could make. Yet neither it nor Kemp's backing would ease the minds of those who saw modernism in anything not aggressively fundamentalist. North would never lose the confidence of the denominational leadership. As he grew older, he would become almost universally acknowledged and respected as a senior figure. The college, however, would have to endure a fluctuating but never disappearing reputation for unsoundness. This is evident in the comments made to Ayson Clifford when in 1933 he announced to his friends that he would be going to the Baptist College in the following year. One, a student at Kemp's Bible Training Institute, whilst encouraging Clifford to attend a revivalist mission being held in Dunedin at the time, added

I can imagine you getting so much on fire that you may even find that your place is in the 'B.T.I.' instead of the 'Bible Banging College'. I say, 'Come out from among them' & that applies not only to Churches where Modernists preside but also to all places where they have any authority at all.¹⁵

Bible 'banging' clearly meant something like Bible 'knocking' to this writer. Perceptions like this would have a profound effect on the college's history. Clifford was clearly cautious and later reported his first impressions of North's views to his confidants.¹⁶

The first years of North's Principalship, then, had their challenges. All, however, had not gone wrong. The outstanding area of progress was in the provision of premises.

The College on a Hill

The lack of its own buildings was regarded from the beginning as a significant problem for the new Baptist College. It was far from obvious that a speedy solution would be possible. The denomination did not own any significant property of its own when the college was founded. North highlighted the premises issue at every opportunity. At the inaugural service in March 1926 it was noted that the Methodists had set themselves a target of £50 000 to build a college in Auckland.¹⁷ Nobody

¹⁴ NZB December 1928:354-5. See also June 1929, 172-3.

¹⁵ Letter, 'Bert' to Ayson Clifford 25 June 1933, f. 4.

¹⁶ See Letter E.C. Wright to Ayson Clifford, 27 April 1934.

¹⁷ NZB April 1926:87

imagined that the Baptists could be quite that ambitious. Nonetheless some plan would need to emerge. North had no intention of remaining in rented rooms at the Tabernacle forever.

In the end the provision of a college site came much quicker than had at first been hoped. At the committee meeting held on the day of the inauguration an anonymous gift of £2000 was announced 'towards securing a College property'.¹⁸ The gift had come from 'an old friend' of North's: Robert Milligan of Oamaru.¹⁹ It was hardly the £24,000 the Methodists had already raised, but it was a start. Although this was a significant fillip for the Committee's plans, there were few other obvious means of fundraising. Agreement grew that a significant building was needed.

A range of substantial properties were considered but the solution was found through another unexpected gift. H.M. Smeeton, who had been closely involved with the setting up of the college and who currently chaired the Committee, held the lease to a large property on the slopes of Mt Hobson in Remuera. With the limits of age becoming more obvious, he and his wife decided to build a smaller dwelling on a portion of the site and to part-gift the house and gardens for the purposes of the Baptist College. Echoing the concerns of North, Smeeton noted that the six articles of faith in the Baptist Union Incorporation Act embodied 'the truths that they as Baptists desire to see maintained and preserved in the work of the college.'²⁰

'Binswood' (then 57 Remuera Rd) was offered with an acre of land. It had potential to accommodate up to 15 students plus provide a flat for the Principal, lecture rooms and library, dining room and quarters for a housekeeper. Yet it was not obvious that, even with the generosity of Smeeton, the denomination could afford such a large purchase. In quick order, wealthy supporters of the college were canvassed and a package put together and presented, more or less as a *fait accompli*, to the Committee on 3 December 1926. Perhaps not surprisingly, the proposal was unanimously accepted.²¹

¹⁸ CM 3 March 1926, f. 75. *NZB* April 1926, 85

¹⁹ Milligan was a noted philanthropist in his district. He would later join the other donors of funds for the college site on Mt Hobson. In 1932 in a short history to mark the Jubilee of the Union 'an old student' listed the £2000 donor plus six others who enabled the purchase (*NZB*, October 1932, 303). The original £2000 was included in the combined total.

²⁰ CM 3 December 1926, ff 97-8.

²¹ CM 3 December 1926, ff. 97-8.

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The gift of the Mt Hobson site would be announced with great fanfare in the *N.Z. Baptist* in January 1927. The generosity of the donors would receive particular attention, with satisfaction expressed that they came from all over the country. The 'seven men' would enter the folklore of the denomination. Indeed the legend would take hold that they had requested that their names remain secret until all of them had died. So Sherburd and Silcock, in their Jubilee history of the college declared 'no group photograph of these men exists because they desired, during their lifetime, to remain anonymous.'²² There is certainly no known group portrait, but this was likely more due to geographic distance than to modesty. The myth of preferred anonymity is exploded by the fact that the names of the seven were listed in the *NZ Baptist* as part of the official announcement of the gift. They were, in alphabetical order as first listed: F.W. Gaze of Auckland, W.H. George of Wellington, W. Lambourne of Auckland, M.W.P. Lascelles of Wellington, R. Milligan of Oamaru, Smeeton and T.E. Toneycliffe of Gisborne.

This was a significant group. Lascelles was the General Secretary of the Baptist Union. He, Milligan, Smeeton and Gaze each served at some time as President. Milligan had been an influential local body politician and philanthropist in North Otago. Sadly, Smeeton would die before the college moved into his former home.

The identities of the donors then, were no secret at all. What was withheld was the detail of the individual amounts given. This request for confidentiality was honoured at the time and it is appropriate to honour it still. A discount in the price compared to the market value was deemed to be Smeeton's contribution, with those of the other six (incorporating the earlier £2000 gift) contributing the cash difference.²³ There were 75 years to run on the lease. With the college only one year old, this must have seemed plenty of time. However, within twenty years concerns would grow that a more secure site be obtained.

A dedicated property, however grand, was only part of the picture. It was immediately realised that the cost of furnishing home so that it could operate as a college would be substantial. A budget of £1000 was agreed and a fundraising scheme immediately launched. A booklet, with scenes of the building was prepared and widely circulated. This would prove

²² Sherburd and Silcock, 13.

²³ Milligan added a further £1000 to enable the purchase of the Smeeton property. (See Correspondence regarding the purchase of the Mt Hobson house in NZ Baptist Archives B15/24 esp. Letter, Lascelles to Milligan, 17 December 1926.

very successful. Perhaps the concrete reality of a building was enough to galvanise hitherto quiescent donors. By October 1927 pledges of nearly £900 had been made and by the official opening on 29 February the full amount had been exceeded.

The need for ongoing financial support was recognised by the committee. As the special appeal for the college furnishings closed the first of a series of supporters schemes was launched. In February 1928 Baptists were invited to become 'Colleagues of the College.' It was the hope that 'these would undertake a prayerful interest in its work, would subscribe annually to its funds in March, and would receive occasional bulletins reporting its progress.' An initial proposal for an illustrated card featuring the college and its students was deemed too ambitious and more modest Christmas cards were sent out.²⁴ The results were disappointing. In February 1929 North surmised, 'we suppose that folk are still staring at that card, and wondering what they will send. Let the wonderment cease.'²⁵ The onset of economic depression made matters worse and the scheme languished. In 1932 a fresh start was made. The League of Associates' involved more active 'targeting' of likely donors. The philosophy was to identify those who with the means and the interest to be regular donors. By 1945 a total of 230 members had been enrolled, with an estimated contribution over the first twelve years of 'about £3000'.²⁶

The Mt Hobson house was the single biggest material investment to that date by the Baptist Union of New Zealand. There can be no doubting the pride with which the denomination viewed its new college. The account of the opening day reads like a sales brochure.

The day was gloriously fine. Bright sunshine, a rain-washed atmosphere, and refreshed vegetation enabled visitors to see the ideal setting of our new and most important denominational home. The noble building, its ideal situation on the slopes of Mount Hobson, commanding a glorious view of the Waitemata Harbour and the islands of the Hauraki Gulf, and its fine appointments and elegant furnishings, came as a pleasing surprise to many of the visitors.²⁷

On three levels, the building was set out to fully contain the activities of the college. On the ground floor what had been essentially a basement

²⁴ NZB April 1928:105; CM 11 October 1928, ff. 117-118.

²⁵ NZB, February 1929, 35.

²⁶ See the note by E.P.Y. Simpson in the 1945 N.Z. Baptist College *Magazine*, 40.

²⁷ NZB April 1928:110.

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was converted into two lecture rooms, the larger of which doubled as the library. Library space was one thing, books were another. North provided his own library and Samuel Barry made his extensive collection of missionary literature available to students. However the college library remained poor for a long time. Gifts of such treasures as the *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, the *Oxford Dictionary*, and various encyclopedias were assiduously acknowledged in the regular 'College Notes' in the *NZ Baptist*. A surprising gift (one, it is clear, the college had little idea what to do with) was received in 1933. This was several pages of a medieval manuscript version of the vulgate on vellum, donated by the Christian publisher A.H. Reed.²⁸

On the first floor was the Principal's flat plus a reception room, dining room and kitchen. The second floor was divided into rooms, initially to house twelve students. A tennis court was built, both to enable exercise and promote fellowship. There was no doubt about the model of training which was to be followed. The resident students, all single men, were effectively to be the family of the Principal - taking breakfast and some other meals with the North's, being accountable for their comings and goings. This 'household' model of training would persist until the 1950s.

Curriculum and Teaching

The shaping of the students was more than a function of their proximity to the Principal. A number of the features of the training at Knox (the model with which North was most familiar) were replicated in the new Baptist college. Most obvious was the expectation that most students would undertake studies at the Auckland College of the University of New Zealand during their four year programme at the Baptist College. E.W. Grigg came to the college with a B.A. and managed to complete a Master of Arts by the end of his first year as a Baptist student. North noted in his first report that 'all the students have done University work'. He had a particular commitment to political economy but was not too impressed with the classes the three first-year men had taken in psychology and logic. The college itself provided the more theological topics. New Testament Greek was a major focus for the senior students, with English Bible study in 1926 focusing on Luke and 'a typical O.T. Prophet.' A particular interest at this time for North was systematic theology, or what he described as 'the philosophy of the Faith.' The text

²⁸ *NZB*, December 1933, 363.

for this subject was to be A.H. Strong (apparently chosen as a less controversial option to W.N. Clarke's more 'liberal' work).²⁹

In his 1926 report North also gave an insight into his approach to teaching. 'Students have worked steadily at the major doctrines. The method of a prescribed text book, open conversation round each point, and final test of comprehension in examination has been followed.'³⁰ Writing in a tribute volume in 1944, D.H. Stewart recalled glowingly

Our Principal believed that the surest way to deepen the impressions made by contact with truth and knowledge was by each man being given opportunity to express what he had learned. And the discussion group method certainly helped each student to appreciate what he was learning, and made the various subjects absorbingly interesting.³¹

The style was remembered in similar terms by Ewen Simpson.

He allowed his students to argue with him in the course of lectures....There were numerous incidents like that, and they were important in the training process. If he were proved wrong on some point of fact he was quick to admit that he had learned something a student....When he frankly didn't know something he was ready to have any student provide the information, an attitude which impressed on our minds the importance of truth.³²

The vigour and directness of North's teaching was not, however, universally appreciated. Even such an admirer as Simpson, could concede that 'not all students thrive under North's robust style'.³³

There is a hint in North's first report of themes which would assume greater importance as his principalship developed. The first was preaching. This was an area which he always claimed for his own. His consistent aim was that the college would produce good preachers, and he worked hard to make this a reality. Stories of sermon class with North are legion, and legendary. The typical pattern was for a student to deliver his (only the men did this class) sermon, after which the other students would comment and critique the effort. Finally, North would arise and sum up, sometimes with a defence of the sermon more often with a pungent critique. Interestingly, those who endured these sessions

²⁹ Simpson 8.

³⁰ NZBU *Handbook* 1926-7, 30-33.

³¹ *Magazine*, 1944:21

³² J. E. Simpson, 'John J. North, D.D.' in 'New Zealand Baptist Theological College: Sixtieth Jubilee Essays 1986', unpublished collection, N.Z. Baptist Theological College, 1986, 3-9, 7.

³³ Simpson, 7.

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generally testify that North, whilst unrelenting on what he saw as inconsistent or mediocre efforts, was not a cruel judge. At North's retirement, David Edwards would conclude that 'the great dread of our Principal's heart was that from that table there should go forth to proclaim the "unsearchable riches," a "middling" man of God.'³⁴

A second important theme, mentioned only in passing in the first report, was that of 'poetry and literature'. This source of inspiration would become increasingly important in North's curriculum.

For most of 1926 North carried the college teaching on his own. By the end of the year, however, two significant helpers had arrived. A.J. Grigg had arrived as the first minister of the nearby North Memorial church in Remuera (named for J.J. North's father, Alfred). Described as 'an expert Grecian', Grigg took over the Greek classes for the final term. Also in Auckland, at the Mt Albert church, was John Laird. In 1927 these two men were appointed to the college as part-time tutors (initially for four hours of lectures per week). Laird concentrated mainly on Old Testament studies. He would conclude his regular teaching service to the college at the end of 1929, giving way to an expanded role for Grigg. Laird's lectures were thought to be somewhat simplistic. (Eric Batts recalled students baiting with such questions as where the window on Noah's ark would have been.) Grigg would develop a wider brief. From 1930 he became full-time tutor and would play a significant part at the college through the 1930s. Like Laird, Grigg's lecturing style was not favoured. Arthur Jamieson remembered his 'just reading to us from books'.³⁵ It seems likely that Grigg had to work very hard, it was expected that he would obtain outside tutoring to help fund his salary. He would leave in 1938 to become Principal at the Baptist College (now Whitley College) in Melbourne, Australia.³⁶

Students of the college were, as had been the case with the old scheme, very much under the direction of the committee. N.R. Wood's student experience illustrates this well.

Nathan Rillstone Wood applied to the College Committee during 1926. He had a background in clerical work and had achieved matriculation. At the Assembly of that year six applications were

³⁴ *Magazine*, 1944: 35

³⁵ Personal interview March 2002.

³⁶ *NZB*, June 1926, 141. Memories of Grigg and Laird are recorded in the 'New Zealand Baptist Theological College Sixtieth Jubilee Essays' (unpublished, 1986) held in the College library. On Grigg see also R. Otzen, *Whitley: The Baptist Theological College of Victoria 1891-1991* (South Yarra: Hyland House, 1991), esp. 100-102.

considered, with only Wood and Cecil Boggis accepted. Wood was notified by telegram and then a letter from the Secretary F.E. Harry. 'You have been accepted as a probationary student of the...college. I emphasize the word "probationary" that you may fully understand the position.'¹ This was followed by a personal letter from J.J. North and instructions from A.J. Grigg about necessary preparation for Greek.¹ When the college began in 1927 Wood was twenty. He would complete the typical four year course.

In his first year Wood was on the sports committee for the Students' Association and represented the college on the Bible Class executive. In 1928 he was a key mover in the bid to convince the Principal to issue Diplomas for the college course. The following year he was Secretary of the Association; Vice President in 1930. Over the four years Wood was examined and passes on the following formal courses

1927:	Logic, Junior Classical Greek, O.T. Introduction, Theology, English Bible, General Religious Knowledge
1928:	Ethics, Greek, N.T. (Revelation), Isaiah, Comparative Religion, General Religious Knowledge
1929:	Senior Greek, John's Gospel, I Corinthians, Doctrine, O.T. Prophets, General Religious Knowledge
1930:	Apologetics, English Bible, Church History, Economics, General Religious Knowledge

Non-examined classes in Psychology, Preaching and English Literature were also required.

At the end of 1930 Wood's services were sought by Ponsonby in Auckland (where he had been stationed during the year) and Linwood in Christchurch. It is clear that discussions were held with the churches on these placements, often through representatives at the Assembly. On the other hand it appears to have been assumed that the graduating students would be available to go wherever they were sent. Wood was notified that he was going to Christchurch by the Secretary in October 1930 and was in Linwood by the end of January. He was now on a further probation for two years, to be supervised by Rev. J.K. Archer of Colombo St. In 1931 an examination on the Greek text of Hebrews was required. Archer reported each year and in 1932 Wood was approved to be given full ministerial recognition.

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It is difficult to assess the academic work at the college in these early years but it seems the standard was not onerous. That a number of students successfully undertook University study indicates that the ability of individuals cannot be doubted. On the other hand the published results suggest few students of whatever ability struggled to pass. There were some moves towards tertiary benchmarks. In 1928 the Baptists joined an inter-denominational approach to the University of New Zealand for a bachelor of Divinity degree.³⁷ From 1931, in response to a letter from educationalist W.H. Newton, candidates were required to achieve University matriculation unless circumstances made this impossible.³⁸ A year later Newton, now a Committee member, expressed disappointment at the levels achieved in scripture (North's course, highest mark 78). Subsequently, not feeling that the Committee responded appropriately to his criticisms, he made suggestions for broadening the Scripture course, which had focused on Mark's Gospel. The Committee duly revised the prescription.

After discussion of the question of the amount of Scripture knowledge required of candidates, it was determined that fresh emphasis should be laid on a general knowledge of Scripture and that the Guild Text book (Robertson on O.T. and McClymont on N.T.) should be named in addition to Lindsay on Mark. An Examination Cttee consisting of Mr Newton and the Rev. J. Laird was appointed.³⁹

A loose system of donated prizes attached to a number of courses. In 1932 the students expressed dissatisfaction with the impact of this on what was a small group. They wanted a level field.

[T]he students feel that competition among us is undesirable. A certain amount seems inevitable, but we would rather not compete for prizes. We value the books of course and suggest that donated book money be divided amongst the students. We would prefer to do our best without a specific prize.⁴⁰

The clear fact is that the college was not intended to be characterised by its academic level. It was its function to produce evangelists, rather than scholars. It was envisaged, however, that 'Tracts for the Times' might appear. Apart from North's (admittedly extensive) journalism and a booklet for young Baptists the closest the college came to this aim during the early years was a series of 'Aids to Bible Study' published in

³⁷ CM 13 October 1928, f. 121. The initiative came to nothing.

³⁸ CM 13 October 1931, f. 143.

³⁹ Auckland Committee Minutes, 4 April 1932.

⁴⁰ Students' Minutes, 26 September 1932.

the *N.Z. Baptist* from 1930 to 1937. These took the form of devotional comment or explanatory notes on scripture passages.⁴¹

The McMaster Doctorate

North clearly had a powerful mind, but his capacity was for breadth rather than depth. Both tutors were more academically qualified than their Principal. Although in the early years he encouraged all students who were capable to undertake courses at Auckland University College North was suspicious of the value of theological degrees as such and was reluctant even to introduce a formal diploma for the college course. It is perhaps somewhat ironic, then, that from 1928 he would be known as 'Dr North', thanks to the expansionist generosity of Canadian Baptists and some careful behind the scenes negotiation in New Zealand.

In 1928, to mark the upcoming fourth congress of the Baptist World Alliance, McMaster University of Toronto (itself a Baptist foundation) proposed to award a number of honorary Doctorates in Divinity. Notice was received on Tuesday, 1 May that the offer included one for New Zealand Baptists. The expectation was that it would be conferred on the official delegate to the congress. The delegate that year was the General Secretary of the denomination W.R. Lascelles, who was to depart on Monday, 7 May. A flurry of telegrams and letters ensued in which a number of the practically minded businessmen on the executive doubted whether such a degree had any value. F.N. Andrews (chairman of the College Board), for example, expressed the view that 'our Yankee friends scatter degrees indiscriminately'. Nonetheless it was agreed that, if the offer was to be accepted, rather than to Lascelles the degree should go to J.J. North, as fitting his role as Principal. Samuel Barry's only reservation was over whether the Union would have to foot the bill for the robes!

Interestingly, North himself argued that he was the better candidate. In a letter to the acting Union Secretary W.S. Rollings he stressed his own academic achievements at Knox College and noted pointedly that

a D.D. would not sit easily on dear old Lascelles. Shalders and Andrews have written to say so. It is an honour however which this College could do with and would not be inappropriate (I suppose) for me to bear....I have been put in a rather anomalous position by the call to this work and such a degree would place the

⁴¹ The series began in May 1930, apparently prompted by a letter to the editor from 'Delegate Z' of Hororata in Canterbury seeking assistance in 'systematic Bible study'. See *NZB* April 1930, 117; May 1930, 154.

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College beside the Methodist and other Colleges in the public eye.⁴²

On 11 June 1928 Eric Batts, President of the College Students Association, reported that he had approached North about diplomas for the college course, 'but had been told that nothing could be done at present in this regard. The Principal did not see necessity for diplomas at the present time.'⁴³ Two weeks later J.J. North received his honorary Doctor of Divinity *in absentia*, at a special convocation in Toronto. Ten other Baptist leaders from around the world were similarly honoured.⁴⁴ Ceremonies at the Auckland Tabernacle, then again in October at the Assembly, celebrated the event and a special photo of the robed Principal was issued as a supplement to the *N.Z. Baptist*.⁴⁵

North and the members of the Union executive were undoubtedly right in the decision to favour the College Principal over the General Secretary for the honorary degree. However, we are left with a sense that the process, involving as it did no specific recognition by McMaster University of North's attainments, was rather hollow. Not until 1931 would the college students get their diplomas.

A College for Evangelists

Beyond the classroom, students were frequently called upon to preach at churches around Auckland. Indeed the meetings of the students' association for the 1926 year were dominated by discussions as to how preaching fees were to be handled.⁴⁶ This was a real practical concern, as such payments were often the only income students received. This

⁴² See Letters to W.S. Rollings of F.N. Andrews (4 May 1928), S. Barry (undated) and J.J. North ('Friday' [4 May 1928]) in NZ Baptist Archive 01/... ; The matter of the robes was attended to by a gift from the Auckland Tabernacle, NZB, September 1928, 261. 'D.D.' was added to the masthead of the NZB after North's name from October 1928.

⁴³ 'Minutes of the N.Z. Baptist College Students' Association', 1926-1936, NZ Baptist Archive B15A/1, 11 June 1928.

⁴⁴ Among the other recipients was F.W. Boreham, formerly of Mosgiel New Zealand but by now in Armadale, Australia – see the *Record of Proceedings of the Fourth Baptist Congress, Toronto, Canada, 23-29 June 1928* (Toronto: Stewart Printing Service, 1928), 7.

⁴⁵ NZB, November 1928, 328.

⁴⁶ 'Minutes of the N.Z. Baptist College Students' Association', 1926-1936, NZ Baptist Archive B15A/1.

regular student preaching delighted North, who himself carried a heavy speaking load.

From the first year a tradition began whereby students were 'dispersed' to Easter Bible Class Camps. B.N. Eade was at Temuka in 1926, whilst North himself spoke at the northern Young Men's Camp at Henderson. The following year Thelma Gandy was at the Women's camp at Whangarei whilst seven of the male students were with the men at Wanganui.⁴⁷ In 1928 all the men attended the South Island camp at Timaru, leading Bible studies and doing the cooking.⁴⁸

Perhaps more stretching were the evangelistic efforts. North was particularly impressed with any initiatives of this type. The students were inspired in this area by the visit of the international missionary leader J.R. Mott in April 1926. This was Mott's third trip to New Zealand and he was received as a major figure. Baptist students attended the Auckland meetings and Thelma Gandy and Ewen Simpson were delegates to the Dunedin Missionary Conference.⁴⁹

Gandy and Simpson were (at that point) candidates for overseas mission training. It was not imagined however that mission at home could be ignored. Public preaching would be a feature of Baptist college training for many decades. In August 1926 B.N. Eade recorded

We joined with the Bible Training Institute students in an open-air service and are engaging in similar but more personal work at the after-church meetings on the water front. This is difficult work, bring us into personal contact with all types of belief.⁵⁰

From 1933 the Baptist students joined with the Salvation Army at a regular Friday night 'open-air' in Newmarket.

More targeted evangelism was also tried. In May 1928 a week long mission was held with the new cause at Royal Oak, Auckland, with house to house visitation. This inspired a more extensive operation in August/September, with missions in Morrinsville and Wanganui where the efforts of Cliff Reay revealed his gifts as an evangelist.⁵¹ The following year the students combined with Baptists from the Bible Training Institute in a mission at Otahuhu. N.R. Wood noted that while this venture 'was not greatly used for winning men to Christ it did help

⁴⁷ NZB, June 1927, 163; May 1928, 143.

⁴⁸ NZB, May 1928, 143.

⁴⁹ NZB, June 1926, 141, 144, 156-158.

⁵⁰ NZB, August 1926, 218.

⁵¹ NZB, October 1928, 291.

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considerably the cause at Otahuhu.⁵² In 1930 the entire student body took part in a mission at Mt Eden in Auckland. The secretary of that church reported in the *N.Z. Baptist* that 'we feel we cannot speak too highly of the evangelistic fervour which permeated every message delivered by the ten students, many of whom are truly gifted above average as evangelists.'⁵³ Within a few years, however, vacation missions were being regarded as an imposition by the students. At a meeting of the Students' Association in April 1932 it was recorded that

The fellows feel that missions during the short vacation are too tiring in consideration of the college curriculum. It was left to the prefect [M.J.Eade] to interview the Dr. It was thought that two Sundays should be long enough, considering how tired the fellows get.⁵⁴

Tired as the 'fellows' might have been, the missions continued.

'The Elan of Community Life'

The first two years of the college, when it was forced to use rented rooms and there was no residential option, presented difficulties in developing a sense of corporate identity. A Students' Association was formed and a corporate student life of sorts began (see box). Nevertheless North lamented that 'the élan which belongs to community life has been sorely missed.'⁵⁵ Some efforts were made to make up for the lack. Wealthy Auckland families provided recreational opportunities. The Speddings, for instance, hosted the first of what would become regular harbour cruises, on their launch 'Molly' in 1927.⁵⁶ Most fondly remembered were two short stays on Waiheke Island, in 1926 and 1927. On the first occasion, North and five of the male students spent a few days in fairly basic accommodation. In 1927 the Lambourne's of Ponsonby made available two dwellings in Cowes' Bay. The North's took one, while seven of the students 'bached' in the other. Eric Batts recorded an incident which took place during the first of these trips which hints at a powerful element in the college's atmosphere.

⁵² N.R. Wood, Students' Association Annual Report, 1929, 2. N.Z. Baptist Archive B.15A/10.

⁵³ *NZB*, June 1930, 184.

⁵⁴ Students' Minutes, 22 July 1932.

⁵⁵ *NZBU Handbook* 1926-27:32

⁵⁶ *NZB*, June 1927, 163.

Students Together, 1926

What of the corporate student life? This is not neglected, although none realises more than the students themselves that a resident hostel or college can alone make this side of student life complete. We have formed a Students' Association, with constitution and rules. The clause under "Aims" reads thus: "The aims of the Association shall be the development of the spiritual and all other phases of College life, and the representation of the students in all matters affecting their welfare." We are trying to lay a worthy foundation for the future. Our College shall be to us a real Alma Mater.

Thursday afternoon is devoted to tennis on the courts of Mr Spedding; we thank him for this kindness. Afternoon tea is a regular function. Another happy event was the initiating by the seniors of the juniors into the mysteries of the society of 'Gorgonzolas'. The seniors also, alas! were later treated similarly. It was a real student affair. ('College Notes' NZB, May 1926, 118.)

Time came for bed. Two of us were in our little room. The wall that divided ours from that used by [North] scarcely reached the ceiling. We heard [him] enter his room. There were the brief minutes in which one prepares for rest and then the low voice of one in prayer. We could not help but hear....

'Gentle Jesus meek and mild,
Look upon this little child...'

The man we loved and respected, who introduced us to the intricacies of Greek and Theology, the reader of a thousand books, had the heart and faith of a child. That is greatness.⁵⁷

Batts was writing on North's retirement, with no doubt a tint of rose to his spectacles. There were, on occasion, problems. North's slow response to the desire for diplomas rankled. In 1930 he proposed holding classes on Anzac day. An extraordinary meeting of the students on 23 April resolved that this should not happen. 'Discussion then centred around relations existing between Principal and students.' It is not clear who prevailed.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ *N.Z. Baptist College Magazine*, October 1945, 26.

⁵⁸ Students' Minutes, 23 April 1930.

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Despite the occasional clash of wills, student relationships and personal intimacy with North would form the outstanding features of many memories of training. This dynamic was institutionalized with the advent of the residential college. With the students now living together, the nature of their community life became a fundamental part of their training. Life on the large hill section which required development meant the organisation of rosters and duties. Planting slopes, tending livestock and shaping the tennis court were the stuff of non-classroom time. The Students' Association was responsible for this detail and for the devotional and recreational life of the students. There was inevitably some tension between these aspects of college life. Daily 'ping-pong' was an early initiative and this was quickly extended to deck tennis and became an opportunity to engage with students at the Bible Training Institute and at Trinity Methodist College. Regular 'fellowship meetings' with these two colleges would be a feature of student life on Mt Hobson. A 1928 proposal to make similar arrangements with Anglican students seemed to languish.⁵⁹

A feature of the records of the college is that very little reference is made to the domestic staff. No photos of Annie Reigate the cook, Miss Leverett, Miss Kemp, or Miss Wallace will be found in the archive. Yet these women played a crucial role in community life and were held in great affection by students.

The first issue of a college magazine is recorded in 1928. Cecil Boggis was editor and he repeated the effort in 1929.⁶⁰ *College Days* was an in-house rag, meant only for the students and, sadly, short lived. A.L. Silcock was appointed editor for 1930 but no issue appeared. This no-show was roundly treated in the annual report of 1931.

What has happened to the editor we know not. We know he is still in N.Zed and that he is no ghostlike presence, for his bulk amazed folk at the conference no end! Probably the exigencies of married life have told upon him....We have greater hopes for this year under Mr Stewart's editorship.⁶¹

The optimism of this good-natured comment was misplaced. The magazine did not appear again until 1942. Even more unfortunately (for

⁵⁹ Students' Minutes, 11 June, 27 July, 17 October 1928.

⁶⁰ Only one copy of *College Days: The Official Organ of the New Zealand Baptist College Students Association* survives. It is Vol. III, 1929. It is unclear whether it was annual, in which case it would have first appeared in 1927, or occasional, from 1928.

⁶¹ Students' Association Annual Report 1931 f. 4.

the historian, at least) is that no copies of the Boggis issues of 1928-29 seem to have survived.

The nature and mood of a community of ten or so rapidly changes with new personnel. From 1929 a more serious tone is evident in the students' meetings. In March 1929 the devotional life of the college was given more definition. On most mornings students were to rise at 6.30 a.m. and from 7.10 a.m. have private devotions in their rooms. In addition to this

it was decided that the students have two devotional meetings each week. These to be held on Tuesday and Friday from 7.15 a.m. to 7.45 a.m.. The Tuesday meeting to be for the deepening of our own spiritual life and the Friday meeting to be devoted to general intercession.⁶²

'Loose' behaviour was discouraged. Following the Easter camp of 1930 it was agreed 'that we watch ourselves in regard to slang [and] levity; with a mind to deepening our devotional life.' A further fifteen-minute prayer meeting each evening was commenced. Similar concerns were raised in 1931 and 1932.⁶³

It was not just the students who had concerns about behaviour and the consequent image of the college. The origins of the college's restrictive approach to engagements and marriage can be identified in these early years. In 1932 Rev. W.S. Rollings wrote to the Committee 'regarding the love affairs of students' - particularly concerned at broken engagements. The matter had been brought to a head by a perhaps inevitable circumstance in which a student on summer placement in Wellington developed a relationship with a young woman in the church which he was serving. The student was already engaged to an Auckland woman, who, naturally upset at the turn of events, had written to the Principal. A report was commissioned and the student reprimanded. In response, the Auckland Committee resolved 'that with each acceptance into college, very serious representation should be made to the incomer as to relations with young women and advising against engagements during college days.'⁶⁴ The issue was tested again almost immediately, with E.P.Y. Simpson having to give assurance that his engagement had not been envisaged when he applied a few months before. The committee warned that 'no action suggestive of dishonour could be

⁶² Students' Minutes, 4 March 1929. On 18 June it was decided to drop the 6.30 a.m. gong, other than Tuesdays and Fridays.

⁶³ Students' Minutes 23 April 1930, 1 June 1931, 22 July 1932.

⁶⁴ Auckland Minutes 4 July 1932; 1 August 1932.

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countenanced.⁶⁵ The constraint of romantic associations would be a feature of the college culture until the 1970s.

Relations with the Norths

The college, especially through its Principal, took a close interest in the entire lives of the students. The emotional and relational impact of this 'household' model of training cannot be over emphasised. The students, mostly in their early twenties, were younger than the North's own children. As far as was possible with a larger group, they became a second family of the Principal and his wife. North would refer to them as his 'other sons'.⁶⁶ Again, this is evident in the recollections of those who were students in this period. Comments on both J.J. and Cecilia North are more than just respectful or affectionate, they are almost filial - more homage to beloved parents than tributes to teachers.

W.N. Flett remembered the more relaxed setting of Sunday evenings.

Those off duty moments, to my mind, were amongst the richest things in college....Many an impression gained then, in that warm atmosphere and cosy room with Mrs North dispensing coffee, has lingered, while others of the lecture room has (sic) been (oh shame!) forgotten.⁶⁷

Students were especially protective of Mrs North. There were always domestic staff and the students had certain duties in the house, so the Principal's wife never had to carry the entire load. Nevertheless, Cecilia North was three years older than her husband and was not always a well woman. The strain on her of the college environment was noted by Ayson Clifford who wondered at her 'singular patience' with the rowdy inhabitants living above her flat.⁶⁸ A report of the college graduation in 1931 notes

Mrs North's position may be privileged, but it is not easy. For her there is little privacy and less quiet, for it is not natural for students to creep around like mice....But this gracious and kindly lady, who has been the best of mothers to her four sons, mothers unobtrusively successive relays of students, who hold her in respectful affection.⁶⁹

⁶⁵ Auckland Committee Minutes, 14 February (appropriately!) 1933.

⁶⁶ *Magazine*, 1945, 5.

⁶⁷ *Magazine*, 1945, 27.

⁶⁸ *Magazine*, 1945, 25.

⁶⁹ *NZB* December 1931, 373.

North deliberately fostered this type of relationship. He began an annual dinner which he hosted at Assembly for those who had trained under him. Though this tradition grew to be a highlight for many it did not survive the strained atmosphere of the denomination which would coincide with North's retirement.⁷⁰

Governance and Finance

The college began its 1933 programme with a full house of students and a growing sense of optimism and acceptance. Seven years on, the advent of a denominational college had placed new pressures on the administration of Baptist training. The old Students' Committee became the College Committee, retaining general responsibility for training and accreditation, though with the aim that the college would become the only path into recognised ministry among the Baptist churches.⁷¹ In the mean-time it continued to oversee the Home Mission course, though it was revised in 1927. New internal structures were required. The full College Committee generally met only at the annual assembly, when its principal business was to receive reports and consider candidates. Three subcommittees were formed: an Auckland-based House committee and two others, focusing on finance and candidate selection. The Auckland committee, closer to the developing life of the college, would gradually become the dominant group, a trend which would eventually create significant tensions.

With the death of Smeeton, F.N. Andrews was appointed Chairman of the Committee. He would remain in that role until 1933. He and North appear to have worked very well together. Like his predecessor a successful businessman, Andrews was an effective advocate for the college. His skills were essential, given the tenuous financial state of the new venture and the wariness of some in the churches. Ewen Simpson recalled Andrews' pivotal role.

There was a wonderful rapport between Mr Andrews and J.J. and Mrs North, and from the denominational point of view that was extremely important. Mr Andrews himself was *persona grata* in circles where J.J. was still under some suspicion of modernism. He was an ideal man to provide liaison with the denomination as a whole.⁷²

⁷⁰ See Simpson 'J.J. North', 9.

⁷¹ *Yearbook*, 1927-28, 30.

⁷² J.E. Simpson taped recollections 23 January 1981,

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The college acquired its capital (site and plant) through generous donation, but the operational expenditure was potentially a more difficult area. The first budget for the college covered only seven months (March to September) but nonetheless projected expenditure of £1400 of which £350 would be a proportion of North's £600 salary, with £560 allocated for allowances to students.⁷³ At this point in its history the college received no funds directly from the Baptist Union, although the Missionary Society allocated a sum in proportion to its approved students. The budget depended heavily on the support of the Auckland Baptist Tabernacle which pledged £350 cash as well as providing rooms. In the event, with a number of generous private donations the college ended its first year with a substantial surplus of £271.18.4. This would come under pressure immediately. In 1927 donations were down. The advent of the Mt Hobson house enabled a reorganisation to take place. As accommodation was now able to be provided, North's salary was reduced by a third to £400, and student-related expenses declined. These changes enabled the college to maintain a fluctuating credit balance on its accounts.

As the world-wide depression squeezed the New Zealand market, further economies were required. North's salary reduced further, to £357 in 1932 then to £324 in 1933 at which level it would stay until conditions improved in 1935. The Tutor and domestic staff salaries were also reduced, though by lower proportion.⁷⁴

A key source of funds through this time was the Young Men's Baptist Bible Class Union, which provided over £1100 between 1926 and 1933. But it was the Tabernacle Buildings Trust which by far provided the largest single portion of the college's income, averaging £400 per year. The Tabernacle church was also the largest contributor to the church collections. The college's connection to the richest church in the union was clearly crucial to its survival in these early years.

Why was the Tabernacle so well disposed to the new institution? The reasons are in part historical. In the 1880s Thomas Spurgeon imagined a college on site next to his new church. As buildings on that land, fronting Karangahape Rd, now provided income to the Tabernacle's trust it was deemed appropriate to make grants to the college.⁷⁵ There

⁷³ The sources of these figures are the College Committee Minutes and the Baptist Union Yearbooks for the periods involved.

⁷⁴ CM, 9 October 1931 f. 142.

⁷⁵ The historical link was not lost on Andrews, who noted the aptness of the setting at the public meeting, held in the Tabernacle to mark the opening of the house on Mt Hobson on 29 February 1928. See *NZB*, April 1938, 113.

were also personal factors. Smeeton, Andrews and (when he shifted to Auckland) North were members of the Tabernacle and, as has been seen, the college enjoyed the full backing of its minister, Joseph Kemp. The Tabernacle's financial underpinning of the college was maintained through the 1930s. Its consistent support enabled the college to weather difficult early years and the depression. Attempts were made to diversify the support base and release the college from its dependence on one or two sources. These were only partially successful.

By the end of 1933 the college was entering a new phase. It had established its patterns and trained two full cycles of students. Key figures Smeeton and Kemp were dead and Andrews had resigned. J.J. North D.D., by contrast, was attaining new heights. He was completing a year as President of the Baptist Union (his second term). He was concurrently editor of the *N.Z. Baptist* and Principal of the denominational college. He had weathered theological suspicion and financial stringency as he struggled to establish the new institution. The next years would present their own economic, social and personal difficulties but, as he buried Kemp in September 1933, North had already entered a less troubled period as Principal. The years of his greatest impact as a church leader were arguably behind him, but his *mana* had never been higher. Over the next decade this reputation would become fixed. The college too would firmly secure its place in denominational life.

Martin Sutherland
Laidlaw College, Auckland

Mission, Slavery, Freedom: Philip Cornford Recalls the Baptist Mission in Jamaica.

Introduction

Philip Cornford served a number of churches in New Zealand. He had arrived in the colony in 1861 with a business career, rather than ministry in mind. However he was soon called to the Auckland church which he served for 25 years. He was President of the N.Z. Baptist Union (1886-7) and came to be a respected elder figure in the denomination's life. This was the third phase of Cornford's career. He had held three pastorates in England and, before that, had been for eleven years in Jamaica with the Baptist Missionary Society. The dramatic events of the Baptist mission in Jamaica form the core of this account, published in the *NZ Baptist* 1886-88.¹ Cornford arranges his material in eight sections

- I Arrival and meeting with Knibb
- II The spiritual plight and slave history of the African population
- III Cornford's ministry and the death of his wife
- IV 'Superstitions' of the population
- V-VII The slave rebellion of 1831
- VIII A particular case of conversion and witness.

These 'Missionary Reminiscences' essentially cover material which Cornford had published in 1856 in a tract of the same title. Some details are added but there is little question that these are the later

¹ See *NZ Baptist*, June 1886 92-93; Aug 1886 125-126; October 1886 147-148; February 1887 17-18; May 1887 76-78; Aug 1887 115-116; Nov 1887 162-163; Feb 1888 25-26.

reflections of an older man. As such they take on a romantic tone in places.

Cornford was not present during the rebellion. Indeed he arrived after emancipation, in 1841. However he appears to have had intimate access to eyewitnesses among the missionaries and former slaves. His account is thus not a primary record of the events but it does provide a glimpse into the attitudes and interpretations of the Baptist missionaries and provides significant spiritual portraits of key slave leaders such as Sam Sharpe and Moses Hall. Beyond this useful, if limited, glimpse into a significant episode in Baptist mission history Cornford exhibits the spirituality valued and celebrated by Victorian Baptists. The account of Catherine Harding in section VIII is especially revealing in this regard.²

Missionary Reminiscences

I

Come, labour on!
 The labourers are few, the field is wide,
 New stations must be filled, and blanks supplied;
 From voices distant far, or near at home,
 The call is, "Come!"

When slavery ceased in the British West Indies, the success of mission work in Jamaica urgently called for a large increase of labourers. 'The harvest truly was plenteous, but the labourers few.' Ten additional missionaries with their wives, and several Normal School teachers, were accordingly soon sent into the field by the Baptist Committee; and kindred societies, in like manner, increased their representatives. The

² On the Baptist Mission in Jamaica the most up to date treatment is Brian Stanley, *The History of the Baptist Missionary Society* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1992) pp 68-105. On the Slave Rebellion see M. Reckord 'The Jamaica Slave Rebellion of 1831' *Past and Present* 40 (Jul 1968): 108-125. Neither Cornford's 1856 version nor the articles in the *NZ Baptist* reprinted here are listed in Stanley's bibliography or cited by Reckord. His accounts add details not mentioned in these studies.

people had received the Gospel, and hungered for the Bread of Life. Pioneer work was accomplished; but ignorance, superstition, and vice, with all the evils of the natural man, remained to be combated.

The emancipated population, however, were so imbued with a sense of indebtedness to the missionaries, that for a time nothing in their power seemed too much for them to do to express their veneration and their love. Into this bright and singular scene of religious and social effervescence, I, with my beloved wife, entered in January 1841 – that is, within three years of the date of emancipation. Landing at Rio Bueno, in company with William Knibb, a band of sixteen in all, we found a throng of enthusiastic coloured people, in striking, motley attire, waiting to greet us. In our transit from the ship to the shore we had sung the very appropriate hymn - *How are Thy servants blest, O Lord, How sure is their defence!*

With hearts full of emotion, and eyes as full of tears, we sang till, as the last verse closed the song, our boat reached the shore. How well did it accord! How thrilling were its words!

Our life, while 'Thou preserv'st that life,
Thy sacrifice shall be;
And death, when death shall be our lot,
Shall join our souls to Thee.

We had counted the cost, and now we had touched the land which so often proved unfriendly to the life of Europeans. The die was cast. The hand was put to the plough, and we looked not back. Yet, as our ship quietly glided into the beautiful bay, and all were admiring the glories of the scene, the gruff voice of the mate was heard exclaiming, 'There's a death hole!' Experience had taught him how there the floating miasms spread the fatal fever abroad, and involuntarily he seemed to utter the note of warning. Alas, in a few weeks one of that happy company left us for 'the better land;' and all too soon my own loved wife followed the silent way, to dwell where Jesus is. Well was it for us that we foresaw nothing. We were called to go forward, and this we desired.

A few scattered houses facing the sea, with here and there a store, constituted the so-called town of Rio Bueno, which also had a small English Church at its farther end. High above us, standing solitarily on the rocky eminence, was a Baptist Chapel. It was grandly placed, with the ever-flashing sea full in view, with abundant foliage all round, and ensuring at all times the refreshing sea breeze, in which the inhabitants of tropic islands so much rejoice. Within we found nothing to suggest luxury. The sittings were narrow benches, placed very closely, that no

room might be lost. The 'gallery' for the Sabbath-school was under the floor, through which, in front of the pulpit, was an opening railed round, and all so formed that those in this gallery might both see and hear the preacher.

On this spot, some ten years before, another chapel stood, but in their rage against the missionaries, the planters and their friends had, during the insurrection, burned it to the ground. In a few months the ruins were covered with a plant which flourishes among the rocks, called 'the tree of life.' On this fact being conveyed to James Montgomery, the Christian poet, he penned the lines—

Where flames devoured the House of God, Kindled by hell, with
heaven at strife, Up sprang, spontaneous from the sod, A forest of the
'Tree of Life,' Meet emblem of the sanctuary, Which there had been, and
yet should be, Now on the same thrice hallowed spot, In peace a second
temple stands; And God hath said, 'Destroy it not!' For lo! the blessing
He commands, As dew on Hermon's hill of yore, LIFE - even life for
evermore!

Around, beneath, and rising sharply behind this spot were really 'ragged rocks,' though thickly covered with bush and undergrowth, through which there ran a narrow, winding, and difficult path. We were here informed that, shortly following on the burning of that building, one of the active participators in the evil deed was found lifeless among the rocks, having apparently in the night stumbled or slipped in such wise as to lose his life! This, by not a few, was ever regarded as an awful act of divine retribution; nor are we desirous to gainsay it.

The means of conveyance being limited, some of us had to wait awhile before proceeding to the abode, about eight miles away, of Mr. Knibb. Yet the delay was far from tedious, for we were excited by the novelties around us. We wandered amidst the tall cocoa-nut trees; delighted ourselves with rare plants, and shrubs, and fruits, and flowers; admired the humming-birds, the parrots, and the splendid butterflies; but most of all were glad to see and hold converse with the people.

At length, as the sun was nearing the horizon, we were summoned to depart. Soon the shades of evening fell strangely fast. The sea breeze died away. The feathery branches of the glistening cocoa-nuts ceased to move, and fell asleep. Then the stars shone forth in glory:—

Stars like moons, which, hung on high,
Breathed and quivered in the sky.

Then from out their hiding places came the many mirthful bats to take their evening meal, while countless fire-flies flashed on every side.

Thus we journeyed, attended by a party of our sable friends on horseback, till 'Kettering,' our destination, was reached.

Here we were welcomed by dear Mrs. Knibb in every way that loving-kindness could suggest. New friends and brethren also joined us, first in our repast, and next in our sacrifices of praise and prayer. What wonder that strange tumults were in our breasts, or that for the multitude of thoughts within us a few hours of retirement and solitude would have proved preferable to even such society? Here, then, in Jamaica we really were, not knowing what a day might bring forth. Yes, we were here, whether long to live and labour, or soon to die and rest, who should say? Ourselves we had, as with closed eyes, laid upon the altar. We had come 'bound in the Spirit to this land, not knowing the things which should befall us here.' Faith and hope were our rod and our staff to comfort us, and we wished for nothing, save to serve the Lord according to His will.

Our sleeping appointments were on the floors, because of the number to be accommodated, but not less comfortable than those of our ship. Yet who among us could sleep? Who could calm the surging thoughts, or quench the flashings of emotion? How oft did we rise to gaze on the glories of the sky, to feel the cooling balm of the richly-perfumed air, to enjoy the sight of shadowy hills and vales, the night song of innumerable insect tribes, or of the jocund mocking-bird! Brief and broken were our slumbers, for life seemed all too new for sleep. By dawn of day we were all astir, and ere the sun was hot, were gladdened by the arrival of the mission family, who came to rejoice with us.

At this time 'Kettering' was not properly a mission station. Our brother Knibb had here a needed refuge for his family from the heat and unhealthiness of the town of Falmouth, and within easy distance of the sub-station of 'Refuge.' It was a commanding position on an eminence, from which a wide extent of land and ocean were visible, and directly connected with a village, and allotments then beginning to be occupied by labouring people, who sought to acquire houses and grounds of their own.

Until now they had dwelt in hovels belonging to the plantations, for which, on their becoming free, they were compelled to pay extortionate rentals; and to deliver them, from this grinding oppression, these settlements were formed. We had come into this transition period. Freedom was little more than a shadow or a name, till the negro was absolutely free from the hands of his former masters; and this he had been quickly taught by grievous experience. Promptly to his aid our brethren had come, and through their efforts, in more than one sense, the slave became "free indeed."

II

Go, ye messengers of God,
 Like the beams of morning fly;
 Take the wonder-working rod,
 Wave the banner-cross on high;
 O'er the Negro's night of care
 Pour the loving light of heaven;
 Chase away the fiend despair,
 Bid him hope to be forgiven.

As a missionary and philanthropist, Knibb was a man of special mark and celebrity. On behalf of the slave he laboured with his whole soul. His fervour and boldness in denouncing the abominations of slavery brought on him the burning hatred of the planters, and of all their sympathisers. His life was often in jeopardy, as were also the lives of his brethren, who fully shared in the strife. In one instance, through a false witness, bribed to make a declaration which by the law of the island would have brought him to the scaffold, Knibb was arrested and imprisoned; but the man quickly repented, and in open court denounced those by whom he had been suborned.

This event advanced Knibb to more prominence and power. It was evident that there could be no truce between Christianity and slavery. With Burchell as his coadjutor, Knibb laboured for emancipation through all England. He was called before a Committee of the House of Commons. Everywhere sought for and welcomed, on the platform he was unsurpassed. His form was manly and noble; his countenance benevolent and genial; his voice clear, melodious, and powerful; his command of language unbounded. To us he was now embodied sunshine - a magnetic force of goodness, devotion, and love.

His Church was in the little seaport town of Falmouth. The building was of brick, with galleries and vestries, accommodating about eighteen hundred. But this number was often largely exceeded, when, like bees at swarming time, crowds clustered at the doors and open windows, as well as thronged the vestries, the aisles, and the gallery stairs. The morning prayer-meeting was largely attended, many having left their homes before break of day, who filled the time between the services either at the school or in class meetings.

Our first Sabbath was with Knibb and his people. The very sight of that crowd, with black faces and glistening eyes, was most impressive. The throng was very dense, extending far around the building; yet the

silence was solemnising. No eagerness to hear could be more marked. No reverence in worship could be more apparent. No heartiness in singing the Lord's song could be more impressive. And when all stood up and sang to a glorious tune -

Yes, we hope the day is nigh,
When many nations long enslavèd,
Shall break forth and sing with joy,
Hosanna to the Son of David!
Hosanna! hosanna! hosanna to the Son of David!

The effect was overwhelming. Who could forget what, till so recently, these people had been and had suffered? How many of them had shrieked under the driver's lash, or pined and groaned under every form of torture? Yet here they were all free, and seeking, if they had not found, the far greater freedom. And we, among them, seemed to have found a spiritual tropic clime, in striking contrast to the almost frigid zone we had left behind.

This church and congregation were a fair sample of those throughout the land. It had its sub-stations, its day-schools, and Sabbath-schools for adults and children alike. The general need for instruction was cared for to the full extent of the funds obtainable, and the people appreciated the benefits placed within their reach.

As a new arrival, my first care was to reconnoitre the field of service; hence I was glad of the opportunities afforded of visiting different places and sojourning among the brethren. The congregations were everywhere very large; the people mostly coming from estates at various distances, some even from seven to ten miles. In one instances, their homes were twelve miles from the church, and yet they cheerfully walked the distance to and fro. In the time of slavery, the missionaries had so little access to the people that it became necessary classes should be formed in different localities, and responsible appointed of the best men that could be found. These classes built their own houses for worship, wherein they met on Sabbath as well as other evenings; and those who had the oversight proved a valuable means of communication between the missionary and the people. In this way the system of classes and leaders had been established as one that was easily regulated, and that suited the exigencies of the time. By its means trifling discords were at once harmonised; individuals were subject to constant oversight; the sick had prompt attention; the poor and aged were known and relieved; the sanctity of the Lord's Day was guarded; anxious souls became known, and were introduced to the pastor; while the inconsistent, negligent, or backslidden were sought out, recovered, or brought under

discipline. The superstitious tendencies of the people were also kept in check, and the orgies common in olden time almost annihilated.

Social conditions, however, were far from satisfactory. Their former life was meant to bow and bind them to the level of the brute. Their tyrants had debased and degraded them to the uttermost, and there was nothing to aid them to rise. Their abodes were mere hovels. Their beds were mats spread on the floor, and that but bare earth. Furniture and goods for household use were rude and scanty. Everything betokened their recent casting upon the world, destitute of all things. To the unrighteous slaveholders England had given £20,000,000 as compensation for the surrender of stolen property; but to those of whose life-blood and unrequited toils they had enriched themselves, it gave literally nothing, not even a plot of land to cultivate. Yet many were smitten with sore diseases; many were aged, weak, or blind; some were widows with small children to care for, while others had families of whom scarcely any were fit for work. Surely not in this way did God send the slaves of Egypt forth; nor in this manner could the Hebrew set a bondman free.

Of course, the negro quickly awoke to a sense of his need. It was among the first signs of his new life; and in a fit of despondency I have heard him even wish for a return to his previous lot. In want of all things, with many depending on him, and with oppressions and unjust exactions grinding him on every side, it was not to be wondered at that men often felt care and worry were more than they could bear. The primary want was money; and if money could be had for labour, money the negro would have. But here the planters were leagued against him. They had gained their compensation by making oath that the average value of the labour was eighteen pence per day. When the labourers claimed this, they were met by extortionate rents, by the truck system, and by the burdens of taxation being laid wholly on themselves, while the rich were comparatively, free. When such unthought-of troubles came, their passion for independence was fired. For payments in cash they accepted lower and lower wages. For food they depended on their cultivations and a little salted fish. Meat was a luxury only. A "homestead" was the vision ever before them; and to call them lazy was unmitigated slander, a slander never heard from the lips of those who treated them justly. The words of one of them to me, in answer to a remark of mine, had a volume of significance when he said, 'Ah, minister, you dunno nigger yet! You t'nk nigger bring you two dollar when him no hab de grace o' God in him heart? Me say, No! Ah, you dunno nigger!'

Such in brief were some aspects of this sphere of labour. Here was a poor, oppressed, and uneducated people, intensely susceptible and affectionate, burdened with anxieties, surrounded by employers who hated them because they had escaped from their grasp. Missionaries were almost their only friends - certainly their only helpers. But we had no hoary idolatries to meet- no Popish priesthood to encounter - nor had we a new language to acquire. Some had come so recently from Africa, that they knew little beside their mother tongue. I knew one class of Eboe people whose meetings were always carried on in their own language; and to make up for their imperfect comprehension of the minister's sermons, the aged leader, who had been long in the island, said, "*Me break down de word to dem.*" Some of our brethren could tell to what tribes the Africans belonged by the differing lines and marks which had been cut in their faces whilst in their infancy, and from these people they had gleaned words of their mother tongue to help in converse with them. How very much for such people needed to be done; yet beyond giving them the Gospel, how little could we do! Oh, it was joy unspeakable that in such few and simple words the glorious Gospel could be conveyed; that the brightness of 'the Sun of Righteousness,' with its all-healing power, could be brought to so small a focus; and especially that this people, so 'robbed and spoiled,' were so ready to receive it!

None need wonder that we often found gross darkness resting upon the willing mind, and even the shadows of death; or that the servant of Christ needed much of blended sympathy and judgment in dealing with such a people. The old folk were slow to abandon their "charms," and sometimes as slow in losing their regard for omens and their fears of evil spirits. The influences of heathenism rested upon them, and were not to be wholly banished on the instant. Nothing but the higher life, flowing from a clearer knowledge of Christ, could truly exalt the soul and make it free indeed. Nor were they unconscious of this. 'None o' we is Christian yet,' said one of them to me, 'but we's trying for it. Dat's all!' Another once went very seriously to his leader and said, 'Seems dere's some secret in dis 'ligion, like Freemason, so you no tell all at once. Some hab de secret, and some can't get it for long time.' Were these not tokens that there was 'in the desert prepared a high-way for our God?'

How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy
and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.
- 2 COR. viii. 2.

How far the people were from being "lazy" all things proved. Whence came the multitude of horses, which bore the produce of their grounds to market? Whence were all their needed equipments? What made their cultivation so richly productive - their walls and fences so perfect? How did they find the money for purchasing lands and building houses - for paying taxes and doctors - for supporting schools and churches; besides meeting those unenumerated requirements of life in food, clothing, and incidentals, which none can evade? Add to these the many voluntary labours for the Gospel's sake, which defy enumeration, and none will wonder that the very words 'lazy nigger' evoke the indignation of a Jamaica missionary.

My first settlement was at Rio Bueno— the place of our landing. The house for God was reared on the slope of a rocky steep, the way of ascent being over huge blocks of stone, or by a serpentine course where these were insurmountable. On a certain Sabbath morning our opening hymn was that of Dr. Watts:

How did my heart rejoice to hear My friends devoutly say,
In Zion let us all appear, And keep the solemn day!
Then, having read the first line of the following verse, 'I love her gates, I love the road,' I paused a moment, and exclaimed, 'No! we cannot say that. Let us pass on to the third verse— "Up to her courts with joys unknown" &c.'

As the service closed I noticed the congregation forming a number of groups, which remained to converse on something of general interest. Passing through these I caught the words 'Hi! de road too bad! de road 'poil de worship!' but of the object of the conference I knew nothing till on the day following a deputation came to ask for a supply of blasting powder. Having obtained this, each succeeding Friday, for several weeks, saw a strong party of men, women, and children giving voluntary labour to make a perfect road. And a perfect road they made for the house of the Lord; every inch of which was specially sanctified by a loving zeal which He well knew how to estimate and to accept. Had mere money been given for such work to be done by stranger hands, we could not, as we did, have celebrated its completion by singing with full hearts the whole of that song of Zion, without passing over the words—

I love her gates, I love the road,

The church adorned with grace
Stands like a palace built for God
To show His milder face.

This fact but exemplifies the prevailing spirit of the people. Many were the buildings for which all the timber was felled, prepared, and borne on the shoulder for miles; all the lime burned, and shingles split and carried by voluntary labour. 'But,' said the planters, 'that is your priestly domination; they will not work for us. The lazy lot would rather starve than work!' And this saying is commonly reported among them until this day. Nevertheless, the answer was not far to seek. I have known the planter who engaged a gang, at fifteen pence per day for each man's work, to clear the cane of weeds, &c. When the names were enrolled, as they were dispersing, the employer called aloud, 'Mind! It is for thirty chains a day!' Taking all in good faith, after a brief consultation the people assented. In due time the work was done. As the days passed, each one's work was measured and recorded; but when, all being finished, they went for payment, it appeared that in but few days had the full measure been reached. The fields being foul and the work heavy, in varying degrees it had fallen short; but in those instances only where thirty chains had been done *within the day* would the planter pay anything whatever!

The whole plantation was thus weeded and cleaned for next to nothing, " the hire of the labourers being kept back by fraud." On my earnest remonstrance, each labourer was 'presented' with half-a-crown; but all protested, 'We neber work for him no more!'

I knew the owner of another estate who had a general store, and who, when needed work was done, would absent himself, leaving tickets for the labourers, in exchange for which they might obtain flour, dried fish, clothing, tobacco, &c. On Sabbath days, secure from molestation, he might often be seen at home, but would disappear ere the day closed, till his people were tired out, and changed the tickets for what they could get.

Thus the people were driven to seek a livelihood away from the plantations, and on this wise. In Jamaica, only the rudest machinery and appliances were used for the production of sugar, so that not a third of that really grown ever reached the market; whilst in Cuba, every modern improvement was eagerly adopted, and slavery was not abolished. Hence the Jamaicans, unwilling to invest anything in improvements, sought their profits largely by 'grinding the faces of the poor.' So systematically was this done, that one man, who kept a record in a packet-book, once

showed me how on every estate within six miles he had been so cheated that he could work thereon no more.

Yet these people showed the riches of their liberality out of the abundance of their poverty. 'All giving and *always* giving' brought small contributions to a large amount; and when they had no money, its worth came in yams, fowls, eggs, coffee, chocolate, honey, or whatever they might have.

On my taking the pastorate at Rio Bueno, I was presented with a pair of beautiful horses which had cost £80. Expressing my surprise at the greatness of the gift, I was answered, 'We neber befo' hab a minister to call *we own*, and now we no want for *we minister* to be second to any in de island!' Of course I took these as church property, and on my leaving, left them behind. In such a climate horses were indispensable; and as public conveyances were unknown, the missionary would have been powerless without them, whilst by their means a great and effectual door was opened. In how many places far and near was the Gospel published, the people seen in their homes and met in their class-houses, and wide circuits of evangelistic meetings held! The life of 'labours more abundant' was a life of real joy. Wherever the preacher appeared, the people thronged. Sometimes an overseer has politely requested that my visit might be deferred, as it would stop the work of the estate; and afterward, to express his obligation, would prepare the largest building for my use, and attend at the service. Such gatherings were held as frequently as might be convenient - the first commencing as the day's work ended - the next at another village or township, according to distance, an hour and a half or two hours later - another and another following, till the midnight hour struck - deacons, leaders, and others also helping. Then would follow, in some green booth, the refreshing repast ere pursuing our homeward way through paths perfumed by the flowering orange, flashing with the fire-flies' splendour, and jocund with the night-birds' song. Or were the journey thought too long, the sweet bed of fresh plantain leaves in the negro's cot has been found a luxury indeed. Then at break of day a goodly circle of worshippers would meet, and the incense of that early hour would fill all the following day. No words can utter the joy of such never-to-be-forgotten scenes. No heart can think with what emotion the words would be ever coming to the lips:

In the desert let me labour,
On the mountains let me tell
How He died - the blessed Saviour,
To redeem the world from hell.

Nor were the days of my dear wife any less bright with joy. She found her special element in the schools, and the women sought her as a friend unknown before. To live each hour 'for Jesus' sake' made earth a heaven to her. Classes were gathered and taught, and her works brought their own recompense. Of those who came thus, there was one who said, 'Please, missis, Sunday teaching bery good; but it not enough, my sweet missis. Oh, if missis so good to make me come wid my chillern, dat we may learn more! The wish of course was granted, and the three wore often seen sitting by the hour on the floor, conning the words of the book, having come three miles for the privilege. At length, when the mother had adjusted her spectacles, a Testament, opened at the first chapter of John, was put into her hands. Looking up with wonder, she said, 'No, my sweet missis! Me can't read de booh yet!' On being urged to try, and slowly plodding through a few verses, she suddenly dropped the book and burst into tears, exclaiming, 'To tink dat me, poor ole cretur, lib to read God's blessed Book! The fact was too much for her, and on that day she, for her tears, could read no more.

In days so bright little did we think of dangers or of death. Our sky was cloudless. Our health was vigorous. The Lord was blessing us. Life was of the sweetest.

Yet, amidst all, the fever laid us low. Of the signs of its coming we were ignorant, and of remedies we had none. Far from help, thirty hours passed before a doctor came. In the second night after my wife's seizure, Mr. and Mrs. Knibb arrived, and did all in their power - in vain, alas! to her. Full soon 'she was not, for God took her.' Oh, the avalanche of sorrow - the dire catastrophe of that untimely death! Nor was I alone in my grief. In the following night, the officers of the church bore her sacred relics on their shoulders to Kettering, a distance of nine miles, for sepulture. They asked the privilege, and Mr. Knibb assured me their grief was so great, that not a word was spoken all the journey through.

IV

'Tis not the way that lay so bright before me,
 When youth stood flushed on Hope's enchanted ground;
 No cloud in the blue sky then bending o'er me,
 No desert spot in all the landscape round.
 A way I knew not—winding, rough, and thorny,
 So dark at times that I no path might see;
 But Thou hast been my guide through all the journey,
 Its steepness has but made me lean on Thee.

Restored health recalled me to my work, and to my home, which for awhile had of necessity been forsaken. Weakened in body and crushed in spirit, an exile, and bereft of what I held most dear, life seemed more bitter than I had ever dreamed. Alone in a building so large, that it was afterward taken for the Calaban College - servants' apartments being detached - I often found it unendurable.

The joy-giving pretence, the communing heart, the ever happy look and voice, were gone! How often did I fly from its precincts to soothe a fevered mind in the perfumed air, amid rustling trees, with the songs of birds, by the ecstasies of the instinct tribes, or, through hours of night, to wander where the phosphorescent wavelets played along the shore. How vainly! In health I suffered anew until, 'for the work's sake,' duty seemed to urge RIP to *'forget.'* Alas! the pent up waters only gathered to burst their bounds again and again, for though the loved may die, the love cannot. How touching to me at such a time was it, that, of his own accord, ray servant was wont to spread his mat, and sleep on the ground at my chamber door! How I blessed him as, without disturbing his slumber, I silently passed over him as I would! It was a lowly sign of his sympathy and love; yet but a sign of the spirit which in every way the people continually displayed. To record their many generous deeds is not possible; but they served to bring around me an atmosphere of love, which warmed my heart with admiring gratitude.

It was at this time, when, having about sixty persons to baptise in the sea at Dry Harbour, I found some persons ranged in the form of a crescent behind me. On my asking the reason for so singular a course, they looked one on another as if not willing to answer, till, being pressed For an explanation, one said with a smile - 'Shark too much 'bout dis place, Minister; we no hab shark for come take we Minister away.' With their own lives they stood for the defence of mine!

Ere long a very superior master was obtained for my school, who, with his excellent wife, shared my abode. Reports, however, soon reached them that the house was haunted, and they were seriously troubled. I had long been familiar with noises for which it was not difficult to account, as the place was dilapidated, and much liked by rats and bats; but these dear friends were not open to conviction. They fostered each other's dread so much, that their care for me alone kept them under my roof. By the parents and children they were treated with every token of affectionate regard, to which they were by no means insensible; but when it was affirmed that 'the duppies' had been seen riding round the house at a gallop, holding the tails of the horses for bridles - when they had removed a sleeper from his room, so that he

awoke in the passage on the following morning, with his feet raised on the steps - when by night they entered the master's room, rattling his keys, shaking the garments, and moving, now here, now there, whilst with his wife he sat up, bathed in cold perspiration, to listen, - and when one had, by night, really cantered a horse up to my door, when the wife was alone awaiting her husband's return, but, with the horse, had vanished, when she rushed out to meet him - it was too much! The good man loved his work, his scholars, and the people; but the untimely frivolities of these shadowy 'duppies,' which really injured no one, caused him to seek out another sphere.

That superstitions should be very prevalent among a negro population every one would expect; but many of these were trivial enough to excite only a smile, whilst all would die a natural death as the truth of God became more fully known. Nevertheless, some were long latent, and like smothered fires would by a breadth flame up afresh. Of these the most potent and mischievous related to the demon called 'Obeah.' It had long dominated in Africa, and the terror had descended from generation to generation, ever fostered by men who lived by its means. As agents of the spirit, they wielded his powers over pain, disease, disaster, and death. Obeah, as a magic spell composed of rusty nails, needles, pins, bits of glass, of bone or earthenware, of teeth or minerals, together wrapped in rags, was secretly placed to afflict the unwary object of malevolence passing over or under it. As poison, Obeah was mixed with food. Before the eye it defended fruit trees or provision grounds from theft. In the parish of Manchester, when from a drought the river had ceased to flow, the cause was traced to Obeah, and with great ceremony, in the sight of hundreds, 'Doctor Taylor' - like the African rain-maker - dashed into a deep hole and removed the cursed thing! Then the air rang with shouts of joy. Rain returned in three weeks' time, and the river flowed again; but common belief said, 'if Taylor had not taken out the Obeah, the river would have run no more!'

The counter-superstition was 'Myalism,' of which Taylor seems to have been a priest. For pecuniary considerations, the Myal doctor could discover the Obeah, and annihilate its power. The one superstition lived by the other; and if for awhile forgotten, these were liable, like the ghostly fears of my friend the schoolmaster, to return with grievous power. Such revivals have been at different times where least expected, filling hundreds with frenzies, stopping all labour, causing the wildest excesses, and rending families asunder. Some when reasoned with would be calm for some minutes, listen and weep, and then with blood-shot eyes, rave, and stamp, and foam, as if possessed with a devil. So, bursting through every restraint, I have seen them defy pursuit, and like wild

goats scale rocks and heights, rush down frightful steeps, slighting every obstacle, till from a wide circuit they rejoined their company. Hundreds on this account have been excluded from church-fellowship, but most of them at length returned with shame and humiliation, confessing their folly and their fault.

The practice of the Myal doctors was but a rude jugglery, carried on with forms and incantations; so that, having themselves secreted the terror, after much pretence of searching they would find it, burn it, and reap their harvests of compensation. From sufferers they would cure, it was made to appear that they abstracted pieces of glass, bone, metals, &c., thus ensuring an ultimate, if not an instant cure. How this was done, I explained to men whose intelligence was above the average, and sent them to confront and confound the deceivers. On their return, they were called on for their report at a deacons' meeting. Their reply was, 'Minister, we've nothing to say. We see it with we own eye!' 'And what did you see?' I asked. 'We see them take the sister, who have great pain in the shoulder. Then they bring basin and water. They then rub the place long time, and the Myal man put his mouth to it, and take out a big nail and spit it into the basin! Yes, we see it with we own eye!' And to them seeing was believing. They owned that no blood had flowed - that the extracted nail left no mark of its exit - and that none saw the nail come from the shoulder - yet of the fact they were fully satisfied, and argument having no power, I could but ridicule the whole affair, and dismiss them. However, I heard no more of their faith in Obeah or Myal, and among my own people the superstition thenceforth was apparently at an end.

Still more strange was the practice of catching the shadow, by which they understood the spirit, and screwing it down in a coffin; of course, very small but very neatly finished, so as to be worth preserving, after which, provided the coffin were never opened, Obeah could do the possessor no harm. The shadow was caught at night, generally among the trees, where strange feats of agility, speed, and strength would be exhibited to excite the onlookers and to seal the claim to a large payment for so great a work - usually an amount as great as, it was thought, the privileged person could pay. And what gross evils were not practised under this screen, or by means of the tyrannical power so wielded! Who dare defy such mysterious powers? Who that *feared* was not in danger of becoming the dupe or the victim of such agents of the devil? In the gross darkness of such superstition in former times every crime appears to have been committed, and almost always to have been safe from detection.

Having to deal with a people who had inherited so strong a leaning to superstition, rendered our examinations of candidates for baptism most anxious and wearisome. Moreover, such examinations were often repeated—the same persons frequently having to attend again and again, some for months, and some for years. For this work whole days, even two or three in a week, and also in successive weeks, have had to be entirely devoted. The person before the pastor might be nervously agitated, or really not have words whereby to utter what the heart contained. Baptism might be sought as a ministry of salvation; or the applicant might be too ignorant of the Gospel, or of himself; or the testimonies as to character might not be satisfactory. This work, therefore, demanded no common wisdom. Was apparent sincerity to suffice? Was character, in a difficult case, to turn the scale of judgment? Could all responsibility remain with the candidate? Must all the fancies and superstitions of the ignorant be set in arrest of the desire to unite with the Church of Christ? What rule could be fixed? We saw our hearers frequently in tears whilst listening to our addresses. Penitents from miles away have been found, before the dawn of Monday morning, weeping at my door, longing for counsel and comfort. To set before such any standard but ‘repentance toward God, and faith in the Lord Jesus,’ would have been to ‘quench at once the smoking flax;’ and if in admitting candidates to fellowship we at times were in error, the very rigid discipline of the Churches largely counteracted such errors, and clearly proved that in religious qualities the professed Christians of Jamaica were not behind those in more favoured lands. What a mercy was it to them, that salvation could be so simply presented and in so small a compass – ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved!’

V

No sweeter is the cup,
 Nor less our lot of ill;
 ’Twas tribulation ages since,
 ’Tis tribulation still.
 No slacker grows the fight,
 No feebler is the foe,
 Nor less the need of armour tried,
 Of shield, and spear, and bow.

On removing to Montego Bay, I found the Church had more than fourteen hundred members and some three hundred registered enquirers. The chapel would seat two thousand and eight hundred hearers, yet it was often insufficient for the congregation. Here, and through the wide region round, Mr. Burchell had long and abundantly laboured. With these people and for them, at the imminent peril of his life, he had faced the terrors of 'martial law.' Many were here to prove with what spirit and power he had preached the Gospel and proved 'a burning and shining light.' With him as its ever active and zealous centre, the religious machinery constantly expanded and worked with power. To the enslaved population it imparted life and light, comfort, hope, and holy impulse, which seemed the dawn of heaven below. The Spirit of God breathed like morning air, spread like contagion, and burned like sacred fire. What wonder was it that to 'a people robbed, and peeled, and spoiled,' the Gospel should be the power of God unto salvation? The Sunday markets threw the people by thousands into the missionaries' way. Like shoals of fish they came to those who were 'fishers of men,' and multitudes became the Lord's. As a sample, see William Plummer. This weary slave having brought his load of provisions, was attracted by seeing a great crowd, and urged his way till within hearing of the preacher's voice. His huge basket was soon on the ground, and with eager attention he leaned on the post at the corner of the street.

Like arrows piercing him, like lightnings lashing him, the words of God entered to his very soul. Lost to all but thoughts of God, when the service ended, he went to his humble abode, wholly forgetting the great load he had gone so far to sell, and groaning deeply under the far heavier load of guilt and fear. Then with all his heart he turned to the Lord, serving Him faithfully to the end of his days. I knew him well, and loved him much, as a man who was a saint indeed, adorning the Gospel of God in all things. Yet he was but one of the many seals to Mr. Burchell's laborious but blessed ministry, prosecuted with courageous constancy, though furious foes on every side plotted against his life.

It must be remembered that the white population called slavery a Divine institution, and deemed it essential to their very existence. Their commerce depended on it. Estates without slaves were valueless. Many possessed no other property. Emancipation meant universal ruin, and abolitionists were but thieves and robbers. But Christianity being incompatible with slavery, every missionary labouring for the slaves was *de facto* an abolitionist. That a sharp contest was inevitable they easily foresaw, but that was all. At length it came suddenly, in a way they had not thought of; but as it came from men connected with the Church under Mr. Burchell's care, their fury was unbounded. All Baptist chapels

were at once destroyed, and the life of every Baptist missionary was in danger; yet not only did the Lord not forsake His servants, but to them, in several instances, it seemed that His hand was stretched out against their persecutors. An officer of the militia used openly to boast that he 'would do for Burchell with this very pistol' snatching with the right hand the weapon carried in his belt at the left. 'I'll have his blood,' was an oft-repeated threat. But once, when at dinner, having, as usual, placed the pistols on either side of his plate, a gentleman opposite, attracted by their appearance, asked to see one of them. The very pistol set apart for Burchell's destruction was at once courteously handed for inspection. Having been much admired and praised, when about to return it, the friend of the officer playfully raised it, exclaiming, as he pulled the trigger, 'Have at you, my boy!' It proved to be loaded. The charge lodged in the officer's own breast, and caused his death! The Rev. T. F. Abbott told me he had by special enquiries learned that it was indeed 'that very pistol!'

From thickening dangers and 'perils by his own countrymen,' Mr. Burchell took refuge on board the *Blanche*, a frigate lying in the Bay. When at length it was known that he was to return to land, his foes crowded to the jetty, where another fiery officer declared that from the top of those steps he would 'throw Burchell backward into the boat!' But when nearing the place, the threatening demonstrations of the crowd alarmed the officer who was steering, and at the last instant, turning the boat sharply aside, he said, 'Give way, boys! give way!' So with all speed it shot across to another landing, and Burchell was saved. But as the frigate was about to leave, a dinner was given to a number of guests, of whom that officer in the militia was one.

Of course the entertainment was in all things most liberal, and the festivities prolonged. At last the company returned, and on those steps there *he* slipped and fell backward, his head striking the gunwale of the boat who had planned that fate for the missionary! From that fall, Mr. Abbott said, he never recovered!

Many and striking were the instances in which, after a similar manner, calamities and untimely deaths befell the men who were most prominent, either in destroying the places of worship, or endeavouring to compass the death of the missionaries. Of course, but little was said of them at the time, lest the greater anger of survivors should be roused by what they would have thought a presumptuous or cruel fanaticism in tracing the hand of God where they saw nothing but chance; yet among the common people impressions were left which were both deep and lasting. One woman, who, in wild excitement at the destruction of a chapel, was crying out, 'thank God! that den is down! Thank God! that

den is down!' suddenly fell down in a fit and expired. In another place, the leader of the mob which burned the house of God was found soon afterward dead among the rocks near by, having apparently mistaken the path in the night, and fallen to rise no more. To many, indeed, such facts had no significance; for it was ever, as the prophet said, 'Lord, when Thy hand is lifted up they will not see,' although 'verily He is a God that judgeth in the earth.' The immediate cause of that insane fury of the white people was the sudden insurrection among the slaves; which, though soon proved to be weak and futile, served at least to fill the island with terror. Naturally enough, it was attributed to those instructions and religious influences which could but make their condition of bondage intolerable; especially as their combinations in worship and Christian fellowship could but also show their vast numerical superiority in contrast to their oppressors. The discovery of danger had however come too late; though doubtless by many, who could discern no possibility of preventing it, the judgment had long been formed 'whereunto this would grow.' Not only had experience convinced the sufferers that their state of bondage was cruel and unjust, but added to this, the Word of God called them to a life which was, under their circumstances, impossible. For a while they could but groan, and cry, and suffer. They shed 'the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; on the side of their oppressors was power; but they had no comforter.' In proportion as they had enlightened understandings, quickened consciences, and changed hearts, their deep debasement was a torment grievous to be borne: and this often worse, from the fact that their so-called 'owners' were absentees, and themselves were left to brutish tyrants, from whom they could neither escape or appeal.

At length, as through a rift in a cloud or chink in the dungeon door, one man espied a ray of light. He was the butler of a wealthy merchant, and had learned to read. In the Baptist Church at Montego Bay he had been placed in the deacon's office, which he held with honour. No man than he was more unlikely to shake the foundations of society or rock the world. Gentle and faithful, wise, loving, and holy, he had no thought but to keep the even tenor of his quiet way. Having a nephew employed in the office of the *Cornwall Chronicle* newspaper, occasionally an old cast-away English paper reached his hands; and so it happened that, in one of these, he found a full report of an anti-slavery meeting. With a whirl of unwonted thoughts he read, and with a fluttering heart he pondered. That paper was carefully concealed, and more were eagerly sought. Wonders multiplied. Here were 'petitions' to the Houses of Parliament, carrying thousands of signatures. There was

the report of the Anti-Slavery Society, with thousands of pounds at its command. Besides, there were the debates in Parliament on the question of slavery. Sam Sharp soon found he 'had fire in his bones, so that he was weary of forbearing; he could not stay.' Friends were secretly collected to hear the amazing news. They were excited beyond measure, and spread the tidings far and wide. Ere long they were chafing with impatience, and debating what they should do, none thinking 'their strength was to sit still.' Then strange rumours got abroad, such as 'the King was going to send a letter to the Governor to make all slaves free;' which was followed by 'the King's letter had come, but the Governor kept it back.'

At last Sam Sharp suggested a plan of action which seemed to meet the case, a plan which was at once enthusiastically resolved upon. The white population was insignificantly few, and therefore to his mind powerless, if only the coloured people were united in their purpose. He was sure that 'union was strength.' What were the handful (13,000) of whites against all the blacks (365,000)? Hence they had but to join in a resolve not to work without payment, and the thing was done! He meant simply passive resistance. 'When we all say we no more work except you pay, dem can't make we!'

The impracticable nature of the scheme he saw not. Enough for him that it was morally right and just. Full of the thought 'We hab frens in England!' he felt that slavery was already doomed, and little was needed to achieve its downfall. The result was a secret society, pledged to act together when affairs were ripe. But as adherents multiplied, some doubted of success. They knew the men they had to deal with, and foreboded evil. Suddenly at one of the gatherings a man arose, and broke in with the scornful words, 'O 'noo all fool! O 'noo all fool! You tink dey mek we go free so? Me say, no! nebbber! we will hab to fight for it! We must get gun; we must get lead and mek bullet; we must get powder and sword, plenty too; and all be ready to fight for de free!' Then followed no doubtful murmur of the crowd. It was, 'Hear him! hear him! hear him!' on every side.

Conviction flashed through his impassioned words. The coming crisis was no child's play, but a storm of fury, fire, and blood. Sam Sharp was troubled, but still steadfast. He replied, 'No, my brudder! Dat is bad word! De Bible say, dem as take de sword must perish wid de sword. Beside, dere's no 'casion, 'pose we all agree. Dem's too few! We's de most! When altogeder we say, "We no work no mo', 'cept you pay," dem can't mek we!'

Hence long and earnest discussions began; and though many were averse to a bloody strife, there were few who did not seek in some way

to make preparation for it. Even the most peaceful said, 'If dey come to fight we, den we must fight; but we 'gree not to go for fight 'cept we forced to.' However, beyond the range of Sharp's direct influence, it is doubtful if the pacific spirit at all prevailed; and notwithstanding the passionate longing for liberty, by far the greater majority felt they were so powerless, that they shrank from committing themselves to the struggle whereof they knew nothing, and wherein life must be the stake.

VI

The hope of freedom had now become a feverish excitement, which ignorance and inexperience intensified. To revolt from established tyranny required as much calm judgment as unflinching courage. There was danger in impetuosity, which Sam Sharp foresaw; but against it he had no power. His thought of passive resistance found comparatively little favour, and dangers threatened in the reckless spirit of men too confident in their own powers. The secret combination was yet but limited, and many of the people were too wary to commit themselves before success was pretty well assured.

The storm, however, burst unexpectedly, and the conflict commenced with ruinous haste. It is true that multitudes, in a portion of the island, had entered the confederacy; but the combination of the whole people was far from being an accomplished fact. Three months had passed (but twelve would scarcely have sufficed for the preparation required), when the spark fell into the magazine of suppressed excitement and set the country, in a blaze. A woman at Salt Spring estate was to be flogged for a fault, and at once her husband, rushed on the planter, and inflicting a furious blow, exclaimed that his wife should never be flogged any more! In a moment all was uproar, panic, and confusion.

In vain the planter called on men to seize the rebel; none heeded his command. As soon as possible the message was sent to Montego Bay for help; but hours must pass before it could be got, and the men fled in a body. When darkness set in, a huge fire was seen blazing on the top of the hill. The red signal was soon answered by distant fires on every side. The insurrection was precipitated. On the morrow, bands of armed men were roaming abroad to burn, and destroy, to pillage and to murder. They dreamed of liberty to be purchased by violence and crime; but what else could be expected of men who, by their owners, had been kept in the darkest ignorance and deepest debasement? Some indeed were

horrified, and remained faithful to their masters; some were without weapons and incapable of joining the war; others clung to family ties, and so were quiet; while others again were mere cowards in whose breasts no aspirations dwelt.

No time was lost by the authorities in putting martial law into force; setting aside justice, mercy, and truth for the sake of expediency - which expediency was too often but that of blind passion. Sad indeed were the tales told, when, all was over, of cruelties causelessly inflicted, and of the reckless sacrifice of the innocent with the guilty. Victims were wanted to make terror dominate, and who these should be mattered little.

George Spencer, belonging to Fat-Quarter, was executed at Lucea 'for rebellion and rebellious conspiracy.' He was taken on Friday evening and the following morning brought to the military tribunal. Ensnaring questions were put to him by the president to make him criminate himself, and especially to involve Mr. Burchell. The man replied that he 'did not know Mr. Burchell,' 'he never saw him,' 'was not a Baptist,' 'he belonged to Mr. Watson's (Presbyterian Mission) Church.' An officer present, who was not one of the court, boldly protested against the injustice of the course taken by the president, but in vain. He was told that he had no right to interfere. The man was sentenced to be shot at once, but when led forth to his doom was not aware of the fate awaiting him! Seeing the soldiers, he asked the marshal, with evident surprise, 'Where are you going to take me? What are you going to do with me?' The only answer given him was by the officer in command throwing a jacket over his head and face, tying the sleeves around his neck, and, as he stepped back, giving the word to 'fire!' Immediately the poor fellow lay a bleeding corpse upon the ground! What mattered it whether he were innocent or guilty? Such summary slaughter would make others fear!

At Montego Bay, William Plummer was imprisoned with several others; but no case could be made out against them beyond this, 'they were members of the Baptist Church.' At length, the gaol being greatly overcrowded, it was as inexpedient to keep them as to let them go. Thus it happened that the gaoler entered the crowded cell on a certain evening, and very carefully closed up the only narrow opening in the wall which afforded ventilation. Soon after this he returned with a great pan of burning brimstone, which he set on the ground; then exclaiming, 'There, you devils! you will smell hell-fire to-night!' he locked the door. Narrating to me the story, with flowing tears Plummer exclaimed, 'God is so good, Minister! Oh, yes, God is so good! Else me no bin here to tell you. You see, dey want we all for go dead! De gaoler he 'spect in a

morning to see we is dead! Ah, Minister, God is so good and kind! You see dis? When de door shut, it no come close down at de bottom. Den we get on de ground and poke we nose close as we can to de hole—so we get a lettle breff. Den when morning come, dey open da door and see we no dead! Ah, yes! God is good! Else me no bin here to-day!

These are but samples of the atrocities which in many forms were common at that time. All our places of worship were either burned or pulled down. Our brother Knibb, with other missionaries, was imprisoned, and Burchell had fled for his life to H.M.S. *The Blanch*, then lying in Montego Bay. But where was Sam Sharp, the innocent author of all this evil? He had taken with him some hundreds who were resolved to do nothing unless they were first attacked. They were prepared for the conflict should it be forced on them, but he would bear no weapon. He dwelt with them, at a place called Greenwich Hill, as the Christian leader, to counsel, restrain, and instruct. Daily worship was offered by the whole company every morning and night. Thus they simply awaited events, and gathered all the information possible.

Ere long it was reported that the missionaries were imprisoned for inciting to rebellion, and would be put to death; if, indeed, some were not already executed. The faithful Christian secretly resolved on the course to take. If the missionaries yet live he will save them from death. If any are dead he will save their reputation. Alone, in darkness, he makes his way into the town, and finds his brother. Rejecting every remonstrance, he goes to the house of the merchant, Mr. Grignon, his master, and boldly says he has come to surrender himself, because the ministers were accused of causing the rebellion, when he alone was responsible for the whole of it!

The day following saw the town and country alike full of wonder and excitement. The deed was entirely voluntary. The man, assured of a terrible death, was his own accuser. None charged him with a deed of violence or wrong. All that he had done his utmost to prevent. There was no evidence against him but his own. He had learned, 'We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren,' and though life was as sweet to him as to them, he chose so to do.

Knibb obtained permission to see the prisoner in his cell, in the presence of witnesses. Before them he most solemnly charged him to state fully and fearlessly if any missionary had, in *any* way, said or done anything to lead him, or any one that he knew, to take a part in the insurrection. Sharp replied, 'No, minister, you never did. Mr. Burchell never did. No one minister ever say such a word. But me read it in my Bible!'

Yes, indeed! That had been his teacher and his guide, and from it the principles and inspirations of his life had been drawn, whilst to them he adhered even to the end.

Of course, he was condemned to die. In prison he daily received from his kindred the hymns and chapters used at family worship, and to them he returned those he had chosen.

Full soon the fatal morning came. A merchant told me of his intense interest in the case, and the wondering admiration he felt for the man. He said: 'I saw him on that morning come from the gaol with form as erect, with steps as firm and face as bright, as if he had won a victory.' In front of the house at the windows of which his master's household appeared, he paused to bow his last farewell. At the scaffold he was calm and self-possessed. With a clear voice he told the crowd that he came to die because he thought they had a right to be free, but he had done no violence nor wrong. He declared his firm faith in the Lord Jesus and his hope of eternal life. 'Ah! my broders,' said he, 'now you see de heaben is like brass, and de eart' is like iron. You know what trouble we pass troo. But God is good, you will see! No sooner is me gone dan God will open de heaben and send de plenty o' rain, so you will all rejoice.'

Quickly the rope was adjusted, and the drop fell. At once great drops of rain began to fall from what was said to have been a cloudless sky. Torrents followed, and the people rushed away for shelter, exclaiming, 'Didn't God tell him to say dat word? Hi! what is dis mean?'

He was buried on the sea shore, till in due time a company of missionaries removed his bones. A beautiful coffin of polished mahogany, and a vault under the pulpit in the Lord's house, were prepared, wherein the complete skeleton was solemnly interred at midnight, in the presence of a great throng of those who loved him well. For five years I was preaching every Sabbath immediately above those honoured remains, always conscious that to Sam Sharp the missionary cause is more indebted than words can ever tell.

VII

No! think not I can ever be False to my Saviour's hallowed name,
 For aught that thou could'st offer me - A little life - a little fame:
 'Twere weak indeed to lose for them A bright unfading diadem.
 And if one passing pang I feel, Deluded crowd! 'tis felt for you:
 Ev'n thus resolved the Truth to seal, I would that ye were martyrs
 too! Blest Saviour! Lord of earth and heaven! Oh, be their sins and
 mine forgiven.

The insurrection naturally evoked the utmost hostility of the planters and their partizans against all missionary instrumentalities. A variety of circumstances led to this, which, when fully known, diminish our surprise, although they fail to form its justification. Primarily, the Gospel enlightened the minds and quickened the consciences of those who required to be kept as nearly as possible to the level of the brute if slavery were to continue. The missionaries made the slave of too much importance. They raised his sense of accountability from the earthly to the heavenly Master. They made him believe that God was his Father, and that before all others He must be served and loved. This alone was incompatible with the very existence of West Indian slavery. It was seen and felt that, sooner or later, a collision was inevitable. The missionaries knew this, and were ever on their guard. The planters Mt it, and, with rare exceptions, made no secret of their animosity. But when it was known that a Baptist deacon acknowledged the origination of the rebellion they were filled with madness, and intent only on repression and retaliation. Hence every religious meeting excited their suspicion and roused their ire. Without doubt these meetings gave opportunities for secret communications; and many would frequent them to advance the projects of the insurrection, who had no religious sympathies. Thus either before or after such meetings - which, indeed, were well-nigh innumerable - the passion for liberty was doubtless very zealously fired and fed. Even the most excellent of the people could, without injuring their piety, adopt the principle, 'We no work if you no pay.' Not having learned the sinfulness of all war whatsoever, many professed Christians, of every denomination, joined in the struggle for liberty. The Baptist Churches were chiefly involved in this because they had, beyond the rest, drawn the slave population to their fellowship. What wonder, then, if the planters knew that after the prayer-meetings on different estates secret conferences were held? And what wonder if reports were exaggerated until the white people were unanimous in their determination to suppress every semblance of religion which was not conformed to the Established Church? Hence amongst the slaves the most zealous were often singled out for vengeance, while those who wreaked that vengeance, as some afterwards, confessed, were wholly 'beside themselves' with fury.

In the south eastern part of the island a striking illustration of these things occurred. Among the multitudes attending Mr. Philippo's ministry, a slave named Moses was converted to Christ. To serve the Lord and seek the salvation of souls soon became the joy of his life. To multitudes far and near he published all he had learned. Many were led

by him to listen to the missionary. Many were the places where he gathered the people for worship; and many, by his labours, became his joy and crown.

At length, in distant parts of the island the insurrection had suddenly broken out. It mattered nothing to their masters that these poor people were far from the scenes of strife, and gave no sign of a rebellious spirit. The planters thought they saw in every prayer-meeting the sign of revolt. Among themselves the subject was always uppermost. None doubted the natural relation of these meetings to the insurrection. What were the missionaries but social firebrands? 'What did these black brutes, who had not one soul among a thousand of them, want with religion?' 'It was God's will that they should be slaves, and the Bible proved that beyond a doubt!' But what could now be done? Could they not stop this increasing rage for religion? Could not the mischief, which threatened so much, be nipped in the bud? To do this the chief man must be seized, and his followers scattered before they were ripe for revolt.

Such was the conclusion arrived at. Martial law being in force, it was decided that Moses should be apprehended at one of his meetings, and duly tried and executed as a mover of sedition. The place, the time, and the circumstances were all duly settled, and the end awaited with satisfaction.

The time arrives. The men who are to seize their victim advance to the humble cottage where prayer was wont to be made. All through the negro villages would be seen the tall cocoa-nut trees, whose light feathery leaves would rustle in the evening air whilst gleaming like silver under the light of the moon. The ever clear and cloudless sky, so full of glorious stars; the ceaseless ring of a thousand noisy crickets; the fragrance of the orange, flowers, and the song of the nightingale or mocking bird, make the nights in Jamaica surpassingly beautiful. But through all this, while the song of praise is heard in sweet accord from the unsuspecting throng, these angry men pursue their way. They listen awhile. In the darkness without, they scan the faces of the crowd within. The object of their search is not there! What can they do? Evidently suspecting that by some means their intention had been discovered to Moses, who in consequence had kept out of the way, they concluded that 'one man was as good as another to make an example of,' and so resolved that the leader of this meeting, whose name was David, a constant helper of Moses, should be taken in his stead. He was therefore taken as a prisoner. The charge against him was that he held a meeting for exciting rebellion, though it has not been shown that such meetings as he had presided at were prohibited by law. However, David was taken

to the town of Black River, and there, after the mock trial usual in such cases, was condemned and executed. We know of him nothing more, but every Christian can imagine much. He was living and working for his Lord, and for that he died a martyr's death. By the fury of ignorant malice he was sacrificed, and had any demanded, 'Why? What evil hath he done?' there could have been but one response: 'Away with him! Away with him!'

By special request, his head was, after death, sent back to the estate from which he had come. His death, in a distant place, does not serve the intent of the planters, which was to fill the people with a wholesome fear of their masters' power and determined purpose. Did they think that the Christians' fear of man was greater than the fear of God? This they meant to try. A suitable pole was chosen and brought from the bush. The people of the entire district were then brought together. The head, fixed upon the pole, was raised on high, and the trophy firmly secured. Then the spectators are told of the rebellion in the north and west, of its miserable failure, of the mad excesses of the rebels, and the terrible vengeance which had overtaken them. These sorrows, they were told, had all come through the so-called 'prayer meetings,' which at once and for ever must cease. At any cost their owners were determined on this, and to prove it David had been punished as a warning to them.

After much had been delivered to the same effect, the name of Moses was loudly called. Answering from a distance, he came into the circle before them all. Thus standing, he was addressed on this wise:— 'Now, Moses, you have heard all this, so take warning. Let us see that you understand all about it. Whose head is that above you?' Moses answers, '*Dat's David, massa.*'

'And what is he there for?'

For praying, massa.

'Well, listen! Do you know that *your* head should have been on that pole; and so it would have been if David had not taken your place? Now, mark! we'll have no more of these meetings; and if we catch you at them we shall serve you like David. Yes, *all of you*. We mean to serve you all alike. Do you hear, Moses?'

Indeed he did hear it. What could he do? To quietly acquiesce would be like denying his Lord. To declare his purpose to disobey would be construed as rebellion. It was a sore trial, but he was equal to the occasion. Kneeling by the pole under the head of David, he clasped his hands, exclaiming, 'Let us pray!' At once the assembled crowd were on their knees, and before their masters could recover from their

astonishment, Moses had secured their attention to his fervent prayer. We know by the issue that wisdom and grace were so given him then that they quietly listened till his prayer was ended. The spirit of that ever so emotional race was doubtless most fully evidenced on that occasion. The fury of the planters was quelled. They were satisfied - perhaps even ashamed. David had without cause been put to death, but Moses they had not the heart to destroy.

Ere I left Moses was old and grey. From that eventful hour he had continued his work, 'none daring to make him afraid.' I saw him at the house of his beloved pastor; and soon after he died of cholera. 'He had fought a good fight, he had finished his course, he had kept the faith; there was laid up for him a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give him at that day.'

VIII

In the years immediately following emancipation the Sunday Schools were among the most interesting aspects of our work. The number of adults who took their places with the children surprised as well as greatly pleased us. To read the Scriptures for themselves was a much coveted privilege. Age was as much disregarded in the classes as if thirsty throngs were crowding to pools of water. Thus, with the early prayer-meetings, the class-meetings held by leaders and deacons, the school of the morning and afternoon, and our public services, suitable occupation was found for the immense gatherings on the Lord's Day, and no appearances dishonoured its sacredness. Sabbaths then were, in Jamaica, days of holy joy and praise, and all could see that 'the fields were already white unto the harvest.'

Nevertheless, the ingathering was a very anxious and tedious work, owing to the ignorance of the people, their superstitions, and their former habits. Applicants for baptism came in crowds, and the work of the leaders was indispensable for sifting these. Of course their judgments as to proofs of conversion were not relied upon, although from their knowledge of the candidates their testimony was very important. As the rule, they introduced for the pastor's examination those they could commend, and were carefully consulted before such were received. Whole days in succession were frequently spent in these examinations, and it was not unusual for neighbouring missionaries to be called in to help in so great a work, many, even of such as were approved, being examined again and again. Not a few on these occasions would be

pronounced unsuitable, who yet would seldom fail to appear from time to time for months, and even years. We were painfully conscious in all this that we were not infallible, and could but act on judgments formed very often on uncertain data. Without doubt many were sent away who, could we have known more, ought to have been received; and just as many, for the same cause, baptised who would have been at least deferred.

It was but natural that from the Sunday Schools we should expect some of the best of fruits, nor were we disappointed. Catherine Harding, a tall and slender girl of 16 or 17 years, of very interesting manners and appearance, sought for baptism repeatedly, but owing to her extreme timidity could give no satisfactory account of herself. Either no reply at all, or a whispered 'Yes!' or 'No!' were all that resulted from attempted conversations with her, and with the lapse of time she made no progress. Her mother was a member of the Church, and Catherine had long been in the school. It was to the no small grief and surprise of the leader that such an exemplary girl should so often be 'put back.' Expressing his disappointment, he said, 'Minister, some of dem dat no hab one word to say for demself is better nor many as can tell you *eberry ting!*' Living as she did very near to us, we cultivated her acquaintance until she acquired sufficient confidence to tell us plainly of her 'repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.' Ultimately she was baptised and admitted to the Church. Daily she came to my dear wife for more of Scriptural instruction; but it was not long ere with her rapid growth there were signs of pulmonary consumption setting in. Feeling a very anxious concern for her, we removed her to our little cottage on the nearest hill, hoping by care and medical attendance to arrest the disease. Months passed.

The spoiler came, yet paused, as though
 So meek a victim checked his arm;
 Half gave, and half withheld the blow,
 As forced to strike, yet loath to harm.

All that could be done availed nothing. She but ripened for a fairer world. The Bible and hymn-book were her constant companions, and she never wearied of them. With these on her lap she was usually found seated under the shady tree, and enjoying the reviving breeze. There her eye commanded the view of the town and harbour of Montego Bay. Many green islets added beauty to the scene. The wide ocean and spreading shore were spread out before her, while not far away were the lofty hills she was no more to ascend. Surely if health were to be regained from favouring circumstances it had been there! But instead of this she

continued to decline, and her mother finally received her to her own home. The dear girl's cheerfulness seemed never to fail, and nothing indicated that she thought death was near. Not willing to sadden her, I refrained from telling her all I knew until I could no longer withhold the truth. With all the **land** gentleness I could command, and yet with all plainness, she was assured that she had not many days, perhaps hours, to live. For this she was more prepared than I had thought. No tear came to her eye. No shadow passed o'er her face. She listened as if absorbed in thought, without a sign of emotion. I therefore enquired how she felt on such a subject, and whether she was happy in the prospect.

'Oh, yes, minister,' she answered. 'I am going home now. I am going to see my Saviour. He will show me all the glories of heaven. I know I shall be happy there. Oh, so many good people. And many that I used to know, that have gone before! And so many ministers that preached the Gospel all over the world. And teachers, that tried to do good in the world, and show the young people the way to God! I feel it will be happy to be in such a place.' 'But, Catherine, do you never have any fear?' I asked. 'Are you never afraid to die?'

Looking fixedly on me, as if not knowing what was said, she exclaimed, '*What*, minister?' I repeated my question, 'Do you feel no alarm - no anxiety? Are you never afraid at all?'

She looked bewildered and astonished. Her bright, beautiful eyes were fixed full on mine. Then, as if at a loss for words, she looked from one to another standing round the bed, and paused a moment. Turning again to me she said joyfully, 'What! minister. Afraid of Jesus? Can I be afraid of Jesus? Jesus, who died for me? Who loves me. Afraid, to see Jesus!'

The scene was indescribable. Her look, her tones, the manifest emotion, the expressive shake of the head can hardly be imagined. Those sunken cheeks so flushed with life - the lips so bright with the smile of joy - the flicker of new life which seemed to fill the wasted form, propped up with pillows - the poor little room in the negro's humble cottage, at once so changed to a very 'gate of heaven,' words cannot picture. On the instant all around were melted to tears, but there were no tears of grief. They were rather the fast flowing tears of wondering sympathy and grateful joy.

After resting a little she said, 'Minister, I thank God that you ever come to Montego Bay.' In reply I enquired the reason: 'and if her soul was profited by what she had heard?'

She answered, 'Oh, yes! I feel it, I feel the change. And it was you baptized me. I know that didn't wash my sin away; but you talked to me,

and told me how I must remember Jesus, and think upon Him, and pray to Him. Then you look after me, and take care of me, and I thank God you come here. And my Saviour know it was *you* that did it. Oh, minister, you preach till you strain your throat, and make yourself ill, to tell us the way to God. But it *worth* straining your throat for! Go! Do it again, my minister! Tell them they *must* leave their sins and turn to God; and if you drop down dead on the spot, you won't die on the ground - you shall die in the arms of the Lord Jesus. Oh, yes, tell them, tell them:

None but Jesus—none but Jesus,
Can do helpless sinners good.

Oh, minister! I feel for the young people. The young people only should *fill* the house of God.'

Having rested a little, she asked for her brothers. When they came, she took each one by the hand, and keeping her hold she said, 'Oh, my brothers; perhaps I don't die to night. Perhaps I don't die this week. But I *shall* die, and I shall die soon. So I call you, to tell you what I feel. My brothers, I feel for your souls; and you don't care. Look! What is your going to church one Sunday, then stop one Sunday? Mother, did I ever miss, wet or dry?'

The sobbing mother said, 'No, my child.' Catherine continued (pressing her hands to her bosom), 'Oh, my brothers, I want you to feel that sweetness I feel *here*. "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me bless His holy name." I beg of you to think upon your souls while you can, for as soon as you're cut down you will be drive away from God and go to hell. Minister, I beg you to see after my brothers. *Do*, minister. I beg you for their souls' sake.'

This excitement and strain was far too much. She was fearfully overcome, and wept and mourned aloud, everyone present weeping with her. Bye-and-by, when a little composed, she took her mother's hand, and said, 'My mother! You've been a *kind* mother to me. You nurse me so - you care for me so - but you like Rachel, who weep for her children and wouldn't be comforted. But you mustn't be so. You mustn't fret for me. Oh, promise me you won't fret for me. Remember, mother, what's the Lord's will must be done. Whatever the Lord put upon you, you must bear it. Eh, mother?' The mother replied, 'Yes, my child.'

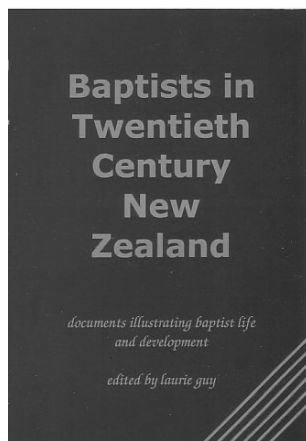
Then again turning to me, and clasping my hand, she said, 'Minister, may the Lord bless you, and help you to bring many souls to Christ. But preach to them young people. I *fret* upon them young people. Tell them from me, I beg you, that they *must* turn from their sins, and come to God. Tell them *I say so*. Do, minister.'

But now, as she began to pray for 'the kind sweet lady' who had taken such pains with her, a fit of coughing came on which completed her exhaustion, and she said no more. We joined with much weeping in commending her to the Lord, and I went home to commit to writing our last conversation as here given. At the dawn of the next morning I found her still breathing, but not insensible. She knew me, but could not speak. Having prayed with her for the last time, I had scarcely passed the outer gate when, quickly following me, one came to say, 'She's gone! She's gone!'

Now the sad conflict's past - 'tis o'er;
That gentle bosom throbs no more.
The spirit's freed;—through realms of light
Faith's eagle glance pursues her flight
To other worlds, to happier skies!
Hope dries the tear which sorrow weepeth;
No mortal sound the voice which cries,
'The damsel is not dead, but sleepeth.'

P.H. Cornford

NZ Baptists - in their own words!

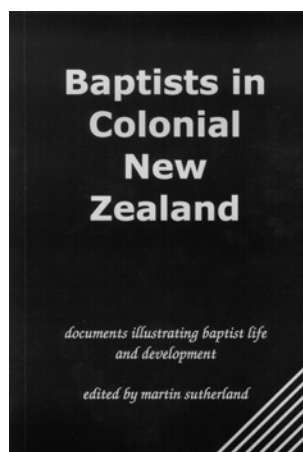


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Reviews

Christopher Elwood, *Calvin for Armchair Theologians*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002. (182pp)

John R. Franke, *Barth for Armchair Theologians*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006. (183pp)

The Armchair series in theology, now numbering seven volumes ranging from Augustine to Wesley, are primarily written for newcomers to various thinkers and moments in Christian history. They are fast paced, humorous, and satisfying introductions and overviews. The two works under review are written by experts in their field, both Elwood and Franke having published on Calvin and Barth respectively in the past. Given the Westminster John Knox Press commissioning of these works, the books are clearly written by thinkers sympathetic to their subjects and yet, without fault, both writers are fair and respectful in their treatments. Added to the lucid and simple writing style (only sixteen endnotes in the work on Calvin!) are humorous illustrations by Ron Hill. What more could students want than simple surveys with pictures!

The volume on Calvin, the first in the series, by Elwood (Associate Professor of Historical Theology, Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary), contains five chapters. After a brief introduction to Calvin's life which sets him squarely within renaissance - reformation contexts in France and the continent, Elwood presents an overview of Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion* in ninety pages. This is a magnificently clear articulation of the major concerns of the *Institutes* and provides novices to Calvin with a potted summary of his life's work which is remarkably accurate. Elwood then provides details on the declining years of Calvin's life in Geneva and concludes with an assessment of the impact Calvin has had since his death. Elwood considers everything from the Weber thesis through democratic politics to feminist theology and fundamentalism. At each turn Elwood is sympathetic yet objective in his assessments, endeavours to take the middle path in his evaluation of Calvin's impact, and provides the first-time reader with insights into many of the issues which have tended to divide Calvin scholarship. A brief section on further reading closes the study.

Elwood succeeds in bringing Calvin and his work into focus and defends Calvin from caricatures which would distort either his impact or his personality. For instance we read, 'In 1937, an American named Dale Carnegie wrote a bestseller called *How to Win Friends and Influence People*. In 1991, some other Americans named Roger Fisher and William Ury, wrote another bestseller entitled *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement without Giving In*. It is a pity that Calvin was unable to dip into these texts, as they might have given him some ideas about how to approach Geneva's new rulers' (pp21-22). Other instances include Elwood's comparison of Calvin's theology of sin to a stanza from Dr Seuss: 'And this mess is so big / And so deep and so tall, / We can not pick it up. / There is no way at all!' (p72). Delightful! The deft way Elwood negotiates his way through post-reformation theology and the disputes over who is or is not a genuine heir of Calvin is another significant feature of the work and will prove especially useful for people new to Calvin studies.

The volume on Karl Barth by Franke (Professor of Theology, Biblical Theological Seminary), is just as informative and useful and yet lacks the humour and winsomeness of Elwood's work. The cartoons by Ron Hill wonderfully illustrate this work as well as Elwood's but the prose is more academic (101 footnotes for instance), and there is much more detail in this work than in the volume on Calvin. Reading Franke's work takes a little more effort and those familiar with Barth and the *Church Dogmatics* will find it more stimulating than the work on Calvin. The trade off is that first-time readers of Barth may find this volume rather difficult in places. Franke provides good summaries of Barth's life and influence and a fifty page summary of the *Church Dogmatics*. Franke is less objective than Elwood and takes a firm stand on many issues which are highly contested in Barth studies. As with the Elwood volume, Franke provides a chapter discussing the impact of Barth's theology and the various ways his work has been read, most notably neo-orthodox and post-modern readings. A section on further reading is also supplied.

These volumes are enjoyable and easy to read and provide first rate introductions and summaries to Calvin and Barth. First year students to theology will greatly appreciate them and those more familiar with the subjects will enjoy a refresher course.

Myk Habets
Carey Baptist College

K. Giles, *Jesus and the Father: Modern Evangelicals Reinvent the Doctrine of the Trinity*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006. (320pp.)

Trinitarian theology is at once the most fascinating and foundational Christian doctrine and the most complicated. Theologians have wrestled with the Christian doctrine of God for millennia and, in the process, have developed creeds, confessions, monographs, and teaching which, collectively, amount to what we know today as Christian orthodoxy. Such orthodoxy is summarised by Giles as follows (pp.309-311):

1. The God of Christian revelation is one divine being and three 'persons'.
2. The three divine 'persons' are inseparable in operations.
3. The three divine 'persons' are indivisible in power and authority.
4. The three divine 'persons' have one will.
5. The three divine 'persons' are eternally differentiated but not divided.
6. There is order among the divine three persons.
7. The Son is subordinated in the incarnation.

On these seven points contemporary Roman Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, and Protestants are in agreement. But, as the saying goes, the devil is in the details.

Giles articulates the post-1970s phenomenon of conservative Evangelical Christians appealing to the doctrine of the Trinity to support the subordination of women to men in church and wives to husbands in the home. In particular, theologians such as Wayne Grudem, who has written the highly influential theology textbook *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), Bruce Ware, and several Australian Anglicans such as Robert Doyle (head of systematic theology at Moore Theological College, Sydney), and Mark Baddeley. The specific context, however, to which Giles is responding, is Sydney evangelical Anglicanism which has, in recent years, sought to bolster arguments for the subordination of women with appeal to the eternal subordination of the Son to the Father, thus supplying divine warrant and analogy for female subordination to males.

Giles has one simple thesis in this work:

It is...a plea from the heart to my fellow evangelicals who in growing numbers in recent years have begun arguing for the eternal subordination in function and authority of the Son to the Father. I say to them, 'Go back, you are going the wrong way.' To

set God the Son eternally under God the Father is to construe the Trinity as a hierarchy and thereby undermine the coequality of the differentiated divine persons, the core truth of the doctrine of the Trinity. (p.9).

According to Giles the contention that the Son is eternally subordinated to the Father in power or authority or being is an ontological claim, and, therefore, is tantamount to arguing of the Son's eternal subordination to the Father in essence or being. This, argues Giles, is classic Arianism, that heresy so roundly refuted by such thinkers as Athanasius, the Cappadocians, Augustine, the council of Nicaea and Constantinople, and later, Calvin and the Reformed confessions. Of special importance to Giles is the theology enshrined in the so-called Athanasian Creed which unequivocally teaches the eternal equality of the Son in power, authority, and function, but also the eternal differentiation of the three divine persons. Giles' work is a refutation of complementarian evangelicals who claim the Trinity in support of their position. As far as Giles is concerned, the eternal subordination of the Son is a heresy that was resisted in the early church, at the time of the reformation, and in our day must be resisted with equal vigour.

In an earlier work entitled *The Trinity and Subordinationism: The Doctrine of God and the Contemporary Gender Debate* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2002), Giles sought to give a comprehensive rebuttal of the post-1970s' conservative evangelical case for the permanent subordination of women. As a result he received criticism in several high profile publications, largely over the (un)reliability of his claims that the eternal subordination of the Son to the Father was a theological novelty in Christian theology. The book under review here is his attempt to set the record straight by examining the tradition in detail looking for teaching, universally accepted, on the eternal subordination of the Son.

Through eight chapters Giles canvasses Scripture and the tradition seeking clarity on what these authorities have to say on the equality and unity of God in being, authority, and function, along with how the differentiation of the divine persons is explained. Due to his critics' comments Giles is also forced to interact with certain contemporary voices, notably Karl Rahner, Karl Barth, Jürgen Moltmann, Wolfhart Pannenberg, Robert Jenson, and Thomas Torrance. Due to the influence of Barth on renaissance of trinitarian thought, and the claim by Giles detractors that Barth is 'on their side', Giles devotes the final chapter to a survey of Barth's thought on the supposed eternal subordination of the Son to the Father.

According to Giles' analysis, what certain contemporary evangelicals are claiming is on a par with the basic tenets of fourth-century Arianism

(Giles does provide a basic taxonomy of fourth-century ‘Arianisms’ and shows that this was not a monolithic movement, however certain features are endemic to each), defined as follows (pp.306-309):

1. All Arians confess ‘Jesus is God’ but that he is not ‘co-equal’ God. By ‘co-equal’ Giles means ‘equal in being, function, and authority with the Father’.
2. All Arians appealed to Scriptural proof texts for their position but failed to articulate an adequate biblical theology that put the seemingly contradictory teaching of Scripture into a framework which made sense of the whole.
3. For fourth-century Arians, subordination in being, work, and authority were inextricably linked.
4. The titles *father* and *son* when used of God are understood literally, not analogically. For this reason, Arians argue, the Father has prominence.
5. The trinity is ordered hierarchically. The Father is over the Son, and the Son is over the Spirit. Order means hierarchy for all Arians.
6. The fourth-century Arians with one voice put to the fore the differences between the Father and the Son. The Father alone is true God, absolute in power and authority.
7. Fourth-century Arians apply the subordination of the incarnate Son in the economy to the eternal Son in the immanent Trinity and so make the Son eternally subordinate to the Father.

Giles then contends that on almost every point there is a direct correspondence between what fourth-century Arians teach to what post-1970 complementarian evangelicals teach on the Trinity. Giles stops short of calling these contemporary evangelicals ‘twenty-first century Arians’, but his critique of their position borders on such a charge.

My charge is rather that in arguing for the *eternal* subordination of the Son to support the doctrine of the *permanent* subordination of women, my debating opponents’ primary and consuming concern, they have in ignorance broken with how the best of theologians and the creeds and confessions have concluded the Scriptures should be read and understood. Unintentionally they have embraced fundamental aspects of the Arian heresy in its varied forms, producing a strange amalgam of truth and error. (p.309).

Giles is well placed to canvass the issues covered in this work, given his academic background (ThD, Tübingen University), his ministry (vicar of St Michael’s Church in North Carlton, Australia), and the

immediate context within which the issue of the eternal subordination of the Son to the Father came to prominence (the 1999 *Sydney Anglican Diocesan Doctrinal Commission Report*, 'The Doctrine of the Trinity and Its Bearing on the Relationship of Men and Women'). Throughout this work Giles is respectful, honest, and meticulous in his selection of citations, interaction with primary works, and the immense secondary literature. His articulation of the relationship between Scripture and doctrinal formulation is well made (pp.67-74) and well worth reminding ourselves of, especially in light of the fact that too many Evangelicals simply do not understand how theological sources such as tradition and the creeds and confessions of the Church function in theological construction. Giles makes a compelling case that the eternal subordination of the Son is a theological novelty, first articulated by fourth-century Arians, and revived today by certain Evangelicals. His use of Athanasius, the Cappadocians, Augustine, and Calvin, Thomas Torrance, and even Karl Barth is compelling and convincing in the final analysis. To claim the eternal subordination of the Son in being, function, or authority is no longer plausible if one wishes to stand in line with Scripture and the tradition. For this Giles' work is an invaluable contribution to the contemporary discussion on this issue.

Beyond the immediate concerns of men's and women's relationships the present work is a fine introduction to trinitarian theology in biblical and historical perspective. Classical themes such as the unity of the divine being and the differentiation of the divine persons are opened with skill and explained with care. This work makes for a fine trinitarian primer in its own right and should be compulsory reading for all interested in grasping the fundamental tenets of trinitarian theology. Doctrines such as the *homoousios to patri* are simply explained and the significance is clearly shown. Especially important in this volume is the analysis of the differentiation of the divine persons. Giles explains, from the tradition how the Father is not the Son or the Spirit and so forth, and yet all three persons are one God. Through Athanasius, the Cappadocians, and Augustine in particular, Giles provides a conceptual tour through the difficult notions of differing origination, the doctrine of appropriation, and the *taxis* or order of the divine persons. This is fine theological work which rewards those who 'take up and read'.

There were occasions where Giles was guilty of the offence he accuses his detractors of, that is, of assuming a position and citing authorities in support. While this was infrequent it was apparent when he fails to grasp the nuanced theology of some Evangelical complementarians when they argue for differentiation of the divine persons which is worked out in a *voluntary* subordination of the Son to

the Father. Giles is absolutely right in arguing against the necessary eternal subordination of the Son but in his analysis of Barth's theology he does come close to recognising voluntary submission as a distinct argument. While he finally rejects Barth's theology of trinitarian relations, and with good reason, he could perhaps have considered interacting directly with proposals which, while not explicitly recognising Barth as its motivation, veer close to some of the implications of his ideas. If the Son voluntarily submits to the Father in person, and yet in being all three divine persons are one, is this still classic subordinationism? If so, how would Giles respond? I suspect this will be the latest incarnation of complementarian argumentation and had Giles anticipated such a move his work would prove even more important.

Trinitarian theology is foundational and if we don't get this right, and by right I mean – biblical and orthodox – then the rest of our theological constructions will suffer. Giles highlights one current example of how faulty theology can lead to defective practice and for that his work is important. The fact that he manages to do this with theological precision, Christian grace, and simple prose (considering he is discussing complex theological doctrines!) makes this work invaluable. This work deserves a wide reading and a fair hearing before one uses the doctrine of the Trinity to support contemporary practice.

Myk Habets
Carey Baptist College

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**International Conference
on Baptist Studies V**

&

**Australian Baptist
Research Forum III**

Whitley College, Melbourne, Australia

15 - 18 July 2009

Following four successful International Conferences on Baptist Studies at Oxford in 1997, Wake Forest in 2000, Prague in 2003 and Acadia in 2006, there is to be a fifth at Whitley College, Melbourne, Australia, from Wednesday 15 to Saturday 18 July 2009. On this occasion we are glad that the conference will also be the biennial meeting of the Australian Baptist Research Forum. All the conferences take Baptists as their subject matter, but are not restricted to Baptists as speakers or attenders. The theme this time is 'Interfaces: Baptists and Others', which includes relations with other Christians, other faiths and other movements such as the Enlightenment. What has been the Baptist experience of engaging with different groups and developments? The theme will be explored by means of case studies, some of which will be very specific in time and place while others will cover long periods and more than one country.

A number of main speakers will address aspects of the subject, but offers of short papers to last no more than 25 minutes in delivery are welcome. They should relate in some way to the theme of 'Baptists and Others'. The title should be submitted to Professor D. W. Bebbington, Department of History, University of Stirling, Stirling FK9 4TB, Scotland, United Kingdom (e-mail: d.w.bebbington@stir.ac.uk).