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A table of contents for *The Baptist Quarterly* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_bq\\_01.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bq_01.php)

## Thomas Burchell, Gentle Rebel

ONE may assume that the majority of Baptists will have heard of William Knibb and would at least be able to say that he was connected with the work of emancipation in Jamaica. The chances however, of many Baptists knowing anything about Thomas Burchell seem remote. This is sad because men such as Knibb and Burchell have still a great deal to teach us about the application of our faith in the world in which we live.

It would not be unfair to the memory of William Knibb to suggest that much of his great work in Jamaica would have been impossible had it not been for two people, his wife and Thomas Burchell. Mary Knibb must have been the essence of patience, for she never knew when her husband would sell most of the furniture in order to buy a plot of land, either for a school or for the formation of a 'free village'; or it could be that their current savings were now given to help an immigrant family to return to Ireland! Yet Mary Knibb was prepared for any eventuality and would willingly have tramped the length and breadth of the British Isles with her husband, penniless, as he said he would have done, because she shared his conviction and passion for the well-being of the slave population they served.

Thomas Burchell was perhaps, next to Mary Knibb, closer to William than any other person and in a very real sense was necessary to him in order for his passion and prophetic vision concerning the implications of complete emancipation for Jamaica to be accepted and understood both by his brethren of the Baptist Mission and the other denominations in Jamaica and England. H. P. Jacobs has written concerning the relationship of these two men, "It is one of the most reassuring traits in Knibb's character that he was devoted to Burchell; and probably one reason for this fact was that Burchell could understand him."<sup>1</sup>

Burchell was a man of many parts who because of his somewhat quieter nature is not so easily recognized as being a revolutionary as was friend Knibb. A case could however be made out to support the idea that it was Burchell's thought and Knibb's prophetic application of that thought that gave the dynamic to the Baptist

Mission during the eventful years in Jamaica, 1831-45. A further comment on Burchell by H. P. Jacobs illustrates how Burchell's real nature was misjudged especially by the committee in England. "Burchell was undoubtedly in some respects superior intellectually to Knibb—he gives more of the impression of a genuinely cultured man, and it is probable that he was thought of in England as the 'safer' and more business-like of the two."<sup>2</sup>

Thomas Burchell was born on 25 December, 1799, at Tetbury in Gloucestershire, and could boast among his ancestors Sir Isaac Newton, while his paternal grandfather was the Baptist minister at Tetbury.

It was while training to be a cloth manufacturer in Nailsworth, that he came under the influence of the Shortwood Baptist Church and from then onwards his thoughts were turned towards the mission field. Once more this little church was to supply a missionary for the island of Jamaica. During this particular period there went out from the fellowship, Mrs. Coultart, Joshua Tinson and his wife, Burchell himself and then his niece Hannah Bancroft who married Samuel Oughton; later in 1840, Jabez Tunley and Eliza Tainton who had married Samuel Hodges of the L.M.S., later to become a Baptist and to serve many years in the West Indies.<sup>3</sup>

On 25 November, 1819 Burchell presented himself before the committee of the B.M.S. as a candidate. It was while he was waiting to go into the Committee Room that he met James Phillippo for the first time and thus began a life-long friendship that was strengthened as they spent many years together in Jamaica. Phillippo in his autobiography gives us a glimpse of Burchell's fears and doubts before entering the Committee Room :

Mr. B. was especially anxious as to the consequences of his having formed a connexion with a young lady which from what he had heard would likely be a cause of his rejection.<sup>4</sup>

On 30 November Thomas entered the Bristol Academy and there set about preparing for his work as a missionary. It is interesting to note that both he and Phillippo, who was now at the Academy at Horton, were keen to learn as many extra subjects as possible in order to be fully prepared for any situation that might arise in Jamaica. How wise they were! William Burchell, Thomas' brother and biographer, gives us some idea of what this extra work entailed. As well as the usual subjects of Latin, Greek and mathematics we read, "We have also, this season, weekly lectures on anatomy and physiology by Mr. Chandler, designed principally for the benefit of missionary students, to whom some knowledge of these subjects is held to be of great importance."<sup>5</sup>

We later read in connexion with his medical work at Mount Carey, that "When a student at College, Mr. Burchell had familiar-

ized himself, as his leisure permitted, with the elements of chemistry, little dreaming of the practical use to which his knowledge was to be ultimately turned."<sup>6</sup>

Once he arrived in Jamaica, in January, 1824, he was met with disappointments. He was sent to Flamstead where previously Henry Tripp had spent a year helping the ageing Moses Baker. On arrival he was met by Mr. Samuel Vaughan, who in 1814 had met John Rowe on his arrival, giving him a somewhat cautious welcome. Burchell was informed by Vaughan that his family were giving up services on one of the estates and would only need his services on alternate Sundays at Flamstead; furthermore, the house in which the missionary was supposed to live was now a hospital for negroes!

Thus it was necessary for Burchell to turn to Montego Bay as the centre from which he was to work. In fairness to Vaughan, it could well be that he was now feeling the pressure from his friends and business acquaintances for his having shown some interest in the Baptist missionaries. He had warned Rowe on his arrival that had he not been a Baptist things would have been easier, and that he dare not appear too friendly or else his friends and business acquaintances would make life difficult for him.<sup>7</sup> Fortunately Vaughan was able to be of help to Burchell, for when Burchell applied to the Quarter Sessions of the parish of St. James for his licence to preach, Samuel Vaughan was acting as the Chief Justice.<sup>8</sup>

We can assume that the letter of instruction Burchell received as he left for Jamaica was similar to that given to Knibb, which forbade him to have any part in the political aspects of slavery. He certainly would not have had a letter similar to that received by John Rowe, which allowed for conscience to come into play. The key passage in Rowe's letter of instruction was :

But let man, whatever be his situation, be the object of your regard—You carry a gospel which addresses itself alike to civilized and the uncivilized; a Gospel that commends itself alike to everyman's conscience and occupies the heart. . . . You are going amongst a people in a state of slavery, and require to beware lest your feelings for them should lead you to say or do anything inconsistent with Christian duty.<sup>9</sup>

By 1819 the great trio—Ryland, Fuller and Sutcliffe—were no longer in command of the B.M.S. Only Ryland was still alive and John Dyer had become the first full-time secretary of the society. With the change there came also a change in attitude towards the political problems, an attitude of caution and fear of political contamination. Fortunately it was the spirit of the letter to John Rowe which motivated Knibb and Burchell.

In 1826 Burchell and his family visited England for health reasons and during that visit he received another disappointment and also

revealed that he had within him the spirit of revolution. During this visit he made known as clearly as possible the situation in Jamaica. He attacked the somewhat disinterested attitude adopted by the committee towards the Jamaica mission, and must of necessity have attacked the slave problem. Though it would seem that he could impress and move the congregations wherever he preached he could not move the committee. Deeply disappointed, he talked over the whole matter with some friends and then made a formal proposition to the committee, that "they should give up the Jamaica mission and allow it to pass into other hands". Walter Dendy who reports this even goes on to say that it "aroused them from their lethargy, they saw they could trifle no longer, and therefore they were led to energetic action on behalf of this island."<sup>10</sup>

On arrival back in Montego Bay in 1827, Burchell discovered that he was in trouble with the local authorities. His brother William had published a letter of his in the November issue of the *Particular Baptist Magazine*, 1827. In this extract Burchell had attacked the way in which slaves were treated, especially the brutal attempts to hinder the negro in his religious life. The local plantocracy who had received the extracts from their agents in England quickly brought a court action against him. No lawyer could be found who would defend Burchell and he therefore prepared his own defence. Whether it was a subtle move on his part or just his simple honesty is a matter of opinion, but he showed his defence to a sympathetic planter. His defence contained a larger volume of evidence regarding brutality than he had written to his brother and in spite of the warning that this could well result in an attempt on his life, Burchell insisted on appearing before the Assizes. His brother commenting on this incident wrote :

His friend doubtlessly communicated with his persecutors, informing them of what he had seen and heard; as he received an early intimation, that, if he would make a public apology, the action lying against him should be withdrawn. It scarcely need be said, that he at once rejected the proposal . . . and they instructed their counsel to enter a *nolle prosequi*.<sup>11</sup>

Ill health forced him to return once again to England in 1831. One doubts whether the secretary of the B.M.S. was altogether happy about this visit for in 1830 Burchell had stated in a letter to Dyer :

I have some thoughts of coming home next year; and if I do, I'll tell a tale. Slavery! Accursed slavery! That infernal system! From my inmost soul I detest and abhor it! I'm tired of living in its midst; though I sincerely love the work in which I am engaged.<sup>12</sup>

There were other matters that Burchell was determined to discuss with the committees during his stay in England; one was the great need for new missionaries in Jamaica, though the situation in Jamaica was a difficult one, yet there were signs of rapid progress. The other matter was that of education. There was a desperate need of a school in the Montego Bay district and this visit was a chance to plead for some money so that he might build his school. There was unfortunately another matter which was thrust upon him. There had been an attack upon the integrity and the work of the Baptist mission in Jamaica. The attack had been started by some of the Colonial papers in Jamaica, and much to the sorrow of Burchell and Knibb, it was taken up by some of the other missionary bodies, especially the Presbyterians. They charged the Baptists with laxity and indiscipline and the use of 'membership tickets' as a means for raising money without due regard to the character of those seeking church membership. Burchell pointed out that in fact the ticket system, used by them and the Methodists—and not unknown in the Presbyterian system—had been a means whereby he could cope with such a large area and so large a number of members and enquirers :

Every alternate sabbath is occupied in attending to duties of the church at Gurney's Mount, or Shortwood, or some other place. In addition to this, I frequently go into the country to preach in the interior, at fifteen or twenty miles distance; and, until lately, I had to supply other places at thirty or even thirty-five miles' distance : so that when I inform you that last year only, for thirteen successive weeks, I journeyed at an average of one hundred and three miles per week on the affairs of the mission and during ten months travelled three thousand one hundred miles, you will be convinced that my toils were not inconsiderable; especially if you keep in mind the climate, and that there are no public means of conveyance.

The number of people in full communion with the Montego Bay Church was 1,600 as well as 3,000, who were designated as enquirers.<sup>13</sup> These facts reveal that the ticket system—which they had inherited from the Native Baptist Church started by George Liele and Moses Baker—was used with good effect, especially linked with the system of lay-leadership. It was the combination of these two factors so linked together that caused much of the suspicion and fear seen amongst the planters.<sup>14</sup>

Burchell was, however, able to satisfy the committee and the members of the B.M.S. that there was nothing untoward going on in Jamaica, save an ever growing challenge and need for men and money. This attack was soon to be replaced for a time

by a much more serious accusation, that the Baptist missionaries had been instigators of the 1831-1832 insurrection in Jamaica. They were accused of being involved in a 'Baptist War'.

By the time Burchell and his family arrived back again in Montego Bay, January 1832, the insurrection had taken place and the process of reprisals had begun. When the ship *Garland Grove* dropped anchor, a naval frigate, H.M.S. *Blanche*, came alongside and a small party boarded the *Garland Grove*. After reading through the passenger list Burchell was taken aboard the frigate; no charge was preferred, all he was told was that it was now 'Martial Law'.

It is known that Burchell's visit to England had been taken by many of the slaves to mean that he had gone to collect their 'free papers'. Bleby the Methodist missionary tells how he was informed that the Baptists were saying that Burchell would bring back their freedom.<sup>15</sup> It is also significant that Sam Sharp who was one of the leaders of the original 'passive resistance' plan, was a member of Burchell's church.

Once aboard the *Blanche*, Burchell's papers and letters were searched and read; he says that they would, 'from the tenor of my letters, discover my sentiments.' There can be no doubt that amongst his letters there would be some similar to those written both to his brother and to John Dyer.

Having been transferred back to the *Garland Grove* he was kept a prisoner until 10 February but his release only meant he was now taken prisoner by the Civil authorities, this time on a trumped up charge involving a false affidavit, sworn by a free coloured man named Samuel Stennet. Stennet had stated that he had been told by Burchell to say that freedom was theirs and negroes were to fight for it. It was soon proved that this was a false statement; Stennet confessed to being bribed to do it. This confession was made on 14 February but it was not until 14 March that Burchell was actually released. Gaining a passage aboard an American ship, Burchell and his family left the island for the safety of their lives and sailed away to America.

Meanwhile Knibb, who with some of his colleagues had also suffered imprisonment, was deputed by his brethren to return to England to explain what had actually been happening in Jamaica. Church members had suffered and Church buildings had been burned down; Baptists were not alone in suffering from these reprisals. The Moravians and the Methodists also lost members and Church buildings. Knibb's own Church Record Book at Falmouth has some very illuminating entries which reveal the tensions and the hardships undergone by church members during those trying days of Martial Law. Entries such as these:

William Gardner, shot in Martial Law, without trial. John Barrett, received 500 lashes in Martial Law, and sent to work in chains for life.

Another slave from the Orange Valley estate has this recorded against his name :

Murdered by the Militia in Martial Law, died praying.<sup>16</sup>

Once Knibb had arrived in England he stirred not only the Baptist denomination to action but made an impact upon the nation as a whole. Burchell came and joined him, together with James Phillippo who was already in England regaining his health. These three men began the slow task of educating the nation to the real meaning of living under slavery.

Some of Burchell's most important work was done in meetings with Fowell Buxton, the leader of the Anti-Slavery movement in the House of Commons, discussing the vexed question of recompense for the damage done to Dissenting places of worship. On 25 February 1834, together with Dyer and Knibb, he went to the Colonial Office; the result of the discussions was that the Government eventually granted the sum of £12,205 for the rebuilding of the chapels.

By this time the abolitionists had gained a partial victory. Though the missionaries had advocated immediate emancipation, there had been evolved a system which was supposed to help both the slaves and the planters to get used to the idea of emancipation, the system was known as the 'Apprenticeship system'. W. L. Mathieson described it thus :

As a social institution slavery disappeared under what the preamble calls 'a general manumission'; but it came back as a system of industry.<sup>17</sup>

Phillippo called it 'slavery disguised'. Burchell at one point had to admit that it was working better than he thought it would, but then went on to qualify this statement somewhat :

The apprentices have conducted themselves with the most admirable propriety, where they have been treated as human beings and not as brutes.

In the same letter he indicates that his original concept of the system has not changed, for the people who worked it had not really



changed. To him the planters and the representatives were :

. . . just so many hard-hearted drivers, doing their best to meet the wishes of the planters, and assimilating the present system as nearly as possible to the old.<sup>18</sup>

During this period he and many of his fellow Baptist missionaries, together with some of the more conscientious Special Magistrates, who had been appointed to see that the system worked, kept a strict watch to see that justice was done. It was a period when, as Professor Douglas Hall has stated,

Many of the slave owners and the slave managers regarded the apprenticeship as a part of the compensation, a short and partial reprieve granted that they might squeeze the last juice out of the compulsory labour before the great ruin of freedom set in.<sup>19</sup>

Before the actual emancipation—which came two years earlier than originally planned by the British Government—in 1838, both Knibb and Burchell persuaded all their Church members who held apprentices to grant them their freedom. It was a sense of relief to be able to say that their churches were free from slave holders.<sup>20</sup>

This was not a negative period, in spite of the Apprenticeship system and its many abuses, for many of the positive events that were developed after emancipation in 1838, had their beginnings in this period.

During this period the negroes were at last able to make money, for after the 40½ hours per week compulsory labour on the plantation to which they originally belonged, they could hire themselves out to other estates or spend the time in planting and cultivating their own plot of land. Sometimes they managed both. The extra money from their hired labour and the money from their produce sold in the local markets made it possible for them to either buy their freedom or else a small plot of land upon which to build a home of their own, in readiness for emancipation. Phillippo was the first really to go into the 'real estate' business on behalf of the negroes. Large parcels of land were bought and then re-sold in small plots thus enabling the negro to buy it. This method quickly developed and Knibb, Burchell and others began to do the same; the result being that 'free villages' began to spread all over the island. Phillippo started at least six villages as well as being involved with the establishment of many more.

Among the numerous free villages established by the Baptist missionaries may be mentioned, Bethel Town and Mount Carey,

by Mr. Burchell; Kettering and Hoby Town, by Mr. Knibb; Wilberforce and Buxton, by Mr. Clark; Victoria in St. Thomas-in-the-Vale, by Mr. John Clarke; and the Alps and Calabar, by Mr. Dexter.<sup>21</sup>

This development was to have an important effect upon the future development of Jamaica in its economic struggles and in the development of the concept of 'independency'.

In the realm of education, Burchell again played an important part. We have already noted that on his second visit to England in 1831, he pleaded with the missionary committee for a school in Montego Bay; for him as for many of his colleagues, schools were an essential part of their missionary work, not only for evangelistic purposes but also in the preparation of the negro for full citizenship after emancipation.

In 1835, Burchell began the first serious educational project in the County of Cornwall. With a steady supply of willing people to train as teachers he envisaged a programme that would double the extent of the work he had already been able to do through his Sunday School work :

Already I have two young men under instruction, for masters; one of whom is sent by brother Knibb, designed for a school he contemplates at Falmouth. Other persons are making application for instruction and situations; but it is impossible for me as an individual to undertake more than I have done. I have now above one thousand children under instruction, chiefly in Sunday school at Montego Bay, and at some of my outstations; at the rest I am about to commence schools; and I could enlarge at all, had I the means. The same cause prevents my establishing day schools at most of my stations, which lie situated in an important district of country. I feel intensely anxious for the welfare of the rising generation, now growing up to be free people. At present I have strength, and I think I have at least an equal disposition, to work : all I need is help, pecuniary help. Let me but have this in sufficient measure, and I will pledge myself to establish schools, so as to have at least a thousand children of apprentices under instruction.<sup>22</sup>

A year later he tells of the progress that is being made to fulfill his plans. In Montego Bay his 'British School' is going well and he has started an infants school together with a building programme to house both sections which will accommodate 300 children, costing £1,600. At Mount Carey a school to seat 200

children is in progress as well as two teachers in training :

Thus, my expenses for masters' salaries will soon be £500 currency per annum, for which I alone shall be responsible.<sup>23</sup>

Not only was he concerned about the education of the children but also that those in responsible positions in the church should have the advantage of training in leadership. It would seem that Burchell had been able to convince his own church on this matter, for in a letter dated 1840 he wrote :

I have resolved at the wish of my church to commence as soon as my August meetings are over to appropriate a portion of my time every week to the training of a few young men to assist me in my country stations—also with the view of establishing a 'Home Missionary Society'. This will add to my labours for the present but will by and by relieve me . . .<sup>24</sup>

In this extract we can see something of the seeds that came to flower in the establishment of the Calabar College; it is not unlikely that, had Calabar not come into being in 1843, Burchell would have commenced something similar on his own accord.

Though in 1838 emancipation came about and the churches were playing a vital role in the establishment of the ex-slaves as citizens, there were interdenominational clashes that tended to increase the acrimony and damage something of the work already accomplished. The old arguments and jealousies against the Baptist mission were once again raised. Some members of the L.M.S. and the Presbyterian mission launched an attack on the Jamaica Baptists. Two factors seem to lie behind these attacks; one was obviously the suspicion aroused by the Baptists for their continuing to 'meddle' in the political affairs of the island, the second was the fact that many of the Baptist missionaries were amongst the best paid men on the island at that particular time! James Stephen, the Permanent Secretary to the Colonial Office, wrote in 1841 :

. . . in almost every Parish of Jamaica the Baptist ministers have good chapels, and large Congregations, pastoral Income averaging from three to four hundred pounds per annum.<sup>25</sup>

Some of the contemporary planters' journals reveal that it was not only the missionaries who were somewhat envious of the financial position of some of the Baptist ministers. This position of comparative wealth was not surprising at this period, for the majority of the ex-slaves, who for a short time, were amongst

the more prosperous wage earners, turned to the Baptists as those who had stood by them during the trying days of 1832 and the Apprenticeship era.

On the political scene, the newly installed Governor, Sir Charles Metcalf, in his first report home in 1840 had been rather critical of the Baptists, suggesting that they were politically involved in the affairs of the island.<sup>26</sup> There was truth in this of course, for Knibb is known to have taken part in an election campaign during 1837 on behalf of the Hon. Richard Hill of Falmouth and he stood as a candidate himself on behalf of the small traders in 1840. These two factors made the Baptists very unpopular amongst the bulk of the plantocracy and a number of their brethren in other denominations. Burchell, though loyal to his colleagues was not afraid to face the facts that there were some grains of truth in the accusation which needed to be examined. He wrote two letters in 1840 which must have caused him a great deal of heart-ache in the writing of them :

We are at present in this island in difficult circumstances—Our Mission is down in the estimation of all. Public meetings have been too many—they have satiated—they have disgusted—The refusal of Lord Russell to allow Bro. Knibb a personal interview at the Colonial Office will do much to keep us down. My firm conviction has always been and still is that a different course ought to have been pursued after 1st August 1838 than had been pursued and which would have saved us from the present difficulties—however we must recover our ground in the best way we can. Recovery is perfectly practicable were we all of one mind, but there is at present no union of views and consequently little union of feeling or action—we are not what we once were.

The second letter addressed to Thomas Abbott, is a little more explicit concerning some of the more domestic problems within the denomination and may give us a glimpse as to what Burchell was suggesting concerning a 'different course of action'. Though a firm believer in 'independency', as we shall see later, it may well be that there was too much emphasis upon 'individualism' amongst the Jamaican brethren at that time.

Those who have recently come out have acted as tho' they were influenced by any spirit rather than a Christian Missionary spirit. I am not going to write a letter of complaint but to state the reason for my not acting. It has appeared to me (I shall be glad if I am in error) that our recent friends have been anxious to procure the most important vacant situations without any regard to the destitute districts—Souls have been

lost sight of too much—I have felt almost disgust at the grasping after the best stations. When I came out we had not stations—we had to work for them and I grieve to see these things.<sup>27</sup>

Exaggerated though the charges against the Baptist missionaries were, motivated by jealousy they may have been, nevertheless Burchell's letters suggest that there was a grain of truth in them, and this was for him a cause for anxiety.

That Burchell was no blind follower of the establishment is illustrated clearly in the part he played concerning the establishment of the Jamaica Baptist Church as an autonomous Church, freed from the financial support of the parent Society. The wisdom of this break with the B.M.S. is still a matter of debate in Jamaica. There are some writers who have placed all the blame for this upon the shoulders of Knibb.<sup>28</sup> That the sole responsibility is his, is not true, but it would seem from the evidence that Burchell must take a very large share of the responsibility. In a letter to Dr. Angus, who had taken over the work of secretary of the B.M.S. after the death of Dyer, he wrote in 1841 concerning a proposed reduction in the salary of the missionaries that it was :

not injurious to the missionaries or the church, and advantageous to the Society—and which shall in due course of 6 or 8 years leave the Jamaica Mission free of your funds and dependent upon its own means—I intend to submit it to the brethren at the Union—and if the union determine to draw off entirely, if it be practicable I shall be most happy.<sup>29</sup>

In his own account of the meeting when the whole project was discussed and acted upon, we see that it was in fact Burchell who argued for an immediate withdrawal from the financial bond with the B.M.S.

Our present association is likely to be a most important one . . . Some were for using the pruning knife; but brother Knibb proposed a committee to consider the embarrassed state of the Society's funds, and the best means of reducing the expense of the Jamaica mission. I seconded the proposition, requesting that as this year is the Jubilee of the Society, the committee be instructed to consider the practicability of withdrawal from the funds of the parent Society altogether, and the taking on ourselves the support of our branch of the mission. On this, the whole association resolved itself into a committee and ultimately came to the resolution, *nemine contradicente* . . .<sup>30</sup>

It needs to be borne in mind, before condemning such an action as being irresponsible and short sighted, that at that particular time all the signs seemed to point to steady progress for the Baptist churches, the future looked fairly settled. The negroes were reason-

ably well off, the economic situation was comparatively better than it had been for a while. Even some of the planters were beginning to show signs of fresh optimism. No one can blame the missionaries for not predicting the economic disasters that lay just ahead, especially for the action of the British Government in lifting the restricted tariff on sugar that had been protecting Jamaican sugar for so long. This it did in 1846, and Jamaica was now in a free, competitive market.

The B.M.S. committee must have felt a sense of relief when the Jamaica Church became self supporting for the Society itself was having great difficulty in meeting all its commitments and demands. Though looking back, one could wish that Phillippo's advice about maintaining a close link with the parent society had been taken more seriously, nevertheless, it could be well argued that this was one of those 'accidents of history' which leaves an indelible mark upon the history of a nation. Together with the widespread development of the 'free-townships', the apparent wealth of Baptists in Jamaica and the obvious poverty of the parent Society, the Jamaican Baptists were forced into accepting and developing a concept of independency and freedom that is still a hall mark of the Jamaica of today.

Never a physically robust person, Burchell gave a great deal of his time and energy and his money to the care of the sick. After the start of the Apprenticeship system and the inevitable end of that period, emancipation, many of the medical doctors who had worked on the estates left the island believing that with emancipation they would find it impossible for them to stay, for they believed along with many planters that there would no longer be any plantations. This exodus meant that the care of the sick negro would be left to whoever cared enough about them. This inevitably meant that it was the missionary who, despite his already over burdened programme of work, was to become the healer of the sick. Burchell, who had settled in Mount Carey due to his own ill health, started a dispensary. There in that rugged though beautiful district just a few miles away from Montego Bay, he organized what must have been one of the earliest 'free health services' recorded.

Mount Carey assumed the character and the importance of a dispensary in relation to the surrounding districts; as many as from two to three thousand of the coloured peasantry annually receiving gratuitous relief. The obtaining of medicine from England, however, in requisite quantities, became too expensive; hence he further turned his chemistry to account by making his own resins, tincture, etc.; yet even then, his outlay was heavy, amounting in the latter period of life to nearly £100 per annum. The reader will probably remember that, at an

earlier period of life, Mr. Burchell had the opportunity of attending a course of lectures on physiology and anatomy. The knowledge then acquired he now employed in the practise of surgery to some extent; and occasionally he used the knife. To assist him in the dressing of wounds, he took into his house, from time to time, several orphan children of his members, whom he trained to that beneficent service, in which they showed much expertness.<sup>31</sup>

The death of his great friend Knibb in 1845 was a blow to him, it was a blow to the Jamaican Baptists and this was intensified when a year later in 1846 Burchell died while in England. So much seemed to rest upon these two men as the Baptist Church looked forward to the future. There were many able men left but somehow they were not the same as Knibb and Burchell. Burchell, who was so soon to join his friend, was in a sense the other half of Knibb. Their death left the island bereft of the two men whose vision and abilities were so united that they were truly a force to reckon with. They were a combination and there was no other combination like it on the island. It would seem true to say that these two men played a tremendous part in the laying of the foundation of present day Jamaica because of their clear understanding of the meaning of involvement with the people.

Burchell was gentle but strong in purpose and vision, determined that justice and mercy should go together even though it could well have cost him his association with the Missionary Society, and certainly cost him his worldly wealth as well as his physical strength. Cast in the same mould as Knibb, all this was loss that his people might know Christ.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> H. P. Jacobs, *William Knibb Memorial*, Centenary booklet, Kingston, 1948. Essay, "Knibb as an Emancipator".

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> R. M. Newman, *A History of Shortwood Baptist Church, 1715-1965*, London, 1965.

<sup>4</sup> J. M. Phillippo, Mss. autobiography in B.M.S. Archives.

<sup>5</sup> W. F. Burchell, *Memoir of Thomas Burchell*, London, 1849, p. 34.

<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*, p. 303; see also Underhill, E. B., *Life of the Rev. J. M. Phillippo*, London, 1881, p. 8.

<sup>7</sup> Letter of John Rowe to John Ryland, 13th March, 1814; B.M.S. Archives.

<sup>8</sup> Burchell, *op. cit.*, pp. 51-53.

<sup>9</sup> *Periodic Accounts of Baptist Mission*, Vol. 5, 1813, pp. 290-293.

<sup>10</sup> *Voice of Jubilee*, Clark, Dendy and Phillippo, London, 1865, p. 202.

<sup>11</sup> Burchell, *op. cit.*, p. 127-129.

<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*, p. 156-157.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*, p. 163.

<sup>14</sup> see Philip D. Curtin's *Two Jamaicas*, Harvard, 1955.

<sup>15</sup> Bleby, *Death Struggle of Slavery*, London, 1853, pp. 2-3.

<sup>16</sup> Falmouth Church Record Book, kept by Knibb, and now in the keeping of the Falmouth Church, Falmouth, Jamaica.

<sup>17</sup> W. L. Mathieson, *British Slavery and its Abolition 1823-1838* London, 1926, p. 243.

<sup>18</sup> Burchell, *op. cit.*, p. 295.

<sup>19</sup> D. G. Hall, *The Apprenticeship Period in Jamaica, 1834-1838*, reprint from *Caribbean Quarterly*, Vol. 3, No. 3, 1953, p. 3.

<sup>20</sup> Burchell, *op. cit.*, pp. 331-332; also J. Hinton, *Memoir of William Knibb*, London, 1847, pp. 241-242.

<sup>21</sup> Underhill, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

<sup>22</sup> Burchell, *op. cit.*, p. 302.

<sup>23</sup> *ibid*, pp. 310-311.

<sup>24</sup> Burchell Letters, B.M.S. Archives.

<sup>25</sup> S. C. Gordon, *A Century of West Indian Education*, London, 1963, p. 39.

<sup>26</sup> Hinton, *op. cit.*, pp. 350-352.

<sup>27</sup> Burchell Letters, B.M.S. Archives.

<sup>28</sup> J. W. Kilpatrick, *Protestant Missions in Jamaica*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Edinburgh, 1944. D. A. Ryall, *The Organization of Missionary Societies etc.*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, London, 1959.

<sup>29</sup> Burchell Letters, B.M.S. Archives.

<sup>30</sup> Burchell, *op. cit.*, p. 363.

<sup>31</sup> *ibid*, p. 304.

G. A. CATHERALL.

## Training Baptist Ministers

(Concluded from p. 348)

The colleges have become an accepted and integral part of Baptist life. All the major communions have their own colleges, though many also have provision for educating men who, while called to the ministry, find it impractical to spend the years of full-time study normally demanded. In spite of many debates and experiments the ideals which form the foundation of Baptist ministerial education remain unchanged. Whatever technical advice a college may give to students regarding preaching and pastoral work, and whatever literary subjects it may encourage a man to pursue, its first task is to ensure that every man entering the ministry has an understanding of the Bible and the historic faith. William Jones speaking at the Abergavenny Academy in 1830 said "General knowledge is of essential importance to the Christian ministry; but scriptural knowledge is indispensable. A minister who has made the most commendable progress in all literary acquirements and is deficient in theological knowledge is like a physician who has made some proficiency in every art, save and except the art of healing". All studies must be practical. The work of the college is, and always has been, directed towards the preparation of ministers capable of building up the saints in the faith of Jesus and of presenting the Gospel to the world in a way that is relevant to its own doubts and needs.

D. M. HIMBURY.