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**“FULLNESS OF THE SPIRIT”—THE GOAL OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE:
THE HOLINESS ADVOCACY OF BISHOPS JAMES MILLS
THOBURN AND FRANCIS WESLEY WARNE OF INDIA**

“I heard more about the Holy Spirit in the time I was in India (it was a visit of a few months), than in thirty years from the preaching here in America,” observed one American Methodist minister during a visit to India in 1912.¹ Emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit had permeated the life and culture of the Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC) mission enterprise in India—drawn mostly from the wells of both Wesleyan/Holiness and Keswick “higher life” spirituality as suggested in recent studies.² It is acknowledged that in the decades surrounding the Indian Revival of 1905 there was close interaction between the MEC missionaries, mostly reared in the Wesleyan/Holiness camp meeting tradition, and their Anglican and Non-Conformist evangelical counterparts, who imported with them the teachings of the Keswick conventions from Britain.³

While the dynamics and extent of the coalescing of the two related movements in India is an area yet to be explored, the impact of Keswick spirituality to the MEC mission is an issue that we would like to address in this paper. It is hoped that some illumination may be shed on this by

¹ John F. Goucher as quoted in Brenton T. Badley, *Warne of India: The Life-Story of Bishop Francis Wesley Warne* (Madras: Madras Publishing House, 1932), 17.

² See for example, Gary B. McGee, “‘Latter Rain’ Falling in the East: Early-Twentieth-Century Pentecostalism in India and the Debate over Speaking in Tongues,” *Church History* 68, no. 3 (1999): 651-52; idem, “‘Baptism of the Holy Ghost & Fire!’ the Mission Legacy of Minnie F. Abrams,” *Missiology* 27 (1999): 517; Dana L. Robert, *American Women in Mission: A Social History of Their Thought and Practice*, The Modern Mission Era, 1792-1992 (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1996), 15-27.

³ The interdenominational cooperation surrounding the 1905 revival is acknowledged, for example, in J. Pengwern Jones and F. Kehl, “To the Trustees of the Keswick Convention,” *Indian Witness*, 15 July 1909, 5-6.

probing into the origins and development of the holiness advocacy of Bishops James Mills Thoburn (1836-1922) and Francis Wesley Warne, the first two missionary bishops of the Southern Asia field of the MEC, which India was a part of. Their substantial works on the Holy Spirit will indicate that they rearticulated holiness in light of the Keswick emphasis on the “fullness of the Spirit.” Though, admittedly, their views may not be totally representative of the MEC mission, they can still help us discern, to some degree, how Wesleyan/Holiness teachings were appropriated in India.

A Path to Pentecost: Thoburn’s Departure from Classical and Organized Holiness

It is impossible to talk about Bishop Thoburn’s holiness advocacy without first mentioning the influence of William Taylor, renowned, albeit controversial, Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC) evangelist, who Thoburn invited to India in 1870. Taylor was among the firsts, if not the first, to disseminate holiness concerns in the mission field when he launched into self-supporting evangelistic work in India.⁴ It is important to note that holiness revivalism, which specializes in the “evangelism of the already-convinced,”⁵ bode well among European and Anglo-Indian “nominal Christians,” mostly Anglicans, who Taylor sought to awaken believing that God will use them to win the native population.⁶ During the four-year evangelistic

⁴ For a comprehensive account of William Taylor’s self-supporting ministry in India, see William Taylor, *Four Years’ Campaign in India* (New York: Phillips & Hunt, 1875). See also David T. Bundy, “Bishop William Taylor and Methodist Mission: A Study in Nineteenth Century Social History, Part 1,” *Methodist History* 27 (1989): 197-210; idem, “The Legacy of William Taylor,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 18 (1994): 172-76.

⁵ Charles E. Jones, *Perfectionist Persuasion: The Holiness Movement and American Methodism, 1867-1936* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2002), 11.

⁶ See D. O. Ernsberger, “Story of the South Indian Conference,” in *India Mission Jubilee of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Southern Asia : Story of the Celebration Held at Bareilly, India, from December 28th, 1906, to January 1st, 1907, Inclusive*, ed. Frederick B. Price (Calcutta: Methodist Publishing House, 1907), 168; Bessie R. Beal, *Bishop John Edward Robinson* (Lucknow, India: Centenary Forward Movement Methodist Church in Southern Asia, 1958), 7.

campaign, it should be noted, however, that Taylor seldom utilized classical Wesleyan/Holiness terms to describe sanctification, and this had a formative influence on Thoburn's understanding of the doctrine. Describing the renowned evangelist's presentation of Methodism's *grand depositum*, Thoburn recalled:

Brother Taylor taught the doctrine of full salvation in a way which was new to me and all the rest. He made but slight use of the word "holiness," and was equally sparing in using the word "sanctification," but from the first he drew a clear distinction between the "infancy" and "manhood" of the Christian life. He also avoided the terms "sanctify," "entire sanctification" and "perfection," but often said, "You must receive the Sanctifier instead of sanctification." His favorite statement was, "You must receive Christ for all you need." He laid down no rigid rules, made no mention of dress, ornaments, or style.⁷

Taylor's presentation of holiness deviated from the popular expressions and ethos perpetuated through the camp meetings organized by the National Camp Meeting Association for the Promotion of Holiness (later renamed National Holiness Association).⁸ It is also important to note that his insistence on the "Sanctifier" or "Blesser" rather than "sanctification" or the "blessing" is a step closer to what would later be emphasized in Keswick spirituality—a nuanced Reformed to ecumenical variation of holiness doctrine ridded of its perfectionism, which developed from the annual conventions in Keswick, England, promoting among others the concern for the "higher Christian life" and the "fullness of the Spirit."⁹ It was this approach,

⁷ James M. Thoburn, "Wayside Notes: An Autobiography, Chapter XXV," *Western Christian Advocate*, 21 June 1911, 9.

⁸ Kathryn T. Long, "Consecrated Respectability: Phoebe Palmer and the Refinement of American Methodism," in *Methodism and the Shaping of American Culture*, ed. Nathan O. Hatch and John H. Wigger (Nashville, TN: Kingswood Books, 2001), 305.

⁹ For this emphasis on Keswick, see J.B. Culpepper's contrast between Wesleyan/Holiness and Keswick teachings in David T. Bundy, "Keswick and the Experience of Evangelical Piety," in *Modern Christian Revivals*, ed. Edith W. Blumhofer and Randall H. Balmer (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 132. Bundy also writes that Taylor was "appreciated" by "'Keswickian' evangelicals." See Bundy, "Legacy of William Taylor," 172. For the most definitive presentation of Keswick distinctive teachings, see J. Robertson McQuilkin, "The Keswick Perspective," in *Five Views on Sanctification*, ed. Stanley N. Gundry (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1987), 151-83.

which drifts away from classical Wesleyan/holiness vernacular and somewhat closer to Keswick that helped set the stage for how the message of holiness would be appropriated by Thoburn.

A son of Ulster Methodist immigrants in Ohio, Thoburn, according to Bishop Warne, was “one of the greatest believers in and teachers of holiness of heart and life.”¹⁰ Though biographers and recent scholars alike position him as a “holiness” person, it is interesting to note that Thoburn did not claim an experience of entire sanctification.¹¹ In fact, in an autobiography published as a series of articles in the *Western Christian Advocate* in 1911, Thoburn admitted: “For years I had been baffled in an earnest search for an ‘experience’ known as ‘holiness’ or ‘entire sanctification,’ but the search had ended in a more or less constant disappointment.”¹² Among these attempts included one during the height of the Great Revival of 1857, which, instead, resulted in a definite “call to preach.”¹³ Though he later testified to the significance of experiencing a “pouring” of the Holy Spirit on May 12, 1866, Thoburn did not equate this with the second blessing experience, even skipping it in his 1911 autobiography, most likely for reasons that will become more apparent later.¹⁴ Thoburn continued to struggle until he,

¹⁰ Francis W. Warne, "The Church of Pentecost," *Methodist Review* (1922): 190. For Thoburn's standard holiness biography, see William F. Oldham, *Thoburn: Called of God* (New York: Methodist Book Concern, 1918). For a shorter one, see, for example, Francis W. Warne, "Thoburn--Saint, Statesman, Seer: A Character Sketch," *World Wide Missions*, December 1904, 1-3.

¹¹ Cf. William C. Kostlevy, "Thoburn, James Mills," in *Historical Dictionary of the Holiness Movement*, ed. William C. Kostlevy, *Historical Dictionaries of Religions, Philosophies, and Movements*; No. 36 (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2001), 252-53. See also Warne, "The Church of Pentecost," 190.

¹² Thoburn, "Wayside Notes, Chapter XXV," 9.

¹³ See Francis W. Warne, "Bishop Thoburn's Source of Power," *Indian Witness*, 28 February 1911, 14; "Bishop Thoburn Tells the Story of His Life," *Northwestern Christian Advocate*, 6 December 1922, 7.

¹⁴ James M. Thoburn, *My Missionary Apprenticeship* (New York: Philips & Hunt, 1884), 156-57. See James M. Thoburn, "Wayside Notes: An Autobiography, Chapter XXVIII," *Western Christian Advocate*, 3 May 1911, 9-10.

subsequently, resolved to end the quest after receiving “illumination” from Taylor, realizing that what mattered most was the “Sanctifier” and not “sanctification.”¹⁵

Thoburn’s autobiography further revealed some “unfavorable impressions” towards the National Holiness Association, suggesting an increasing detachment from the movement. For example, at the holiness camp meeting in Loveland (near Cincinnati) in 1876, Thoburn lamented the “harsh words” spoken against those who were not present—“the ambitious pastor, hostile critic or a tyrannical official”—indicating that such attitude was “quite unlike the love which in the New Testament is called ‘perfect.’” Though Amanda Berry Smith, the famous African-American woman evangelist and holiness promoter, during a campaign in Calcutta in 1879 tried to appease him, a visit by the National Holiness Association leadership further deepened the wedge.¹⁶ Arriving in India a few months later, John S. Inskip, William McDonald, and John A. Wood, Thoburn complained, “were swift to teach and slow to learn, and unlike William Taylor they took little or no pains to adapt themselves to the new conditions which they should have expected to find in strange lands. The result was a practical failure.”¹⁷ Although in his assessment of the movement Thoburn acknowledged that a “genuine and searching revival had

¹⁵ Thoburn, “Wayside Notes, Chapter XXV,” 9. Thoburn’s biographers seem to suggest that this was his sanctification. See, for example, Oldham, *Thoburn*, 62-63; Warne, “Thoburn--Saint, Statesman, Seer: A Character Sketch,” 2. Although William Kostlevy points to 1868 as Thoburn’s sanctification, he may be referring to the same occasion. See Kostlevy, “Historical Dictionary,” 252.

¹⁶ James M. Thoburn, “Wayside Notes: An Autobiography, Chapter XXXIV,” *Western Christian Advocate*, 23 August 1911, 9. Thoburn’s detailed account of Smith’s successful evangelistic campaign in Calcutta is found in an introduction to Amanda B. Smith, *An Autobiography: The Story of the Lord's Dealings with Mrs. Amanda Smith, the Colored Evangelist; Containing an Account of Her Life Work of Faith, and Her Travels in America, England, Ireland, Scotland, India and Africa, as an Independent Missionary* (Chicago: Meyer & Brother, 1893), v-x.

¹⁷ James M. Thoburn, “Wayside Notes: An Autobiography, Chapter XLV,” *Western Christian Advocate*, 8 November 1911, 9. For a detailed account of this visit, see W. McDonald and John E. Searles, *The Life of Rev. John S. Inskip : President of the National Association for the Promotion of Holiness* (Boston: McDonald & Gill, 1885), 329-41. James Mudge, controversial holiness advocate and former missionary in India, shared a similar perception and even commented that Amanda Smith’s evangelistic efforts “did much good” compared to that of the three. See James Mudge, “Long Ago in Lucknow I,” *Indian Witness*, 6 January 1910, 7.

passed through the Church,” and that it “was from above, beyond all doubt,” he, nevertheless, regretted that “its leaders created a formal organization, set up a new standard of Christian life, struck back in return for blows, differed among themselves, and gradually saw the movement melt away.”¹⁸ On account of this divisive spirit, Thoburn distanced himself or, as his son would aptly put it, “quietly withdrew” from the movement,¹⁹ and eventually from its most-cherished perfectionist doctrine.

Thoburn and the Fullness of the Spirit: Holiness as a Result

Parallel to Thoburn’s repudiation of the Holiness Movement’s leadership was a growing sense of uneasiness to classical Wesleyan/Holiness expressions that jettisoned him to develop a doctrine of holiness and its accompanying themes in light of Pentecost:

So far as my own course was concerned, the longer I remained in the work, the more was I led to make a very sparing use of the current terms, such as “sanctification,” “holiness,” “holiness people,” “justification,” “mere justification,” etc. At all times words or phrases which are likely to suggest party names, or to indicate party feeling, should be avoided. In my own preaching I tried to make the work of the Holy Spirit as prominent as possible; in fact, it was at that time that I began to study the whole subject of personal piety, personal equipment for work, from the standpoint of the office and work of the Holy Spirit in the believing heart.²⁰

Although one of the causes of Thoburn’s aloofness to classical Wesleyan/Holiness expressions was due to their close identification with the Holiness “party,” he further outlined a more major concern: “Concerning these phrases it may be remarked that while some of them are Scriptural,

¹⁸ James M. Thoburn, "Wayside Notes: An Autobiography, Chapter XLIV," *Western Christian Advocate*, 1 November 1911, 9; Thoburn, "Wayside Notes, Chapter XXXIV," 9. Thoburn’s opinion is reminiscent of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South bishops address to their 1894 General Conference. See John L. Peters, *Christian Perfection and American Methodism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1985), 148.

¹⁹ James M. Thoburn, Jr., "Some Thoburn Traditions," *Central Christian Advocate (Kansas, Mo.)*, 21 April 1909, 10.

²⁰ Thoburn, "Wayside Notes, Chapter XXXIV," 9-10.

all were unknown in the Church of Pentecost.”²¹ Hence, Pentecost was to be the yardstick by which holiness teachings were to be measured.

Of course, this interest in Pentecost was part of a much wider trend throughout the history of Methodism, even predating the birth of the American Holiness Movement. Although, not well-pronounced, and sometimes suppressed, in the early stages of the movement, it eventually reached its pinnacle in the 1890s.²² In Thoburn, however, this interest began much earlier in his career and its prominence was never left unnoticed. After preaching on “the work of the Holy Spirit” at a Holiness camp meeting in Round Lake, New York in 1876, holiness advocate Bishop Randolph S. Foster, who was in the audience, confessed: “I have been a Methodist preacher for forty years, but I have never heard the work of the Holy Spirit described as we have heard it just now.” He further recommended Thoburn to preach it in other camp meetings, thereby resulting in Thoburn’s camp meeting tours that summer.²³ Thoburn further manifested this emphasis throughout his episcopacy beginning in 1888, eventually reaching its climax with the publication in 1899 of a book on Pentecost.²⁴

Born out of requests made in the Holiness camp meetings years earlier, *The Church of Pentecost* outlines Thoburn’s “mature reflections, meditations and conclusions” on the subject of Pentecost in relation to empowerment for service, spiritual fruits and gifts, holiness, and

²¹ James M. Thoburn, *The Church of Pentecost*, Rev. ed. (Cincinnati: Jennings & Pye, 1901), 76.

²² See Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*, Studies in Evangelicalism ; No. 5. (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow, 1987), 71-92. Cf. Donald W. Dayton, "From Christian Perfection to the "Baptism of the Holy Ghost," in *Aspects of Pentecostal-Charismatic Origins*, ed. Vinson Synan (Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1975), 39-54.

²³ As quoted in James M. Thoburn, "Wayside Notes: An Autobiography, Chapter XXXIII," *Western Christian Advocate*, 16 August 1911, 9.

²⁴ See Thoburn, *The Church of Pentecost*.

missions, among others.²⁵ Here one unmistakably finds a different concern for Thoburn: Holiness is neither the goal nor beginning of the Christian life.²⁶ It was not a central theme because he considered it as only one of the many “blessings” resulting from a life that is “united” with or that abides in Christ—“the highest aim and fondest desire of the believing heart.” Again, in true Taylor fashion, Thoburn gave holiness and the other “blessings” traditionally associated with the baptism of the Holy Spirit a Christocentric twist—what mattered most was the “Blesser” and not the “blessings.” It is only through an “abiding union” with Christ that one can “attain or retain the gifts and grace of the Pentecostal morning.”²⁷

But what was this “abiding union” in Christ in the first place? For Thoburn, it was precisely the “fullness of the Spirit.”²⁸ This “fullness of the Spirit” experience, however, may constitute two distinct experiences: one being “special” and the other “normal.” The “special” connotes instances of special “infilling” of the Holy Spirit from time to time, sometimes accompanied by “unusual manifestations,” for “special purposes on special occasions” or “when special help is needed, when some special task is to be performed, or some special trial endured.”²⁹ Consequently, the “normal,” Thoburn argued, was what “every Christian should aim to realize in daily life.” It is not a “spasmodic or intermittent manifestation,” “but an abiding grace, the privilege of all believers, and the normal standard of personal holiness to which all believers were urged to attain.” In other words, “special” “fullness of the Spirit” refers

²⁵ Ibid., 3-4. See also Warne, “The Church of Pentecost,” 188.

²⁶ In the Holiness Movement, Christian perfection becomes the beginning of the Christian life contrary to that of Wesley who saw holiness as the goal, see Melvin E. Dieter, “The Wesleyan Perspective,” in *Five Views on Sanctification*, ed. Stanley N. Gundry (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1987), 40.

²⁷ Thoburn, *The Church of Pentecost*, 62.

²⁸ The connection between “abiding union with Christ” and the “fullness of the Spirit” is made much clearer as Thoburn explained this further in Ibid., 77-78.

²⁹ Ibid., 68-76.

exclusively to special empowerment for special purpose (eg. prophecy and preaching); while “normal” “fullness of the Spirit,” which characterizes the normative goal of the Christian life, may pertain to both power (eg. spiritual fruits and normal spiritual gifts) and holiness. Thoburn’s position appears to be much more consistent with the Keswick movement, where the former is referred to as “fillings of the Spirit” and the latter as “fullness of the Spirit.”³⁰ Nonetheless, while Keswick emphasized “faith” as the only requirement for receiving this “fullness,” Thoburn emphasized two—“absolute and unqualified” faith and obedience.³¹

Accordingly, it is also in the “normal” “fullness of the Spirit” concept, which deals with the issue of holiness, that Thoburn’s understanding of sin, though contrary to Wesleyan/Holiness notions, comes into full view. Using a garden metaphor in pitting Wesleyan view—“one who thinks fire will permanently destroy [eradicate] the weeds [sin]”—with the Reformed view—“more weeds [sin] will spring out of the ashes,” Thoburn instead endorsed a *via media*—the Keswick way. “We must all agree that no weeds [sin] will spring up in that garden plot *so long as the fire [Spirit] is kept burning,*” he argued.³² Simply put, sin cannot be totally “eradicated,” but can only be “suppressed” through the “fullness of the Spirit.” In light of Thoburn’s similarity with Keswick, it is easy to imagine why he found more affinity with the Northfield conventions of Dwight L. Moody, where Thoburn was invited him to speak on several occasions in the

³⁰ See David T. Bundy, “Keswick Higher Life,” in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, ed. Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. van der Maas, Revised and Expanded ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003), 821. Cf. Ian M. Randall, “Old Time Power: Relationships between Pentecostalism and Evangelical Spirituality in England,” *Pneuma* 19 (1997): 58.

³¹ Thoburn, *The Church of Pentecost*, 82. See Bundy, “Keswick Higher Life.” 821.

³² Thoburn, *The Church of Pentecost*, 209-10.

summer of 1890.³³ It should be noted that it was Moody who imported Keswick to the United States.³⁴

Warne and the Fullness of the Spirit: Holiness as a Precursor

Thoburn's great esteem for Pentecost was also the eminent concern of Bishop Francis Wesley Warne, the second person to be elected to the episcopacy of the MEC in Southern Asia (1900). Born and raised in Ontario and of Cornish Methodist ancestry, Warne was recruited to India by Thoburn in 1887.³⁵ A missionary colleague who had known the bishop for years summed up his work in a letter: "Through it all in your ministry you have majored on the Holy Spirit." Truly, Warne's interest in the Holy Spirit began early in his career—he had memorized William Arthur's *Tongue of Fire*, studied "the abundant writings on the Holy Spirit" by Daniel Steele, and the writings on the same subject by Samuel A. Keen, a prominent MEC holiness evangelist.³⁶ Unlike Thoburn, on the other hand, Warne was more upfront with his entire

³³ James M. Thoburn, "How Christ Came to India XVI," *Northwestern Christian Advocate*, 17 April 1912, 24-25. For more on the Northfield conventions and its relation to Keswick, see Bundy, "Keswick and the Experience of Evangelical Piety," 131-32.

³⁴ See Melvin E. Dieter, *The Holiness Revival of the Nineteenth Century*, 2d ed., Studies in Evangelicalism, No. 1 (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1996), 249-50; Dayton, *Theological Roots*, 104-06.

³⁵ For Warne's autobiography, see Francis W. Warne, *Bishop Frank W. Warne of India: His Conversion, Call to the Ministry, and Other Spiritual Experiences* (New York: Board of Foreign Missions Methodist Episcopal Church, 1915); idem, *A Covenant-Keeping God: A Narrative of Personal Experiences* (New York: Methodist Book Concern, 1925). His standard biography is found in Badley, *Warne of India*.

³⁶ Francis W. Warne, *Ideals That Have Helped Me* (New York: The Methodist Book Concern, 1928), 37. Warne's undeniable interest in the pneumatology is further attested in a number of articles he wrote for the *Methodist Review*. See, Francis W. Warne, "Jesus and the Holy Spirit," *Methodist Review* (1915): 946-57; idem, "The Holy Spirit the Distinctive Power in Christianity," *Methodist Review* (1925): 409-24; idem, "The Holy Spirit and World Service," *Methodist Review* (1930): 364-76. For more on S.A. Keen, see Dayton, *Theological Roots*, 91.

sanctification experience, having experienced it in 1871.³⁷ Bishop William Oldham credited Warne for the “tidal waves” that have swept “great multitudes into an experience of full salvation” in India.³⁸ Most notable was his role leading up to the Indian Revival of 1905, which first broke out within the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist mission in Khassia Hills, Assam Province, and later in Pandita Ramabai’s Mukti mission in Kedgoan.³⁹ Among these were the official calls for prayers for a “widespread outpouring of the Holy Spirit,”⁴⁰ as well as his support of the interdenominational prayer circles and the “Higher Life” conventions formed through “Keswick lines” throughout India, which were instrumental in preparing the way for the Revival.⁴¹ Warne effectively functioned as a revivalist in several MEC annual conferences and annual conventions, most notably, the Dasehra meetings in Lucknow. When the Revival finally broke through the MEC mission, first at the Ansansol District Conference in November 1905, Warne effectively guided the mission, together with Bishop John E. Robinson. In 1907, he chronicled the origins and spread of this revival in his book, *The Revival in the Indian Church*.⁴² It was this first-hand

³⁷ Warne, *Bishop Frank W. Warne*, 10-13; idem, *A Covenant-Keeping God*, 21-26.

³⁸ Warne, *Bishop Frank W. Warne*, 3-15.

³⁹ See J. Pengwern Jones, *India Awake* (Calcutta: F. Kehl, 1905); Helen S. Dyer, *Revival in India: "Years of the Right Hand of the Most High"* (London: Morgan and Scott, 1907). Secondary works that discuss the subject, to some extent, include, Gary B. McGee, "Pentecostal Phenomena and Revivals in India: Implications for Indigenous Church Leadership," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 20 (1996): 114, 16; McGee, "Baptism of the Holy Ghost & Fire!," 517-19; idem, "Latter Rain," 651-53.

⁴⁰ Francis W. Warne, William F. Oldham, and John E. Robinson, "An Invitation to United Prayer," *Indian Witness*, 7 September 1905, 9.

⁴¹ The important role played by Keswick in India in the outbreak of the Revival is attested in Dyer, *Revival in India: "Years of the Right Hand of the Most High"*, 24-30. See also "Beloved Brothers and Sisters Assembled at the Keswick Convention," *Indian Witness*, 15 July 1909, 6-7. Bishops Warne and John E. Robinson were among the signatories of the letter. A good summary of this Keswick spirit in India—the cooperation among the different missions is described in Jones and Kehl, "To the Trustees of the Keswick," 5-6. See also McGee, "Pentecostal Phenomena," 114; idem, "Latter Rain," 651-52.

⁴² John E. Robinson, "Days of Power and Blessing at Asansol," *Indian Witness*, 21 December 1905, 3-4; Francis W. Warne, *The Revival in the Indian Church* (New York: Board of Foreign Missions

experience of the awakening in India, in addition to the formative influence of holiness teachers and Thoburn that would eventually reverberate in Warne's treatises on the doctrine of holiness.

To begin with, Thoburn's uneasiness with classical expressions of holiness was not lost on Warne. Warne revealed this in his book, *Ideals That Have Helped Me*: "With all the teachings of Methodism concerning new birth I am in fullest accord. I am not, however, I confess, in such full accord with Methodist terminology as used by specialists in their teaching of holiness."⁴³ Consequently, emphasizing this point further he compared the teachings "Jesus and the Holy Spirit" as found in John 14 and "John Wesley on Perfection" placing them side by side, and noted: "Please note that in John Wesley's summary 'The Holy Spirit' is not mentioned even once, and in the summary emphasized by Jesus such popularly used terms as 'sanctification,' 'holiness,' 'heart purity,' and a 'second blessing' are not emphasized." Pentecost terminology is better than "Methodist phraseology," and it was this same principle, Warne believed, that spelled Methodism's success in India. "In all these years there have been no divisions and strife about sanctification neither among our missionaries nor our Christians who are Indians.... I have found it in the fact that in India we have emphasized not so much Methodist terminology, as that used in St. John's Gospel [John 14-15] and the Acts of the Apostles. Hence, our Indian revival has often been called the 'New Acts of the Apostles,'" he maintained.⁴⁴

In describing his sanctification experience, however, Warne did not use Pentecost imagery, preferring, instead, Scriptural language that strikingly resembled that of Thoburn's. He called the event his "Abiding Life" or "Abiding Blessing" experience because "it describes a life

Methodist Episcopal Church, 1907), 9-11; Badley, *Warne of India*. Cf. McGee, "Baptism of the Holy Ghost & Fire!," 518.

⁴³ Warne, *Ideals*, 52.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 53-57.

of holiness in the language that Jesus used.”⁴⁵ Though obviously referring to a definite event, why then did Warne use the word “abiding” then? Before one thinks of this as an allusion to progressive sanctification, let it be clarified that Warne was not suggesting a growth in holiness, which is typical of Methodist thought, but instead a concept of continuity that defied conventional Wesleyan/Holiness logic. This becomes more apparent in *Ideals*. After a litany of accounts regarding the post-Pentecost infillings in the Book of Acts, he arrived at the conclusion: “That leads me to state that I believe that not sanctification alone, but after heart-cleansing the fullness of the Holy Spirit is full salvation.”⁴⁶ Here one finds a re-appropriation of traditional Wesleyan terminology. Sanctification is not full salvation. It is only as a precursor to the “fullness of the Spirit,” which Warne equates with full salvation or, as he would also have it, the aim of the Christian life. This he emphasized in his reflection on the Indian Revival of 1905: “The doctrine and the need of scriptural holiness, purity in life, because of heart cleansing experience, have been constantly emphasized, not as a goal, but as a necessary stage in a preparation for reaching the goal—the fullness of the Holy Spirit.”⁴⁷

Although Warne, like Thoburn, saw the “fullness of the Spirit” as the ultimate object of the Christian life, he, nevertheless, explicated it more in terms of empowerment for special service in the same vein as Thoburn explained the “special” “fullness of the Spirit.” For instance, citing the post-Pentecost infillings of Peter, Paul and Stephen, Warne argued that they were not

⁴⁵ Warne, *A Covenant-Keeping God*, 29.

⁴⁶ Warne, *Ideals*, 59.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 60. Bishop Brenton T. Badley wrote: “Bishop Warne’s preaching, with its emphasis on the need and possibility of experiencing the fullness of the Holy Spirit, was supremely significant throughout his career. It was his own way of teaching Biblical holiness, or John Wesley’s ‘Christian Perfection.’” Badley, *Warne of India*, 16.

only filled once, but on several occasions as “special preparation for special service.”⁴⁸ The “fullness of the Spirit” explained in this manner was a recurring motif in Warne’s writings and emphasized as a normative Christian experience.⁴⁹ Warne’s main difference with Thoburn and Keswick, however, lay in the fact that he maintained holiness as a crisis experience and then positioned it as a requirement rather than the result of a Spirit-filled life. However, this becomes rather vague when Warne’s sparse statements on the problem of sin are added to the equation—they hint at a “suppressionist” position shared by Thoburn and prominent in Keswick. For instance, in his article “Jesus and the Holy Spirit” (1915), Warne pointed out: “When we read that Jesus ‘was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin,’ we should also remember that even Jesus resisted by ‘the power of the Holy Spirit.’ Can one even imagine a Christian ‘full of the Holy Spirit’ and at the same time falling into gross sin—or any sin?” This is further reinforced in his review of Thoburn’s book, where he quoted with approval Thoburn’s garden metaphor as mentioned earlier.⁵⁰ Even so, based from the extant materials at our disposal, Warne, did not pursue this question in detail with the same intensity and frequency as he did with themes pertaining to the blessings of empowerment for service through Spirit-filled living. Perhaps given his attention to missionary work, it was this motif that produced great results and worked best for the conditions on the field.

Conclusion

Keswick spirituality helped shape the holiness advocacies of Bishops Thoburn and Warne. This would have not been possible without their sense of detachment not only from the

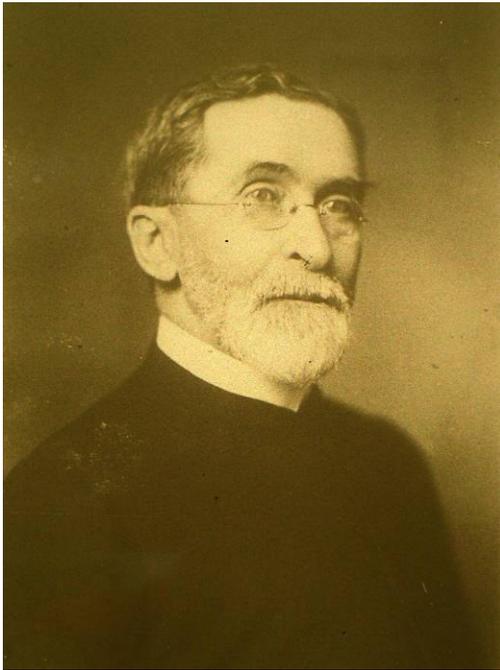
⁴⁸ Warne, *Ideals*, 57-58.

⁴⁹ See, Warne, "Jesus and the Holy Spirit," 946-57; idem, "The Holy Spirit the Distinctive Power in Christianity," 409-24; idem, "The Holy Spirit and World Service," 364-76.

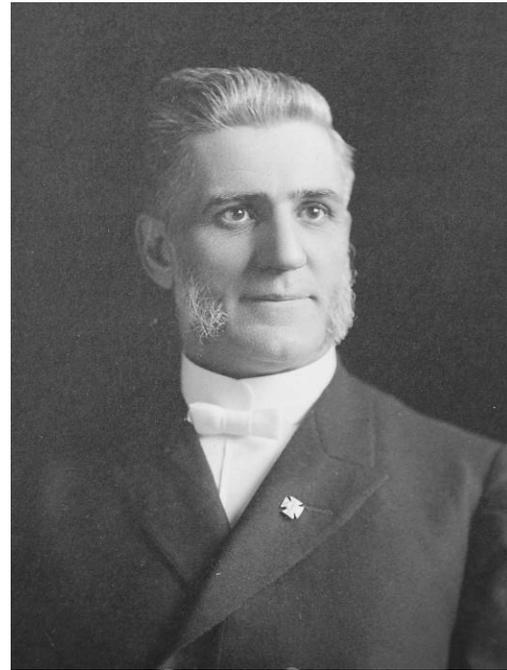
⁵⁰ Warne, "Jesus and the Holy Spirit," 948. See also Warne, "The Church of Pentecost," 193-94.

Holiness Movement, but also from classical Wesleyan/Holiness terminologies that have been identified with the movement. Thoburn and Warne sought to redress this with a reconfiguration of holiness doctrine, but in the process ended up borrowing much from Keswick. Perhaps, being the persons of institution that they were, Keswick provided for them an alternative understanding of holiness which was not only Biblically feasible, but also intellectually respectable. Though claiming the same goal—"the fullness of the Spirit," which was consistent of Keswick, the two took divergent paths in terms of the place of holiness. Thoburn, who never claimed an experience of sanctification, saw it as a result; while Warne, who took value with his second blessing experience, made it a precursor. For Warne it was this Keswick influence that united him with other evangelicals in India and helped prepare the denomination for the Revival of 1905. Thus, the evidence makes one wonder whether there was an actual blurring of Wesleyan and Keswick lines leading up to the Revival. It appears, though, that in the interaction between Wesleyan/Holiness and Anglican and Non-Conformist evangelicals in India, Keswick spirituality won out.

APPENDIX



Bishop James Mills Thoburn



Bishop Francis Wesley Warne

JESUS AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may be with you for ever, *even* the Spirit of truth: whom the world cannot receive; for it beholdeth him not, neither knoweth him: ye know him; for he abideth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you desolate: I come unto you (John 14. 16, 17, 18).

But because I have spoken these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you. And he, when

JOHN WESLEY ON
PERFECTION

In the year 1764, upon a review of the whole subject, I wrote down the sum of what I had observed in the following short propositions:

(1) There is such a thing as perfection; for it is again and again mentioned in Scripture.

(2) It is not so early as justification; for justified persons are to "go on to perfection" (Heb. 6. 1).

(3) It is not so late as death; for Saint Paul