

to be accepted. If General Baptists were found to have come to the practice by quite different theological paths from Calvinistic Baptists then the force of the comparison diminishes almost to nothing. Naylor concedes that 'evidence...may hint that Baptists...whose Calvinism was "high" invariably practiced closed communion.' If so it remains possible that the logic of hyper-Calvinism might inexorably lead to restricted communion. The mere fact that others also adopted the practice does not preclude that possibility.

This, then, is an ultimately unsatisfying volume, despite the presence of some interesting detail. Baptist and historical scholars should nonetheless be pleased such projects are at last being presented for debate and review. Paternoster is to be congratulated on bringing these studies to a wider readership, beyond those with direct access to university theses.

### **Martin Sutherland**

**R.F. Keam, *Dissolving Dream: The Improbable Story of the First Baptist Maori Mission*, Auckland: self-published, 2004, 236pp.**

What is an academic physicist doing writing a mission history book? The answer is quickly evident. The Baptist Maori Mission was located close to Mount Tarawera, which underwent major eruption just as the mission was drawing to a close. In the process of doing major research on the Tarawera eruption as a physicist, the author 'stumbled' across this mission story.

Keam, has traced the story of the mission in fine detail. He has explored extensively the family background of American philanthropist William Snow before tracing his journey to New Zealand in 1880 in the hopes of strengthening his indifferent health, but also to promote the cause of temperance in the Rotorua-Tarawera region. This led to his organising funding for a Maori mission there, drawing in the Auckland Baptist

Tabernacle as a partner. Through Charles Spurgeon in London, Alfred Fairbrother was recruited as missionary. Fairbrother began well, soon having had 85 adults and fifty children attending services at Te Wairoa. Within two years, however, things had largely unravelled.

What went wrong? Fairbrother seems to have been very autocratic, rebuking people, snatching a pipe from the mouth of a smoker etc. Was he, an Englishman, insufficiently prepared for cross-cultural ministry and was he suffering culture shock? That remains a question worth probing.

Resentful of his style, many Maori melted away. A few, however, put in complaints. The outcome was Fairbrother's forced resignation from the mission. He continued for several months in independent mission ministry but then withdrew. A couple of months later the Tarawera eruption destroyed several of the main villages where the mission had undertaken ministry. It proved to be the end of the mission.

Overall, the book begins with perhaps too much detail on the earlier American background. I also wonder whether Keam has overemphasised the role of the eruption in terminating the work. After all, Fairbrother had already ceased his ministry prior to the eruption. Moreover, his final ministry was largely at Ohinemutu, which was not destroyed by the earthquake. Surely, if his ministry there was in any way influential, there would have been some base from which to rebuild the ministry. It looks as if the failure of the Baptist Maori mission must largely be linked with the failure of Fairbrother's ministry, with the eruption simply being the final nail in the coffin.

These queries aside, I am deeply impressed with the amount of research and information conveyed by this book. It is an invaluable source of information on this first Baptist Maori mission. Keam is to be congratulated for his thorough exploring of this tributary to his main scientific inquiry.

**Laurie Guy**