

TAKING THE LOGIC “A LITTLE FURTHER”:  
LATE NINETEENTH-CENTURY REFERENCES TO  
THE GIFT OF TONGUES IN MISSION-RELATED LITERATURE  
AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON EARLY PENTECOSTALISM

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“The power to acquire a foreign language in such a degree as to make the student a powerful speaker before a native audience is, undoubtedly, ‘a gift of God,’” according to an article entitled “The Gift of Tongues for Missionary Service,” published a decade before Charles Parham and his students at Bethel Bible School in Topeka, Kansas testified to the divine bestowal of at least seventeen languages in January 1901.

It cannot be produced by the severest application, and therefore stands upon the same basis as any endowment of a high order. The possession of this gift does not, indeed, exempt the holder from making great efforts, but it facilitates and makes possible the use of a “strange tongue” with oratorical power.<sup>1</sup>

To the author, achievement of fluency in another language entailed more than the memorization of vocabulary words and the wizardry of pronunciation, it involved some measure of God-given enablement. But how much? The author had barely opened the door for this discussion before he abruptly turned to the problems faced by missionaries in

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<sup>1</sup> Reprinted from *The Christian* (U.K.) as “The Gift of Tongues for Missionary Service” in the *Illustrated Missionary News*, April 1, 1891, p. 58. This article in *The Christian* came on the heels of the debate discussed in the pages below. It would have been published sometime between January 1890 and March 1891, before it was reprinted in the *Illustrated Missionary News*. Unfortunately, issues of *The Christian* are currently unavailable (at least in North America) for the years 1890-1893.

language study (for example, finding tutors).<sup>2</sup> Others, however, with less caution heeded the direction of an otherworldly compass on how the Christian world mission might be accomplished and pointed to the possibility of God instantaneously conferring the necessary proficiencies, fashioning Mark 16:17 (“And these signs will accompany those who believe...they will speak in new tongues”) into a virtual guarantee for the applicant with sufficient faith. Confronted by the Babel of the world’s languages, some had contended from the time of William Carey that the church needed a replay of the Day of Pentecost to provide missionaries with the requisite languages.<sup>3</sup>

This essay reviews selected articles in mission-related periodicals and books, prominent in the Trans-Atlantic connection among evangelicals, produced in the last two decades of the nineteenth century that mention the gift of tongues. It further analyzes how such discussions influenced early Pentecostalism.<sup>4</sup> Although a few stories from this period tell of missionaries receiving divine assistance in their language studies,<sup>5</sup> the focus centers on the anticipation of languages supernaturally endowed without instructional assistance.

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<sup>2</sup> “Gift of Tongues,” p. 59. At a time when aids for language study were limited and few missionary language schools existed, the means of attaining such preparation received increasing attention. For example, see J. C. R. Ewing, “The Intellectual and Practical Preparation of the Volunteer,” *The Student Missionary Appeal: Addresses at the Third International Convention of the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions Held at Cleveland, Ohio, February 23-27, 1898* (New York: Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, 1898), pp. 70-71.

<sup>3</sup> The issue surfaced on the occasion of the famous rebuke of John Ryland to William Carey: “Young man, sit down, sit down. You’re an enthusiast. When God pleases to convert the heathen, He’ll do it without consulting you or me. Besides, there must first be another Pentecostal gift of tongues!” Ryland quoted in S. Pearce Carey, *William Carey, D.D., Fellow of Linnaean Society* (New York: George H. Doran, 1923), p. 50. For an insightful study on the gift of tongues in Christian history, see George H. Williams and Edith Waldvogel [Blumhofer], “A History of Speaking in Tongues and Related Gifts,” in *The Charismatic Movement*, ed. Michael P. Hamilton (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), pp. 61-113.

<sup>4</sup> The sources for this study have been limited to English-language publications.

<sup>5</sup> For example, see Rosalind Goforth, *Goforth of China* (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, n.d.; originally published in 1937), pp. 87-88.

### 1. Premillennial Urgency and Language Proficiency

At the first international gathering of the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions (SVM) in 1891, Ellen Cushing, a veteran missionary to Burma (Myanmar), offered this advice to the volunteers who might be "in a hurry to go quickly to their field of work":

Remember that if you are to evangelize the world in this generation, there are a great many unlearned, unwritten languages for you to dig out. You must have the ability to dig out the language, construct an alphabet, translate the Bible, make a dictionary, do all the preparatory work, before your brothers with less preparation can come and be evangelists in that language.<sup>6</sup>

Whether among the college and university volunteers who attended this convention or the thousands of other women and men dedicating their lives to missions, there were many young missionaries "in a hurry to go quickly" and Cushing's advice reminded them of the slow road ahead of them.

It seemed the whole world had opened up for travel, adventure, economic investment, and preaching the gospel. The complexity of motives pushing this surge of western imperialism ranged from greed to national glory to gospel proclamation.<sup>7</sup> Reflecting on the unprecedented opportunities the global scenario offered the church to fulfill the Great Commission (Matt 28:19-20) before the impending return of Christ, American mission promoter Arthur T. Pierson wrote *Crisis of Missions* in 1886 to rally Christians to action. "It is our solemn and mature conviction that before the close of this century the gospel might be

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<sup>6</sup> Mrs. J. N. (Ellen) Cushing quoted in *Student Mission Power: Report of the First International Convention of the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, Held at Cleveland, Ohio, U.S.A., February 26, 27, 28 and March 1, 1891*, p. 157. (Reprinted by William Carey Library, Pasadena, CA, n.d.)

<sup>7</sup> Charles W. Forman, "A History of Foreign Mission Theory in America," in *American Missions in Bicentennial Perspective*, ed. R. Pierce Beaver (South Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1977), pp. 83-86.

brought into contact with every living soul,” he averred.<sup>8</sup> “We have reached the most critical point in missionary history.”<sup>9</sup>

The available literature indicates that both desperation to master foreign languages<sup>10</sup> and, particularly, the premillennial urgency to encircle the globe with the gospel message encouraged the belief that God would dispense languages. “The disappearance of the gift of tongues has occasioned no little disquiet in the minds of many, especially those who have supposed that this gift was originally bestowed for missionary purposes,” wrote James Thoburn in 1894, the pioneer Methodist bishop for India and Malaysia.<sup>11</sup> Certain radical evangelicals who had earlier taken inspiration from the “faith principle” in missions, as they interpreted Jesus’ commission to the disciples in Matthew 10:9-10, now hoped for the spectacular displays of God’s power referred to in Mark 16:17-18 (NIV):

And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.

Claims to the reception of languages for missionary evangelism can be traced back to Mary Campbell in the West of Scotland Revival in 1830, an event influenced in part by the teachings of the controversial Presbyterian preacher Edward Irving.<sup>12</sup> Believing she had obtained

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<sup>8</sup> Arthur T. Pierson, *The Crisis of Missions; or, The Voice Out of the Cloud*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (London: James Nisbet, 1886), p. 326. See also A. B. Simpson, “Can the World Be Evangelized in Ten Years?” *Christian Alliance and Missionary Weekly*, April 1, 1892, pp. 220-221.

<sup>9</sup> Pierson, *Crisis of Missions*, p. 273.

<sup>10</sup> Following a twenty-month tour of overseas missions and observing the long delay that new missionaries faced in preaching caused by their having to learn difficult languages, Congregational pastor Edward Lawrence reported, “Some have been disposed to pray for the gift of tongues.” See Edward A. Lawrence, *Modern Missions in the East: Their Methods, Successes, and Limitations* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1895), p. 147.

<sup>11</sup> J. M. Thoburn, *Missionary Addresses* (Cincinnati: Cranston & Curts, 1894), p. 179.

<sup>12</sup> David W. Dorries, “West of Scotland Revival,” in *New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, eds. Stanley M. Burgess et al. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), pp. 1189-1192.

Turkish and the language of the Palau Island group in the Pacific Ocean, she stated, “If God has promised to furnish his servants with every necessary qualification, what have they to do but step into the field, depending on Him for all?”<sup>13</sup> Though Campbell’s newfound proficiencies remained untested, her logic mirrored that of the radical evangelicals and their Pentecostal children.<sup>14</sup>

## 2. References in the 1880s

In a startling account printed in 1881, the *New Zealand Christian Record* told how Miss C. M. Reade of the Highways and Hedges Mission had received “Hindostani” (Hindustani) as a “gift of tongues” for preaching, and through this gift she also gained revelatory insight into the Islamic religion that would assist her in preaching to Muslims.<sup>15</sup>

One month she was unable to do more than put two or three sentences together; while the next month, she was able to preach and pray without waiting for a word. Those who heard her could only say with herself, “It was a gift from above.”<sup>16</sup>

The Highways and Hedges Mission, founded by Reade’s father, had close ties to the Christian Brethren, a movement known for its

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<sup>13</sup> Cited from a letter of Mary Campbell in Robert Herbert Story, *Memoir of the Life of the Rev. Robert Story* (London: Macmillan, 1862), p. 202.

<sup>14</sup> Speaking in tongues occurred among believers in India beginning in 1860 in a revival sparked by the Irish awakening of 1859. As the impact of the revival rippled from Tirunelveli westward to Travancore in the following years, instances of speaking in tongues were recorded. However, these appear to have been viewed as “unknown” tongues with no connection to preaching. For more information, see G. H. Lang, *The History and Diaries of an Indian Christian (J. C. Aroolappen)* (London: Thynne, 1939), pp. 193-203.

<sup>15</sup> On the Highways and Hedges Mission, see Miss C. M. Reade, “Punrúti Mission,” *The Missionary Conference: South India and Ceylon, 1879* (Madras: Addison, 1880), pp. 421-23.

<sup>16</sup> “A Gift of Tongues,” *New Zealand Christian Record*, April 14, 1881, p. 11. North American Pentecostal writers seem to have been unaware of the story, probably because of its publication in New Zealand. J. E. Worsfold of the Apostolic Church of New Zealand refers to it in his *History of the Charismatic Movements in New Zealand* (Bradford, Yorks: Julian Literature Trust, 1974), p. 82.

premillennial eschatology. Her familiarity with the Hindustani language should also be taken into consideration, a factor that sets her apart from later persons who said they hoped to be given languages of which they had no knowledge.

In the same year, the potential restoration of tongues attracted a much wider audience with the publication of *The Ministry of Healing: Miracles of Cure in All Ages* by Adoniram J. Gordon, an advocate of faith healing, prominent pastor, and Baptist mission leader. Not surprisingly, Mark 16:17-18 merited special attention: "This rich cluster of miraculous promises all hangs by a single stem, faith," wrote Gordon. God never intended for miracles to cease, "nor is there any ground for limiting this promise to apostolic times and apostolic men."<sup>17</sup> While his main interest centered on the prayer of faith for the sick and he fails to explain how tongues would function, his examination of Mark 16 and 1 Corinthians 12-14 led him to conclude that the "gifts of tongues and of prophecy...do not seem to be confined within the first age of the church."<sup>18</sup> The popularity of the book undoubtedly prompted radical evangelicals to put more stock in the "promises" of Mark 16, thus helping to set the stage for a far-reaching anticipation of supernatural interventions.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> A. J. Gordon, *The Ministry of Healing: Miracles of Cure in All Ages* (Harrisburg, PA: Christian Publications, 1881), p. 22.

<sup>18</sup> Gordon, *Ministry of Healing*, p. 55. Reflecting the diversity of opinion over what the restoration of the gift of tongues might mean, Gordon's friend, Arthur T. Pierson, wrote: "In the Acts of the Apostles, two great aids were granted to the witnessing Church: first, the gift of *tongues*, which fitted the heralds to reach strange peoples without the slow mastery of a foreign speech; and, secondly, the gift of *healing*, which made even opponents favourably disposed toward the herald who first brought such help to the body. In a natural way, the lack of these supernatural gifts is now compensated. Christian scholarship has so far outrun the best learning and training of those earlier days, that grammars and dictionaries of all the leading languages and dialects can be supplied to the student.... Within the hundred years past, at least one hundred tongues that had before no literature, not even an alphabet, have by missionaries been reduced to writing. And the Word of God, in over three hundred dialects, now, like a perpetual Pentecost, speaks to the nations, so that each man may in his own tongue read the wonderful works of God. This reduction of the world's languages to a written form, to a scientific form, is God's modern gift of tongues." Arthur T. Pierson, *The New Acts of the Apostles* (New York: Baker and Taylor, 1894), p. 382. See also p. 18.

<sup>19</sup> Gordon, *Ministry of Healing*, p. 22.

The appeal to these verses did not escape the watchful eye of New Testament scholar and Union Seminary professor Marvin Vincent: "Healing through the prayer of faith,' says Mr. Gordon, 'stands on an entirely different basis from such miracles as raising the dead, turning the water into wine, and *speaking with unknown tongues.*' But in Mark [16] the promise, 'they shall speak with new tongues,' is given, *on Mr. Gordon's own expressed admission, to them that believe,* as an inheritance for all time." Taking the logic of Gordon's exegesis "a little further," Vincent pointedly noted "this miracle of speaking with tongues...is nevertheless included in the promise to *all* believers."<sup>20</sup> Indeed, the appeal of Gordon and other radical evangelicals to the promise of physical healing in the disputed longer ending of Mark (16:9-20),<sup>21</sup> the gift of healing in 1 Corinthians 12:9, and other New Testament passages, virtually forced them to argue for the availability of the gift of tongues as well.

Expectancy of tongues surfaced with three members of the Cambridge Seven of athletic fame in England when they arrived in China in 1885 to serve with J. Hudson Taylor's China Inland Mission. Sailing with Taylor up the Han River, C. T. Studd and Cecil and Arthur Polhill set aside their Chinese grammar books and prayed for the Pentecostal gift of the Mandarin language. After they reached Hanzhong, they encouraged two young missionary women to do the same. By this time infuriated with their behavior, Taylor scolded them: "How many and subtle are the devices of Satan to keep the Chinese ignorant of the gospel.

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<sup>20</sup> Marvin R. Vincent, "Modern Miracles," *Presbyterian Review* 15 (July 1883), pp. 484-85.

<sup>21</sup> For a discussion of the textual problem, see Bruce M. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), pp. 226-29. The issue was intensified for radical evangelicals when the *English Revised Version* (New Testament in 1881) and the *American Standard Version* (1901) called attention to the questionable textual underpinning of Mark 16:9-20; see F. F. Bruce, *The English Bible: A History of Translations from the Earliest English Versions to the New English Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), pp. 148-49. Radical evangelicals and Pentecostals vigorously defended the longer ending; see Gordon, *Ministry of Healing*, pp. 245-46; "Shall We Reject Jesus' Last Words?" *Apostolic Faith* (Los Angeles), October 1906, p. 3, col. 1; and Arthur W. Frodsham, "The Sixteenth Chapter of Mark: How God Vindicates His Word in the Last Days," *Pentecostal Evangel*, April 28, 1923, p. 9. E. F. Baldwin also refers to the integrity of the text in "The Question of the Hour—Foreign Missions," *The Christian*, February 15, 1889, p. 132.

If I could put the Chinese language into your brains by one wave of the hand I would not do it.”<sup>22</sup>

“We waited on the Lord, believing He would teach us, as He taught the 120 at Pentecost, and fulfill in us Mark xvi. 17, 18,” confessed Studd, but “He has now, after some time, shown us that at present He means us to study; they did not understand us at all at first at [Hanzhong]—thought us idle fanatics, I fancy—but the Lord has now removed the misunderstanding, praise God.”<sup>23</sup> As they began their arduous lessons in Mandarin, Studd and the Polhill brothers would probably have agreed with the sentiment expressed by another veteran missionary at the 1891 SVM conference, “The romance of missionary life will not last very long.”<sup>24</sup>

The possible restoration of the gift of tongues arose again in 1888-89 during an uproar over whether the instructions of Jesus in Matthew 10:9-10 established the sole divinely commanded paradigm for Christian missions. An American missionary to North Africa, E. F. Baldwin, had submitted a series of seventeen articles to *The Christian*, a prominent British weekly reflecting Keswick views on Christian spirituality. Printed under the banner, “The Question of the Hour—Foreign Missions,” he authored them in response to an earlier article entitled “Can Pentecost be Regained?” and directed his attention to the mission dynamics of the primitive church.<sup>25</sup>

“Ah! that was the golden age of missions,” sighed Baldwin, standing proudly on his soapbox of thinly veiled contempt for denominational mission hierarchies and traditional mission methods.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> J. Hudson Taylor quoted in A. J. Broomhall, *Hudson Taylor and China's Open Century*, Book 6 (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1988), pp. 375-76.

<sup>23</sup> C. T. Studd, “Trumpet Calls to Britain's Sons,” in *The Evangelisation of the World, a Missionary Band: A Record of Consecration, and an Appeal*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., ed. B. Broomhall (London: Morgan & Scott, 1889), p. 53. Cecil H. Polhill, who joined the Pentecostal movement in 1908 and founded the Pentecostal Missionary Union for Great Britain and Ireland a year later, never mentions this expectation in his memoirs (available at the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, Springfield, Mo.).

<sup>24</sup> Ella J. Newton quoted in *Student Mission Power*, p. 157.

<sup>25</sup> “M.,” “Can Pentecost be Regained?” *The Christian*, November 23, 1888, pp. 1086-87; for an important editorial explanation, see “Notes and Comments,” *The Christian*, November 30, 1888, p. 1107, col. 2.

<sup>26</sup> A Southern Baptist minister from North Carolina, E. F. Baldwin and his wife and eleven children went to North Africa in 1884 under the auspices of the (English) Kabyle Mission after his application to the Board of Foreign Missions

The heralds consulted not with flesh and blood. They knew neither committee nor comity.... They and their Divine Master were not in need of the patronage of the great. These power-filled heralds could not have wrought on lines marked out by human wisdom.<sup>27</sup>

Passionately arguing for a return to the simpler apostolic methods of the New Testament church, he contended that better results would come from missionaries who modeled their lifestyles after the disciples and prayed for miracles.<sup>28</sup> The ensuing debate over his proposals and the possibility of miracles churned for more than a year, drawing the notice of other periodicals, as well as a chorus of opponents.<sup>29</sup>

Among Baldwin's readers, London doctor James Maxwell, secretary of the Medical Missionary Association, took exception not only to the notion that miracles of healing might accompany evangelism, but that such an open-ended restoration of apostolic methods might prompt some to look forward to the reappearance of the gift of tongues. In the Acts of

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had been turned down and his appeals before the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Baltimore earlier in the year had failed. The Convention stated: "We regret that neither our Board or that of the Missionary Union could see its way clear to undertake just now a mission to the Kabyles"; quoted in Willy Normann Heggoy, "Fifty Years of Evangelical Missionary Movement in North Africa, 1881-1931" (Ph.D. diss., Hartford Seminary Foundation, 1960), pp. 70-71. For more information on Baldwin, see E. F. Baldwin, "My Call to Foreign Mission Work, My Journey, My Support," *The Gospel in All Lands*, April 1885, pp. 160, 162-64; idem, "Evangelization of North Africa," *The Gospel in All Lands*, April 1885, pp. 155, 157-60; idem, "The Jews of Morocco," *Missionary Review of the World*, N.S. I (September 1888), pp. 692-93.

<sup>27</sup> "A Missionary" [E. F. Baldwin], "The Question of the Hour—Foreign Missions," *The Christian*, January 11, 1889, p. 26.

<sup>28</sup> "A Missionary" [E. F. Baldwin], "The Question of the Hour—Foreign Missions," *The Christian*, January 4, 1889, pp. 12-13; February 8, 1889, pp. 110-11.

<sup>29</sup> Those offering limited affirmation included Arthur Pierson, editor of the *Missionary Review of the World*, and Andrew Murray, a South African Dutch Reformed theologian and mission advocate. An editorial in Pierson's *Missionary Review of the World* stated: "Without giving our endorsement to every sentiment of Mr. Baldwin in those letters, we confess to a large measure of sympathy with his general position"; "Editorial Notes on Current Topics," *Missionary Review of the World*, N.S. IV (January 1891), p. 71; see also A. T. Pierson, untitled note, *Missionary Review of the World*, N.S. II (July 1889), p. 548. For a reference to Murray's "warm appreciation" of the articles, see "Editorial Note," *The Christian*, July 26, 1889, p. 664.

the Apostles, the latter represented a “wonder, associated especially with new ingatherings of believers, and indicated...the purpose of the Spirit, not only that every believer should be a confessor and witness for Christ, but also that the Gospel should be diffused among all peoples, and in every tongue.”<sup>30</sup> Although Baldwin had sidestepped the issue of tongues, Maxwell charged him with looking for “faith-tongues and faith-healings” at the very moment when the “present methods,” including medical missions, have been “crowned...in heathendom with ever-increasing tokens of [God’s] blessing.”<sup>31</sup> Obviously, Baldwin like Gordon could not escape the logical implications of his appeal to the miraculous happenings promised in Mark 16, without making him responsible for “folly and fanaticism” in the eyes of his critics.<sup>32</sup>

Ironically, his most strident adversary proved to be Fanny Guinness, editor of the *Regions Beyond*. She and her husband, H. Grattan Guinness, had been leaders in the faith missions movement and co-founded the Regions Beyond Missionary Union. In her estimation, Baldwin’s extremely ascetic application of faith missions smacked of the controversial proposals that Edward Irving had laid before the London Missionary Society in 1824 and published a year later as *Missionaries After the Apostolic School*.<sup>33</sup> Irving called on missionaries to follow literally the instructions of Jesus in Matthew 10 and trust in God alone for their support.

Both Guinness and Eugene Stock, editorial secretary of the Church Missionary Society, grimaced at the similarity of views. The linkage of Baldwin with Irving—“a fanatic and a heretic”—meant that he had “gone quite off Evangelical and Scriptural lines” in the opinion of Stock.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> James L. Maxwell, M.D., “Modern Medical Missions: In Reply to ‘A Missionary,’” *The Christian*, March 1, 1889, p. 177.

<sup>31</sup> Maxwell, “Modern Medical Missions,” p.177.

<sup>32</sup> Mrs. H. Grattan (Fanny) Guinness, “Missionaries According to Matt. X,” *Regions Beyond*, September and October 1889, p. 283.

<sup>33</sup> Klaus Fiedler, *The Story of Faith Missions: From Hudson Taylor to Present Day Africa* (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 1994), pp. 34-40, 43.

<sup>34</sup> Stock noted, “In 1889, a series of articles appeared in *The Christian*, which turned out to be in the main a reproduction of Irving’s sermon [to the London Missionary Society]. They had a similar effect on many minds, for a time. It is worth noting that the writer, like Irving, soon afterwards went quite off Evangelical and Scriptural lines.” Eugene Stock, *History of the Church Missionary Society* (London: Church Missionary Society, 1899-1916), vol. 1, p. 282n. Idem, “Foreign Missions in the New Testament,” *Church Missionary*

Guinness alleged that Irving's interpretation of Matthew 10 was "closely connected" to "his later faith in modern miracles, and in the revival of the gift of tongues."<sup>35</sup> Regrettably, "craving after the supernatural, so common in the Church just now" had stirred the recent interest. Unfortunately, "good people" could be led astray because of an unhealthy curiosity in "claims [of] direct inspiration or the gift of tongues, or miraculous interpositions, or even miracle-working power, in a way that Scripture does not warrant *nor experience justify*."<sup>36</sup>

Though not a party to the squabble with Baldwin, church historian Philip Schaff addressed the "Miracle of Pentecost" and the gift of tongues in the third edition of his *History of the Christian Church* published in 1889, while the debate still roiled. "[The gift of tongues] passed away gradually with the other extraordinary or strictly supernatural gifts of the apostolic age," he wrote, but people later misunderstood it to mean the "miraculous and permanent gift of *foreign* languages for *missionary* purposes." Schaff then declared that the "whole history of missions furnishes no clear example of such a gift for such a purpose." Interestingly, he had listened to "Corinthian glossolalia" ("unknown tongues") on one occasion at an "Irvingite congregation" in New York City. "The words were broken, ejaculatory and unintelligible, but uttered in abnormal, startling sounds, in a state of apparent unconsciousness and rapture, and without any control over the tongue, which was seized as it were by a foreign power." His friend and colleague at Union Seminary, Charles Briggs, had noticed the same phenomenon when visiting the main Irvingite church in London a decade earlier.<sup>37</sup>

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*Intelligencer and Record* XIV N.S. (May 1889), pp. 296-305. Stock also wrote a series of articles in *The Christian* in response to Baldwin beginning with the article: "The Question of the Hour—Foreign Missions," April 5, 1889, pp. 290-291.

<sup>35</sup> Guinness, "Missionaries According to Matt. X," September and October 1889, p. 280.

<sup>36</sup> Mrs. H. Grattan (Fanny) Guinness, "Missionaries According to Matt. X," *Regions Beyond*, April 1889, p. 111.

<sup>37</sup> Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, vol. 1: *Apostolic Christianity*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1889), p. 237.

## 3. References in the 1890s

Another failed restoration of the gift of tongues occurred shortly after in 1890 when members of the Kansas-Sudan movement reached Sierra Leone.<sup>38</sup> Encouraged by George Fisher, a YMCA mission enthusiast who had been influenced in part by the preaching of Grattan Guinness at a summer Bible conference, nine young Kansans dedicated their lives to African missions. Arriving on the East Coast, they stayed at A. B. Simpson's missionary hostel in New York City before they boarded the *City of Chicago* for Africa.<sup>39</sup> Their confidence in the faith principle and anticipation of physical healings reflected that of other radical evangelicals. Sadly, several died within a few weeks of reaching their destination, having refused to take quinine.<sup>40</sup> Headlines about young men and women dedicating their lives to missions and then dying because of their embrace of faith healing embarrassed leaders of the faith missions movement.

Virtually all the articles written about the outcome of the Kansas-Sudan movement focused on the tragedy and extreme views on faith missions and faith healing.<sup>41</sup> Yet one contemporary observer of the mission scene and a noted linguist, Robert Needham Cust, reported they had initially assumed they would be given the gift of tongues. Such bizarre behavior could only be attributed to "hare-brained excited young men, full of so-called zeal, empty of all experience, [and] ready to adopt the last new hallucination, such as Faith-healing, Pentecostal gift of

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<sup>38</sup> Robert Needham Cust, *Essay on the Prevailing Methods of the Evangelization of the Non-Christian World* (London: Luzac, 1894), p. 107. For a recent discussion on the Kansas-Sudan movement, see Dana L. Robert, *Occupy until I Come: A. T. Pierson and the Evangelization of the World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), pp. 178-81.

<sup>39</sup> News note, *Bombay Guardian*, September 6, 1890, pp. 3-4. See also, J. M. S., "The Soudan Missionary Movement," *Missionary Review of the World*, N.S. III (July 1890), p. 555; "Missions," *Christian Alliance and Missionary Weekly*, August 15, 1890, pp. 92-93.

<sup>40</sup> F. F. Ellinwood, "The Faith Element in Missions," *Missionary Review of the World*, N.S. III (December 1890), pp. 944-49.

<sup>41</sup> True not only in mission periodicals, but also in the coverage of New York City and Kansas newspapers. For example, in the reprint edition of an article from the *New York Sun* (August 17, 1890) in the *Topeka Daily Capital* (August 20, 1890), the new title in the Topeka paper reads: "A Sad History: the Experiences of Our Topeka Missionaries."

vernacular languages, *claiming* a sick person of God, and talking of their work being *owned by God*.<sup>42</sup>

Some laid the blame for their deaths at the doorstep of Simpson, one of the best-known proponents of faith healing and founder of the Christian and Missionary Alliance. In their opinion, the Kansans had left Topeka without belief in faith healing and then embraced it while they resided at his hostel.<sup>43</sup> Probably troubled by Fisher’s connection to the ministry of her husband, disturbed by the teachings of the healing movement, angered over the tragic events that had transpired, and recognizing the same radical ideas that Baldwin had proposed, Fanny Guinness now adjusted her editorial sights and took aim at Simpson’s “foolish, false, and mischievous doctrines.”<sup>44</sup>

“Dr. Simpson,” she charged, “thinks we need these ‘signs,’ and asks, ‘What right have we to go to the unbelieving world and demand their acceptance of our message *without* these signs?’” Lamentably, “he thinks too, like Irving before him, that we may expect, and are even beginning to see, a restoration of the gift of tongues.” She then quotes him as saying, “Instances are not wanting now of its apparent restoration in missionary labours both in India and Africa.” To Guinness, such statements lacked any foundation: “[Simpson] does not cite any instance of this, nor are we acquainted with any! We did indeed hear of a dear young enthusiast who tried to learn Chinese by prayer and faith without study, but we heard also that he did not succeed, and that, perceiving his mistake, he soon adopted the usual course.”<sup>45</sup>

It is true that Simpson had endorsed—in fact, “cheerfully accept[ed]”—the “severe logic” of Mark 16: “If you expect the healing of the sick, you must also include the gift of tongues and the power to overcome malignant poisons.... We cannot afford to give up one of the promises.” Hence, “We see no reason why a humble servant of Christ,

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<sup>42</sup> Cust, *Essay on the Prevailing Methods*, p. 197.

<sup>43</sup> For his rebuttal to the charge, see A. B. Simpson, “Editorial,” *Christian and Missionary Alliance Weekly*, November 7, 1890, pp. 274-275.

<sup>44</sup> Mrs. H. Grattan (Fanny) Guinness, “Faith-Healing and Missions,” *Regions Beyond*, January 1891, p. 32.

<sup>45</sup> Guinness, “Faith-Healing and Missions,” p. 31. Guinness does not cite the source for Simpson’s statement. While he made a similar remark in his book, *The Gospel of Healing* (periodical articles first published in book form in 1885), I have not been able to locate the earlier source to which Guinness refers. The “young enthusiast” was probably C. T. Studd since the Guinnesses had close ties to J. Hudson Taylor and the China Inland Mission.

engaged in the Master's work, may not claim in simple faith the power to resist malaria and other poisons and malignant dangers. To a greater or less extent the gift of tongues has been continuous in the Church of Christ, and along with many counterfeits has undoubtedly been realized in the present generation."<sup>46</sup>

Despite Guinness's rebuke to Simpson, interest in tongues persisted in the Alliance. In an article published in February 1892, he referred to "much earnest inquiry into the real meaning of this apostolic gift, and not a few intending missionaries are hoping and praying, and even believing for the bestowal of this gift upon them, to enable them to preach the Gospel to the heathen."<sup>47</sup> Among them were William W. Simpson (no relation to A. B. Simpson) and William Christie, graduates of Simpson's training school for missionaries, who landed in China in May, intent on evangelizing Tibet. Like Studd and the Polhill brothers, their exuberant trust in Mark 16:17 (as well as Mark 13:11) prompted their prayers for Mandarin and Tibetan.<sup>48</sup>

Several months later at the Alliance's New York convention, Simpson told the faithful, "We believe that it is the plan of the Lord to pour out His Spirit not only in the ordinary, but also in the extraordinary gifts and operations of His power, in proportion as His people press forward to claim the evangelization of the entire world." Confident of the biblical promises, he added, "We are praying for the special outpouring of the Spirit in connection with the acquiring of foreign languages." But, perhaps bruised by Guinness's censure and thinking of the failure of the two missionary recruits (Simpson and Christie) to miraculously obtain the languages, he cautioned against the "dangers of Irvingism," aware that "every little while [the idea] is so easily taken up that some persons are called even in these days to a kind of apostolic ministry, and to receive some sort of personal gift."<sup>49</sup>

Simpson openly wondered if missionaries had the right to expect foreign languages for preaching the gospel without diligently studying

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<sup>46</sup> A. B. Simpson, *The Gospel of Healing*, rev. ed. (Harrisburg: Christian Publications, 1915), p. 57. Simpson does not provide an example.

<sup>47</sup> A. B. Simpson, "The Gift of Tongues," *Christian Alliance and Missionary Weekly*, February 12, 1892, p. 98.

<sup>48</sup> W. W. Simpson, "Letter from Shanghai, China," *Christian Alliance and Missionary Weekly*, July 1, 1892, pp. 13-14.

<sup>49</sup> A. B. Simpson, "Connection between Supernatural Gifts and the World's Evangelization," *Christian Alliance and Missionary Weekly*, October 7 & 14, 1892, p. 227.

the languages. Yet, both in the early church and the modern church, God had given individuals this gift for preaching, "but this did not become a permanent gift, and we advise our dear friends to be fully persuaded in their own minds before they commit themselves to a theory which might bring to them great disappointment."<sup>50</sup> Though he cited no examples of such remarkable occurrences in the modern church, he spoke of missionaries in China who, through divine enablement in their study of Mandarin, had been able to preach within a few months.

Because God conceivably could do anything for the seeker who "claimed the promises" with robust confidence, Simpson struggled to resolve the dilemma that his radical stance on "faith" had engendered: "Should God give [the language] immediately to the faith of any of them, by the miraculous answer to prayer, we should greatly rejoice and should not question it, but we do not feel authorized to encourage them uniformly to expect it."<sup>51</sup> Wanting to avoid the dangers of "excess and fanaticism," and once again distancing himself and the Alliance from Irving, he contended several weeks after the convention closed that one could still find the "middle ground of supernatural reality and power, where we may safely stand, as far on one side from the excesses of Irvingism as it is on the other from the coldness of unbelief."<sup>52</sup>

By 1898, Simpson's confidence that in rare instances and with sufficient faith some missionaries might receive the languages had waned, knowing of missionaries who "have been saved from this error." With language instruction and heaven's blessing, they quickly mastered and preached in the language. Those who proposed that the Alliance "should send our missionaries to the foreign field under a sort of moral obligation to claim this gift, and to despise the ordinary methods of acquiring a language," did not foresee that the results would surely lead to "wild fanaticism and bring discredit upon the truth itself."<sup>53</sup> Less than a decade later, Simpson again would face turbulence in the Alliance over

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<sup>50</sup> Simpson, "Connection," p. 227.

<sup>51</sup> Simpson, "Connection," p. 227. Simpson then noted, "Even in the early church an interpreter was frequently required...when the gift of tongues was exercised."

<sup>52</sup> A. B. Simpson, "The New Testament Standpoint of Missions," *Christian Alliance and Missionary Weekly*, December 16, 1892, p. 389.

<sup>53</sup> A. B. Simpson, "The Worship and Fellowship of the Church," *Christian Alliance and Foreign Missionary Weekly*, February 9, 1898, p. 126; see also, idem, "The Supernatural Gifts and Ministries of the Church," *Christian Alliance and Foreign Missionary Weekly*, January 19, 1898, pp. 53-54, 67.

the gift of tongues, resulting in differences of opinion that would have far-ranging effects on the organization.

#### 4. Astonishing Claims

Those looking for a success story of a missionary actually having a gift of language cheered at the news of Jennie Glassey, upon whom the Holy Spirit purportedly had bestowed thirteen African dialects, in addition to Mandarin.<sup>54</sup> What's more, reports circulated that her proficiencies had been corroborated by knowledgeable bystanders.

A native of Missouri, she had come into contact with Canadian Baptist evangelists Walter and Frances Black who were conducting services in the rural part of the state where she and her mother lived.<sup>55</sup> A Presbyterian of Scottish descent, Glassey told them she had been baptized in the Holy Spirit on March 23, 1894. A year later, at eighteen years of age, she moved to St. Louis and stayed with the Blacks who were engaged in "home missionary work" in conjunction with a local congregation.

Unlike others, Glassey said that the call to be a missionary and the promise of an African language followed her Spirit baptism. On July 8-9, 1895 in St. Louis, she received several African dialects (Housa, Croo, and "Khoominar"[?]) in a vision. "The Spirit," as described in a newspaper account, "unrolled before her eyes [a] long scroll covered with strange characters. These were in the Croo language. The [S]pirit read them most rapidly, and she read after him. First the psalms...and then the Bible. So rapid was the reading that she feared she could not remember all, but has done so, and speaks the Croo language with grace and fluency." Her ability to speak Khoominar was verified, "because the Lord said it was [Khoominar]."<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> "Tarry Until," *Tongues of Fire*, March 1, 1897, p. 38.

<sup>55</sup> Walter S. Black had been born in Salem, Nova Scotia and graduated with a B.A. from Acadia College (now University) in Wolfville, NS in 1889 and from Newton Theological Institution (now Andover Newton Theological School), Newton Centre, Mass. in 1892. After graduation, he and his wife Frances pastored Baptist churches in Massachusetts and Minnesota before moving to St. Louis, Mo. for two years. See Edward Watson Kirkconnell, ed., *The Acadia Record (1838-1953)*, rev. ed. (Wolfville, NS: Acadia University, 1953), p. 34.

<sup>56</sup> "Mission Work," *Amherst (N.S.) Daily News*, December 9, 1895, p. 1. I have not been able to identify the "Khoominar" language.

Soon afterward, the Blacks received Khoominar, according to Mark 16:17, when members of the St. Louis congregation laid hands on them in prayer. While they could converse with Glassey in the language and answer her questions, they curiously lacked the "power of interpretation" and did not understand what was spoken. Nonetheless, the experience brought them a call to Africa as well.<sup>57</sup> Leaving St. Louis, the Blacks and Glassey went to Connecticut and then on to Amherst, Nova Scotia where their recently attained notoriety furnished them the opportunity to share their testimonies and plans to an overflow crowd at the YMCA in December. During their brief visit, Glassey gained the "Chinese language" and visited two "Celestials" (Chinese) at a local laundry who indicated they recognized the language.<sup>58</sup>

Traveling as "faith missionaries," the threesome sailed to Liverpool, England and arrived there on January 7, 1896, with plans to book passage for Sierra Leone. As it happened, they remained in Liverpool for two years due to insufficient funds and resided at the home of W. H. Archer, an English evangelist who directed the Bethel Mission. In the meantime, several American periodicals branded their miraculous claims as fraudulent, a charge not easily dismissed after Glassey refused to allow her languages to be examined by a representative sent to England by a Christian organization in America.<sup>59</sup>

Such opposition did not deter their confidence in miracles. In fact, Glassey received more amazing gifts: seventeen new teeth, including "five fullgrown [sic] white teeth [that] filled old vacancies during a half hour's heavy sleep,"<sup>60</sup> handicraft skills, especially "practical needle work;" and newfound ability in instrumental music. "Those who know how unproficient she was in all those things when she left her home," said Walter Black of the hapless Glassey, "need no further proof that she

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<sup>57</sup> "Mission Work," p. 1.

<sup>58</sup> From a news item published in the *St. John (N.B.) Daily Sun*, December 30, 1895, reprinted in "Tongues of Fire. Other Tongues," *Tongues of Fire*, April 15, 1896, p. 59.

<sup>59</sup> "Going on Still," *Tongues of Fire*, April 1, 1897, pp. 54-55. Glassey wrote (p. 54): "It is no wonder the Lord would not permit me to verify the gift of tongues when there were so many volumes of prayer ascending to God for us. Do you know while [the representative] was trying to compel me to do as *he* said, I felt as if I was held by such an unseen force I dare not move."

<sup>60</sup> Frances F. Black, "God Also Bearing Them Witness," *Tongues of Fire*, June 15, 1897, pp. 97-98.

has been divinely taught, for all these gifts are as unnatural to her as the gift of tongues.”<sup>61</sup>

The story of this unusual missionary party might have died in obscurity had not Frank Sandford, an evangelist and founder of the Shiloh religious community near Durham, Maine, publicized it in his *Tongues of Fire* newspaper. “Such is the account of the Pentecostal method of learning foreign languages for the proclamation of the gospel,” declared Sandford. Christians who had the faith to try the “purely Holy Ghost machinery” of Mark 16:17-18 could achieve quickly the Great Commission, since, he huffed, neither “20,000 nor 100,000 missionaries of the common sanctified type will [ever] evangelize this globe.”<sup>62</sup>

Sandford became acquainted personally with Glassey and the Blacks in Liverpool and invited them to join him on his way by ship to Palestine.<sup>63</sup> For whatever reason, they abandoned their immediate plans for Sierra Leone and disembarked in Palestine at the beginning of July 1898. They may have resided in the region (Jerusalem and Syria) until 1904. Virtually nothing is known about their activities there except that the relationship with Sandford ended shortly after their arrival.<sup>64</sup> Although interest in the gift of tongues flourished for a time at Shiloh, Sandford had no place for it in his vision for the means of world evangelization.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Letter from Walter S. Black to Frank W. Sandford quoted in “Commit Thy Way,” *Tongues of Fire*, June 15, 1898, p. 93.

<sup>62</sup> “Tongues of Fire. Other Tongues,” pp. 58-59.

<sup>63</sup> Frank S. Murray suggests that the Blacks and Glassey visited Shiloh on their way from St. Louis to Amherst, N.S. in *The Sublimity of Faith: The Life and Work of Frank W. Sandford* (Amherst, NH: Kingdom Press, 1981), p. 180. While this may have happened, the correspondence with the Blacks and Glassey, which Sandford published, indicates that they were not personally acquainted; for example, see “Tongues of Fire. Other Tongues,” p. 58.

<sup>64</sup> Sandford returned to the United States in August 1898. The tenure of the Blacks in Palestine possibly lasted until 1904. In that year, Walter Black once more began pastoring Baptist churches: Moscow and Black Foot, Ida., Innisfall, Alta., New Westminster, B.C., Redlands, Calif., and Calgary, Alta. His last pastorate was a small mission in Los Angeles, Calif., where he died in 1929. “Deaths,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 7, 1929, p. 24. It is uncertain whether Glassey continued living in Palestine or had returned with the Blacks to North America by 1904. There is no indication that the Blacks or Glassey ever identified with the Pentecostal movement.

<sup>65</sup> Shirley and Rudy Nelson, “Frank Sandford: Tongues of Fire in Shiloh, Maine,” in *Portraits of a Generation: Early Pentecostal Leaders*, ed. James R.

The passionate conviction about Christ’s imminent coming and certainty of supernatural power had energized late nineteenth-century radical evangelicals.<sup>66</sup> In important respects, their approaches to mission and trust in the restoration of “signs and wonders” (Acts 5:12) stood as a protest against the influence of modernity on the mission enterprise and concomitant emphasis on the “civilizing” of heathen peoples. The seemingly endless fund raising, growing mission structures and policies, and resources deployed on institutions (schools, orphanages, clinics), downplayed what they considered to be the paramount objective of missions.<sup>67</sup> “Let it be understood,” thumped E. F. Baldwin, “that the simple preaching of the Gospel alone is the fulfilling of the [Great] commission.”<sup>68</sup>

Interest in the gift of tongues also displayed the pragmatic impulse of radical evangelicals and revealed a dynamic that blurred naiveté with exuberant faith in God’s power to accomplish the humanly impossible.<sup>69</sup> Since conferred languages conceivably could be verified, this left no

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Goff, Jr. and Grant Wacker (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2002), pp. 68-69.

<sup>66</sup> See A. J. Gordon, “Pre-Millennialism and Missions,” *Watchword*, April 1886, pp. 30-35; cf., Pierson, *The New Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 298-99.

<sup>67</sup> E. F. Baldwin described the constant call of mission agencies for “men and money” as a disgraceful “exaltation of gold” and a “departure from Christ’s simple and unencumbered methods laid down for the conduct of his work in enlarging the frontiers of his kingdom” in “The Question of the Hour—Foreign Missions,” *The Christian*, January 4, 1889, p. 12. For an insightful discussion of missionary funding, see Valentin H. Rabe, “Evangelical Logistics: Mission Support and Resources to 1920,” in *The Missionary Enterprise in China and America*, ed. John K. Fairbank (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), pp. 56-90.

<sup>68</sup> “A Missionary” [E. F. Baldwin], “The Question of the Hour—Foreign Missions,” *The Christian*, February 8, 1889, p. 110.

<sup>69</sup> Though their anticipation of miracles generally kept them on the margin of the nineteenth-century Protestant missions movement, the following served as articulate spokesmen for missions. Gordon, A. B. Simpson, Studd, the Polhill brothers, Sandford, and Walter Black were all college or university graduates, with several of them having attended or graduated from seminary (Gordon, Simpson, Sandford, and Black). William Simpson and William Christie had studied at the Missionary Training College in New York City and Charles Parham spent two years at Southwest Kansas College. While the information on Baldwin does not mention his educational training, his many periodical articles suggest an above average level of learning for his time.

room for unknown tongues or the connection to the baptism in the Holy Spirit that Pentecostals would later trumpet.

## 5. The Missional Influence

The broad conversation on the apostolic paradigm of faith missions and the availability of miracles—specifically healing through the prayer of faith—had logically opened the door to the gift of tongues. The missional nature of this two-decades-long discussion profoundly influenced the course of Pentecostalism when it arose after the turn of the twentieth century, indicating that more than any other factor tongues set the Pentecostals apart from their radical evangelical parents. The emerging legacy appears in many places, especially in the teachings of Charles Parham on Spirit baptism, as well as in key developments in the Christian & Missionary Alliance.

### 5.1 Parham and the Pentecostal Baptism

Information about Glassey gleaned from a St. Louis periodical caught the attention of Kansas holiness preacher, Charles Parham. In his *Apostolic Faith* newspaper in 1899, he said that she “could read and write, translate and sing the language while out of the trance or in a normal condition, and can until now. Hundreds of people can testify to the fact, both saint and sinner, who heard her use the language.”<sup>70</sup> In April of the next year, he reported that “Bro. and Sister Hamaker are now in Beth-el [Healing Home] to labor for Jesus until He gives them an heathen tongue, and then they will proceed to the missionary field.”<sup>71</sup> Residing at the heart of Parham’s operation in Topeka and devoting themselves to prayer for the conferral of a language, the Hamakers surely heightened his curiosity about the gift.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>70</sup> Charles F. Parham, “The Gift of Tongues,” *Apostolic Faith* (Topeka), May 3, 1899, p. 5. Parham’s source was an article in *Everlasting Gospel*, published in St. Louis, Mo. by H. W. Peffley. Thus, he may not have read the letters published by Sandford in *Tongues of Fire*. A reference to Glassey in Parham’s *A Voice Crying in the Wilderness*, 2d ed. (Baxter Springs, KS: Apostolic Faith Bible College, 1902, 1910), p. 29, indicates that his knowledge of her activities was limited.

<sup>71</sup> News note, *Apostolic Faith* (Topeka), April 1, 1900, p. 7, col. 2.

<sup>72</sup> James R. Goff, Jr., *Fields White unto Harvest: Charles F. Parham and the Missionary Origins of Pentecostalism* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1988), p. 73.

In late June 1900, Parham journeyed to Shiloh to meet Sandford and visit his Holy Ghost and Us Bible School. There he heard speaking in tongues for the first time, when several students came down from their vigils in the prayer towers.<sup>73</sup> His expectations of Mark 16:17 and Acts 2:4, the news about Glassey, the presence of the Hamakers at the Beth-El Home, and his experiences at Shiloh, confirmed that tongues as languages could be restored. He also knew of the widespread interest in such a possibility: "We have heard of a Bible School that made most marvelous claims in regard to the Baptism of the Holy Spirit," he recalled in 1902. "Like many individuals...[have] said: We have received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, but as we are bent upon the world's evangelization, we must have this. This Bible School sought in vain, month after month for the speaking in other languages."<sup>74</sup>

In October 1900, Parham opened Bethel Bible School, modeled on the Shiloh school, with the hope of producing a new diaspora of Spirit-filled missionaries who would leave Topeka for the ends of the earth. By this point his re-conceptualizing of the Wesleyan holiness baptism in the Holy Spirit had fully matured with the uniquely added "Bible evidence" of speaking in tongues. The reception of the global languages would mark the onset of the end-times,<sup>75</sup> the sealing of the bride of Christ, and provide the means for the speedy evangelization of the world.<sup>76</sup> On January 1, 1901, the anticipation became a reality for Parham and his students. The first to speak in tongues, Agnes Ozman, received the Chinese language. "We will not have to wait until we master the foreign languages," Parham told a bewildered reporter from the *Kansas City Times*, because "God will give us the power to speak so that we will be understood."<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> C. W. Shumway, "A Critical Study of 'The Gift of Tongues'" (A.B. diss., University of Southern California, 1914), p. 165.

<sup>74</sup> Parham, *A Voice Crying in the Wilderness*, p. 35.

<sup>75</sup> Charles Nienkirchen discusses the historical vision of early Pentecostals in "Conflicting Visions of the Past: Prophetic Use of History in the Early American Pentecostal-Charismatic Movements," in *Charismatic Christianity as a Global Culture*, ed. Karla Poewe (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1994), pp. 119-133.

<sup>76</sup> Goff, *Fields White Unto Harvest*, p. 78.

<sup>77</sup> Parham quoted in "Story of His Belief. Rev. Charles Parham Tells How He Learned His Religion," *Kansas City Times*, February 4, 1901; reprinted in *The Topeka Outpouring of 1901*, rev. ed., ed. Larry Martin (Joplin, MO: Christian Life Books, 2000), p. 252.

The languages from the testimonials of the Topeka revival included Assyrian, Bohemian, Bulgarian, Chinese, French, German, Hindi, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Norwegian, Russian, Spanish, Swedish, Turkish, Yiddish, and Zulu.<sup>78</sup> Along with these, participants at the later Azusa Street revival in Los Angeles, California (1906-09), impacted by Parham's teachings through his former student William J. Seymour, spoke of receiving Bengali, Chippewa, "Esquimaux," Greek, Hebrew, Latin, Tibetan, and sign language, among others.<sup>79</sup>

Unlike the radical evangelicals discussed previously, Parham had invested his holiness understanding of Spirit baptism with tongues. To the former, the gift of tongues would signify that God still performed miracles and would bestow languages. When this failed to happen, missionaries like C. T. Studd and William Simpson simply returned to their books. Their confidence had not been built on Spirit baptism, but on God's providence. Neither did they suggest that God intended for every believer to have such languages; tongues were for missionaries. In contrast, Parham's linkage of tongues with Spirit baptism added a dramatically innovative dimension, one that would form the direction of Pentecostal theology and spirituality for years to come. By insisting that every believer should have this experience, he pressed the logic much farther than had other radical evangelicals.

For the first seven years of the Pentecostal movement, the contours of his theology of Spirit baptism went largely unchallenged. In due course, Pentecostals modified their perception of the purpose of tongues. After Alfred and Lillian Garr, the first missionaries from Azusa Street to reach a foreign country, discovered in Calcutta their inability to preach in their newfound languages, they reformulated Parham's Bible evidence doctrine in early 1907. Though still perceived to be unlearned foreign languages or, as Alfred Garr added, the unknown "languages of angels" (1 Cor 13:1), their function changed from preaching to ecstatic prayer in the Holy Spirit as the source of empowerment for evangelism and missions.<sup>80</sup> Tongues then remained an indispensable component of Spirit baptism.

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<sup>78</sup> For the reported claims to divinely bestowed languages at Topeka, see Martin, *Topeka Outpouring*, pp. 235, 244, 247.

<sup>79</sup> News note, *Apostolic Faith* (Los Angeles), September 1906, p. 1, col. 4.

<sup>80</sup> A. G. Garr, "Tongues. The Bible Evidence to the Baptism with the Holy Ghost," *Pentecostal Power* (Calcutta), March 1907, pp. 2-5; idem, "Tongues in the Foreign Field" ("A letter from Bro. Garr"), *Confidence* (Special Supplement), May 1908, pp. 1-3. For a more complete discussion, see Gary B. McGee, "The

With this adjustment, Pentecostals no longer needed authentication of their languages, the scientific affirmation of which had eluded them since 1901.<sup>81</sup> Tongues as a form of prayer naturally demanded a major revision of the previous understanding of Mark 16:17 and Acts 2:4, signaling that Pentecostals had crossed the Rubicon into the Christian mystical tradition, while retaining the missiological intent of baptism in the Holy Spirit.<sup>82</sup> Ironically, the demise of the former certainty of tongues for preaching left their actual meaning in question.<sup>83</sup> From their

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Calcutta Revival of 1907 and the Reformulation of Charles F. Parham's 'Bible Evidence' Doctrine," *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 6 (January 2003), pp. 123-43.

<sup>81</sup> Nevertheless, in the years that followed, Pentecostals eagerly cited many instances where knowledgeable bystanders recognized the tongues being spoken. However, examples of Pentecostals being able to speak *at will* in their newfound languages proved difficult to find. An early Pentecostal editor, J. T. Boddy, wrote: "When a person finds himself, without any effort on his part, able at once to speak in a language or languages, which he never learned, (and in many cases these languages have been recognized by persons acquainted with them, thus proving them genuine) then it must be by a power outside of themselves..."; "The Gifts of the Spirit," *Pentecostal Evangel*, April 17, 1920, p. 6. For anecdotal evidence of recognized languages, see Stanley H. Frodsham, *With Signs Following: The Story of the Latter Day Pentecostal Revival* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1926), pp. 208-29; Ralph W. Harris, *Spoken by the Spirit: Documented Accounts of "Other Tongues" from Arabic to Zulu* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1973).

<sup>82</sup> Simon Chan, *Pentecostal Theology and the Christian Spiritual Tradition* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), pp. 40-72. According to Grant Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), p. 54, "Pentecostals inherited these cues and intensified them by making tongues and other forms of ecstatic behavior normative. In short, the momentum and direction of radical evangelical *culture* effectively predetermined that Holy Ghost ecstasy would emerge sooner or later." In reference to Mark 16:17, Pentecostal scholars in the second half of the twentieth century generally ignored the passage in their expositions of baptism in the Holy Spirit and Pentecostal spirituality. For recent Pentecostal scholars who affirm the missiological nature of the Pentecostal baptism, see William W. Menzies and Robert P. Menzies, *Spirit and Power: Foundations of Pentecostal Experience* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), pp. 69-83.

<sup>83</sup> Pentecostal writers usually chose to analyze the effects of tongues in spiritual empowerment, but not the actual function of tongues in personal spirituality. For example, see A. A. Boddy, "Speaking in Tongues: What Is It?" *Confidence*, May 1910, p. 11. Exceptions to this include the recent study by New Testament scholar Anthony D. Palma, *The Holy Spirit: A Pentecostal Perspective*

perspective, radical evangelicals suspected that Pentecostals had been deceived: Were unknown tongues of satanic origin?<sup>84</sup>

## 5.2 The Christian & Missionary Alliance

The gift of tongues had garnered more sustained attention in the Christian & Missionary Alliance than in any other mission-related organization. It captured the imagination of visionaries like Simpson who longed to see the gospel message announced around the world before Christ returned. Conversely, he had wrestled publicly for almost two decades with the issues that would encircle such a restoration: the rationale for tongues and also if their manifestations required the gift of interpretation (1 Cor 14:13-19).<sup>85</sup>

Though word of the Azusa Street revival sparked Pentecostal revivals in the Alliance,<sup>86</sup> Simpson and other radical evangelical revivalists had provided the tinder. While the *Apostolic Faith* (Los Angeles) newspaper, published by the leaders of the Azusa Street revival, still told of missionaries on their way overseas utilizing their new languages as late as the fall of 1907,<sup>87</sup> Alliance Pentecostals did not highlight always their experiences of tongues as preparation for

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(Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 2001), pp. 140-48; also, theologian Frank D. Macchia, "Sighs Too Deep for Words: Toward a Theology of Glossolalia," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 1 (October 1992), pp. 47-73.

<sup>84</sup> Grant Wacker, "Travail of a Broken Family: Radical Evangelical Responses to the Emergence of Pentecostalism in America, 1906-16," in Edith L. Blumhofer, et al., eds., *Pentecostal Currents in American Protestantism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), pp. 36-37.

<sup>85</sup> For example, see Simpson, "The Supernatural Gifts and Ministries of the Church," pp. 53-54, 67; "The Worship and Fellowship of the Church," pp. 125-27.

<sup>86</sup> "Revival Notes," *Christian and Missionary Alliance Weekly*, April 7, 1906, p. 212. The most extensive discussion on the Pentecostal revivals in the Alliance can be found in Charles W. Nienkirchen, *A. B. Simpson and the Pentecostal Movement* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1992), pp. 81-100; but one is also well served by Paul L. King, "Pentecostal Roots in the Early Christian & Missionary Alliance" (Part 1), *Assemblies of God Heritage* 24 (Fall 2004), pp. 12-17; (Part 2) 24 (Winter 2004-05), pp. 32-33.

<sup>87</sup> "Pentecostal Missionary Reports," *Apostolic Faith* (Los Angeles), October to January 1908, p. 1, col. 4. Nevertheless, the faithful at Azusa were also reformulating Parham's doctrine of Spirit baptism as evident in "Pentecostal Notes," *Apostolic Faith* (Los Angeles), September 1907, p. 3, cols. 3-4.

preaching.<sup>88</sup> Even as particular “branches” of the association were “seriously disrupted” by outgoing parties of missionaries who believed they had received the necessary languages and some new Alliance missionaries had been tempted “to abandon the study of the native language and wait vainly for some supernatural gift of tongues,” this prospect did not appear to reflect the prevailing opinion, whether among the Alliance faithful in North America or their missionaries in China and India who spoke in tongues.<sup>89</sup>

Recounting his Spirit baptism in early 1907 at Homestead, Pennsylvania, Alliance pastor J. T. Boddy said that for weeks afterward, he was “more or less intoxicated in the Spirit and flooded with tongues without number, expressed in messages, poetry, praise, prayer and songs of the Spirit.”<sup>90</sup> Likewise, reporting on the revival at the Chicago branch, Alliance insider William T. MacArthur penned, “The tongues they speak in do not seem to be intended as a means of communication between themselves and others, as on the Day of Pentecost, but corresponds more closely with that described in the 14<sup>th</sup> [chapter] of I Corinthians...and seems to be a means of communication between soul and God.”<sup>91</sup>

Another noteworthy example comes from a report prepared by the principal of the Missionary Training Institute at Nyack, New York. William C. Stevens related that when the school year began in the fall of

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<sup>88</sup> Nienkirchen, A. B. *Simpson and the Pentecostal Movement*, pp. 81-88.

<sup>89</sup> A. B. Simpson, *Eleventh Annual Report of the Christian & Missionary Alliance*, May 27, 1908, p. 12; see also, W. A. Cramer, “Pentecost at Cleveland,” *Christian and Missionary Alliance Weekly*, April 27, 1907, p. 201; F. E. Marsh, “The Gift of Tongues,” *Living Truths*, May 1907, pp. 261-62 (account of tongues at Alliance Hall in Newcastle, PA); A. B. Simpson, “Annual Report of President and General Superintendent of the C. and M.A.,” *Christian and Missionary Alliance Weekly*, June 15, 1907, p. 222; “Editorials,” *India Alliance*, August 1907, p. 19. For the Pentecostal revival in India among Alliance missionaries, see M. B. Fuller, “India,” *Eleventh Annual Report of the Christian & Missionary Alliance*, 1908, pp. 139-141; Mrs. W. M. Turnbull, “Another Chapter About Dholka,” *India Alliance*, May 1908, p. 130. One of the most insightful articles on the issue of tongues came from China missionary Robert A. Jaffray, who had experienced speaking in tongues himself: “Speaking In Tongues—Some Words of Kindly Counsel,” *Christian and Missionary Alliance Weekly*, March 13, 1909, p. 395.

<sup>90</sup> J. T. Boddy quoted in Frodsham, *With Signs Following*, p. 45.

<sup>91</sup> William T. MacArthur, “The Promise of the Father and Speaking with Tongues in Chicago,” *Christian and Missionary Alliance Weekly*, July 27, 1907, p. 44.

1907, “there was much demonstration and in many ‘tongues.’ Had these movings been from the wrong quarter, we might have had serious times. But never has the Faculty had to sit in council over the matter. . . . The result has been a deepened mutual confidence, love and respect in all our body.”<sup>92</sup> Whether known or unknown languages, the notion of their use for preaching did not occupy the discussion; the leaders had been down that road before.

For A. B. Simpson and many of his colleagues, the “most pernicious error” in circulation came from those who mandated tongues as the “necessary test of our having received the Holy Ghost, and come into the fullness of Christ.”<sup>93</sup> Nevertheless, a sizable contingent of Alliance members disagreed with them, seeing tongues as normative to Spirit baptism, and beginning in 1907 left to identify with Pentecostalism. Their involvement added to the doctrinal stability of the movement, impacted the character of its ministerial and missionary training schools, and extended the list of Pentecostal missionaries.<sup>94</sup> Others of the Alliance faithful who spoke in tongues, however, accepted Simpson’s critique and remained in the organization.<sup>95</sup>

Pentecostals insisted that speaking in tongues, now signifying the “inspired utterance” experienced by the 120 on the Day of Pentecost and to which Paul refers in 1 Corinthians 14:2 (“anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God...he utters mysteries with his spirit”), brought a heightened intimacy with the ministry of the Holy Spirit. This has distinguished the piety of Pentecostalism. “Everyone that gets the baptism gets power,” lauded an unnamed writer in the *Apostolic Faith* (Los Angeles). “It is a continuous power. It comes down from heaven. The Lord sings and speaks through you in another tongue. . . . [It

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<sup>92</sup> Wm. C. Stevens, “Report from the Missionary Institute,” *Eleventh Annual Report*, p. 82.

<sup>93</sup> A. B. Simpson, “Gifts and Grace,” *Christian and Missionary Alliance Weekly*, June 29, 1907, p. 302.

<sup>94</sup> Former Alliance members were especially influential in the fledgling Assemblies of God; see Edith L. Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith: The Assemblies of God, Pentecostalism, and American Culture* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993), p. 134. For the influence of the Alliance on Pentecostal ministerial and missionary training institutions, see Lewis Wilson, “The Kerr-Peirce Role in A/G Education,” *Assemblies of God Heritage* 10 (Spring 1990), pp. 6-8, 21-22; Michael G. Owen, “Preparing Students for the First Harvest: Five Early Ohio Bible Schools,” *Assemblies of God Heritage* 9 (Winter 1989-90), pp. 3-5, 16-19.

<sup>95</sup> Nienkirchen, A. B. *Simpson and the Pentecostal Movement*, pp. 122-30.

is] the third Person of the Trinity upon your soul, that reveals Christ and takes the things of the Father and shows them unto you."<sup>96</sup> Presbyterian missionary Antoinette Moomau said the transformation of the Pentecostal baptism created within her the ability to "preach the everlasting gospel in the power and demonstration of the Spirit and to truly go out on the faith line and to minister day and night, sometimes unto the hungry multitudes in the face of fierce opposition."<sup>97</sup>

## 6. Conclusion

Beginning in the 1880s, and especially in the years from 1888 to 1892 when North American Protestant missions expanded exponentially, the otherworldly logic of radical evangelicals pressed supernatural expectation ever farther in their march toward the evangelization of the world, charting a path that differentiated them from other Christians who did not share their unbridled confidence in the potential of miraculous happenings. In the end, they were forced to rethink the relevance of Mark 16:17 and instructed their missionaries to learn the "new tongues" of their respective mission fields with the assistance of the increasing number of grammars and dictionaries of foreign languages, undeniable evidence of the blessings of modernity in scholarly translation work. Notwithstanding, Pentecostals discovered spiritual dynamics in tongues-speech that would noticeably impact the Christian world movement.

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<sup>96</sup> "Pentecostal Notes," p. 3, cols. 3-4.

<sup>97</sup> Antionette Moomau, "China Missionary Received Pentecost," *Apostolic Faith* (Los Angeles), October to January 1908, p. 3, cols. 3-4.