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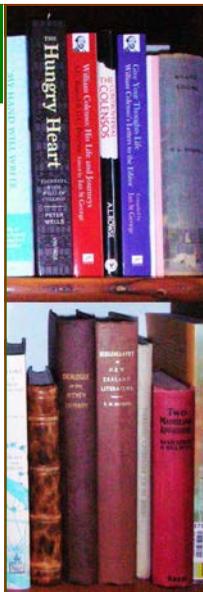
December 2014
Volume 5 No. 12
ISSN 1179-8351

eColenso



It ain't necessarily so

In his 1878 *Tracts for the times; No. 1, On the Sabbath and its due observance* (Napier, Dinwiddie, Morrison & Co. 46p) William Colenso was at his sarcastic best. His old nemesis Bishop Selwyn was of the Oxford Movement, High Church Anglicans, many of whom were members of the University of Oxford, and who sought to demonstrate that the Church of England was a direct descendant of the Church established by the Apostles. It was also known as the Tractarian Movement after its series of publications "Tracts for the Times" (1833–1841). Colenso was a liberal, reforming theologian and decidedly anti-Rome. He had published a series of short papers in 1858–1859 which he



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had called “Tracts for the times”, then the series of letters on which that booklet was based.

Here, in 1878, he followed his cousin’s 1862 publication challenging the view that the Bible was the infallible Word of God.

... one great difficulty presents itself at the very threshold, namely, the popular opinion respecting the Bible. I call it, the popular opinion; and yet it may not quite amount to that. Be this as it may, it is that notion, that the Bible is peculiarly one book,—comprising an entirety or complete whole in itself; that as such it is also the only Revelation, or direct Word of God to man. I can very well understand how ready some good folks are to bristle up, and to shew fight, at even the bare mention of a doubt of such being the case; and I can make every allowance for them, aye, and sympathise with them,—for I once so believed and so acted myself. And I did not readily give in, either,—until long (oh! very long) and painful and prayerful research and study brought me to see clearly that such a position was no longer tenable,—*could not*, in fact, *be any longer truthfully held or supported*,—and so I was obliged to give in, after contesting every position inch by inch. But have I, as a Christian, really lost any truth,—any good thing, thereby? No, by no means; very far from it, as I hope to shew in the end. This much, however, in passing, I will here say, that the Sacred Volume,—notwithstanding its unhistorical character, its variance with scientific certainties, its discrepancies, and contradictions,—the more it is studied the more Divine it seems, the more full of real support and solid comfort for the soul of man.

I must, however, remind my reasonable and thoughtful readers,—to consider (briefly) a few needful facts respecting the Bible.—

- (1) It is a volume containing writings made by many and different writers extending over a period of several hundred years.
- (2) That many of the several separate books themselves were not written by a single individual, but by several persons, and that, too, from time to time; and that the writers of many of those books are wholly unknown.
- (3) That, in addition to what Protestants know as the Old and the New Testaments, there are also the ancient books called (by them) “the Apocrypha,”—in which, however, are to be found some Divine passages, as much so as any we read in the Canonical writings; which are received alike with the other books by both the extensive Roman and Greek Christian Churches,—comprising, by far, the larger part of Christendom.
- (4) That at the time of the Jewish captivity under Nebuchadnezzar (600 years before Christ), their sacred books had been burnt, and that thus the Jews account for their reproduction.—

The two books of Chronicles, in a very great part of their contents, are not historically true,—they are written, as Dr. Irons says, “with a design of their own;” and

that “design” is, evidently, to blot out as much as possible from the earlier history of the people, as it is written in the older Books of Samuel and Kings, the plain signs which those Books exhibit, that the Law of Moses—the laws of the Pentateuch—were habitually disregarded by the very best of the Kings of Judah, and to represent them as in force all along. Now this fact—that of the unhistorical character of the narrative in the Chronicles—is one of the greatest importance, therefore it is that I so dwell upon it. For you cannot possibly acquire a clear idea of the real History of Israel, (from the time of the conquest of Canaan down to the Captivity,) unless your minds are disabused of the traditionary notion, as to the infallible accuracy of every line and letter in the History of the Chronicler, while yet his statements repeatedly contradict the statements of the older Books and even his own. You may easily satisfy yourselves on this point, by merely reading your Bible, carefully, with open eyes and clear understandings, employing a Bible with the marginal references and making use of them.

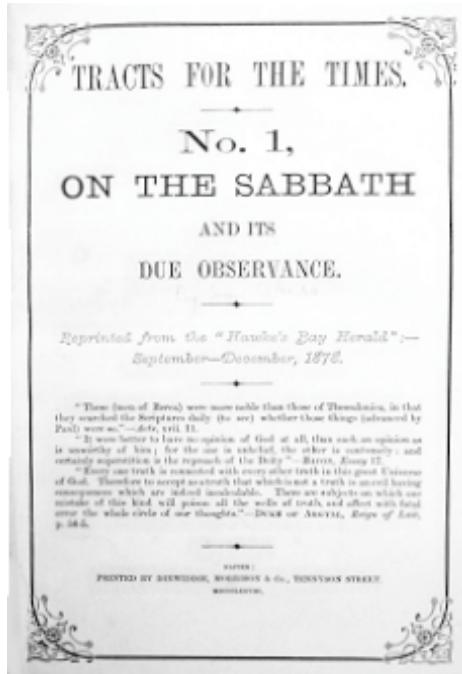
You will find that the Chronicler never gives a hint of David’s sins of adultery and murder,—nor of Solomon’s taking many heathen wives, and of their turning away his heart from the Living God: he says nothing of Solomon going after “Ashtaroth, the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom, the abomination of the Ammonites,”—of his “building a high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon.”

Again, the writer of the Book of Kings tells us that “Abijah, the son of Rehoboam, walked in all the sins of his father, which he had done before him, and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God” (1 K 15),—and mentions only that “there was war between Abijah and Jeroboam” (v. 7);—but the Chronicler, writing centuries afterwards, says not a word about Abijah’s wickedness, but makes him lead out a host of “400,000 chosen men” against 800,000 chosen men of Jeroboam, “mighty men of valour.” Abijah is then described (by the Chronicler,) as addressing this immense host of 800,000 men in most pious language, declaring that in Judah the Law was strictly obeyed;—and calling on them not to fight against God. However, they did fight, and in this one battle, we are told, Abijah’s 400,000 warriors slew of Jeroboam’s 800,000,— “five hundred thousand chosen men.” (2 Chron. xiii.)

Now let me here call your attention (1) to the actual size of these two petty kingdoms, which, together, formed what is called the Holy Land. (As many, I know, have not yet considered this.) Those two kingdoms together, were not so large as the small tract of country extending from Napier to Cape Palliser, and from the Ruahine mountain range to the sea. While that of Judah, alone could be comprised between Napier and Takapau. (2) The total loss of the Allied army in the great and memorable battle of Waterloo, including “British, Germans, Hanoverians, Brunswickers, Prussians, and Belgians,” was 4,172 men. (From *Alison*.)

Thus, once more, the Chronicler tells us, (1 ch. xxiii.) that when David was old the Levites were numbered, 38,000,—of whom 24,000 were to set forward the work of

the House of Jehovah, 6,000 were officers and judges, 4,000 were gatekeepers, 4,000 choristers;—that is, he reckons 24,000 ministering Levites, 4,000 gatekeepers, and 4,000 choristers, for a small tent, probably not so large as one of our own Napier churches, just exactly half the size of the Temple of Solomon, and might hold, if crowded, perhaps, 300 people! He also tells us of *one* Levite family, in which there were “2700 chief fathers and 1,700 officers”—altogether 4,400 rulers.—out of one single family of the tribe of Levi!



*De t'ings dat yo' li'ble
To read in de Bible,
It ain't necessarily so.*

—lyrics by Ira Gershwin from *Porgy and Bess*.

In 1879 Colenso wrote to the editor of the *Herald* informing the public of the proposed contents of a second booklet (*Tracts for the times No. 2*), but despite repeatedly advertising it for sale at 1s 6d in the following months, he did not publish it.



More on Hector and Colenso

By Simon Nathan

James Hector and William Colenso had known each other since 1864 when Hector invited Colenso to contribute two major essays to the 1865 New Zealand Exhibition in Dunedin. Colenso was happy to oblige, and put a lot of effort into the essays as it was a chance for him to demonstrate his expertise as a botanist and ethnographer. The essays were subsequently published in 1868 in the first volume of the Transactions of the New Zealand Institute:

- “On the Maori races of New Zealand”. 75 pages
- “On the Botany, geographic and economic, of the North Island of the New Zealand group”. 54 pages.

There was some controversy about the wording of Colenso’s ethnographic observations which Ian St George has documented in *e-Colenso* [St George IM 2011. “Beastly”: Colenso censored. *eColenso* 2 (4): 2–6].

Although Colenso remained interested in all aspects of natural science, he had little time for writing over the next decade as he was immersed in Hawkes Bay politics as well as his job as Inspector of Schools, which involved considerable travel. Everything changed in 1876 with the abolition of the provinces, leading to the appointment of Henry Hill as a replacement school inspector. Aged 65, Colenso suddenly had some spare time, and he threw himself into scientific and ethno-

graphic research with the obsessive zeal which was characteristic of everything he undertook.

On August 15 1877 Colenso sent Hector two manuscripts for publication in the Transactions of the New Zealand Institute. They were the first of more than 110 papers he was to submit over the next 22 years. We are not certain exactly how many were submitted because the records are incomplete and not all were published. But it seems that Hector accepted most of Colenso’s manuscripts apart from a small group (mainly on literary topics) he deemed to be unsuitable. Colenso later published some of these at his own expense. We can get an idea of Colenso’s scientific productivity during this period by the tabulating the number of his papers published in the Transactions year by year:

1877 – 4
1878 – 6
1879 – 5
1880 – 6
1881 – 7
1882 – 4
1883 – 1
1885 – 5
1886 – 7
1887 – 5
1888 – 7
1889 – 3
1890 – 3
1891 – 6
1892 – 5
1893 – 7

1894 – 5
1895 – 5
1896 – 2
1897 – 0
1898 – 2
1899 – 2

101 papers by Colenso were published in the Transactions over 22 years, an average of 4.5 papers a year, which is a remarkable record for an individual.

Hector clearly respected Colenso for the breadth of his ethnographic and biological knowledge, but he often shortened the manuscripts because of Colenso's tendency to write at great length. Hector was generally a conscientious correspondent, but he sometimes found it impossible to keep up with the flood of letters and queries he received from Colenso. On 16 January 1883 he received an indignant letter from Colenso saying that in late 1882 he had written to Hector and his assistant no less than 18 times, and had only received two letters in reply, one of which acknowledged the receipt of seven manuscripts for publication. Colenso was clearly a demanding correspondent.

But Colenso and Hector generally stayed on good terms. In January 1891 the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science held its first New Zealand meeting in Christchurch, Hector invited him to attend. His excuse was ill-health, but the real answer

was probably that he could not bear the thought of a sea journey. In his presidential address to the meeting, Hector paid tribute to a number of pioneering New Zealand scientists:

There is another name I feel must be mentioned as one who should have been in this position had his health permitted. I refer to the Rev. William Colenso, who is not only the greatest authority on the folklore of the Maoris, on whom he was among the first to confer a printed literature in their own language. His long-continued work as a field naturalist, and especially as a botanist, is exceedingly interesting, seeing that it forms a connecting link that has continued the early spirit of natural history research in New Zealand, that commenced with Banks and Solander, and was continued by Menzies, Lesson, the two Cunninghams, and Sir Joseph Hooker, prior to the arrival of colonists. Thus we still have in my esteemed friend, Mr Colenso, an active veteran naturalist of what we may call the old school of explorers.

Colenso clearly valued his friendship with Hector, and in a codicil to his will, dated 18 September 1895 he left a legacy of £100 "to my old friend Sir James Hector". In addition he left a number of items to the Colonial Museum and Library including "my ancient bronze bell with Tamil inscription".



A slice of heaven

There is a series of entries in Colenso's 1834 diary of the voyage to New Zealand which suggest the passengers indulged in a literary pastime: he records several poems of his own ("The Ocean—a Contrast", "A Thought on my Soul—July 8th at Midnight in the Atlantic", "The Hyacinth") as well as verses from well-known poets, two poems by fellow passenger Richard Wade, a quote from Horace (*Scribendi rede, sapere est principium ei fons*: good sense is the foundation of good writing) and then this!

Tale of a Voyageur.

Oh! sister! such a lovely sight I beheld last evening shortly after you retired from the deck.

"Did you ever see the moon rise at sea?"——

"Oh! dear, no; how should I? you know Alexius I never was at sea." [1]

I certainly spoke without thinking——but I have seen it and a lovely sight it is——almost worth a short voyage to witness "evening Cynthia fill her silver horn" [2]——

——"Pardon my interruption, but, in what does the moon's rising at sea differ from her rising o'er Land?"

——"The difference, doubtless, lies in the clearness of the atmosphere——the vast expanse of water——and the stillness, combined with the objects around you, not only inviting——but encouraging and aiding contemplation.—I will, as well as I am able, describe this scene, but my poor powers are too scanty to do it justice——

'Twas in the summer of 183_, during my passage to Sydney, in New South Wales, that I first beheld this beautiful sight.—We were nearing the Line—the weather was warm—the days short—twilight crept o'er us by 6 o'clock—our small, but gay, coterie seated in rosewood chairs, with cane bottoms—I am rather particular—we are assembled on the deck—perhaps indulging in small talk. The clouds which during sunset had been of the cirrus and cirrus-stratus description now appeared in masses—of the cumuli class:—resembling mountains capped with snow—here and there a dark cave, cleft & ravine appeared serving to shade and shew the unsullied whiteness of the more prominent parts——

———Meanwhile the Moon

Full-orb'd & breaking through the scattered clouds
shows her broad visage in the crimson'd East [3]

——the Clouds—like embattled armies—flank and pursue her, but in vain, she, like a victorious empress, Fendhia or Boadicea—overcomes, breaks them up into small detached portions—forms a circle around herself, with a halo—and rides triumphantly through the blue-arch'd vault of Heaven [4].

“Now, while the drowsy world lies lost in sleep,
Let me associate with the Serious Night,
And Contemplation, her sedate compeer;
Let me shake off the intrusive cares of day,
And lay the meddling sense all aside.” [5]

What a lovely serenity appears in that shining path [6] on the surface of the shuddering deep! [7] How beautifully the breeze here and there gently ripples the surface! How plaintively sweet does the melody of a fife, though sounded by a son of Neptune, steal in the water! and the thrumming of a guitar, almost carries you back to the serenades of the olden time in honour of the haughty damsels of Castile! For a moment Luna is overcast by a leaden-coloured cloud—but again she emerges with apparent double-lustre—gladdening the mariner in his lonely vigil—the fisherman, the traveller, the admirer of—

“Nature and the Christian—
Oh! Nature! all-sufficient! over all!
Enrich me with the knowledge of thy works!
And let me never, never, stray from thee! [8]

(To be continued).

There is no noun that cannot support at least one adjective. Mills and Boon might have published it, and we have (for our sins), here, but most readers will be pleased to hear that it wasn't “continued”.

References

There may be other literary allusions; those I can discern are these—Ed.

1. St Alexius fled from home to follow his holy vocation: the young Colenso's self-image?
2. Pope: *Messiah*.
3. James Thomson: *Autumn*.
4. Byron.
5. Thomson: *Winter*.
6. Job 41:32: He maketh a path to shine after him.
7. Carlyle: *Earth's music*.
8. Thomson: mixed lines from *Autumn*.

*Warm moonlight over my horizon
She's a slice of heaven, yeah*

Dave Dobbyn.



Golf on Colenso Hill

On 12 December 1895 the 84 year old William Colenso wrote in his diary, “Messrs. P.S. McLean & Kennedy called (as had been arranged) *re* leasing ground for a *Golf Club*.”

He expanded in a letter to Coupland Harding on 15 January 1896,

And now for another *new* arrangement! In Decr. P.S. McLean, Sir Donald’s son, & several others (*Scotch* of course,) made overtures to me, to have the use of the 3 *outer paddocks* for golf play—& yesty. I agreed, & a lease is to be drawn for 3 yrs.

That seems extraordinary, for Colenso famously disliked Scotsmen and games—but he had an ulterior motive: he continued,

Then I proceed to stop the public from going through my grounds—by advt. &c. 100 d’s daily—*more than by M. Rd!* to S. end of Scinde Island; but, had I *not* entered into this agt. such *must be done as it is unbearable!* grass destroyed, fences & banks broken down, trees broken up, gates left open, horses straying & impounded, &c, &c, &c.—fowls, ducks &c. all killed by dogs; fruit stolen, &c.—continual terror from *fire—smokers’ matches*.

He wrote to the *Herald*, with an advertisement in the same issue, informing the public that his land was no longer open as a short cut to and from the southern hill properties.

SIR, From an advertisement in another Column the public will know, that all thoroughfare through and over my ground is permanently closed, and this applies to all alike, including a few friends and neighbors to whom I had given permission, as I cannot possibly make any distinction. I have now leased my premises to the Napier Golf Club, who will join with me in keeping off trespassers.

Notices.

NO THOROUGHFARE.

THE Public are hereby informed that thoroughfare through my enclosed grounds on the hills, Napier, can no longer be allowed. Persons trespassing after the last day of this month (February), will be prosecuted. That none may plead ignorance, and that this notice may be fully known, it will be advertised for one whole week in each of our three daily town papers.

WILLIAM COLENZO.

* * See my letter in another column.
February 20th, 1896. 807

Indeed the enthusiastic Scots of the Napier Golf Club had already played their first match that very day (Saturday 15 February 1896), as the *Daily Telegraph* gleefully reported (in a style surely derived from Jerome K. Jerome's *Three men in a boat*, published in 1889).

NAPIER GOLF CLUB. OPENING DAY.

[BY "TEE."]

On Saturday afternoon the Napier Golf Club opened play on their links, which have been formed on the hills situated between Napier Terrace and the foot of Milton road. It was at one time thought impossible to find suitable ground for the royal game nearer than Greenmeadows, but some months ago two enthusiastic golfers, in exploring the island, found suitable though difficult country in the paddocks which belong to the Rev. Mr Colenso, and are occupied by Dr. de Lisle. These gentlemen, as well as the church trustees, and their tenant (Mr Monckton) fell in with the idea, and made generous arrangements. Docks and blackberries have been tackled, with the result that on Saturday the ground was found sufficiently playable to warrant the opening of the Season. As a rule the game is one which can be played in New Zealand only in winter, because in the country the long grass makes the game impossible. The links of the Napier Golf Club will, however, be playable throughout the year, as the paddocks are continuously occupied, and the grass is always well cropped down. On Saturday afternoon a large number of members and their friends assembled on the starting ground at Napier terrace. The president, Mr W. Dymock, and the vicepresident,

Mr W. Buchanan, picked sides. The first hole is on the point of the next hill towards Mr Colenso's, which is known as the Doctor's Nose. Between the starting point and the Doctor's Nose is Bramble Gully. The president, amid cheers, teed his ball, and made the first stroke. He got his first ball well off from the tee by a spirited drive. It lit, however, just on the verge of the further slope of Bramble Gully, and rolled down the hill into Hell. Mr Buchanan then sent a magnificent drive of over two hundred yards right across Bramble Gully and over the Doctor's Nose, but his ball also went to Hades. Neither ball was recovered, and the first hole was divided.

The second hole is placed on the land through which till lately trespassers have been accustomed to seek a short cut. It is known as the "Way of Transgressors." This drive cost the vicepresident's side another ball, and the hole counted to the president. From the Way of Transgressors the ball was next driven down to Dock Gully, which hole was won by the vicepresident's side. From that point the links follow up and along the Philosopher's Hill, which runs from Mr Colenso's fence behind Carlyle street towards the lime kiln at the head of Hitchings's Gully. The first hole is towards the end of the hill adjoining the Philosopher's fence, and is called The Royal Society hole. This was won by the president's team.

The next drive is right along the ridge of the hill, and is the longest drive in the links. It was well contested. The vice-president had just got to "the like" (Golf language for equality), and the hole would have been divided but for a short drive of the vice-president failing to pass the President's Caddie, an accident which entitled the vice-president to claim the hole. From that point the drive is to the lime-kiln, and is down-hill. Again bad luck pursued the president; in fact, he had the hole in his pocket when the flag that marks it fell on his opponent's ball, lying a few inches from the hole, and cut it in, thus enabling the vice-president to count the hole. The drive from this point is up Dock Gully to the foot of the Hill Difficulty. This is a level drive between the sides of the hills. It was won by the president's party. The drive from this tee is the hardest on the ground, looking up the steep face of a hill, down which the ball rolls back unless it can be landed on the top by one stroke. The balls

all found their way to the putting ground on the top, but the clubs did not appear to have taken any serious share of the business of getting them there, and it was with one consent agreed to omit this hole from the reckoning. The last drive of all is from the Doctor's Nose to the starting point. Again the president's party encountered difficulty in Bramble Gully, and the home hole fell to the vice-president. The complete round of the links occupied just a little over an hour. Many of those present took part in the game for the first time, those who were not included in the teams whose play has been described arranging parties of their own; and all concurred in expressing their delight at having, within such easy reach, the means of enjoying the oldest, the healthiest, the most sociable, and the most pleasant of recreation. On the conclusion of the play the president and Mrs. Dymock, with Mr and Mrs Morris, entertained the members and their friends at afternoon tea at their residence—Balquhidder.

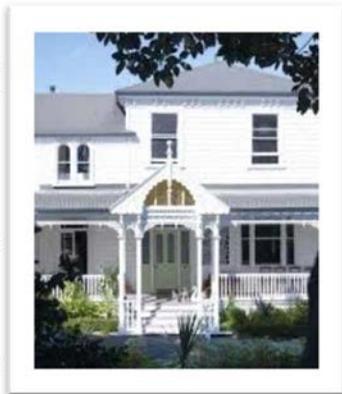
That, if you add up the drives, describes a nine hole course in "the 3 outer paddocks".

Nothing always runs smoothly, of course: Colenso wrote in his diary on 4 November 1896,

At 10 a.m. Messrs. Glassford & Heron, lessees of central paddock, called to complain of injury to grass from Golf Club players, they staid some time, I promised to see to it.

The Scotsmen's accuracy had clearly remained less than perfect, to have strayed off the fairways and out of bounds into the central paddock and to cause such damage and arouse such complaint.

Subsequent newspaper reports of Napier Golf Club events suggest the complaints did not deter them from the royal game, however.



Balquhidder House, Napier



I'm 'Enerly the eighth I am'

In 1875 William Colenso was reading James Anthony Froude's *History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Defeat of the Spanish Armada*.² Froude asserted the English Reformation was the "salvation of England" so when the first volumes were published in 1856 they were criticised by Oxford High Churchmen who opposed his position on the Church—and liberals who felt that Froude's depiction of Henry VIII celebrated despotism.

Colenso was a devoted Protestant, a scholar of the English Reformation, a man who even named his son Ridley Latimer after the English martyrs.

There is a piece of notepaper in Colenso's writing in the Alexander Turnbull Library collections, dated 1875. On it he wrote,

The following is so highly descriptive of *my own* unfortunate case, & what *I went through* 32 years ago, (through the stratagem of others,) that I copy it: I have been greatly struck with it, in reading Froude.

Next are five quotations copied from Froude, the first (1) comparing his own marital actions and position with those of Henry VIII...

— "Cromwell carried the answer from the German suite, who came over with the Princess Anne of Cleves, (about the non-existence of any pre-contract,) to Henry, and it was miserably unwelcome. "I have been ill-handled," he said; "if it were not that she is come so far into England, and for fear of making a ruffle in the world,—I would never have her. But now it is too far gone; wherefore I am sorry." (And, again, afterwards.) "Is there no remedy," Henry exclaimed, "but that I must needs, against my will, put my neck into this yoke?" There was none. It was inevitable.—He gathered up his resolution. As the thing was to be done, it might be done at once; delay would not make the bitter dose less unpalatable. — — — As Henry was preparing for the sacrifice he called Cromwell to him in the Chamber of Presence:— "My lord," he said, openly, "if it were not to satisfy the world and my realm, I would not do that I must do this day for none earthly thing." — — — From the day of the King's marriage "he was in a manner weary of his life." — — To the Queen herself he was kindly distant; but, like most men who have not been taught in early life to endure inconvenience, he brooded in secret over his misfortune, and chafed the wound by being unable to forget it. — — — "I have done as much to move the consent of my heart & mind as ever man did," he said to Cromwell, "but without suc-

1. A 1910 British music hall song by Fred Murray and R. P. Weston. It was a signature song of the music hall star Harry Champion. In 1965 it was revived by Herman's Hermits.
2. You can read it at <http://babel.hathitrust.org/>

cess.” “I think, before GOD,” he declared another time, “she has never been my lawful wife.” The wretched relations continued without improvement till the 9th. of May.”—(pp.277–299.) (see more, p.301.)

The equivalent passage in Colenso’s “Autobiography” (written for his sons) is this:

31. Now, however, a most strange, sudden and sad event took place, known, at present, to no living soul but myself; and did I not believe it highly necessary that you should know it I would not now write it. That night, the one before the marriage (never, never to be forgotten by me) was one of the most awful, most dreadful nights, of my whole life—and I have seen and experienced not a few. Indeed I think, and have ever thought, that it was by far the worst I have ever known. That night I never went to bed. I only paced up and down my small bedroom in a most deplorable state of mind and it began in this way. Mr. F. we had long known, was unfortunately too much given to drink. I, however, on my former short visits had seen nothing of it. On the afternoon evening of this day he got intoxicated and his poor wife and daughter did all they could to keep him quiet etc. but he would neither be quiet nor stay in his bedroom, and in the long struggling etc. that ensued he said several evil things, in which all of them were more or less concerned, and my name was not unfrequently used by them all, especially by the females, but only by them as a reason why he should become quiet lest I should hear etc. etc. The house, a very large wooden one, was wholly unfinished within—the rooms were not yet all partitioned off, so that I could not help hearing too much: it nearly drove me mad. I packed up my few things in my valise; I opened the little window of my bedroom, a “lean-to”; I determined to leave them that night and go and hide among the fern and scoria until morning, and it took some hours ere I got the better of that determination for, I saw, that if I did so I must leave the mission at once and for ever,

32. The next day Mr. Churton arrived very late (after-noon,) and we were married, he, however, only hurriedly reading a small portion of the Marriage Service (he had walked out through the scoria, no roads then, with his little son). This was April 27/43, a heavy day and time for me. And here I must further remark that nothing was more clear and plain to me at that time than this—that we 2 had no love for each other; still I hoped, aye, I fully firmly believed that mutual affection would surely follow, for all I wanted was a suitable partner, particularly in mission work—this was ever uppermost and this I had plainly told Miss F. in my first letter, and to this day in which I write this (August 23/83), more than 40 years since that eventful night and time, I am undecided as to whether I acted rightly or not. Was it the voice of a warning spirit from God (whom I loved and served) or was it from the enemy? I cannot tell. God only knows. Long since then, however, and particularly of late years, peculiar circumstances have arisen both at Home in England and here in New Zealand, in which and while at

the very Communion Table rails one of the two about to be married has suddenly refused and left the Church. One case I recollect was that of a minister. Perhaps I ought to have done so—but I dare not decide—I cannot.

The quotations from Froude continue (2):

(A note by Froude, p.274.) *N.B.*

Those who insist that Henry was a licentious person, must explain how it was that, neither in the 3 years which had elapsed since the death of Jane Seymour, nor during the more trying period which followed, do we hear a word of mistresses, intrigues, or questionable or criminal connections of any kind.— There is a difficulty in this which should be admitted, if it cannot be explained.”

Froude’s *Histy. of England from the fall of Wolsey*:—
vol. iii. ch. xvii: Ed. 1872.

Colenso, to his son Willie,

But it would require many words to give you a correct outline of what strange and false charges I have had to meet and to bear; 1 was that I had turned Mrs. C. out of doors; another that I had cast her off with the 2 children; another that I was living disreputably with Mao. women; another that I was a complete drunkard and common card player with the low whites, but I have never cared to answer these—I have lived them down!

Froude (3)—and here Colenso’s “failure under a single and peculiar trial” is obvious,

— “The worth of a man must be measured by his life, not by his failure under a single and peculiar trial. The Apostle though forewarned denied his Master on the first alarm of danger; yet that Master, who knew his nature in its strength & its infirmity, chose him for the rock on which He would build his Church.”—

(*Id.* vol. 5, ch. 33., conclusion)

Froude (4):

“Orange was well understood to be the soul of the revolt. — his life had been sought for some years past by the indirect means wh. are either murder, or legitimate execution, according to the character of the victim.” (And, in a *note*:)— “The English Govt. had bought the head of Desmond. In our own times a reward has been offered for Nana Sahib, dead or alive.” (*Id.* vol. xi. ch. 66.)

William of Orange, Protestant leader, called by Spanish King Philip “the pest of Christendom”, suffered two assassination attempts (the second was successful)

arranged by Church conspirators. William Colenso had published booklets arguing against Roman Catholicism, had been taken to task by Selwyn for doing so, and was about (in 1878) to begin *Tracts for the times*, a new series against Catholicism. Did he see his actions as a protestant revolt and his expulsion from the Church of England ministry as an assassination plot by High Churchmen?

Froude (5):

“Where the enemy who is to be conquered is strong, not in vital force but in the prestige of authority & in the enchanted defences of superstition, those truly win the battle who strike the first blow, who deprive the idol of its terrors by daring to defy it.” (*Id.* ii. 455).

The “enemy” in Froude’s and in Colenso’s minds was the Roman Catholic church. Henry VIII had dared to defy it in England. Colenso had dared to defy it in New Zealand. They did seem to share a kind of grandiose paranoia.

Eight years after writing this note, Colenso entered into his diary (8 February 1893) the following, “Took up Froude’s ‘Divorce of Catherine of Arragon’—very interesting, & *something else (in part)* applic. to myself & daughter—who was trained to *hate me!!!*” Catherine’s daughter Mary remained Catholic; she would become queen and her killing of protestants earned her the name “Bloody Mary.”

Le roi est mort, vive le roi!



Goodwill towards men

William Colenso gave away a lot of money in the 1890s. He was by now wealthy of course, and could afford to be generous.

A pound in 1890 had the buying power of \$NZ186.86 in 2014, so his gift of £400 and further loan of £1000 to pay off the Cathedral debt were very substantial indeed. His offer of £1500 for a new museum would have been \$280,000 today. [1]

Importantly though, he also gave to the poor and needy. The 1880s and 1890s have come to be known as the “Long Depression” in New Zealand. In the winters there was visible hardship and distress. Those who had come out in the 1870s sent less positive messages home, and free passages were ended. Fewer new settlers arrived, and people began to leave. [2]

Henry Hill wrote of Colenso as,

...the man who, whilst living loved the poor, the homeless, and the unfortunate and though dead had not forgotten to make “mention of them in his will.”

His house was known to all the vagrant train,
He chid their wanderings, but relieved their pain,
Careless of their merits or their faults to scan,
His pity gave ere charity began. [3]

Coupland Harding would write in his eulogy,

Of his charities time would fail to speak. His munificent gifts to the poor of his native town are known by all, and had the undesirable results of flooding him with begging letters. Like all generous men, he was sometimes deceived by a plausible vagabond but as a rule his help was as judiciously as it was kindly given. [4]

His surviving diaries more or less fully cover the years 1890 to 1896. Here are a few entries from 1896...

Mrs Young from Meeanee arrived w. a letter from Rev. A.P. Clarke contg. account of her family troubles: agreed to help her w. £2., she getting other aid.— (18 June).

Aftn. another *poor* man from Meeanee, Oliver Mosen also an *old* settler, lost *all* by fire 2 mths. ago, & no Insurance, w. family of 11! gave him £2. Another poor fellow called, & was fed. (22 June)

Mrs Fullbrooks again called in trouble, landlord threatg., unable to pay Rent; agreed to pay £1. towards it.— A stranger, yg. woman, called, wanted 9/- to pay her fare to Kopua—after some talk, gave her 5/- towards it, telling her, to seek other 4/- elsewhere. (22 July).

... noon a poor man called: (23 July)

There is an ingenuous lack of cynicism in William Colenso. Faced, as he was, with increasing numbers of beggars coming to his Napier door in the 1890s, the harder-hearted of us might have concluded that the small-town grapevine was at work and that he was recognised as a soft touch with easy pickings to be had at his back door. Not so Colenso, who perceived it as his Christian duty to give alms to the poor, and not to question their justification. He was not blindly generous, though,

Mr. Badley Taradale, called, & wished me to aid him w. money or suretyship: obliged to refuse *both*. Assigning (as I thought) good reasons. (22 June).

a poor woman called & wanted help—but I did not give her any!! (Did I act rightly?) appy. yg. fat, strong, &c. I sent her to the Ministers' wives & ladies in town.—(11 July).

In August of 1896 he called for help to the Town Clerk and in a letter to the *Hawke's Bay Herald* (10 August) entitled *A plea for the starving*, wrote,

SIR,—Permit me through your paper to ask you to set forth speedily some useful plan by which to relieve the poor—the very poor—the starving, the outcast, the wanderer, the stranger, the homeless,—who are daily visiting Napier seeking work; and who do not know where to go, or what to do, to obtain a meal or a bed at night. Do, please, come out strongly and quickly in their behalf; for it is a great necessity, a serious trying matter which cannot be put off. Human beings are starving in our midst, and the winter not yet over.

For some months I have had many poor fellows visiting me; sometimes even four and five of a day! and though willing to help, I cannot do all they need—cannot even approach it; and therefore it is that I write to you, that through your generous and ready public call, something serviceable and fitting may be done and that speedily.

In other towns, though much smaller and poorer, an almoner is to be found ready at hand to help all such necessitous cases; and an almoner should be found here, one always handy and at his post,—his room or office being central and publicly known.

Three weeks ago, the cases being numerous and pressing, I called on the Town Clerk and laid the matter before him, for him to tell the Mayor. Captain Bower (seemingly) agreed with me that something should be done, and that, too, quickly; and also promised to let me know of some fit person being appointed as almoner to meet such cases. But I have not heard from him, and hence I write to you.

If money is wanting, let the Mayor call an urgent public meeting “right away,” and let such be subscribed and collected, or (better still) if the Borough possesses the necessary power to levy a special rate for this purpose, let such be done. I am sure many in Napier would gladly pay their share to

help, to save their fellow countrymen; for my own part I would willingly do so—aye, I would rather pay double (if needed) what I have now to pay for harbor rates, and have done with that.

Not a few of those who have called on me are fine able young fellows—not so much seeking pecuniary help as work; and some (I have observed) though starving were above asking alms; still possessing that fine old English feeling! God help them.

Only a short time ago a poor old man was committed to gaol here for a fortnight for asking alms! As a “vagrant”; such may have been right in his case if a resident townsman; but I equally pity the Justices who could inflict such a sentence, together with the householder who laid the complaint, and the policeman who had (in the performance of his duty) to “run him in.”

Do, please, use your able pen. Remember who said,— “Ye have the poor always with you, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: I was a stranger and ye took Me in, naked and ye clothed Me,” &c.—I am, &c.,

WILLIAM COLENSO.

The American author John Williams would write, perhaps more eloquently, but certainly no more humanely of the Great Depression of 1930,

He saw good men go down into a slow decline of hopelessness, broken as their vision of a decent life was broken; he saw them walking aimlessly upon the streets, their eyes empty like shards of broken glass; he saw them walk up to back doors, with the bitter pride of men who go to their executions, and beg for the bread that would allow them to beg again; and he saw men who had once walked erect in their own identities....

John Williams, *Stoner*, 1965.

References

1. http://www.rbnz.govt.nz/monetary_policy/inflation_calculator/
2. www.teara.govt.nz/en/history-of-immigration/page-10
3. A tribute to the veteran. *Hawke's Bay Herald* 13 February 1899. The couplets are from Oliver Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*, which the *Herald* misprinted badly (“His pity gone ere charity began”).
4. *The Press* 27 February 1899.



The Relief Fund.

In addition to the £317 subscribed yesterday, already published, the following donations have been received:—

	£	s	d
R. D. D. McLean	100	0	0
Breakwater Contributions ..	25	0	0
Robjohns, Hindmarsh, and Co.	25	0	0
A. J. Cotterill	25	0	0
Rev. W. Colenso	20	0	0
H. A. Banner	20	0	0
S. Oarnell.. ..	10	10	0
E. and W. Lyndon	10	10	0
G. S. V. Wenley.. ..	10	0	0
Bank N.S. Wales	6	4	0
Clark & Son (per J. V. Brown)	5	5	0
Baker and Tabuteau	5	5	0
W. K. White	5	5	0
Elison and Duncan	5	5	0
J. S. Large	5	5	0
Mrs Bryson	5	5	0
F Howard	5	0	0
Webster and M ^l Lean (Occidental Hotel) and employés ..	5	0	0
P. Gorman	5	0	0
R. W. Jensen	3	3	0
John Grubb (Wellington) ..	3	3	0
P. S. M ^l Lean	3	3	0
W. Proffitt	3	3	0
Mrs Moore, Barrack Hill ..	2	2	0
Albion Lodge Druids	2	2	0
James Hardy	2	2	0
C. B. Hoadley	2	2	0
G. N. Pierce	2	2	0
G. Kelly	2	2	0
H. Davies	2	2	0
A. Beaver.. ..	1	1	0
Jno. Roberts	1	1	0
A. Fried	1	1	0
A. E. Eagleton	1	1	0
Mrs Duncan	10	0	0



Scrofula & Colenso's Conway connection

Gillian Bell emailed,

Another informative journal, which explains to me Hamuera's scrofula of the neck which Colenso cured. I think this reference was in a letter from Colenso, implying the ingratitude of his man servant but you probably know where this info is.

Re Conway, it is a long bow but Fanny & Will Simcox lived in Conway 1870–74 as the Simcoxes had there a holiday home. Two children were born there, the eldest my grandmother. Will & brother Jack spoke Welsh like natives. Lattie visited them & maybe he provided someone with his father's address. Pity we don't know more about Lattie's places of residence at that time.

Amazing what information keeps coming forward, building a picture of the times for which I thank you!

On scrofula, indeed Colenso wrote on 5 February 1852 that Hamuera,

... being a slave, was redeemed when a very little boy by Archdeacon Henry Williams from being killed & eaten; and who, soon after, (when a loathsome object through Scrophula, which disease had eaten large ghastly holes in his neck, armpits, and breast,) was taken in by me; and through GOD'S blessing on the means perfectly cured; and for whom I had done much, and from whom I had patiently borne a great deal, during the 17 years of our living together.

Marsden funding success for Colenso

A 2015–2017 project
*Personal Geographies
and Global Networks:
William Colenso and the
Victorian Republic of
Letters* has been sup-



ported by the Marsden Fund. It features new digital humanities approaches and advanced computational science tools to identify and analyse Colenso's local and international intellectual, scientific, linguistic, religious, and political networks using his extensive published writings and voluminous letter correspondence. Text mining, social network analysis, topic modeling, and geospatial visualisation offer new insights into Colenso's personal geography as well as his pivotal role in a global system of information exchange and knowledge production.

The leader of the research group is Dr Sydney Shep, Reader in Book History, Wai-te-ata Press, Victoria University of Wellington (sydney.shep@vuw.ac.nz).

Dr Shep's research focus is the interdisciplinary domain of book history and print culture and includes projects ranging from a history of New Zealand paper and papermaking to Wellington's print history to the nineteenth-century transnational typographical press system, as well as biscuit typography, graffiti, emoticons, and reading in the Boer War. In 2010 she established a Print Culture eResearch Hub to facilitate several collaborative digital humanities projects: The Printers' Web, the New Zealand Reading Experience Database, and the Digital Colenso.

Sydney integrates the unique letterpress teaching laboratory of Wai-te-ata Press into much of her teaching and this practical experience informs her historical research.

Find out more about recent VUW-funded research into William Colenso and the Victorian Republic of Letters at <http://colensoandtherepublicofletters.weebly.com/>

[Derived from <http://wtap.vuw.ac.nz/wordpress/digital-history/> and <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/sim/about/staff/sydney-shep>]

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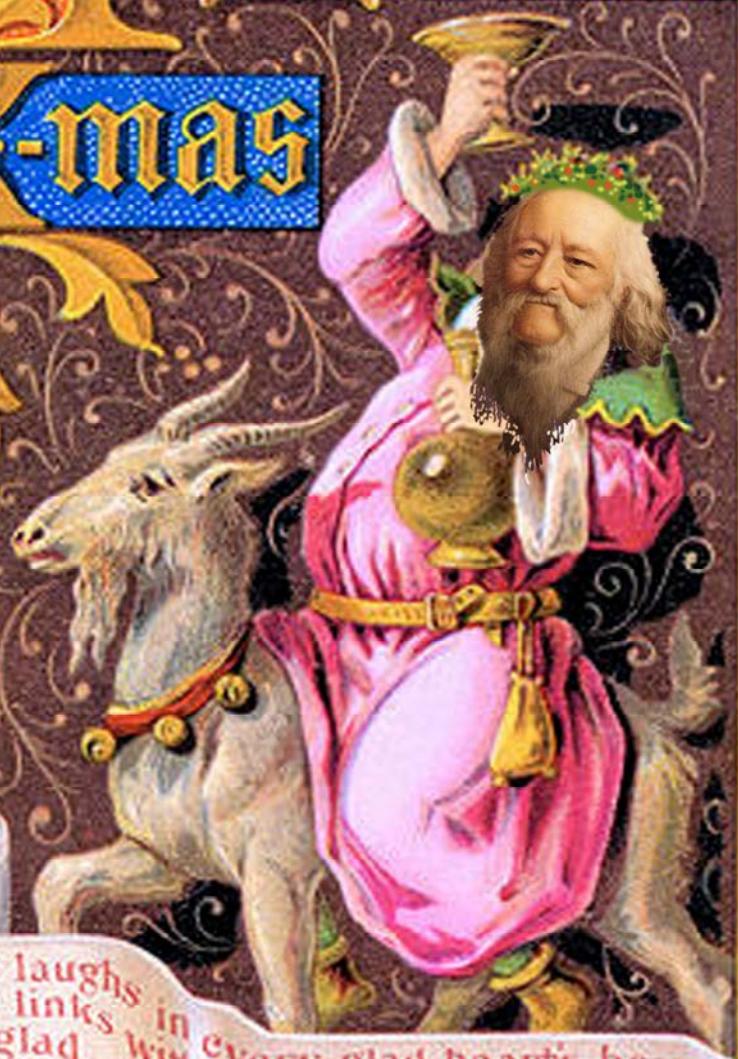
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Ho Ho Ho -mas



He laughs in every glad heart's beating,
He links with firmer love the true -
O glad as bells his name repeating
May old King Christmas come to you!