

ABSTRACT**The Development of Methodism in Barbados****1823 - 1883.****Noel FitzAllan Titus**

This work constitutes the first detailed attempt to look at Methodist work in Barbados in the nineteenth century. It makes extensive use of unpublished archival materials, especially the manuscript records of the Methodist Missionary Society. By using the Methodists as an example, it seeks to highlight the problems some dissenting groups faced in West Indian societies, in which there were "state" or "established" churches, and where religious intolerance, though not as rife as in the previous century, nevertheless was a noteworthy characteristic of these societies.

By the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Church of England was firmly established in Barbados. The Quakers of the previous century had all gone, due largely to the intolerance of members of the Established Church. Moravian missionaries arrived in the latter half of the century to work among the slaves. They existed on sufferance, and were able to survive by pandering to the prejudices of the planter class. The Methodists who arrived in 1788 were to have a different experience. Unlike the Moravians, they were

a dissentient offshoot from the Church of England, and this fact, plus their uncompromising attitude in an already hostile plantation society, contributed to the way in which they were treated.

This dissertation seeks to examine the development of Methodism in the closing years of slavery, and the years which followed the abolition of the slave system. It will seek to show that religious intolerance in the Barbadian society, especially as that was linked to the existence of a church establishment, was a major obstacle for the Methodists to overcome. This intolerance affected them in several aspects of their development - their right to function, their relations with the Established Church, their quest for public financial support, and their operation of schools. It will show that they themselves were not without blame for some of the problems which they encountered. It will also show that internal problems regarding discipline in one congregation, and class or colour distinction among the ministers, created further difficulties for them. This was particularly the case when efforts were made to establish an autonomous West Indian Conference.