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F.F. Bruce and the Inter-Varsity Fellowship

Oliver R. Barclay

Professor Bruce has had a real contribution to make to the Inter-Varsity Fellowship at all stages of his career. He was President of the Christian Union in Aberdeen as a student; then he was a major help to struggling C.U.'s in Leeds and Sheffield as a local member of staff in days when the support of staff for I.V.F. groups was rare. Gradually he emerged as a sought-after speaker on subjects where evangelical scholars were few, and his speaking and personal counselling has helped many to remain true to their evangelical faith when the theological pressures were all the other way.

Over the years he has helped many to keep fighting and not to react into anti-intellectualism, and it is here that his books have been a powerful influence for good. His *Are the New Testament Documents Reliable?* for instance (now under a slightly more positive title), was a major source of help to Christians and non-Christians alike. Though his gifts are not primarily evangelistic, his talks and writings in the field of apologetics have carried a good deal of weight. One wonders who can have been a more prolific writer of everything from highly technical works to popular paperbacks. His industry has been enormous!

At one stage (perhaps still) he had a reputation for answering requests by return of post, usually with a completed manuscript which he had sat up half the night to finish. He must have saved the day for many magazine and symposium editors who, when let down by other authors, turned to F.F.B. and did not ask in vain. One wonders if the Inter-Varsity Press's *New Bible Commentary* and *New Bible Dictionary* could have appeared in anything like the time and shape that they did without his herculean backroom efforts. The I.V.F. and its associate movements would not be what they are apart from F.F.B. And we trust that our experience of fellowship in days gone by is merely a token of many years of fruitful co-operation during years to come.

Dr. O.R. Barclay is General Secretary of the Inter-Varsity Fellowship.

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