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## Ireland, Wales and Scotland

Stewart J Brown

### ABSTRACT

While the Oxford Movement was an English development, it did exercise a significant influence upon the other nations within the United Kingdom. In Ireland and Wales, where the established United Church of England and Ireland held the allegiance of only a minority of the population, small but influential groups of high churchmen embraced Tractarian principles as a form of Church defence. In Scotland, Tractarian principles contributed to the modest revival of the small Scottish Episcopal Church, and also had unexpected consequences in promoting a Scoto-Catholic movement within the late nineteenth-century established Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

### KEYWORDS

Celtic fringe, New Reformation, Church principles, devotional revolution, Dissent, ancient British Church, Jacobites, Scottish Episcopal Church, Disruption, Scoto-Catholic movement.

### **Introduction: The Celtic Fringe**

In its beginnings, the Oxford Movement was most decidedly English. It developed in the late 1820s within the context of Oxford University, and initially it reflected the response of a gifted group of dons to the perceived threats to the Church of England, a response that included a commitment to promote apostolic succession, primitive Christian teachings, high sacramental theology and a Christian ethos. Tractarianism was nurtured within the heart of

the English metropolitan state; its supporters were concerned with the renewal of the established Church in a land where Anglicanism was the faith of the majority of the population.

The Oxford Movement, however, soon made its presence felt in what has been described as the ‘Celtic fringe’ of the nineteenth-century United Kingdom state – that is, the nations of Ireland, Wales and Scotland. Here the Movement encountered very different religious, social and cultural contexts. The notion of a ‘Celtic fringe’ was largely a nineteenth-century intellectual conception, and it referred to those portions of the Atlantic archipelago that had been least influenced by the ancient Roman conquest and occupation of these islands. Ireland, Wales and Scotland each preserved a distinctive sense of national identity, and significant portions of their populations spoke a Gaelic dialect. While Wales was united with England in 1536, Scotland did not enter into parliamentary union with England until 1707, and the parliamentary union of Great Britain and Ireland only came into effect in 1801. While some viewed the ‘Celtic fringe’ as an entity, the nationalities of Ireland, Wales and Scotland were in truth defined more by their individual relationships with England than with one another.

The circumstances for the Anglican, or Protestant Episcopal Church in these societies were far from encouraging. In Ireland, the United Church of England and Ireland was legally the established Church, but it held the allegiance of only about 10% of the Irish people, and its establishment status was deeply resented by Ireland’s large Catholic majority. From the 1820s, that majority was being organised as an effective political force under the leadership of Daniel O’Connell, and was soon demanding an end to the established Church in Ireland. In Wales, the Church of England was also a minority establishment, with the adherence of probably less than a quarter of the Welsh people in 1830. The Welsh people had, from the early eighteenth century onwards, increasingly embraced Protestant Dissent under the

influence of the evangelical revival. Many resented the established Church as the Church of the anglicised landed classes, and they had vivid communal memories of persecution by the bishops' courts. In Scotland, where the established Church had been Presbyterian and Reformed since 1690, the Episcopal Church had the allegiance of a tiny minority of the Scottish people, perhaps only 3% of the population. During the eighteenth century, Scottish Episcopalians had been closely associated with the Jacobite resistance to the Hanoverian monarchy in Britain; as a result Scottish Episcopalians had been subjected to decades of persecution, including penal laws imposed on them by the British parliament. Those laws were only rescinded in 1792. Despite these unsympathetic conditions, and indeed partly in response to these conditions, the Oxford Movement found supporters in Ireland, Wales and Scotland from an early stage.

### **Ireland**

It was, to a large extent, the crisis facing the established Church in Ireland, and the responses of the British state to that crisis, that had formed the occasion for the beginning of the Oxford Movement. The 1820s were indeed a time of intense religious conflict in Ireland, with a 'Bible war' that threatened to erupt into civil war. On the one hand, Protestants, especially those in connection with the established Church, had embraced a campaign, known as the 'New Reformation' or 'Second Reformation', which aimed to achieve what the sixteenth-century Reformation had failed to achieve in Ireland – that is, the conversion of Ireland's large Catholic majority to Protestantism. With the support of prominent landowners, missionary, Bible and educational societies, and some clergy of the established Church, the New Reformation movement aimed to consolidate the Union of Britain and Ireland around a common Protestantism. Protestant 'Bible warriors' denounced the Catholic Church for keeping the Irish peasantry trapped in ignorance and superstition. The New Reformation

campaign had some success, especially in County Cavan, where there were over a thousand converts in 1826-7. Largely in response, the Irish Catholic majority, under the leadership of the lawyer and landowner, Daniel O'Connell, organised a national and democratic movement for Catholic emancipation, including marches and 'monster meetings', aimed at both achieving equal civil rights for Catholics and thwarting the New Reformation movement. By 1828, the New Reformation campaign was losing momentum, while the Catholic emancipation movement was gaining mass support and threatening political upheaval.

To avoid a breakdown of public order, Parliament passed a measure of Catholic emancipation in 1829, though with guarantees for the preservation of the Irish Protestant establishment. Despite these guarantees, Catholic tenant farmers began refusing to pay their legal tithes to the established Church. A 'tithe war' began in late 1830 and spread quickly across the south and west of Ireland, with violent clashes between the Catholic peasantry and troops, loss of lives, and a financial crisis for the established Church. In response to the violence, Parliament passed the Irish Church Temporalities Act of 1833, which reduced the size of the Irish establishment, suppressing some parishes and arranging for the gradual abolition of ten of the twenty-two bishoprics (by uniting dioceses on the deaths of incumbents). It was this Act – which John Henry Newman described in a letter to the archbishop of Dublin as 'the extinction (without ecclesiastical sanction) of half her candlesticks, the witnesses and guarantees of the Truth and trustees of the Covenant' (Whately 1866: vol. i, 235) – that provided the occasion in 1833 for launching the *Tracts for the Times* in Oxford. Meanwhile, the assault on the Irish Church continued, and was taken up by British radicals and Dissenters, who denounced the Irish establishment as corrupt, oppressive and indefensible.

The majority within the Church of Ireland was evangelical in orientation. They emphasised Bible reading, direct, emotive preaching, salvation by grace alone, and the

individual conversion experience, and they were prepared to co-operate with Presbyterians and Methodists in missionary and educational endeavours. However, as Peter Nockles has highlighted, there was also a significant high church group within the early nineteenth-century Church of Ireland – strongly influenced by the theology of the seventeenth-century Caroline divines – which viewed the Church of Ireland as the one true catholic and apostolic Church in Ireland, established by St Patrick, renewed by the Reformation, preserving the apostolic succession, and maintaining pure doctrine against the errors of both Rome and Geneva (Nockles 1998). For high churchmen, the established Church in Ireland derived its authority not from its numbers, but from its divine nature. As the high church archbishop of Dublin, William Magee, insisted in his charge of 1822, the Church of Ireland's claims rested on 'the *apostolic origin and succession of the Christian ministry*; the only ground on which the just rights of the Church can be maintained' (Magee 1822: 12-13). Prominent high churchmen in the Irish Church included John Jebb, bishop of Limerick, Richard Mant, bishop of Down and Connor, Lord John George Beresford, archbishop of Armagh and Primate, and Thomas Elrington, bishop of Ferns. High churchmen, most notably Magee, had initially supported the New Reformation movement, although many soon grew critical of the evangelical dominance of the movement and its lack of attention to Church principles and liturgy (White 1981: 7).

Confronted in the mid 1830s by the tithe war, widespread calls for their Church's abolition, and parliamentary indifference to their plight, a small number within the embattled Church of Ireland were attracted to Tractarian writings, including the Tractarian vision of the Church as a spiritual body, which was tested by persecution, and which possessed primitive truths and a divine authority independent of the state. From about 1835 Tractarian ideas were being spread in Ireland by several younger Irish clerics and laymen who had studied in or visited Oxford and had fallen under the spell of John Henry Newman. They included

James Henthorn Todd, John Jebb, Jr., John Crosthwaite, Lord Adare, Aubrey de Vere, the poet, and William Alexander, a future archbishop of Armagh and Primate of the Church of England. Some were drawn to the Tractarian emphases on asceticism and the disciplined spiritual life; others to Tractarian sacramental theology and veneration of ancient liturgies. ‘I have had intelligence from various parts of the Country’, the Irish historian, James Henthorn Todd, wrote to John Henry Newman on 17 April 1839, ‘of many clergymen who have made great strides towards Catholic views....I understand that in the Dioceses of Derry and Raphoe the Tracts are read with avidity – I know of some clerical book societies that have ordered them, and every one is talking of them.’ ‘Several clergymen’, he added, ‘have preached up Lent and fasting this year’ (Newman vii 1995: 62). Irish Tractarian sympathisers distanced themselves from the evangelical ‘Bible warriors’ and were critical of crude popular Protestant condemnations of Catholicism. In his Donnellan lectures of 1838 at Trinity College, Dublin, for example, Todd created a scandal when he challenged popular Protestant portrayals of the Catholic Church as the anti-Christ.

As Nigel Yates observed, several Irish Protestant bishops supported the efforts, associated with the Oxford Movement, to revive ancient rituals and promote the study of ecclesiology (Yates 2006: 282). Bishop Mant had been insistent from the early 1820s that churches in his diocese should be properly fitted for worship. He later agreed to become a patron of the Cambridge Camden Society and in 1842 he accepted the presidency of his diocesan Church Architectural Society – though this interest in ecclesiology also led to charges of ‘Puseyism’, and forced his resignation as a patron of the Camden Society (Yates 2006: 286-7). In his charge of 1842, while critical of certain Tractarian excesses, Mant none the less applauded the ‘good and laudable motive’ behind the Tracts, which were ‘directed to valuable ends’. These valuable ends included the revival of Church principles, including apostolic succession, baptismal regeneration, and the proper ordering of church interiors

(Mant 1842: 4, 20). Archbishop Beresford, Bishop Elrington of Ferns and Leighlin, and Bishop Kyle of Cork and Ross were also sympathetic to the restoration of historic ritual. From 1837, Todd promoted more choral services at St Patrick's cathedral, Dublin, while he lectured on ancient Church liturgies in the chapel of Trinity College, Dublin. Others, including his brother-in-law John Crosthwaite, worked with Todd in promoting the revival of historic liturgies, daily services and choral services. In 1840, Todd was active in founding the *Irish Ecclesiastical Journal*, which was sympathetic to Tractarianism and ecclesiology.

In 1839, two young laymen with Tractarian sympathies, Lord Adare, the son of the second earl of Dunraven, and William Monsell, who had studied briefly at Oriel College, Oxford, conceived the plan of creating a college in Ireland both for training an Irish-speaking clergy for the mission to the Catholics and for educating young men of the upper social orders in Church principles. Adare and Monsell supported the New Reformation movement, but they had become convinced it would only succeed if based on a conception of the United Church as the true catholic and apostolic Church in Ireland, and if it were conducted by missionaries trained in Church principles. They were joined in promoting the college project by James Henthorn Todd and the Oxford high churchmen, William Sewell – with Sewell later serving as the first warden. The Primate, Archbishop Lord Beresford, made an initial donation of £500 to the new institution, which was named after the Irish St Columba. The college was opened in 1843, and in 1849 it moved to Rathfarnham, near Dublin. In a historical work of 1844 dedicated to the 'Warden and Fellows of the College of St Columba', William G. Todd, the brother of James Henthorn Todd, portrayed the ancient Irish Church as having emerged independently of the influence of the papacy of Rome. The Church of St Patrick, he insisted, had 'remained independent from the See of Rome, from its foundation until the twelfth century' (Todd 1844: 141). This Church of St Patrick was now the United



Church, which was a branch of the ancient catholic and apostolic Church, rooted in ancient Irish culture, and independent of the corruptions both of Rome and of Geneva.

St Columba's College, however, did not become the centre for Tractarian teachings in Ireland that its promoters had envisaged. This was largely due to the storm of protest aroused in Ireland by the publication in early 1841 of Newman's Tract 90, a work which brought a deluge of Protestant denunciation upon the small group of Irish Tractarian sympathisers. As we have seen, the Church of Ireland felt besieged: Irish Protestants viewed Catholics as their implacable enemies, committed to the destruction of their Church and to the end of Protestant property and influence. For embattled Irish Protestants, Newman's efforts to show that the Thirty-Nine Articles could be interpreted in a Catholic sense seemed part of a plot to subvert the United Church of England and Ireland from within. This view was shared by the Irish high church group as well as the evangelicals. 'Many Churchmen here', Todd informed Edward Pusey on 10 May 1841, 'object to Tract 90, supposing it to be a dishonest attempt to strain the Articles' (Liddon 1893-97: iv, 224). Pusey added to the tension with an ill-timed and impolitic visit to Ireland in the early summer of 1841. He met prominent Catholics, attended Catholic mass and visited a Catholic convent, thus seeming to confirm the extreme Protestant portrayal of the Tractarians as Romanisers. 'We shall have to suffer', Todd complained of Pusey, 'for his nunnery doings' (Nockles 1998: 483). The furore diminished Irish support for St Columba's College, which was now denounced as a 'Pusey colony'. In response the trustees distanced the College from the Oxford Movement (Nockles 1998: 483).

The Oxford Movement in Ireland was further weakened by the surge of anti-Catholic feeling roused by the Government's Maynooth grant in 1845, when the Westminster state provided an enlarged and permanent state endowment for Ireland's Catholic seminary. The secession of Newman and other prominent Tractarians to the Catholic Church confirmed, for many Irish Protestants, the Movement's Romanising tendencies. The Oxford Movement in

Ireland experienced some high profile conversions to Rome, including Lord Adare and William Monsell, the two founders of St Columba's College, Aubrey de Vere, the poet, and William G. Todd, the historian. With the death of Bishop Mant in 1848 the Oxford Movement lost its main sympathiser on the Church of Ireland episcopal bench. Also significant in weakening the influence of the Oxford Movement in Ireland was what the historian Emmet Larkin described as the 'devotional revolution' in the post-Famine Irish Catholic Church. According the Larkin, the two decades after the Synod of Thurles in 1850 witnessed a transformation of the Irish Catholic Church under the ultramontane leadership of Paul Cullen, archbishop of Dublin and Primate, with an emphasis on Roman devotional practices, including 'the rosary, forty hours, perpetual adoration, novenas, blessed altars, *Via Crucis*, benediction, vespers, devotion to the Sacred Heart and to the Immaculate Conception, jubilees, triduums, pilgrimages, shrines, processions and retreats' (Larkin 1972: 645). With the devotional revolution, the Catholic Church in Ireland became increasingly assertive of its own claim to be the true catholic and apostolic Church in Ireland. There is no evidence that the Oxford Movement in the Church of Ireland influenced the devotional revolution in the Catholic Church; rather, both were part of the larger religious awakening across Europe associated with Romanticism and the reaction to the materialism and scepticism of the later Enlightenment. But the devotional revolution in Irish Catholicism did mean that suspicions of Romanising tendencies within the Church of Ireland grew more pronounced and tended to reinforce its Protestant character.

## **Wales**

The established Church of England was a minority Church in early nineteenth-century Wales. The Protestant evangelical movement beginning in the early eighteenth century had an immense impact on Wales, with a significant growth of Protestant Dissenting denominations

– Baptists, Independents, and especially Methodists. Welsh Dissenting chapels appealed to local communities with a simple gospel message, direct, impassioned preaching, congregational singing, services in the Welsh language, and emphasis on personal conversion. Their growth reflected in part the weaknesses of the established Church. While its weaknesses were often exaggerated by the Church's opponents, the Church in Wales did have problems with pluralism, clerical non-residence, pastoral neglect, abuse of patronage, and gross inequalities of clerical incomes. Many Welsh people, moreover, perceived the established clergy as alien, English-speaking, closely aligned with the largely anglicised landed classes, and indifferent to their needs and aspirations. Certainly the growth of Dissent in Wales was remarkable. 'On an average over the fifty years between 1800 and 1850', R. Tudor Jones observed, 'Dissenters in Wales were opening one new chapel every eight days'. By the time of the religious census of 1851, over 70% of places of worship and over 77% of worshippers in Wales belonged to a dissenting denomination (Jones 1970: 41).

Compared to this massive growth of dissent, the impact of the Oxford Movement on religion in Wales was modest, and indeed many historians have dismissed the Movement in Wales as negligible. However, as recent scholarship, especially the work of Nigel Yates, D.P. Freeman, and John Boneham, has demonstrated, the Oxford Movement did make its presence felt in the Welsh Church from about 1840, and it did exercise a growing influence, especially through the ecclesiological and ritualist movements, as the century progressed. The Movement found expression in sermons, pamphlets, poems and hymns, many of them preached or published in the Welsh language. Tractarian teachings were brought to Wales largely by Oxford-educated clerics or members of the landed classes, many of whom were connected to Jesus College, and they found some support from an existing Welsh high church movement, which had roots in the Welsh Jacobite movement (Owen 1953: 111-19). The old

Welsh high church movement was especially influential among the landed classes around Aberystwyth.

The prominent Tractarian, Isaac Williams, poet and author of Tract 80, *On Reserve in Communicating Religious Knowledge* (1836), came from a landed family near Aberstwyth, and while he was raised in London, he maintained his Welsh family connections. The Williams family estate became the centre of a network of Welsh Tractarians, including Lewis Gilbertson (later Vice-Principal of Jesus College, Oxford) and Evan Lewis, later Dean of Bangor cathedral. In 1841, the Williams family contributed to the erection of a new church, designed according to strict ecclesiological principles, at Llangorwen, several miles north of Aberystwyth. Matthew Williams, Isaac's older brother, provided a site for the new church and together with his sister-in-law, Jane Griffiths, contributed to the construction costs. The church was constructed in early English style, the chancel was modelled on Newman's church at Littlemore, and the church had the first stone altar in Wales since the Reformation. According to local tradition, Keble donated the eagle pulpit, while Newman gifted four bronze candelabra. In preaching at the consecration of the church in December 1841, Isaac Williams spoke of how the building represented 'the Church Catholic and visible throughout the world ... built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ being Himself the chief cornerstone' (Williams 1841: 16). Lewis Gilbertson was the first incumbent. Another early Tractarian church was built on ecclesiological principles at Llangasty Talylyn in Breconshire. It was endowed by an Englishman, Robert Raikes, who bought an estate in the neighbourhood in 1847; under a succession of Tractarian incumbents, the church provided ritualistic worship and daily services. In 1852, John Lewis, vicar of Llanrhystyd, near Aberystwyth, rebuilt his church on Tractarian principles, enlisting Isaac Williams's help (Jones 1971: 110-11).

During the early 1850s, another small but lively network of Tractarian supporters emerged in the diocese of Bangor, where Tractarianism received some sympathy from the bishop, Christopher Bethell, a high churchman with connections to the Hackney Phalanx. In his charge of 1843, Bethell had denounced Tract 90 and the Oxford Romanisers, but he had also insisted that the Tractarians had done much good through their teachings on the nature and governance of the Church, apostolic succession, sacramental grace, and early Church history. The Tractarians, he maintained, were helping to recall the Church to its ‘laws and regulations’ and raising its ‘standard of holiness’ (Bethell 1843: 15-16). Tractarian supporters in the Bangor diocese included Morris Williams, Philip Constable Ellis, Richard Williams Morgan, Richard Pughe, Griffith Arthur Jones, Owain Wynne Jones and Evan Lewis. They promoted Church principles through sermons, poetry and essays, much of it in the Welsh language. In 1843, Morris Williams, who wrote under the bardic name ‘Nicander’, published a volume of Welsh poems, *Y Flwyddyn Eglwysig*, which was modelled on Keble’s *Christian Year*. John Williams, rector of Llanymawddwy, an antiquarian and Celticist who wrote under the bardic name ‘Ab Ithel’, was a moderate Welsh voice of the Oxford Movement, a translator of Latin hymns into Welsh, and editor of the Welsh-language journal, *Baner y Groes*, which promoted Tractarian principles and lasted from 1855 to 1858.

Welsh Tractarians embraced a form of apologetic which portrayed the established Church in Wales as heir to the ancient British Church, and thus rooted deeply in the Welsh past. This line of apologetic, as Peter Nockles has shown, began among such seventeenth-century writers as Isaac Basire, Edmund Stillingfleet and William Cave, and was revived in the second decade of the nineteenth-century by the high church bishop of St David’s, Thomas Burgess, in such works as *The First Seven Epochs of the Ancient British Church* (1813) and *Tracts on the Origins and Independence of the Ancient British Church* (1815) (Nockles 2007). In 1844, the Welsh Tractarian, John Williams (‘Ab Ithel’) took up this apologetical

line with *The Ecclesiastical Antiquities of the Cymry: or the Ancient British Church*, which argued that Christianity had been brought to Britain in the first century of the Christian era by evangelists of Jewish origin, who had probably been ordained by St Peter. The early Welsh Church, he maintained, had subsequently drawn upon ancient bardic traditions, uniting them with 'Oriental' influences. Its organisation was complete by 500 AD, well before the arrival of Augustine's mission (Williams 1844). This type of apologetic enabled Welsh Churchmen to link their Church to both the ancient apostolic Church and ancient Welsh culture, while distancing their Church from both Roman Catholicism and the evangelical Dissent. This was similar to the apologetic for the Irish Church that we have seen being expressed in the mid 1840s by the Irish Tractarian, William G. Todd. On the whole, the Oxford Movement in Wales was strongly anti-Roman, with few converts to Rome. That said, there was a furore in North Wales when Viscount Feilding, son and heir to the Earl of Denbigh, and Feilding's wife, became Roman Catholics in 1850.

In the late 1850s and 1860s, the influence of the Oxford Movement spread more widely in Wales, and became increasingly associated with ritualism, ecclesiology and the social mission. The Movement found additional patrons among the gentry and aristocracy, including Lady Windsor in Penarth, Lord Tredegar in Llanvaches, Lord Penrhyn, the Gladstones and Glynnnes at Harwarden, and the trustees of the Marquis of Bute. From 1867, the Tractarian incumbent George Huntington promoted ritualist practices in his church of St Mary's, Tenby, in the diocese of St David's, and in 1872, he founded the Society of St David of Wales to promote ritualism within a Welsh national context (Yates 1974: 234-8). In 1872, the Tractarian Griffith Arthur Jones was appointed vicar of St Mary's, Cardiff. The following year, Father Jones, as he was known, was joined by three Anglican Sisters from St Margaret's convent, East Grinstead, to assist in his Cardiff mission work. The Tractarian Evan Lewis was appointed vicar of Aberdare by the trustees of the Marquis of Bute in 1859.

He restored plainsong and Gregorian chants in worship, and in 1864 opened a new church, St Mary's, built on ecclesiological principles. Lewis became rector of Dolgellau in 1866, and dean of Bangor cathedral in 1884. Father Jones' close friend and fellow Tractarian, John David Jenkins, was appointed vicar of Aberdare by Bute's trustees in 1869. Jenkins oversaw the restoration of St John's church to its original Gothic design, heard confessions, inaugurated Church choral festivals, and continued Gregorian chants in worship, now with a white surpliced choir. Active in social engagement, charitable work, and helping to mediate industrial disputes in this industrial parish, Jenkins became revered as the 'Railwayman's Apostle' before his early death, aged 48, in 1876 (Turner 1988: 61-79).

The Oxford Movement aroused considerable hostility from Welsh Dissenters. Not surprisingly, Dissenters objected to being portrayed by Tractarians as schismatics who lacked a valid ministry, because not part of the apostolic succession. For their part, many Welsh Dissenters viewed the Tractarian clergy as Roman Catholics in disguise. 'What is Puseyism?' asked the Nonconformist pastor, John Phillips, in a lecture given in 1850 in Bangor: it is 'the friend of the Church of Rome, the corruptor of the Church of England, and the enemy of Nonconformists'. Puseyism, he added, 'is Protestantism in profession, and Popery at heart. It wears the clothing of the sheep, but its voice is the bleatings of the goat' (Freeman 1999: 130). Nonconformists exaggerated the numbers of Tractarian clergy in Wales, in order to portray the whole established Church as corrupted by its influence. According to the Nonconformist pastor, William Rees, speaking in 1850 at a public meeting in Carnarvon, 'the greatest number of the Parsons of North Wales are now Puseyites', while the Welsh landed classes were 'becoming Popish by the thousand' (Freeman 1999: 163). Hostility to the Oxford Movement was a major factor in convincing Welsh Nonconformists, especially Calvinistic Methodists, to take up the cause of disestablishment during the 1840s. 'For a people whose whole cast of thought was theological', observed the historian, R. Tudor

Jones, 'the Oxford Movement became in itself an argument for disestablishment' (Tudor Jones 1970: 64).

However, while the Oxford Movement may have convinced many Welsh Dissenters to embrace the cause of disestablishment, Oxford influences were also important in shaping the later nineteenth-century responses of the Church in Wales to its increasingly vulnerable position as an establishment. Tractarian teachings helped the Welsh Church to see itself as part of the ancient British Church, spiritually independent of the state, with deep roots in Welsh history and identity. The Oxford Movement contributed to a revival of choral music in worship, to the writing of Welsh hymns and devotional poetry, and to the building or restoration of churches on ecclesiological principles. The influence of the Oxford Movement in Wales should not be exaggerated. There was hostility to ritualism within the Welsh Church, with the broad church bishop of St David's, Connop Thirlwall, among the most prominent opponents. As Nigel Yates observed, with reference to England and Wales, 'at the end of the nineteenth century the four Welsh dioceses were among those that had been least influenced by the Oxford Movement' (Yates 2000: 59). None the less, Tractarian influences helped prepare the Church in Wales for both early twentieth-century disestablishment and for a revived sense of mission in a Welsh national context.

### **Scotland**

Early nineteenth-century Scotland was overwhelmingly Presbyterian. In the 1830s, some 85% per cent of the church-going population north of the Tweed attended a Presbyterian church. They embraced the Calvinist theology of the Westminster Confession of Faith, with belief in the awesome majesty of God, the predestination of all things by the inscrutable divine decrees, salvation by grace alone, and the absolute authority of Scripture. Their



worship was defined by the Westminster Directory, with services focused on the Word of God – Bible readings, long sermons, and congregational singing of the metrical Psalms, with no instrumental accompaniment and no prayer book. Church interiors generally had white-washed or bare stone walls, and were dominated by the high pulpit; there were, at this time, no stained-glass windows and no crosses on the wall. Scottish Presbyterian Churches were governed by a hierarchy of church courts made up of ministers and elders; there was a parity of ministers and no bishops. The majority of Presbyterians adhered to the Church of Scotland, which was Scotland's established Church.

During the 1830s and early 1840s, Presbyterian Scotland was also a place of intense religious conflict. Protestant Dissenters, most of them members of strict Presbyterian denominations that had broken away from the established Church of Scotland, launched a campaign in the early 1830s to disestablish the Church of Scotland and end all forms of state support for religion. The established Church responded with a renewed home mission, launching a church extension campaign aimed at multiplying the number of parish churches and schools, especially in the growing towns and cities. The Church also reformed the system of appointing parish ministers, restricting the power of lay patrons and increasing the role of congregations in selecting ministers. However, the Church of Scotland's reforms led to conflict with the Westminster state. In the later 1830s, the civil law courts declared the Church's restrictions on the powers of patrons in appointing ministers to be an illegal infringement on the patrons' rights, and the civil courts ordered the Church to ordain patron's candidates to the ministry of parish churches regardless of the views of the congregations. When the Church resisted these 'intrusions' of unwanted patron's appointees, its ministers and elders were threatened with fines and imprisonment. Many within the Church of Scotland became convinced that the state was determined to humiliate and degrade their

Church, and by the early 1840s, a large number were preparing to secede from the established Church in protest.

The Scottish Episcopal Church had not participated in these conflicts. It had experienced decades of persecution since the later seventeenth century, largely because of its association with the Jacobite risings, and although the penal laws were rescinded in 1792, it remained vulnerable and cautious. Described by Sir Walter Scott as Scotland's 'poor and suffering Episcopal Church', it was in 1800 little more than a remnant, with six bishops, about seventy clerics and some 15,000 adult worshippers, representing about one per cent of the Scottish population. The Episcopal Church, moreover, was divided. In the north, Scottish Episcopalians were firmly attached to an historic liturgy, the Scottish Communion Office, a modified version of the Scottish Prayer Book of 1637. In the south, however, Episcopal congregations tended to use the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England, and some of these congregations refused to acknowledge the authority of the Scottish bishops. While most Scottish Episcopalians were high church in their piety, there was an evangelical movement, associated with migrants from England and Ireland, and in the towns there were often acute tensions between the high church group and the evangelicals.

The Oxford Movement was becoming known in Scotland from the later 1830s. However, many in the Scottish Episcopal Church did not believe they had much to learn from Tractarian teachings. They claimed to have been well schooled in Church principles during their suffering in the penal times, when Oxford had offered them scant support. Through persecution, insisted Michael Russell, the Episcopal bishop of Glasgow, in his *Charge* of 1842, 'the iron [had] entered into the soul of the poor Episcopalian' and most Scottish Episcopalians had a firm 'belief in the holy catholic church' (Russell 1842: 23, 17). None the less, Tractarian influences did find supporters in Scotland, initially from Scottish landowners who had studied in Oxford or had English connections. One of these, the recently widowed

Marchioness of Lothian, was introduced to the Oxford Movement through her English relations. In the early 1840s, she endowed the building of a sumptuous gothic church, St John's, in Jedburgh, in the Borders district. The architect was John Haywood of the Cambridge Camden Society, while the church's interior, including an altar of Caen stone, lectern, aisleless nave, screened-off chancel, and alignment with its chancel to the east, was meant to accommodate Tractarian liturgical practices. Placed above the altar were tiles with sacred images, designed by A. W. N. Pugin. The church's consecration in 1844 was portrayed as a new beginning for the Episcopal Church, and was attended by four Scottish bishops and thirty-two priests. Among them were several leading English Tractarians, including John Keble, Robert Wilberforce and William Dodsworth (Clarke 1997: 196-207). Shortly after, the fifth Duke of Buccleuch and his high church wife (and Lady Lothian's close friend), Charlotte Anne Montagu-Douglas-Scott, endowed the building of another church on ecclesiological principles, St Mary the Virgin, in Dalkeith, near Edinburgh. The first incumbent introduced choral services and he later became the private confessor to Lady Lothian, until her conversion to Roman Catholicism in 1851. Lord and Lady Aberlour built and endowed another church on Tractarian principles, St Mary's, Dalmahoy, also near Edinburgh; it was consecrated in 1850. Between 1840 and 1860, 88 new Episcopal churches, all of them influenced by ecclesiological principles, were opened in Scotland.

In 1840, two young lay Episcopalians, the Tory MP of Scottish parentage, William Ewart Gladstone, and the Scottish lawyer, James Hope, conceived the project of establishing a college in Scotland for the training of Episcopal priests and lay leaders. Their project paralleled the founding at this time of St Columba's College in Ireland. Both men had come under Tractarian influence while students at Oxford, and they saw their college project as part of a larger movement for reclaiming Scotland to the true catholic and apostolic Church. The prospects for their venture seemed to be brightened by the impending break-up of the

Presbyterian establishment. They enlisted support from a number of Scottish landowners, including Gladstone's father, Sir John Gladstone of Fasque, and the College of the Holy and Undivided Trinity was opened in 1847 in Glenalmond, Perthshire. Two other Scottish lay Episcopalians, Lord Forbes and George Frederick Boyle (later earl of Glasgow) – both of whom had come under Tractarian influence while students at Oxford – initiated a project to build a new cathedral in Perth. Money was raised in Scotland and England, and the grandiose neo-gothic building, designed by the English architect, William Butterfield, with pointed arches, high ceiling, and frescoes, was consecrated in December 1850; it was the first cathedral to be built in Britain since the rebuilding of St Paul's in London. The Tractarian ecclesiologist, John Mason Neale, was invited to become the first dean of the cathedral. He declined, but preached at the consecration service. In 1849, Boyle endowed another Tractarian establishment, the College of the Holy Spirit on the Western Isle of Cumbrae, with a neo-gothic collegiate church (which would later become the Cathedral of the Isles), also designed by William Butterfield and built according to strict ecclesiological principles. The first provost was the Tractarian, G. Cosby White. With its collegiate church and college, Cumbrae would, its promoters hoped, become another Iona, training and sending forth celibate missionary priests for the conversion of Scotland to Church principles (although its location would prove too remote for Cumbrae to have much real influence).

In 1847, the Scottish Episcopal priest and Oxford-educated protégé of Pusey, Alexander Penrose Forbes, was elected bishop of the Scottish diocese of Brechin – becoming the first Tractarian bishop in the United Kingdom. He gained broad public support for his committed ministry in the socially deprived districts of Dundee and his commitment to the Scottish Communion Office, which he viewed as a powerful expression of the real presence in the eucharist. Under Forbes's leadership, a large neo-gothic church, St Paul's (designed by the English architect, George Gilbert Scott), was completed in 1855 in Dundee; its towering

spire symbolised the new confidence of the Scottish Episcopal Church. In 1862, the first Anglican Sisters, members of the Society of St Margaret (co-founded by Neale), began work in Scotland, establishing a house in Aberdeen. As Gavin White observed, the years from 1839 to 1854 were a time of unprecedented growth for the Scottish Episcopal Church. Its seventy-six congregations doubled in number, as did the number of its clergy (White 1977: 329). Much of this growth, to be sure, was unrelated to the Oxford Movement. There was a large-scale migration of Irish Protestants to Scotland during and after the Famine, as well as economic migrants from England; and these Irish and English migrants were very often evangelical. The population of industrialising Scotland, moreover, was as a whole growing rapidly, and despite the increase in their numbers, Scottish Episcopalians still constituted only about 3% of the total Scottish population in the late nineteenth century. None the less, Tractarian principles helped instil a new confidence and sense of mission to Scottish Episcopalianism.

The Church of Scotland was broken up with the Disruption of 1843, when about a third of the ministers and perhaps half the lay membership seceded to form the Free Church. In the view of many Scottish Presbyterians, a major cause of the Disruption had been the refusal of Parliament to provide a legislative solution to the patronage dispute, and many also believed that Parliament's refusal to act had resulted from English hostility or indifference to Scotland's Presbyterian establishment. Moreover, many Scots believed that this English hostility or indifference was encouraged by the Tractarians, who taught that the Church of Scotland was not a true Church because it lacked apostolic succession. There were even suspicions that the Scottish Episcopal Church, puffed up by Tractarian teachings, now hoped that it would become the established Church in Scotland. Speaking the year before the Disruption, in 1842, Andrew Gray, Church of Scotland minister in Perth, had claimed that the Scottish Episcopalians 'were now emboldened by the language, the waxing strength, and the

expected aid, of Tractarianism, to bring their bold pretensions prominently forward' (Gray 1842: 24). Many within the Scottish Free Church would harbour a deep hatred of 'Puseyism' long after the Disruption.

However, within the established Presbyterian Church of Scotland, attitudes to the Oxford Movement would take a different – and unexpected – turn. From the 1860s, a number of ministers and congregations in the Scottish Presbyterian establishment were attracted to historic liturgies and the study of ecclesiology, in part through Tractarian influences. Led initially by Robert Lee, the minister of the historic Greyfriar's church in Edinburgh, the liturgical reformers moved away from the stark simplicity of traditional Presbyterian worship and introduced read prayers, set liturgies, organs, congregational hymn singing and shorter sermons. In 1865, Lee and his supporters founded the Church Service Society, to promote the study of ancient and modern liturgies and to encourage innovation in worship. Despite strong opposition from traditionalists, the innovations spread, including, from the 1870s, a growing number of church organs and trained, robed choirs. There were also Presbyterian movements to restore Scotland's cathedrals and medieval churches, with chancels, holy tables, and stained glass windows.

It is difficult to connect these Presbyterian liturgical and ecclesiological reforms of the 1860s and 1870s directly to the Oxford Movement. However, Tractarian influences became more identifiable in the Presbyterian Scoto-Catholic movement of the later nineteenth century, and its efforts to portray the Church of Scotland as a branch of the holy catholic and apostolic Church. Such Scoto-Catholics as John MacLeod of Govan, James Cooper, George Sprott, Wallace Williamson, and H. J. Wotherspoon insisted not only on reviving ancient liturgies and church interiors, but also on promoting Tractarian principles, including apostolic succession (through presbyteries rather than bishops), veneration of tradition, sacramental grace, and ecumenical theology. 'We must learn to feel more deeply than we yet do',

proclaimed the Scoto-Catholic William Milligan, professor of biblical criticism at Aberdeen University, in his closing address as moderator of the General Assembly of 1882, ‘that *we* are an integral part of Christ’s body, and in vital connection with the whole body.... We are a portion of what is called in the creed the “holy Catholic Church”, planted in Scotland by the Divine Head of the Church Himself’ (Yancey 1970: 337). In 1892, Scoto-Catholics formed the Scottish Church Society, ‘to defend and advance Catholic doctrine as set forth in the ancient Creeds and embodied in the Standards of the Church of Scotland’. The Scottish Church Society organised retreats and conferences, called for the revival of the festivals of the Christian year, and issued publications, including scholarly editions of historical liturgies. For the Scottish-born archbishop of York, Cosmo Gordon Lang, speaking in Aberdeen in 1894, the Scottish Church Society represented an Oxford Movement within the Church of Scotland, and was destined to revive catholic and apostolic principles among ‘the mass of the laity’ (Lang 1895: 10-11). The Scoto-Catholic movement would have a profound influence upon the established Presbyterian Church of Scotland from the 1850s, and was arguably the most important contribution of the Oxford Movement to Scotland.

## **Conclusion**

Despite the very different religious conditions in Ireland, Wales and Scotland, the Oxford Movement made its presence felt in all three nations. In England, the Movement had emerged within a national established Church that commanded the allegiance of the large majority of the English population, including the political elite. In both Ireland and Wales, however, the United Church of England and Ireland was in the 1830s a minority establishment, with the adherence of only a small proportion of the population. And in Scotland, the Protestant Episcopal Church in the 1830s was a very small dissenting Church, which until recently had suffered under penal laws.

The early Oxford Movement in Ireland, Wales and Scotland was limited in its influence. In all three countries, Tractarian teachings were initially spread by small clerical and lay networks, though often with wealthy aristocratic patronage, and the teachings found expression in church building and restoration, and in choral services and the revival of historic liturgies. While Irish, Welsh and Scottish Tractarians had embraced the same basic principles as their English counterparts, their views had a more pronounced anti-Roman tendency. Significantly, they also endeavoured to connect the Oxford Movement to their respective national histories and cultures. In Ireland, Tractarian supporters portrayed the established United Church as part of the ancient Church of St Patrick and of the Irish saints. Welsh Tractarians maintained that the established Church was heir to the ancient British Church, with deep roots in Welsh history and culture. And some Scottish Tractarians, led by A. P. Forbes, embraced the seventeenth-century Scottish Communion Office, as an expression of distinctive Scottish Church principles. The experience of the Oxford Movement in these countries demonstrated that it was not simply an English cultural movement, but that it could be adopted to other cultures.

In Ireland, the influence of Oxford teachings on the Church of Ireland remained limited, in part because of the strident anti-Catholicism in Irish Protestantism and in part because of the growth of ultramontane beliefs and practices – the ‘devotional revolution’ – in the post-famine Catholic Church. In Wales and Scotland, on the other hand, the influence of the Oxford Movement, and its emphasis on the spiritual independence and ancient devotional teachings of the Church, steadily increased in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, helping the Church in Wales to adopt to disestablishment when it came, and the Scottish Episcopal Church to flourish as a small denomination within a predominantly Presbyterian nation. Moreover, the Oxford Movement had an unexpected influence on the



Presbyterian Church of Scotland, contributing to a Scoto-Catholic movement from the later nineteenth century that would greatly enrich Presbyterian worship, devotion and ecclesiology.

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