PREACHING AND THEOLOGY IN SCOTLAND IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY:
A STUDY OF THE CONTEXT AND THE CONTENT OF THE EVANGELICAL SERMON

By
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Presented to Professor A. C. Cheyne and Professor John McIntyre,
in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of Ph.D.,
the Department of Ecclesiastical History, New College,
the University of Edinburgh, June 24, 1968.
This thesis is a study of the evangelical pulpit in Scotland in the nineteenth century. My purpose is to analyze the changing and variegated face of the sermon in this period. My approach is that of a historian, not a theologian. Therefore I have given a more extensive place to the social setting of preaching in nineteenth century Scotland. However preaching and theology are interdependent disciplines. Gerhard Ebeling has succinctly written: "Theology without proclamation is empty, proclamation without theology is blind."¹ I have titled this thesis "preaching and theology" for in tracing the altering emphases of the sermon, one is talking about the theological diversity of the pulpit.

This thesis is based on the premise that preaching does not occur in a vacuum. Preaching functions within a given context. In part the context of preaching is theological for it is the task of theology to "instruct the preacher"; theology is "a preaching to preachers."² A second aspect of the context of preaching is ecclesiastical. The preacher functions as a minister of a particular Church, denomination, and must therefore meet the ordination requirements of that Church, requirements which usually reflect the view of preaching and the ministry in that Church. Finally, the context of preaching is social. A man speaks in

and to a given situation and his message is in part molded by the "provisional character" of this historical setting. Consequently the first part of this thesis is an analysis of the theological, ecclesiastical and social context of the evangelical sermon in the nineteenth century.

I have called this a study of the "evangelical sermon" and the word evangelical requires clarification. First I do not mean to delimit this thesis to a study of the preaching of the Evangelical Party in Scotland as it was antithetical to the Moderate Party. I am using the term evangelical in a broader sense. By evangelical preaching I mean what Alexander Whyte called the proclamation of "the good tidings from God to sinners." Evangelical preaching is that preaching "concerned with Immanuel, God with us!" Thus evangelical preaching is at once Christocentric and soteriological. It is the good news of God's action for man's salvation. Its primary concern is the salvation of man as that salvation is variously interpreted. Evangelical preaching by no means precludes natural theology, but it accentuates the doctrines of "revealed theology."

My methodology has been to examine the sermons of the prominent as well as some less prominent preachers in Scotland in the nineteenth century. The men whose sermons form the basis of this study are: Andrew A. Bonar, Horatius Bonar, A. K. H. Boyd, John Brown of Broughton Place United Presbyterian Church, Edinburgh, John Caird, John Cairns, Robert S. Candlish, Thomas Chalmers, William Cunningham,

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2 *The British Weekly*, August 19, 1887, p. 249. This is a report of a speech given by Alexander Whyte on "Evangelical Preaching."


Marcus Dods, Henry Drummond, John Duncan, John Eadie, Robert Flint, Robert Gordon, Thomas Guthrie, Edward Irving, John Kennedy of Dingwall, John Ker, Robert M. M'Cheyne, Norman MacLeod, John Purves, Robert Rainy, John Robertson of Glasgow Cathedral, George Adam Smith, Walter G. Smith, Andrew Somerville, R. H. Story, Andrew Thomson, John Tulloch, James Veitch, and Alexander Whyte. Other preachers are referred to from time to time but in the main I have proceeded on the assumption that a more balanced historical judgment of a man's sermons, indeed preaching in general, can only be made when a larger number of sermon extracts belonging to one man are available for analysis. I have restricted the scope of this study to preachers representative of the Church of Scotland, the Free Church of Scotland, and the United Presbyterian Church. Since this thesis is primarily historical I have attempted to let men speak for themselves and have therefore quoted extensively from the preachers themselves. This method is also more compatible with the subject of this thesis. Extensive quotations not only illustrate judgments made, they also give a flavor of the style and substance of the sermons themselves. In spelling I have attempted to follow the standard American spelling except in quotations where I have retained the spelling of the source being quoted. For style, I have followed the format found in Turabian, *Manual For Writers of Term Papers, Thesis and Dissertations*.

It is my pleasure to acknowledge with gratitude those persons who have made possible this study. My appreciation is due to my family, numerous friends, my Church and my teachers in America. The staffs of the various libraries in Edinburgh and particularly New College Library and Edinburgh University Library have spared no effort to secure the materials requested for this research. Dr. William Ferguson of the Scottish History Department, Edinburgh University, made several valuable suggestions in reference to chapter three. In particular my advisors, Professor A. C. Cheyne and Professor John McIntyre, have been most helpful in their counsel and judgment.
SUMMARY

This historical analysis of preaching is concerned with both the context and content of the evangelical sermon. Preaching does not occur in a vacuum; it functions within a given context. The context of preaching in the nineteenth century was threefold: theological, ecclesiastical and social. Each made specific contributions to preaching and each placed specific demands upon preaching.

The theological influence was the Westminster Confession of Faith. While the Confession cast theology into specific categories explicitly outlining the function of preaching, the preachers of the nineteenth century interpreted and utilized these categories with latitude. The Confessional directive in preaching was fourfold: the Bible was to be the basis of the sermon; preaching was to function as a means of grace; the great objective of preaching was man's salvation; the effectuation of this objective was contingent on the Holy Spirit. With this legacy the evangelical pulpit was at once soteriological, aggressive, biblically orientated and supremely Christocentric. The three sections in the Confession particularly pertinent to the evangelical pulpit were "of God's Eternal Decrees...of Christ the Mediator...of Saving Faith." The treatment of these themes is illustrative of the continuity and the disparity in evangelical preaching in the nineteenth century.

The ecclesiastical objective was a qualified preacher. Good character, academic proficiency and practical ability were the terms describing a qualified
preacher. The system insuring a qualified preacher centered around the university, the divinity hall and the probationary period. An over-saturated ministry, a changing philosophy of theological education and an ineffective probationary period resulted in the abatement of practical training. Consequently the academic accent of the Scottish pulpit in the nineteenth century was no accident but a reflection of an ecclesiastical emphasis on scholarship.

The social demand was a popular preacher. The collapse of the parish system, the growth and appeal of Presbyterian Dissent coupled with the emphasis given the sermon in public worship all contributed to the emergence of the popular preacher. Urbanization and secularization were the major social movements conditioning popular preaching. Popular preaching was also influenced by a variety of parochial patterns. In country parishes traditionalism was usually the key to popularity. The city judged popular preaching from the perspective of a stratified society. The social criterion for popular preaching was often of a non-theological nature.

The content of the evangelical sermon was that of diversity and development. The change occurring in preaching in the course of the century was from a more rigid evangelicalism to a more liberal evangelicalism.

The older evangelical sermon dominated the pulpit throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, if not until 1880. A scholastic soteriology and a formal homiletical style were the chief characteristics of the older evangelical sermon. Man was a sinner and the first task of the preacher was to convince man of his sin. In turning sinful man to the Christ, the preacher emphasized an atonement which was not open to all men. Salvation was essentially a matter of the status of the elect before God. Life itself was a pilgrimage for man was on probation attempting to secure and enhance his ultimate status with God. The sermon was doctrinal for the Bible was basically a repository of proof
texts for the doctrines of the Westminster Confession of Faith. The sermon had a definite, often detailed outline which was based on a formally stated proposition.

The older evangelical sermon usually oscillated between dogmatism and pietism. A more comprehensive view of salvation, an objective emphasis on God's action as opposed to man's response in salvation, and the belief that right doctrine would issue in right living were the leading traits of the older evangelical sermon tending toward dogmatism. The older evangelical sermon tending toward pietism accentuated the conversion experience and legalized the life of Christian holiness demanding a radical religion of the heart.

1855 to 1880 was the period of transition in the evangelical pulpit. This was the first phase of a more liberal evangelicalism. There was a growing anti-dogmatism reacting against the neat but sometimes cold system of scholastic Calvinism. The demand was for practical preaching in place of the more doctrinal disputation. The sermon was to be attractive and a descriptive style replete with literary illustrations, anecdote and graphic story appeared. The formally stated proposition began to disappear and the outline was more often concealed. Theologically the incarnation came to be given more prominence than the atonement. The love of God was emphasized instead of the righteousness of God. Salvation was proclaimed as a simple but sincere belief in Jesus.

1880 to 1900 was the second phase in the emergence of a more liberal evangelical sermon. Evolution and higher criticism were accepted without serious question. Preaching came to be associated with religion not theology for whereas religion was spiritual, theology was intellectual. The Bible gained a new importance. It was viewed as a human book to be studied and applied in a human and practical way. Salvation was related to man's moral character for Christianity
was essentially a way of life in this world. The fatherhood of God, the personal experience of God and the kingdom of God were the themes most common to the more liberal evangelical sermon.
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"There is unquestionably a preaching for the age. There is a style, a tone, a scope, a speciality of object in the administration of God's Word which peculiarly befit the times.... It is right that the progress of society in every form of talent, taste, and science, should tell on preaching.... Nor is this right alone; it is a thing certain to be. The characteristics of the Pulpit will change from generation to generation. The traits of preaching in one age will be supplanted by other traits."

The British and Foreign Evangelical Review, 1854
CHAPTER I

THE THEOLOGICAL INFLUENCE: THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSIO OF FAITH

The religious climate of nineteenth century Scotland was largely conditioned by the Westminster Confession of Faith. In the schools the Confession was often the text by which children learned to read. In public affairs the Confession was the gauge by which moralists judged and denounced such practices as trains running between Glasgow and Edinburgh on Sunday. In the University until 1853 the Confession confronted each professor as the document demanding his signature before he could be admitted to his Chair. In the Church nearly all religious life was circumscribed by the Confession. Elders and deacons as well as ministers were compelled to subscribe to the standards of the Church. Theology, practical as well as theoretical, innovative as well as traditional,

2. The Scotsman, Edinburgh, January 6, 1847; September 16, 1848.
4. The Church of Scotland, Acts Of The General Assembly, 1889 and 1690. The Free Church of Scotland, Acts Of The General Assembly, 1846. In the Free Church subscription was required of both elders and deacons. The United Free Church, Acts Of The General Assembly, 1900. Here elders subscribed to the Westminster Confession and deacons to the Shorter Catechism.

The subscription required of all ministers was traditional in all three emergent Churches. In 1879 the United Presbyterian Church revised and broadened the subscription formula. They were followed by the Free Church in 1892 and the Old Kirk in 1910.
ultimately had to come to terms with the Confession. Thus it is imperative to observe the manner in which preachers viewed the Confession and the ways in which they interpreted its statements relating to preaching.

**Various Views Of The Confession Of Faith**

Religious life was conditioned by the Confession of Faith, but the Confession of Faith was not paid universal homage. While to some the Confession was the pillar of religious truth, to others it was a barrier to the freedom of thought and action. Thus John Cairns, the traditional and respected theologian of the United Presbyterian Church, subscribed to the Confession but not without producing a lengthy paper at the time of his licensing expressing his discontent with certain ideas stated in the Confession.¹ George Gilfillan, once called "the least strait-laced of the Scotch preachers" said of the Confession: "I do not consider myself bound nor do I ever design to bind others, to its every jot of clause and tittle of word, to its plait phraseology and minute shade of distinction."² Marcus Dods observed in his "Inaugural Lecture" at New College in 1889 that:

If it is true, as Calvinistic writers have so often averred, that the Calvinist becomes an Arminian when he preaches, the Arminian a Calvinist when he prays; then we are justified in desiring a creed more in touch with the actual Gospel we preach.³

In 1865 Norman MacLeod defended the liturgical changes of Robert Lee of Edinburgh's Old Greyfriars Kirk with these words:

I do not know whether Paul would have made all the office-bearers sign the Confession of Faith—but I am sure of this, that he of all the fathers of the Church that ever lived, not only in his preaching but his life, carried out the old adage, "In things essential, unity;

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³ Marcus Dods, *Recent Progress In Theology*, p. 15. Also pp. 13, 19.
in things indifferent, liberty, in all things, charity." Now it is this spirit which should guide the Church of Scotland.\(^1\)

The reserve with which ministers subscribed to the Confession of Faith was so common by 1886 that \textit{The Scotsman} newspaper noted: "It is enough to say at present that creed subscription as practised now-a-days is in most cases an act of doubtful morality."\(^2\)

In view of the reserve and disparity with which the clergy subscribed to the Confession, one must inquire as to the attitudes with which these preachers viewed the actual function of the Confession. Four attitudes seem most apparent. To some the Confession was the living corpus of divine truth. To others it was the supreme testimony of the belief of the Church. Officially it was declared to be a "subordinate" standard to the Bible. Increasingly in the century, the Confession was viewed historically as but the testimony of the Church at a certain moment in her existence.

The view of the Confession as the living corpus of all divine truth was most common among the Free Church leaders of the post-disruption era. In 1847 the Moderator, R. J. Brown, convened the General Assembly of the Free Church with these words:

\begin{quote}
Wherefore, with the Word of God in one hand and in the other our publicly recognised Standards, so richly furnished with unalterable truth, incessantly looking up with suppliant eyes to our Heavenly Father for the wisdom that cometh from above, let us sit in grace, earnest and holy convocation. Questions of doctrine will not chiefly occupy us, for these are happily beyond the hazard of ambiguous constructions.\(^3\)
\end{quote}

It is said of Principal William Cunningham of New College, that "in the Standards of his Church he recognised the exact sense and full amount of Scripture...as

\(^1\)Donald MacLeod, \textit{Memoir Of Norman MacLeod}, Vol. 2, p. 182.

\(^2\)\textit{The Scotsman}, March 3, 1886, p. 6.

\(^3\)Free Church of Scotland, \textit{Proceedings}, 1847, p. 3.
the Confession is the meaning of the Bible."¹ With his typically legal twist of mind Professor John Duncan called the Confession the "juridical codes" of the Church.² In 1883, Horatius Bonar proclaimed with a dubious mixture of defiance and idealism:

We have all subscribed one creed, a creed neither untried nor indefinite, a creed that has stood the scrutiny of more than two centuries; a creed that has not yet become a fossil, or a catacomb "full of dead men's bones."³

The view of the Confession as a testimony of the belief of the Church to be publicly preserved and defended was predominant among the more traditional theological professors particularly in the first half of the century. To such men the Confession was a legal leverage against dissent and heresy. Professor James Bannerman saw the Church as the "authorized custodian and teacher of Divine truth" as incorporated in the Confession.⁴ His cold conclusion was that "there enters into the essence of a Church nothing but what is assigned to it in the Westminster Confession."⁵ In the Old Kirk the formative influence of the deceased Principal Hill of St. Andrews was still prevailing. Hill said of the subscription required of ministers:

As a private Christian he [the ordained minister] might have enjoyed the liberty of publishing any opinions which do not disturb the public tranquillity, but by subscribing the Confession of Faith at his admission, he concurs with the community of teachers in the general views upon which that Confession was compiled and published. If, after his admission, his mind undergo such a revolution that he imbibes new

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¹William Cunningham, D.D., Sermons From 1828 to 1860, p. xxii.
²John Duncan, Colloquies Peripatetica, edited by William Knight, p. 146.
³Horatius Bonar, Our Ministry: How It Touches The Questions Of The Age, p. 17.
⁵Ibid., p. 62.
opinions in religion...he ought also to feel an obligation to renounce the station which he holds.

In the United Presbyterian Church, Professor John Brown viewed the Confession as the legal limitations within which all theological thought was to take place. He greeted new divinity hall students with these words:

It is perfectly obvious, from the very constitution and design of the Seminary, that a young man in the prospect of entering it as a regular student, with the intention of becoming a minister...if he act conscientiously and judiciously, will carefully read our symbolical books; and it will only be if he find, that so far as he is capable of judging, there is nothing in these books inconsistent with his convictions, that he can ask or accept admission. He enters it with the full understanding that the theology to be taught in the Seminary to him, and in the churches by him, is to be the theology of the Bible as defined in these symbolical books....while he retains the character of a student, he is to abstain from exciting doubts in the minds of his fellow students; and on discovering that he has a fixed conscientious conviction, irreconcilable with the symbolical books, it is his duty to withdraw from the Seminary.

In 1881 a Church of Scotland preacher, John Storie, published a pamphlet condemning a collection of sermons entitled Scotch Sermons because they departed from the traditional understanding of the Confession of Faith. He said: "We have here to deal not with clerical proclivities, but with Public Law. A Church stands established...its faith defined." It was this rigid and legal utilization of the Confession which caused some more able minds to abandon their plans for the ministry and what they viewed as a life of "perpetual intellectual servitude." Officially, the Confession was called a "subordinate standard." Yet this objective was not easily maintained. Personal taste tended to carry the application

1George Hill, Counsels Respecting The Duties Of The Pastoral Office, p. 37. Alexander Hill, the son of Principal Hill, was Professor of Theology at Glasgow and read to his students portions of the Counsels.

2John Brown, Hints To Students Of Divinity, pp. 33-34.

3John Storie, The Scotch Sermons, p. 36.

4The Scotsman, May 29, 1886, p. 8.
of the Confession to either extreme of veneration or hypocrisy.

In the first half of the century men viewing the Confession as a subordinate standard had to contend with the danger of extreme veneration. It is said that Thomas Chalmers declared with no little emotion:

I look on Catechisms and Confessions as mere landmarks against heresy ....It's putting them out of their place to look on them as magazines of truth. There's some of your stout orthodox folk just over ready to stretch the Bible to square with their Catechisms; all very well, all very needful as a landmark, but (kindling up) what I say is, do not let that wretched mutilated thing be thrown between me and the Bible.

Principal Harper said with equal firmness:

We do not hold Confessions to be a divine testimony, but the Church's response to that testimony. They are not an oracle of Heaven but an echo of the Spirit's voice as we hear it in the word.

In the last half of the century the Confession existed under the lengthening shadow of hypocrisy. Thus the preachers viewing the Confession as a subordinate standard did so with increasing tolerance. They made fewer overt references to the Confession in their sermons. In part their silence was indicative of reservation. In part their silence was symptomatic of the growing concern for a practical and experimental faith in place of a dogmatic and doctrinal religious

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1 Adam Philip, *Thomas Chalmers Apostle of Union*, p. 123.


3 John Eadie of the United Presbyterian Church is one example of a man whose silence betrays reservations. As a divinity student, Eadie reacted against theological systems which sought "logical consistency." While Eadie was not one to initiate change, he did go along with the initial acts of some of the revisionists in the Church. Thus he sided with Norman Macleod when the latter became embroiled in the Sabbath controversy in 1866. See James Brown, *The Life Of John Eadie*, pp. 44, 164.

Addressing the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1886, Dr. John Cunningham boasted that for "nearly half a century" no minister had been deposed for heresy. This suggested that the great silence in sermons concerning the Confession witnessed more to restive deviation than common agreement. See: *The Scotsman*, June 3, 1886, p. 4.
beliefs.\textsuperscript{1} To such men, the Confession was truly subordinate to the Bible with the result that most of them came to support, though with moderation, the revision of the Confession. John Cairns in the United Presbyterian Church, Robert Rainy of the Free Church and A. H. Charteris of the Old Kirk were such men. In a sermon preached at the opening of the United Presbyterian Synod in 1873, John Cairns said:

\begin{quote}
We may revise our Confession, if called more distinctly than we seem yet to have been in the Providence of God to that work; but we shall not mutilate it.\textsuperscript{2}
\end{quote}

The last quarter of the century witnessed a freer atmosphere and in the Free Church and United Presbyterian Church a revised formula of subscription. This was also the period in which there emerged an increasing tendency to view the Confession historically. To many the Confession was the testimony of the belief of the Church at a certain point in her history. Thus John Stevenson described creeds as but "the reflection of the thought of the ages which gave them birth."\textsuperscript{3} In a sermon on "Individualism And The Church," Thomas Rain suggested that the 'creeds and ordinances conformable to one age may not be conformable to the next, and man is to judge how far and in what direction they need modification."\textsuperscript{4} To most of these men the Church was wrong in accepting "blindly the theological

\begin{footnotes}
\item[1] Thomas Guthrie subordinated the Confession to the religious experience of men. In one sermon he said: "Religion does not consist in doctrinal or prophetic speculations, nor lie like a corpse entombed in old dusty confessions. She lives in action and walks abroad among mankind." See: Thomas Guthrie, \textit{Man And The Gospel}, p. 105.
\end{footnotes}
traditions handed down from the past." Walter G. Smith advised his parishioners to "leave out of sight" the standards of the Church and instead to come straight to "the simple, touching, convincing, and far-reaching words of Jesus." Then, Smith continued, "you will learn to see in the Church's creeds and systems the natural effort of the human mind to give definite shape to a revelation which is too vast for us to grasp as a whole." In his closing address to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1886, the Moderator, John Cunningham, said that the Confession of Faith was to be viewed as "a noble monument of phases of thought through which the Church has passed." Thus the progressive preachers of the Old Kirk accepted their own existence in a Church whose tradition had traversed the Westminster Assembly of Divines.

The variance with which men looked to the Confession of Faith suggests that throughout the nineteenth century theology was subject to constant change and conflict. Consequently in turning to an analysis of the statements of the Confession itself relative to preaching, one must remember that these statements will be variously interpreted. With this understanding three questions must be addressed to the Confession. First, what does the Confession explicitly say about preaching? Second, how were these statements interpreted by the preachers of the nineteenth century? Third, what particular doctrines stated in the Confession were of primary significance to the evangelical pulpit?

1 W. L. McFarlan, "Authority", Scotch Sermons, p. 198. Also p. 225.
2 Walter G. Smith, Sermons, p. 194.
3 Ibid.
4 The Scotsman, June 3, 1886, p. 4.
The Concept Of Preaching Emergent In The Confession

a. As Found In The Confession Itself

In the official standards of the Church the preacher discovered the theological foundation of his task. While the Confession itself only made five direct references to preaching, the scattered statements in the Larger and Shorter Catechism together with the fuller section on preaching in the Directory for Worship all combined to give preaching its theological authorization. The confessional directive in preaching was fourfold. First, the basis of the sermon was the Bible, for preaching was the proclamation "of the word." Second, the function of preaching was as a "means of grace." Third, the objective of preaching was man's salvation. Fourth, the ultimate effectuation of preaching was contingent on the Holy Spirit.

Preaching was primarily the proclamation of the word of God. "The preaching of the word" was described as a means of dispensing the covenant of grace. "The ministry of the word" was said to be the way "by which the Spirit effectually calls people." The "grace of faith" as the human act essential to man's salvation was "ordinarily wrought by the ministry of the word."

But what was the "word" to be preached? On the one hand the unequivocal answer to this question in the Larger Catechism was: "The holy scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the word of God." On the other hand in the Confession

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1 All references to the Confession of Faith in this section will be designated CF in the footnotes. The Larger Catechism by LC. The Shorter Catechism by SC and the Directory of Public Worship by DPW. The five references mentioned in the CF are Chapter VII, #6; Chapter X, #1, 3, 4; Chapter XIV, #1; Chapter XV, #1; Chapter XXI, #5.

2 CF. Chapter VII "Of God's Covenant With Man," #6.

3 CF. Chapter X "Of Effectual Calling," #4.

4 CF. Chapter XIV "Of Saving Faith," #1.

5 LC. #3.
of Faith there was the suggestion a word of God which was *unwritten* existed because the Confession designated the holy scriptures as "the word of God *written.*"¹ Throughout the remainder of the Confession and the Larger Catechism as well as in the Directory of Worship, the terms "preaching of the word" and "ministry of the word" were used without clarification leaving the precise meaning of this terminology open to question. It is only by means of an analysis of the contextual usage of these terms that one can determine the concept of preaching emergent in the Confessional Standards.

First then, the terms "preaching of the word" and "ministry of the word" appear to be the simple affirmation that the sermon is to be based on the Bible. In the words of the Larger Catechism: "The spirit of God maketh the reading, but especially the preaching of the word, an effectual means of enlightening, convincing, and humbling sinners."² In this section the "word of God" is clearly taken to be "the holy Scriptures."³ The clearest statement relating the "preaching of the word" to the Bible is in the Directory of Worship where the preacher is advised that:

> Ordinarily, the subject of his sermon is to be some text of scripture, holding forth some principle or head of religion, or suitable to some special occasion emergent; or he may go on in some chapter, psalm, or book of the holy scripture, as he shall see fit.⁴

In affirming that the Bible was to be the basis of the sermon the Confession also sought to insure an intelligent use of the Bible in preaching. The Confession itself seems to acknowledge "that there are some circumstances

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¹ Cf. Chapter I "Of The Holy Scripture," #2.

² LC. #155.

³ LC. #155, 156, 157.

⁴ DPW. "Of The Preaching Of The Word."
concerning the worship of God necessitating an incisive and intelligent use of Scripture. To this end the function of preaching was restricted to those who were "sufficiently gifted...duly approved and called to that office." In the Directory of Worship it was written:

It is presupposed that the minister of Christ is in some good measure gifted for so weighty a service, by his skill in the original languages, and in such arts and sciences as are handmaid unto divinity; by his knowledge in the whole body of theology, but most of all in the holy scriptures, having his senses and heart exercised in them above the common sort of believers.

Furthermore there was a series of examinations barring a man's way to ordination because the preacher was expected to be "duly qualified."

In this quest for an intelligent utilization of the Bible the Westminster Standards did not leave the preacher on his own in the composition of a sermon. First, the preacher was given the basic rule for the interpretation of the Bible: "The infallible rule of interpretation of scripture is the scripture itself." Secondly, the preacher was told how to develop a text in preaching:

Let the introduction to his text be brief and perspicuous, drawn from the text itself, or context, or some parallel place, or general sentence of scripture. If the text be long let him give a brief sum of it; if short, a paraphrase thereof, if need be; in both looking diligently to the scope of the text, and pointing at the chief heads and grounds of doctrine which he is to raise from it. In analyzing and dividing his text, he is to regard more the order of matter than of words; and neither to burden the memory of

1CW. Chapter I "Of The Holy Scripture," #6. Also see the comments on this section in: George S. Hendry, The Westminster Confession For Today, pp. 34, 35.

2LC. #158.

3DFW. "Of The Preaching Of The Word."

4See The Form Of Presbyterial Church-Government, "Touching The Doctrine Of Ordination." Also see Chapter 2 of this thesis.

5CF. Chapter I "Of The Holy Scripture," #9.
the hearers in the beginning with too many members of division, nor
to trouble their minds with obscure terms of art.

Finally, the preacher was informed that the sermon was to be an exposition of
"sound doctrine" and he was given a series of principles calculated to achieve
this end. 2

In raising doctrines from the text, his care ought to be, First,
That the matter be the truth of God. Secondly, That it be a truth
contained in or grounded on that text, that the hearers may discern
how God teacheth it from thence. Thirdly, That he chiefly insist
upon those doctrines which are principally intended, and make for the
edification of the hearers.

The doctrine is to be expressed in plain terms; or, if any
thing in it need explication, it is to be opened, and the consequence
also from the text cleared. The parallel places of scripture, con-
firming the doctrine, are rather to be plain and pertinent, than many,
and somewhat insisted upon, and applied to the purpose in hand.

The arguments or reasons are to be solid, and, as much as may
be convincing.

He is not to rest in general doctrine, although never so much
cleared and confirmed, but to bring it home to special use, by applica-
tion to his hearers. 3

These suggestions for the treatment of the Bible were given that "the word of
God [might] be preached...diligently, plainly, faithfully, wisely, zealously,
sincerely." 4

In the Confession the term "preaching of the Word" is sometimes ambiguous
because the sermon is more than the static and sterile appropriation of the words
of the Bible. Preaching is always in the present tense and is to be dynamic and
virile. Thus the Confession of Faith suggests that in worship "the reading of
the Scripture with godly fear" is not synonymous with "the sound preaching and

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1 DPW. "Of The Preaching Of The Word."
2 LC. #159.
3 DPW, "Of The Preaching Of The Word."
4 LC. #159.
The sermon is not simply the means by which tourists visit an ancient monument. The sermon is the living word in a contemporary setting. It is God acting now. Thus in the prayer before the sermon, the preacher is described as a "servant now called to dispense the bread of life unto his household." The word is described as one of the ways "whereby [God] makes himself known" to men in the present. Commenting on the doctrine of the word in the Confession, Professor George S. Hendry has written: "The word is not only a record of what God did and said once, it is the instrument through which he speaks to us and acts in us. That is why the Confession stresses our hearing as well as the reading and preaching of the word.*

The "preaching of the word" and "the ministry of the word" is secondly a reference to the function of the sermon. Preaching is to be a means of grace.\(^5\) In the words of the Shorter Catechism: "The Spirit of God maketh the reading, but especially the preaching of the word, an effectual means of convincing and converting sinners, and of building them up in holiness and comfort, through faith, unto salvation.*\(^6\) The "ministry of the word" is the normal means by which "the elect" are called.\(^7\) Saving faith is described as "ordinarily wrought by the ministry of the word,"\(^8\) The preamble of the section on preaching in The Directory

\(^1\) WC, Chapter XXI "Of Religious Worship, And The Sabbath-day," #5.
\(^2\) DPW, "Of Publick Prayer Before The Sermon."
\(^3\) LC, #112.
\(^4\) George S. Hendry, op. cit., p. 190.
\(^5\) SC, #88.
\(^6\) SC, #89.
\(^7\) WC, Chapter X "Of Effectual Calling," #4.
\(^8\) WC, Chapter XIV "Of Saving Faith," #1. Also LC #154.
of Worship begins:

Preaching of the word, being the power of God unto salvation, and one of the greatest and most excellent works belonging to the ministry of the gospel, should be so performed, that the workman need not be ashamed, but may save himself, and those that hear him.¹

While the revelation of God preceded the Bible, this revelation was not intended to become fossilized in scripture.² Indeed it is argued in the Larger Catechism that scripture justifies its claim to be the word of God primarily by what it does.

The scriptures manifest themselves to be the word of God, by their majesty and purity; by the consent of all the parts, and the scope of the whole...; by their light and power to convince and convert sinners, to comfort and build up believers unto salvation.³

It would seem that it is the test of the sermon as the means of grace, to become the living revelation of the Christ of scripture. Thus it is the prayer of the preacher and his congregation that in the sermon:

Christ may be so formed in them, and live in them, that all their thoughts may be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,⁴ and their hearts established in every good word and work for ever.

As the basis of preaching was the Bible and the function of preaching to be a means of grace, so the specific objective of the sermon was to be man's salvation. In the "preaching of the word...grace and salvation" were said to be "held forth in more fulness, evidence, and efficiency to all nations."⁵ In the Bible itself it was claimed that there was unparalleled clarity with reference to "those things which are necessary to be known, believed, and observed, for

¹ DPW. "Of The Preaching Of The Word."
³ LC. #4.
⁴ DPW. "Of Publike Prayer Before The Sermon."
⁵ LC. #35.
Man's salvation was the objective of the sermon and this was meant to give the sermon precision. In its most direct pronouncement on preaching, the Confession of Faith declared: "Repentance unto life is an evangelical grace, the doctrine whereof is to be preached by every minister of the gospel, as well as that of faith in Christ."\(^2\) The Directory of Worship was equally forthright stating that "the servant of Christ" is to seek "the conversion, edification, and salvation of the people."\(^3\)

How then did the sermon become the means of grace and secure its objective in man's salvation? The Westminster Standards declared that the effectuation of preaching was contingent on the work of the Holy Spirit. The ministry of the word and the work of the Spirit were like the two hands of God effecting salvation.

All those whom God hath predestinated unto life, and those only, he is pleased, in his appointed and accepted time, effectually to call, by his word and Spirit, out of that state of sin and death in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ; enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God; taking away their heart of stone and giving unto them an heart of flesh; renewing their wills, and by his almighty power determining them to that which is good; and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ.\(^4\)

In making the effectuation of preaching contingent on the Holy Spirit the Confession does three things. Negatively it substantiates the doctrine of double predestination by which only the elect can be saved and takes salvation completely out of the visible grasp of man.\(^5\) To quote Professor Hendry, it

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\(^1\) WC. Chapter I "Of The Holy Scripture," \#7.

\(^2\) WC. Chapter XV "Of Repentance Unto Life," \#1.

\(^3\) DFW. "Of The Preaching Of The Word."

\(^4\) WC. Chapter X "Of Effectual Calling," \#1.

\(^5\) Ibid. In The Shape Of Christology, Professor John McIntyre has correctly noted that the doctrine of double predestination affects all the other doctrines of the Confession, p. 71.
reduces "the freedom of grace to sheer caprice."  

This effectual call is of God's free and special grace alone, not from any thing at all foreseen in man; who is altogether passive therein, until, being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit, he is thereby enabled to answer this call, and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it.

Others not elected, although they may be called by the ministry of the word, and may have some common operations of the Spirit, yet they never truly come unto Christ, and therefore cannot be saved.  

Positively, the work of the Holy Spirit points to the mystery which stands at the heart of salvation and renders inconclusive an exact relationship between God's action and man's response.

The Spirit of God maketh...the preaching of the word an effectual means of salvation.

That the word may become effectual to salvation, we must attend thereunto with diligence, preparation, and prayer; receive it with faith and love, lay it up in our hearts, and practise it in our lives.

Ultimately, the work of the Spirit in effectuating man's salvation answers to how preaching achieves its purposes in man's salvation. The mystery is not removed but it is resolved. It would seem that the solution the Confession offers to the effectuation of preaching is similar to the way it resolves the matter of the inspiration of the Bible. Certainly the message of the Bible and the object of preaching seem to be parallel, namely "that knowledge of God...which is necessary unto salvation." Just as the inspiration of the Bible turns on "the inward

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2 WC. Chapter X "Of Effectual Calling" #2.

3 WC. Chapter X "Of Effectual Calling," #4.

4 SC. #89.

5 SC. #90.

6 WC. Chapter I "Of The Holy Scripture," #1.
work of the Holy Spirit, bearing witness by and with the word in our hearts" so
man's salvation as achieved by means of the preaching of the word is verified by
the inward witness of the Holy Spirit. 1 It is in the final analysis a matter of
faith: 2 Faith in God in the person of the Holy Spirit.

The grace of faith...is the work of the Spirit of Christ in their
hearts and is ordinarily wrought by the ministry of the word. 3

Such as truly believe in the Lord Jesus...may in this life be cer-
tainly assured that they are in the state of grace...an infallible
assurance of faith, founded upon the divine truth of the promises of
salvation, the inward evidence of these graces unto which these
promises are made, the testimony of the Spirit of adoption witnessing
with our spirits that we are children of God which Spirit is the
earnest of our inheritance, whereby we are sealed to the day of
redemption. 4

On this faithful work and witness of the Holy Spirit hinged the concept of preaching
as found in the Westminster Standards of the Church of the nineteenth century.

b. As Utilized By The Evangelical Pulpit

The concept of preaching couched in the Confession gave a definite sense
of direction to the evangelical pulpit.

First, the conviction that the sermon was to function as a means of grace
and that its objective was to be man's salvation determined the emphasis of the
evangelical pulpit. Preaching was to be soteriological for its theme was God's
action for man's salvation. Thomas Chalmers, the most famous preacher and theologian in the first half of the nineteenth century, informed his students:

Your function...is to preach this gospel. It is to cast the seed into
the ground, which growth up you know not how....The Bible is the
instrument...the Holy Spirit is the agent. 5

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1 WC. Chapter I "Of The Holy Scripture," #5.
2 George S. Hendry, op. cit., p. 32.
3 CW. Chapter XIV "Of Saving Faith," #1.
4 CW. Chapter XVIII "Of Assurance Of Grace and Salvation," #1, 2.
John Dick, whose systematic theology was the text in the United Presbyterian Divinity Hall, spoke of "the superior efficacy of preaching" as the means of salvation, not because such was simply an "article of faith" in the Confession but because this truth was "a deduction of experience." ¹ Professor James Robertson of the Old Kirk said: "The duty of preaching the gospel is the means of saving souls and extending the kingdom of the Redeemer."² In a pamphlet published in 1868, John Philip of Fordoun declared that the end of preaching was "the saving of men's souls."³ A. K. H. Boyd of St. Andrews noted in one sermon that "the great matter of all good preaching is the Gospel of Salvation through Christ."⁴

In a letter to one of his assistants about to be ordained, Alexander Whyte wrote: "Take the title of one of Newman's sermons as your prayer and aim all the day, 'The salvation of the hearer, the motive of the preacher.'"⁵ As preaching was primarily soteriological, Alexander Whyte concluded that "the evangelical pulpit has an exclusiveness and a sanctification about it altogether peculiar to itself."⁶

The objective of the sermon was man's salvation. Yet preaching for man's salvation was open to a variety of interpretations. The Larger Catechism itself used three terms to define the purpose of preaching: "conversion, edification, salvation."⁷ Thus Robert M. M'Cheyne stressed preaching which solicited a

²James Robertson, Old Truths, p. 130.
³John Philip, The Pulpit At The Bar, p. 10. Also see p. 30.
⁶Alexander Whyte, Bible Characters: Our Lord's Characters, p. 11.
⁷I.c. #159.
"conversion experience."¹ John Ker, the professor of practical theology in the United Presbyterian Divinity Hall, encouraged preaching which would both "aim at conversion...and cultivate growth."² Professor Robert Flint of Edinburgh viewed salvation as the end not the beginning of the Christian life. Consequently he advocated the comprehensive proclamation of salvation as continuous and progressive in man.

A true estimate of the proper end of preaching and of the fitness as a means to attain that end is a primary and indispensable qualification of successful preaching. That end is to bring men to God in Christ; into a right relationship of mind, heart, and life to Him; to increase the blessedness and intimacy of this Divine fellowship; to transform and beautify them and build them up until, by a mysterious and Divine assimilation, they are in all respects conformed to the character and example of Christ. This is the design which all preaching should have in view, and the true test of successful preaching is its adaptedness to accomplish this design.³

To other preachers the variance with which salvation was proclaimed hinged on the relationship between the academic and practical treatment of this doctrine. In the 1840's the contentious ecclesiastical scene led some preachers to lay more stress on the proper understanding of salvation. This resulted in more of an academic and doctrinal treatment of salvation.⁴ Even Robert S. Candlish noted this and plead in the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland for preaching which exhibited "the faithful and close application of God's Word to the hearts and consciences of living men."⁵ Later, John Ker declared:

We must aim at dealing with the breadth of a man's nature. If we address the mind alone, we shall make hard, cold dogmatists; but if

¹Andrew Bonar, Memoir of Robert Murray M'Cheyne, p. 335.
²John Ker, Lectures on the History of Preaching, p. 211.
³Robert Flint, On Theological, Biblical and Other Subjects, pp. 52-53.
⁴See Chapter 4, "The Older Evangelical Sermon."
⁵The Free Church of Scotland, Proceedings, 1848, p. 143.
we address the heart alone, we shall produce weak and narrow sentimentalists.¹

In the 1880's and 1890's the accent was on salvation as a practical and a way of life. This later emphasis also brought a change in the understanding of salvation itself. It was Henry Drummond who most forcefully insisted that whereas "the old Evangelism in its conception of salvation" had stressed man's changed "status" before God the "New Evangelism" would stress salvation as centered in man's own "character."² Marcus Dods, who probably influenced Drummond's own theological stance more than any other individual, proclaimed salvation as a way of life to be lived in the secular world.

As the salvation God introduces into the world is a practical everyday salvation to deliver us from the sins which this life tempts us to, so God introduced this salvation by means of the natural affections and ordinary arrangements of human life...so that if we are to make any advance in appropriating to ourselves God's salvation, it can only be by submitting ourselves implicitly to His providence, and taking care that in the commonest and most secular actions of our lives we are having respect to His will with us.³

Dods' close friend, Alexander Whyte, once described "every evangelical Church as an interpreter's house" and every minister as "an interpreter of all the lessons requisite for our salvation." Obviously the preachers were not at one as to what those lessons were nor how they were to be interpreted. Yet their conviction that preaching was to aim for man's salvation kept the evangelical pulpit from drifting to "pointless generalities."⁴

Second, the emphasis on preaching as soteriological gave the evangelical

1 John Ker, Lectures On The History Of Preaching, p. 211.
2 Henry Drummond, The New Evangelism and Other Papers, p. 18.
3 Marcus Dods, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph, p. 39.
4 Alexander Whyte, Bunyan Characters, First Series, p. 76.
pulpit an aggressive character. The view of preaching as a means of grace magnified the importance of the sermon. The Christian Treasury, a journal of pronounced pietistic tendencies, declared that "Preaching is a most important ordinance; it holds a place in the system of means." 1 Robert Murray M'Cheyne declared with his usual revivalistic fervor: "Preaching is the grand instrument which God has put into our hands, by which sinners are to be saved." 2 James Veitch of St. Cuthberts in Edinburgh concluded: "Preaching is every minister's great work." 3 Thomas Chalmers enunciated the source of an aggressive evangelicalism when he said that it was the relationship between the sermon and man's salvation that "gave importance to the business of the pulpit." 4

The aggressive character of the evangelical pulpit also stemmed from the recognition that as a means of grace the sermon itself was the word of God. Professor James Bannerman, of New College, wrote:

Nothing will rightly follow from truth whence it is derived. So that whatever by just consequences is drawn from the Word of God, is itself also the Word of God and truth infallible... This is that on which the whole ordinance of preaching is founded. 5

Most men were not as dogmatic as Professor Bannerman, yet they did acknowledge that there was a sense in which the sermon was the living word of God. Thomas Chalmers wrote: "The Bible, of itself and without the enforcement of a human expounder, is not the great instrument of christianization." 6 James Veitch described

1 The Christian Treasury, 1848, p. 288.
3 James Veitch, Sermons, pp. 356-357.
preaching as not "merely...man's speaking to us...it is man's speaking to us the word of God, then it is virtually God's speaking by man to us."¹ In the practical theology lectureship of 1899, James Robertson of the Old Kirk called the sermon "a divine gift...God's gift and inspiration."² James Stalker of the Free Church wrote: "Preaching is not merely the speaking of a man...preaching is the voice of God."³ Such theology nurtured an aggressive pulpit. Robertson Nicol, the Free Church minister from Kelso and later the editor of The British Weekly, wrote in The British and Foreign Evangelical Review in 1878: "Evangelicalism is nothing unless it is absolutely certain."⁴

The aggressive character of the evangelical pulpit was also nurtured by the conviction that the preacher himself was an indispensible link in the chain of salvation. He was a personal emissary bearing the word of man's salvation. Thus the preacher spoke of himself as a messenger, an ambassador, a herald, a watchman, a witness. A. H. Charteris said: "You have a message to deliver; it is not yours; it is God's."⁵ R. S. Candlish described the ambassador as "a personal emissary with a personal message."⁶ Thomas Chalmers emphasized that the content of this message was "the unconditional tender of forgiveness and friendship."⁷ Norman MacLeod declared: "Ambassadors...beseech all whom they address not to

¹James Veitch, op. cit., p. 357.
²James Robertson, The Christian Minister His Aims and Methods, pp. 63, 72.
receive the grace of God in vain, but to be reconciled to God,"¹ John Robertson, the young minister of Glasgow Cathedral whose premature death robbed him fame, noted:

The pulpit is not a place for human speculations; the merit of the preacher is not the merit of a discoverer in science or in art; the highest end of the ministerial office is to save immortal souls.²

In an ordination sermon, Alexander Duff said that it was the duty of the preacher to: "Declare who are to be warned...proclaim the wrath to come...point out the way of escape...enforce all his warnings by most urgent exhortations."³ In 1888, Charles Jerdan wrote: "The chief end of preaching is to declare the Evangel...to testify the Gospel of the Grace of God."⁴ Evangelicalism was nothing if it was not fervent and aggressive.

Third, the description of preaching in the Confession as the "preaching of the word" gave the sermon a distinctly biblical foundation. Thomas Chalmers called the minister a steward and charged him with the responsibility of insuring "that the things which are written pass without change or injury from the Bible to the pulpit."⁵ John Cairns used three words to describe the task of the steward: "preservation, transmission and diffusion."⁶ While the fathers of the Disruption tended to become more doctrinal in their preaching and more dependent on a rigid appeal to the Confession, an alternative movement was developing back to the Bible.

¹Norman MacLeod, Good Words, 1866, p. 422.
²John Robertson, Sermons and Expositions, p. 7.
⁵Thomas Chalmers, Institutes of Theology, Vol. 1, p. 263.
⁶John Cairns, The Morning Star and Other Sermons, pp. 262-263.
In 1863 a contributor to the *North British Review* wrote:

We do not object... to doctrinal preaching, but only to a kind of doctrinal preaching.... It is not doctrine, but mere doctrine, hard and stiff doctrine, narrow, one-sided doctrine—doctrine divorced from the Scripture exegesis, divorced from experience, divorced from human life—doctrine that may be carried about in a formula, and passed, without thought, a feeling, or heart-conviction, from hand to hand. We want water, drawn not from mere human tanks—whether Oxford, or Geneva, or Westminster—but from the divine living spring.

In his paper "The New Evangelism," Henry Drummond declared that the newer evangelicalism would be biblical not doctrinal.

In theology truth is propositional, tied up in neat parcels, systematized and arranged in logical order. In the Bible, truth is a fountain. There is an atmosphere here, an expansiveness, an infinity.

Throughout the century the preacher appealed to the Bible on different grounds and for different reasons. Yet the pulpit was at one in accepting by faith the fact that the Bible was to be the only basis of the sermon. In 1854 in his inaugural address Professor John Tulloch described the Bible as:

a fountain—head of divine truth ever welling forth afresh under whatever corruptions may overlay it. It is a symbol of sacred meaning which, never changing itself, may yet ever be read anew, under richer lights, and yield a deeper significance to the reader. Infallible itself, it lays no restraint on the freest inquiry.

Although preachers embraced various theories of inspiration, the pulpit was not concerned with the particular theory the preacher endorsed. In the heat of the

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4. Professor George S. Hendry in *The Westminster Confession for Today*, pp. 29-30 says that the Confession is not committed to any particular theory of inspiration. Thomas Chalmers appears to have held a mediating position stressing the Bible as the "medium...through which God holds converse" with humanity. See *Institutes of Theology*, Vol. 2, p. 107. Likewise Principal Robert Rainy said: "Whatever view of inspiration you hold, there is nothing more certain than that the inspiring influence takes the man as he is, formed in part by the experience of life, the habits of speech, the influence of race, country and age; and in his message, in his manner of delivering it, there are the effects due to his
Robertson Smith trial in 1878, Sir Henry Moncrieff admitted that the "Confession of Faith laid down no theory of inspiration."\(^1\) The primary concern of the pulpit was that the "Bible lay its impress on every sermon."\(^2\) Horatius Bonar proclaimed with almost naive confidence:

> Our duty is to believe, not to reconcile. There are many things which in this life we shall not be able to reconcile; but there is nothing in the Bible which we need to shrink from believing.\(^3\)

The simplicity of faith's acceptance of the Bible did not elude the "newer evangelical" at the end of the century. Professor Robert Flint said:

> The reading of a portion of Scripture is much more like Apostolic preaching than the delivery of a modern sermon. It has the same end as the sermon while it possesses an authority to which the sermon can lay no claim. It is primary; the sermon is secondary....The preached word must always support itself on the written word, and can never without usurpation displace it!\(^4\)

For these men the Bible was "authoritative because true, not true because authoritative."\(^5\) Thus William M'Farlan could conclude one sermon on "Authority":

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\(^1\) The Free Church of Scotland, *Proceedings And Debates*, 1878, p. 85.


\(^3\) Horatius Bonar, *Truth and Error*, p. 48.


\(^5\) W. L. M'Farlan, "Authority," *Scotch Sermons*, p. 213.
To simple and devout souls the Bible will still be the Book of life whatever theory in regard to its inspiration the thoughtful and cultured may adopt.

The evangelical, in particular, accentuated the utility of the Bible in preaching. The preacher spoke of himself as an "interpreter" and "expounder" and "a guide". Men following the example of Principal George Hill saw the Bible as the depository of the "revealed doctrines." Other preachers such as A. H. Charteris and Charles Brown stressed the "preaching of the very words of the Book itself" indicating that there should be as few words as possible spoken by the preacher himself. Still other men utilized the Bible on the ground that it "ministered life." To the evangelical preacher the Bible was the "chart of life" containing those truths which were to be proclaimed with certainty.

Fourth, since preaching was soteriological, the pulpit of the nineteenth century emphasized the focal point of God's action for man's salvation: Jesus Christ. Evangelicalism was Christocentric in its preaching.

The most common phrase the preacher used to describe his task was the phrase: "preaching Christ." John Robertson envisioned the preacher to be an

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1 Ibid., p. 216.


3 George Hill, The Character and Office Of Gospel Ministers, p. 23.


6 John Ker, Sermons, p. 163.
"Ambassador of Christ."¹ By this, Robertson meant that "Christ must appear in all our discourses....His name must run through all our exhortations and warnings."² In similar tone Professor Alexander Hill defined "preaching Christ" as allowing "the staple of your preaching the great subject of your discourses, [to] be 'Christ Jesus the Lord.'³ Professor Robert Flint used this phrase to denote the "central and unifying object of the Gospel" in preaching.⁴

All true preaching must be essentially preaching Christ. It is presenting Christ to the contemplation of the soul as being what He really is. This is the great immediate design of preaching, through which it can alone accomplish other ends; through which alone, especially, it can accomplish its ultimate end. Christ in His Person, Work, and Kingdom; Christ as revealing God the Father through the teaching of the prophets, through His own incarnation and atonement and their consequences, through His Apostles and through the guidance and government of His Church and through His gift of the Holy Spirit and all spiritual gifts; Christ in all His offices, and in all His excellences; this is the grand theme, many-sided, yet one.... 'Preaching Christ' is not, as some seem to fancy, simply repeating over and over again certain general statements about Christ; It is not that so-called 'preaching Christ crucified,'....It is a vast work; it is not only to declare all that Christ did and suffered, but it is to apply what he did and suffered to human life in its entire length and breadth, in all its issues, in all its relations. It is to seek to make the whole of life sacred, to make the whole of life Christian, by bringing Christ, so to speak, into it, so that the Spirit of Christ will shine forth in all that men do; in their religious exercises indeed, but not less also in their daily business and amusements; in all that they do as individuals, as members of families and of general society, of the State and the Church. Nothing less than all this is implied in preaching Christ, and earth can show no work more capacious or as glorious.⁵

It seems that the phrase "preaching Christ" was a general testimony to the Christocentric emphasis of the evangelical pulpit.

¹John Robertson, Sermons and Expositions, p. 401.
²Ibid., p. 11.
³Alexander Hill, Appendix to Counsels, by George Hill, p. 111.
⁴Robert Flint, On Theological Biblical and Other Subjects, p. 51.
⁵Ibid., pp. 48-50.
Of course this phrase, preaching Christ, was not immune to more restrictive interpretations. For many the phrase "preaching Christ crucified" served as the more accurate motto of the evangelical pulpit for in the first three quarters of the century more emphasis was given to the cross and the atonement than to the incarnation. ¹ A. N. Somerville found the phrase, preaching Christ, to be a succinct summary of his evangelistic efforts for here his purpose was "to commend Christ."² Professor James Bannerman of New College, emphasized the spiritual and individual aspect of this phrase. He said that in preaching Christ, "Christ is presented directly to the understanding, and heart, and the truth addressed singly to the spiritual nature of man."³ The British and Foreign Evangelical Review defined "preaching Christ" as the announcement of "God in Christ reconciling the world unto himself and not imputing their trespasses."⁴ Alexander Whyte commenced a series of sermons on the person of Jesus Christ because his life was to be primarily an example of everyman's.

I invite you, then, to the study of our Lord's character and walk and conversation; and, in that, to the parallel study and improvement of your own character and walk and conversation. For, first His character, and then your own, those are the two things that most concern you and men in all this world. . . . Come then, and let us begin to study the character of Christ, in order to put it on.⁵

"Preaching Christ" provided the preacher with a wide range of subject matter. Preachers varied in what they chose to accentuate in the life and work of Jesus. In the main the early evangelical pulpit laid emphasis on the atonement

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¹ See this chapter "Of Christ The Mediator."
² Andrew N. Somerville, A Day In Laodicea, p. 73.
⁴ The British and Foreign Evangelical Review, Vol. 6, 1857, p. 95.
⁵ Alexander Whyte, The Walk, Conversation and Character Of Jesus Christ, pp. 16-18.
while the later evangelical pulpit stressed the incarnation. Thus the common motto "preaching Christ" was primarily a description of the emphasis of the sermon within the trinitarian formula. In preaching salvation, the evangelical pulpit of the nineteenth century accentuated the message of God the Son.

The evangelical pulpit discovered the concept of preaching emergent in the Confession to be both specific and general. It was specific in that it stated the basis, the function, and the objective of preaching as well as the manner in which preaching was effectuated. It was general in that the major terms so crucial to evangelical preaching were open to both wide and narrow interpretation. Specifically, preaching was integral to man's salvation. With this legacy the evangelical pulpit was at once soteriological, aggressive, biblically orientated, and supremely Christocentric.

Aspects Of The Theology Of The Confession Affecting Preaching

A critical review of the book of sermons by Thomas Guthrie entitled: The Gospel Of Ezekiel, stated: "Dr. Guthrie seems to think that Ezekiel signed the Confession of Faith." The Westminster Confession of Faith did more than influence the view taken of the function and objective of preaching. The Confession also influenced the content of the sermon. The proclamation of salvation was particularly shaped by those doctrines which the Confession headed: "Of God's Eternal Decrees," "Of Christ The Mediator," "Of Saving Faith."

a. Of God's Eternal Decrees

Of all the doctrines of the Confession, it was the belief in what is

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1John Ker, Lectures On Preaching, p. 364.

2CF, Chapter III. "Of God's Eternal Decrees" is the title of this chapter in the Confession and hence this section of this chapter, however, in the text I shall be using the term: "double predestination."
called "double predestination" which was the most crucial to evangelical preaching. On the one hand predestination was one source of the certainty and the sense of authority which marked the evangelical pulpit. Conversely, this doctrine threatened to nullify the freedom with which salvation was offered to men and turn preaching into a mechanical farce. Consequently, the preacher had to make peace with this doctrine of double predestination if his own vocation was to remain intact. In the end peace did not come easily, if indeed it came at all. For many preachers this doctrine introduced confusion and uncertainty into their sermon. For most men predestination appears to have been one cause of embarrassment necessitating theological gymnastics and apology.

The discomfort which this doctrine of double predestination presented to the preacher is evident in the "special care" with which tradition dictated it should be handled. "Special prudence and care" was in fact the attitude suggested by the Confession itself. In this manner Thomas Chalmers cautioned his divinity students:

> It does not follow that because the theoretical exposition of this doctrine comes suitably from the academic chair, it is equally suitable for the pulpit. There I have ever thought that there should be the utmost delicacy and reserve in the introduction of it. It is a doctrine in fact which has less to do with the outset of the Christian course, than with the progress or the close of it.

With this wisdom Principal Hill would have concurred for he advised his students to avoid all doctrines of "debate" or "uncertainty" in their sermons.

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1. Cf. III/8 "The doctrine of this high mystery of predestination is to be handled with special prudence and care." Professor Hendry has pointed out that this is the only place in the entire Confession where the authors hint at mystery. See The Westminster Confession For Today, p. 15.

2. Thomas Chalmers, Posthumous Works, Vol. 8, pp. 52-54. Yet Chalmers preached at least one sermon on this subject. See T. Chalmers, Sermons Preached In St. John's Church, pp. 294ff.

Try as he might, the preacher could not eliminate the ramifications of predestination from his preaching. John Cairns said: "if you drive out predestination at one point, it comes in at another."\(^1\) The preacher might strike the words "election" and "predestination" from his vocabulary but invariably the same idea entered his sermon under the term "sovereign grace."

The most common reference to predestination in the average preacher's vocabulary was "grace". The common grace of God's action in Christ for humanity was ignored. The preacher emphasized a narrower view of grace delimited to the salvation of the individual. Thus man's personal salvation was "all of grace."\(^2\) This grace, the preacher defined as the "good pleasure of God to rear up from the most unpromising situations."\(^3\) For the preacher grace was "the conqueror of the heart."\(^4\) Grace was "free love...absolute and unconditional."\(^5\) Grace was the action of God qualified by the adjectives "sovereign" and "irresistible."\(^6\)

Horatius Bonar whose evangelicalism was bold and at times strident said:

> A Christian is one who is called not by self, or man, but by God. The voice that calls him is almighty, irresistible. He must needs obey. He is born "of the will of God."\(^7\)

James Veitch who usually refrained from any strong references to predestination

\(^1\)Alexander R. MacIwen, *Life and Letters of John Cairns*, p. 669. This statement was made by Cairns at the 1877 Synod of the UP Church in support of a motion to appoint a Committee to consider the revision of the Confession.

\(^2\)R. S. Candlish, *Discourses Bearing Upon The Sonship And Brotherhood of Believers*, p. 168.

\(^3\)Andrew N. Somerville, *Precious Seed, Sown In Many Lands*, p. 176.


\(^6\)A. R. MacIwen, *Life and Letters of John Cairns*, p. 669, "God's people are necessarily distinguished by sovereign grace."

\(^7\)Horatius Bonar, *Light and Truth*, p. 342.
still found in this doctrine the framework for his proclamation of grace and salvation.

So far from grace leading to ungodliness, it is just because our calling and reward are of grace, that all carnal confidence is cut off, and that every man is roused to activity and watchfulness, lest, a promise being given of entering into rest, he should seem to come short of it.

Even John Eadie, whose evangelicalism always seemed a bit strained in the strait-jacket of traditionalism, said: "God's grace alone, Christ's work alone, and the Spirit's influence alone, are the one basis of hope, and the one means of deliverance." In talking about "grace" it would appear that the preacher was talking about predestination to life.

The preacher further found it impossible to escape some reference to predestination because ultimately he had to speak of the cross. But one could not speak of the cross, or the death of Jesus without answering the question for whom did he die? Thus the discomfort of "double predestination" re-asserted itself in the debate over a limited or universal atonement.

To the older, more rigid evangelical, a limited atonement was simply part of an orderly and coherent system of theology. Principal William Cunningham was most emphatic stating that he embraced "an atonement, limited as to its destination and its personal objects as opposed to a universal, unlimited, indefinite atonement." His colleague at New College, John Duncan, stressed the "vicarious

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1 James Veitch, op. cit., p. 182. This statement by Veitch illustrates Professor Hendry's contention that "a doctrine of predestination which refers salvation ultimately to a secret and inscrutable decree effectually undermines the assurance of salvation," op. cit., p. 131.


3 William Cunningham, Sermons, p. 412.
sacrifice of Christ on behalf of His people."¹ Robert S. Candlish prefaced his major work on the subject of the atonement with the admission that "limitation or restriction" was the "characteristic feature of Christ's work."² He said:

A crowd of criminals, guilty and depraved, are kept in prison, waiting for the day of doom. What is my office, as a preacher of righteousness among them? Is it to convey to them from my Master any universal proclamation of pardon, or any intimation whatever of anything purchased or procured by him for them all indiscriminately? Is it to carry a bundle of reprieves, endorsed with his sign-manual, which I am to scatter over the heads of the miscellaneous multitude, to be scrambled for at random, or picked up by whosoever care to stoop for them? That, certainly, is not my message; that is not my gospel. They are not thus to be dealt with collectively and 'en masse'; nor are they to be fed with crumbs of comfort from the Lord's table. The Lord himself is at hand, and my business is to introduce him to you, that individually, and one by one, you may deal with him, and suffer him to deal with you.³

On the whole, the United Presbyterian Church was more open to the idea of a universal atonement. However, John Dick on whose theology their preachers were in part trained was unequivocal in his embrace of a limited atonement. He writes:

Our Lord, speaking of those for whom he died, calls them his sheep. "I lay down my life for the sheep." He explains who his sheep are by saying, that they are such persons as "Hear his voice and follow Him;" and he adds "that he gives to them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of his hand." Does it not plainly follow from his words, that those for whom he died shall be saved, that he died for none but those upon whom the gift of faith should be bestowed.⁴

To some, the proclamation of a limited atonement placed great weights on preaching. This was particularly true of men whose theology clashed with their evangelistic vigor. Thus Horatius Bonar and John Purves sought to evade the problem of a limited atonement by saying that the message of the gospel is not

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¹ David Brown, Life of the Late John Duncan, p. 386.
³ Ibid., p. 131.
⁴ John Dick, op. cit., p. 483.
whether Christ died for the elect or for all men. "The Gospel is that Christ died for sinners."¹ In the United Presbyterian Church, Principal Harper cast his vote with the traditionalists in the atonement controversy of the 1840's in his church. It appears that while Harper believed that Christ died only for the elect he still could offer the gospel freely to all men because he did not know who the elect were.² This was one common solution to the atonement problem set forth by men who wanted to preach a free gospel while theologically embracing a theory of a limited atonement.

Another body of men openly bolted from any connection with a limited atonement and articulated in their preaching a universal atonement...the fact that Christ died for all men. The most notorious of these protagonists was M'Cleod Campbell who in his pulpit in Row brought the atonement controversy into the open with the firm declaration that "God loves you all,...Christ died for every one of you."³ M'Cleod Campbell's influence is evident in the preaching of his cousin, Norman MacLeod, the latter confessing of the heretic of Row that "I have learned from him as from no other."⁴ In the United Presbyterian Church, the movement towards an openly articulated universal theory of the atonement was most obvious and apparently most tolerated. Two of the foremost preachers of that Church, John Eadie and John Ker, did not disguise their embrace of this view.⁵

¹Horatius Bonar, Truth and Error, p. 87. John Purves, Sermons Touching Some Points Much Controverted At Present, p. 92.
²Andrew Thomson, Life Of Principal Harper, p. 136.
⁴Good Words, 1872, p. 353. The proclamation of an unlimited atonement was a common ingredient in the later sermons of Norman MacLeod.
⁵John Eadie, The Divine Love, pp. 27, 25. "We proclaim a gospel of infinite merit and universal adaptation....The gospel is offered to the world without discrimination." John Ker, Sermons, p. 91. "The arms of God are as
1863, George Gilfillan, the United Presbyterian minister in Perth, recorded with the candor marking a private journal: "Some churches would not permit the full free doctrine of the atonement to be preached, but ours, I trust, is different."\(^1\) As the century wore on, the theory of a universal atonement became less a dream to be recorded in diaries and more a reality proclaimed in the pulpits.\(^2\)

To some preachers, predestination was not a harsh or cowardly doctrine to be avoided or disguised. Principal William Cunningham felt that this doctrine evoked a sense of wonder and humility because "the salvation of all those who will be saved is traceable ultimately to the love of God."\(^3\) John Purves, whose defence for this doctrine grew out of his activity in the revivals in the Jedburgh area in the 1840's said that "in this doctrine alone," there was "that one entire attribute of the Godhead...the most Godlike of all...his absolute sovereignty."\(^4\)

Contrasting the Church of Scotland with the Church of England, Edward Irving said wide as his call and the power of Christ's atonement is as unlimited as the invitation to it. Each one of us knows here, not merely what God is doing for ourselves, but for every other man of the race, and can say with confidence, 'Come with me into this broad and blessed sunlight; it is for thee as for me.'\(^5\)

\(^1\)George Gilfillan, *George Gilfillan: Letters and Journals*, p. 311.

\(^2\)In 1856 in a private letter to his sister Jane, Norman MacLeod wrote: "As to John Campbell's book on the Atonement, it is like himself, dark, but deep, and very true. I think it has led me captive. I shall read it again; but it finds me, and fills up a huge void. I fear that no one has read it but myself." p. 51 from *Memoir of Norman MacLeod*, Vol. 2.

\(^3\)William Cunningham, *Sermons*, p. 27.

\(^4\)John Purves, *op. cit.*, p. 65. In the preface to this collection of sermons John Purves writes: "The writer was anxious to put something into the hands of his own people, which, while not affecting to be a formal discussion of the points referred to, might serve at least as his personal testimony to the fact that there is no inconsistency between proclaiming the Gospel to sinners at large, as freely and openly as words can do, and at the same time claiming all the saving results of this to God's sovereign discriminating grace alone." p. vi.
that in Scotland, the doctrine of election had "stirred up the might of men as individuals, and delivered them from the lethargic corruption of aggregate masses."¹ In particular the more pietistic of the older evangelicals appear to have proclaimed both a doctrine of double predestination and a free gospel to all men.² They appear to have been aware of the tension between freedom and election but to them this was a paradox which was not theirs to resolve.³ They adhered to the counsel of Professor Duncan who said:

Preach the antinomies of truth, and carry each out as far as it is possible to carry it but don't attempt to reconcile them. These two lines will meet if produced far enough.⁴

An equally interesting group of preachers refused to discuss or mention such "abstract problems" as predestination in their sermons.⁵ These were men

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² See Andrew Bonar, *Diary and Letters*, pp. 363-364. David Yeaworth, *Robert Murray McCheyne*, A Ph.D. Thesis, New College, University of Edinburgh, 1957, p. 248. Both Andrew Bonar and Robert Murray McCheyne proclaimed a free gospel to all while believing in the old doctrine of double predestination. A. N. Somerville, *A Day in Laodicea*, pp. 103-104. In a rather typical excerpt from a sermon, Somerville says: "Sinner, true it is that salvation is wholly of grace. It is the privilege of Christians to say to each other, "God...hath quickened us together with Christ." Faith is the gift of God. Yet think not that sovereign grace superseeds the opening of the door on your part, according to the call of Jesus. The Lord opens, and we open. The Lord makes us willing in the day of His power, and we give consent to Christ's entrance. The Father draws the soul to Jesus, but He does not drag it."

³ Horatius Bonar speaks best for this solution: "People say, how can you preach a free gospel and yet believe in election? I answer, I believe in both, because I find both in the Bible. I have no authority for preaching an unconditional gospel but what I find in the Bible: and I have the same authority for preaching an unconditional personal election. God has told me both are true." "Let us not be so anxiously asking how can this be? How can we harmonize the Spirit's free agency with man's free agency? Let us leave difficulties in the hand of God." See *Truth and Error*, pp. 6, 48 by Horatius Bonar.


⁵ *Good Words*, 1862, p. 387. Here Norman MacLeod wrote: "To know God we must turn away from such abstract problems to the living person."
such as John Robertson of Glasgow Cathedral, Norman MacLeod also of Glasgow, Robert Rainy, that enigmatic figure in the Free Church, and John Eadie, John Ker and George Gilfillan of the United Presbyterian Church. These were all men with more of a practical concern in preaching. As a group they tended to emphasize the love of God. To them the sovereignty of God was the sovereignty of divine love. They were men capable of living with mystery and thus their sermons did not necessitate the explication of the doctrine of election. It does not appear that any of them renounced this doctrine; they simply did not believe that it had a place in the pulpit. Norman MacLeod said that such questions as "God's eternal decrees, foreknowledge, predestination" should all be by-passed for they "breed erroneous impressions of God's character." In one sermon John Cairns raised the issue of "God's elect" but quickly abandoned it by saying:

You do not need to solve this question whether or not you belong to the elect, ere you are warranted to look up and rejoice in His light. He shines for you as men, for every one of you and to all.

In the words of John Robertson predestination pointed to the "hiddenness" of God's action and this was a "mystery" with which the preacher could best cope in silence. Thus, the preachers who were among the most prominent in the 1860's and 1870's chose to abandon rather than resolve the thorny issue of double predestination.

The last quarter of the century witnessed the entry of a group of preachers

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1 Ibid. Good Words, 1864, p. 252. "It is not men who are knocking at Christ's door, bolted and barred against them by some unknown, mysterious and inexplicable decree, but it is men shutting their own door against Christ, bolting and barring it by the degree of their own self-will, itself the mystery of iniquity."


3 John Robertson, Sermons and Expositions, p. 24. In another book by Robertson, Pastoral Counsels, p. 20, he criticises the creed for "descending too much into details and seeking to limit thought upon points on which...it might have been left unfettered." See p. 232.
who, going one step further, repudiated the doctrine of double predestination. The thought and homiletical approach of these men is best formulated in the controversial collection of sermons: Scotch Sermons. In part their thinking is reflective of an age in which a new found sense of history defined the limitations of old dogmatic declarations such as creeds. 1 In their optimistic quest for a salvation which was for all men they emphasized man's action. They stressed a religion of the spirit. 2 They sought to create a living body of faith free from dogma. Among the dogmas to be severed was "the redemption in Christ of an election according to grace and the quickening in the elect of a new life." 3

Running through the nineteenth century the doctrine of double predestination was a ribbon of embarrassment. The obvious uneasiness with which this doctrine of double predestination was held gave rise to various attempts to resolve the dilemma. Ironically, most of these innovations were the fruit of men unwilling to relinquish their belief in predestination. The discomfort of these men was not with election or predestination to life, it was with the decree to "wrath."

1 William Mackintosh, "The Renovating Power Of Christianity," Scotch Sermons, p. 190. "The second Reformation will start with a more sweeping principle, and proceed more thoroughly to work, for it will not only discard whatever of the popular creed is hostile to the higher life, but will be a protest against making of any faith or dogma, which is not necessary for the lifting of human life, a condition of salvation." See p. 8 of thesis. Also see "Development and Diversity In Scottish Presbyterianism," New College Bulletin, Volume II, No. 1 by Professor A. C. Cheyne, p. 17.

2 Patrick Stevenson, "Unity," Scotch Sermons, p. 359. "What we need is to breathe again the air He breathed who was no maker of dogma or of ritual, whose work was to call up in humanity the spirit of the child, and to teach that the true worship of God is that 'in spirit and in truth'."

3 W. L. M'Farlan, "The Things Which Cannot Be Shaken," Scotch Sermons, p. 220. In this passage M'Farlan says that it is the theology relating to "sin and salvation" which is now untenable and includes this statement on election under his explanation of what he considers to be the untenable theology of "sin and salvation."
The most common modification was to introduce a clear distinction between the doctrine of predestination and the proclamation of the Gospel to all men. Thomas Chalmers phrased this argument most clearly:

By implicating, as some theologians most unwisely do, the doctrine of election with the primary overtures of the gospel, they, instead of pointing it with sure aim to any, do in fact place it beyond the reach of all. In no place of the Bible is pardon addressed to any man on the basis that he is one of the elect; but in all places of the Bible pardon is addressed to every man on the footing that he is one of the species.¹

In the face of nature's unbelief, and though under the scowl, it may be of a misunderstood theology, let me have you make the proclamation of a free gospel in the hearing of all, and for the acceptance of all...You are the heralds of a grace universal. There is not a universal willingness on the part of man—there lies the barrier.²

John Duncan, Thomas Guthrie, Horatius Bonar and Principal Harper were all advocating a similar distinction. For these men the basis of this distinction was in part an admission of their humanity...they refused to play God. John Duncan said:

I preach a free gospel to every man, or I don't preach the gospel at all, but I know that its acceptance without the help of the Spirit is an impossibility. I am not going to hinder a man from attempting an impossibility.³

Thomas Guthrie said that he was at liberty to preach a "free gospel" since he did not know who were the elect.⁴

Other preachers attempted to alter the understanding of predestination itself. Edward Irving was the most conservative and pedestrian, simply insisting

²Ibid., p. 109.
³John Duncan, Colloquia, Peripatetica, p. 86.
⁴Thomas Guthrie, The Gospel In Ezekiel, p. 316. Man And The Gospel, p. 450. Here Guthrie said that "man cannot be saved unless elected."
that one cannot talk about election without at the same time talking about redemption. He believed in both election and an unlimited atonement. He called redemption "the porch which introduceth us into the temple of election."  

The commonness of the redemption and the personality of the election, do stand, and prop each other up: they can only stand together.... The former without the latter degenerates into universal salvation; the latter without the former degenerates into blind and absolute fate, partiality, or favouritism. But where the two are held fast, they become the two poles upon which the goodness and beauty and solidity of the Divine purpose revolve.  

Moody Stuart sought to give the decrees an existential significance by taking them out of the past and making them decrees in the eternal present. He said:

You will recall that we are taught here that God's will in the present is perfectly free and uncontrolled. He is, therefore, not bound or fettered by any past decree. Of whatever nature that decree is spoken of in our Confession and Scripture, it is merely one aspect of the present will of God, which acts in eternity and therefore is called eternal rather than temporal. But there is no past in it: it is present....You are left face to face only with God's present will, the will of One whom you can pray to, and plead with and reason with. He himself invites you to do so.

John Ker suggested that statements concerning predestination and election begin with man himself. He says:

Election, that is, the sovereignty of grace, is made the handmaid of pride instead of that of humility. Its meaning in the Bible is, "whatever may be good in me comes from God." The mistake in confessions of faith is, that they begin with divine decrees and reason down, instead of beginning with man's nature and reasoning up.

George Gilfillan was perhaps the most radical. He viewed predestination as dependent on God's foreknowledge in relation to the decree to life eternal.

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2 Ibid., p. 182.
4 John Ker, *Thoughts For Heart and Life*, p. 203.
5 George Gilfillan, *op. cit.*, p. 14. "The freedom of man's will is a fact as undeniable as God's own being....But...God knew all the influences and events that were to modify the actions of that will, and had ordained many of them, and
As to the decree to wrath, Gilfillan tended toward destructionism.  

Ultimately the pain "of God's eternal decrees" was exacerbated by those who tended to confuse faith with logic. As the older evangelicals with their more rigid rationalistic approach to the Christian life passed from the scene, the movement was away from faith as notitia and towards faith as fiducia. Increasingly the preacher was content to see the relationship between God's action and man's response as the "great mystery of life and thought."  

b. Of Christ The Mediator

In the nineteenth century the pulpit responded favorably to the challenge to "preach Christ." In the idiom of the Westminster Confession of Faith the preacher was to proclaim the good news of "Christ The Mediator." "Christ the Mediator" was also that section of the Confession concerned with the general theme "salvation through Christ." In as much as the Confession itself spoke of preaching as a "means" of salvation the preacher's appropriation of this doctrine is most significant.

It has already been suggested that the nineteenth century was an age accentuating the way of salvation, as that salvation was variously understood.

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1 George Gilfillan, Letters and Journal, p. 145. "I incline to Destruc-
tionism; or rather the idea of God selecting His own children from among the mass, and leaving the others silently to die away. I believe in the word of the Apostle, 'Elect unto everlasting life.'"

2 George S. Hendry, op. cit., p. 56.

3 John Robertson, Pastoral Counsels, p. 20.

4 Cf VIII. This chapter is titled: "Christ The Mediator."

5 George S. Hendry, op. cit., p. 94.
This emphasis on salvation issued in a corresponding stress on the priestly work of Christ the Mediator.¹ Professor Hendry says that in the Confession itself it is the atonement which stands at the heart of the mediatorial work of Christ.² The "Shorter Catechism" curtly states:

Christ executeth the office of a priest, in his once offering up of himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, and reconcile us to God, and in making continual intercession for us.³

As the cross stood at the center of the scheme of salvation as outlined in the Confession so the cross was one of the dominant themes in the sermon. The centrality of the cross in the sermon was no mere passive acceptance and reflection of the theology of Westminster. On the contrary, the preacher of this general era emphasized the cross with a fervency and vitality which betrayed both a depth of conviction and hinted at possible contention. The preacher enunciated the imperative of the cross in two stock phrases: "Preaching the Cross" and "Preaching Christ crucified."

On the one hand it seems that these two phrases were sometimes used vindictively to stir the emotions and perpetuate discord. Thus the phrases were interchanged with other more general expressions such as "preaching Christ," or "preaching the gospel."⁴ In part, the popular use of these phrases reflects the lingering animosity of the Disruption Era.⁵ In still other cases such phrases

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¹ CF VIII, 3. Here the mediatorial activity of Christ is related to the "mysteries of salvation" which are revealed to us "in and by the word" thus implicating preaching. CF VII, 4, 5 are the principal sections of the chapter relating to the priestly work of the atonement.

² George S. Hendry, op. cit., p. 110.

³ Shorter Catechism #25.


⁵ This "lingering animosity" is illustrated in the sermon preached in 1851 by Nathaniel Paterson, the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Free
were the bludgeon with which the preacher could trounce those with whom he disagreed. Thus Andrew Bonar boasted that his prayer was that no one would ever occupy his pulpit "who does not preach Christ and Him crucified." Even Thomas Guthrie who was usually uninvolved in theological controversy said in the heat of the 1840's: "It is no gospel church unless Christ crucified is preached in it." As a banner to be waved, "preach Christ crucified" provided a rallying point for those preachers who wanted people to know that their sermons were to be especially revered. "Preach Christ crucified" was indicative of a precision and restrictive quality lacking in the phrase "preach Christ." In this spirit Andrew Bonar wrote that while Robert Murray McCheyne preached all of the doctrines of the Confession of Faith, "it was not doctrine alone that he preached, it was Christ and him crucified." As banners to be waved "preach Christ crucified" and "preaching the cross" were illustrative of the pettiness of the pulpit, and of the inherent temptation in preaching to self-vindication via self-righteousness.

On the other hand, the frequency, as well as the fervency, with which the cross was proclaimed points to a significance beyond mere polemics. The cross, or the death of Jesus, was the culmination of his life and "preaching the cross" or "preaching Christ crucified" appears to have been a generalization, a summary, of the message to be proclaimed. Andrew Thomson said: "we must make Christ and him crucified the great theme of our addresses." John Cairns called this Church, at the dedication of New College. "During a half century of Dark Modernism, in the preaching of the Gospel there was indeed the naming of the sun of righteousness, but almost a total eclipse of his beams."

1Marjory Bonar, Reminiscences of Andrew A. Bonar, p. 133.
3Andrew Bonar, Memoir and Remains of Robert Murray McCheyne, p. 73.
4Andrew Thompson, Sermons On Fidelity, p. 432.
redemptive work of Christ the "essence" of the "gospel." 1 John Eadie said that salvation by the cross was "the great truth of the gospel" and confessed that it had been the constant theme of his preaching. 2 Thomas Chalmers declared that "the first and foremost article is the doctrine of Christ crucified." 3 Professor James Robertson described the mediatorial work of Christ as "the sum and substance, the alpha and omega of pulpit ministration." 4 John Ker in his lucid manner said that "the darkness of the cross" is the "centre of our faith" and "our key to life." 5 Robert Flint said: "The cross of Calvary is the centre of history." 6 From a different theological point of reference, William M'Farlane said that the death of Christ was one of three propositional truths which could not be shaken. 7 Ebenezer Porter summed up the general meaning of the phrase "preach Christ crucified" as including "all that is implied in salvation by grace....It is the sum of Christianity." 8 The cross emerged as the fountainhead of evangelical preaching because it was the focal point of the gospel.

Preaching the cross further emphasized the basis of salvation. Professor John Dick declared that the cross took salvation completely out of the hands of

1 John Cairns, Christ, The Morning Star and Other Sermons, p. 357.

2 James Brown, Life of John Eadie, p. 63. This statement was made by Eadie at the conclusion of 25 years of his ministry.

3 Thomas Chalmers, Institutes of Theology, Vol. 2, p. 95.

4 James Robertson, Old Truths, p. 133.


6 Robert Flint, On Theological, Biblical and Other Subjects, p. 27.

7 William M'Farlane, "The Things Which Cannot Be Shaken," Scotch Sermons, p. 230. "Christ died, not to save them from dying, but to enable them to die with him to everything that is evil."

8 Ebenezer Porter, Evangelical Preaching, p. 68.
man and made it entirely an act of God. 1 In the 1840's when the Church was ardently aggressive in its evangelism, The Christian Journal, an organ of the United Secession Church said, "The blood of Christ is the only remedy for man's moral disease; and where this remedy is kept out of sight, there can be no life." 2 To the evangelical "the great end of the Christian ministry was to save sinners" and such was not possible "till Christ was preached as the atoning sacrifice, as the lamb of God." 3 In the more uncertain atmosphere of the late 1860's, A. H. Charteris re-iterated the necessity of "preaching the cross" as the only means of man's salvation:

By the preaching of the cross, God has chosen to save the world. It is foolishness to the natural man, but it has been mighty to the pulling down of strongholds everywhere. Yet how few use it...as believing on its power! How few seem to feel, that in the most decorous and contented congregations are possibly, probably, many, very many who have not been born again, and to whom, therefore, the Gospel in its divine power has yet to come! 4

Even Norman MacLeod, whom some older evangelicals accused of a heterodoxy, proclaimed:

May we all be led to examine ourselves carefully regarding our fitness for the 'inheritance of the saints in light.' Do we believe in Jesus, through whose blood alone there is remission for the sins that are past? Are we reconciled to God, and at peace with him through faith in His love, manifested in this, 'that he sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins?' 5

For the evangelical preacher the cross and salvation were mutual concerns complementing and necessitating each other.

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1John Dick, op. cit., p. 94.
5Norman MacLeod, Good Words, 1861, p. 700.
A pulpit so tuned to the theme of the cross also posed a theological threat...the threat of a truncated gospel. In the words of one critic: "There is danger of turning the great gospel message into one particular fact or incident."¹ John Robertson of Glasgow Cathedral was also sensitive to this danger for he insisted that the preacher move on from the cross with its message of "the forgiveness of sins" to an emphasis on "the attainment in the future of a righteousness that is seen to be most precious and desirable."² Earlier Edward Irving had given similar advice in an ordination sermon:

- Preach the gospel; not the gospel of the last age, or of this age, but the everlasting gospel; not Christ crucified merely, but Christ risen; not Christ risen merely, but Christ present in the Spirit, and Christ to be again present in person.³

Professor Robert Flint scathingly denounced "preaching Christ crucified" as "in reality, crucifying Christ by preaching, since it sets forth only a mean and mutilated simulacrum of Christ."⁴

The danger of a gospel only consisting of the cross arose from the decisive and isolated manner in which the preacher articulated the message of the cross. One periodical writer said:

- Preach Christ crucified! Turn not aside from this under the temptation of meeting some question of the day or some bearing of the public mind.⁵

Robert Gordon of Edinburgh's High Free Kirk said that the death of Jesus on the cross "was the great purpose for which the Son of God became incarnate."⁶

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¹ Robert J. Smith, op. cit., p. 93.
² John Robertson, Sermons and Expositions, p. 96.
⁴ Robert Flint, On Theological, Biblical, and Other Subjects, pp. 49, 50.
⁵ The Christian Treasury, 1850, p. 96.
⁶ Robert Gordon, Sermons, p. 80.
S. Candlish indicated that any preacher who wished to follow the pattern of the Apostle Paul need only preach the death and resurrection of Jesus. Principal William Cunningham apparently recognized the danger of a pulpit emphasizing only "one topic"...the cross. Yet Cunningham said that the atonement as dependent on the cross was "the great Cardinal principle" he kept in the forefront of every sermon. Cunningham's preaching substantiates this claim. His preaching is doctrinal, yet every doctrine which Cunningham examines in the pulpit is passed through the prism of the atonement in the course of the sermon.

Marjory Bonar quoting largely from what her father, Andrew Bonar, had written says:

"The atoning sacrifice of the Son of God formed the central point of all his preaching. The Cross was "the breaking of God's alabaster-box, the fragrance of which has filled heaven and earth." This little world was "the altar of the universe on which lay the Almighty Sacrifice. The Incarnation was but the scaffolding for the Atonement.""

During the first three quarters of the century, the "scaffolding" of the Incarnation was threatened with demolition.

In proclaiming the cross, the preacher focused attention on the forensic nature of the atonement. Among the older evangelicals there was almost unanimous adherence to a substitutionary atonement. Jesus was the "proper propitiation"

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1 Robert S. Candlish, Life In A Risen Saviour, p. 14. "The gospel which Paul preached was very simple...The articles of the creed on which he insisted were few and plain--"Christ died; he was buried; he rose again." Also see The Gospel of Forgiveness, p. 460.

2 William Cunningham, Sermons From 1828 to 1860, p. 123.

3 Ibid., pp. 122-123.

4 By this I mean that in a sermon on the doctrine of providence or the Trinity or prayer, ultimately that doctrine was related to the atonement. Of the 28 sermons in this book no less than 14 of them deal primarily with the doctrine of the atonement and in all of the sermons the cross or the atonement is at least a secondary theme.

5 Marjory Bonar, Reminiscences Of Andrew A. Bonar, D.D., pp. 133-134.
for man's sins. Some of these preachers proclaimed the substitutionary atonement with a rather matter-of-fact bluntness. Thus Alexander N. Somerville said: "My doctrinal watchword wherever I go, will be 'Christ for us a substitute; with us no substitute for Christ.'" Other preachers were concerned with the defense of this doctrine in the face of liberalizing tendencies. John Cairns declared that the whole idea of the atonement was lost if anything but the substitutionary aspect of it was emphasized. Robert S. Candlish was equally dogmatic:

Every theory that has been or can be proposed of the suffering life and cruel death of Jesus, the Holy One of God, apart from the recognition of his vicarious character and standing, fails, and must fail, to satisfy a simple mind. The whole story is a confused, inconsistent, inextricable, incomprehensible enigma... It is the doctrine, or rather the fact, of his substitution for you, which alone harmonizes and hallows all.

The less dogmatic evangelicals did not abandon the substitutionary view of the atonement, but their utilisation of this doctrine in preaching was less contentious and more circumspect and charitable. John Robertson's openness was indicative of the increasingly tolerant spirit of these men. He said:

Different views may be taken as to the nature of the atonement and the grounds upon which an atonement was required. You may think,

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2 James Veitch is an excellent example of this matter-of-fact presentation of the atonement. See *Sermons* by James Veitch, pp. 47, 71, 123, 226.

3 George Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

4 In 1868 the Free Church of Scotland circulated a "Pastoral Letter on Prevailing Sins." Among the "sins" mentioned was that of rejecting the substitutionary atonement and thereby turning the cross into "merely an example of self-sacrifice." See Acts of General Assembly, 1868, p. 543. John Phillip, *op. cit.*, called the substitutionary atonement "the very backbone of the Bible, the pith and marrow of the Gospel-schemes," p. 26.


and rightly, that a complete theory on either branch of the subject is beyond the powers of the human mind. But there cannot be a doubt that the scriptures do teach that we are indebted to the life and death of Christ for the good hope toward God we are permitted to cherish, that life and that death having been needful that our sins might be forgiven.¹

Robert Rainy's restraint in his handling of the doctrine of the atonement is symptomatic of men wanting to embrace the essential core of a doctrine without firm commitment to the particular logic of the doctrine.

Whatever the burden was, whatever the difficulty that stood against sinners, Christ in His atonement bore the strain of it, and put it away. Christ bore the whole burden of our sins, as these barred the way for us to real and eternal welfare.²

Yet, these were not insipid, vacillating preachers. These were men exuding charity as to the peripheral trappings of doctrine but firm in their commitment to the principle doctrines of the Confession itself. Norman MacLeod's basic alignment to traditional orthodoxy is thus evident in this entry in his Journal in 1870:

I have been astounded by a most influential member of the Church saying to me, "What is it to me whether Christ worked miracles or rose from the Dead! We have got the right idea of God through Him. It is enough, that can never perish!" And this truth is like a flower which has grown from a dung-hill of lies and myths! Good Lord, deliver me from such conclusions! If the battle has come, let it; but before God I will fight with those only, be they few or many who believe in a risen, living Saviour....Nothing can possibly move me from Jesus Christ, the living Saviour, the Divine Saviour, the Atoning Saviour, whatever be the philosophy of that atonement.³

In preaching the substitutionary atonement was articulated within the framework of justice. Justice was proclaimed as both the demand of God and the demand of man. As the demand of God, John Cairns viewed the atonement as the

¹John Robertson, Sermons and Expositions, pp. 134-135.
²Robert Rainy, Sojournings With God, p. 231.
³Donald MacLeod, Memoir of Norman MacLeod, D.D., Vol. 2, pp. 321-322.
satisfaction of the law of God.

Salvation is procured for guilty and miserable sinners, by the righteousness of one who satisfies the law of God, and who recovers the transgressors to harmony with that law and its righteous demands. This salvation of God...a salvation resting on the perfect righteousness of God's own Son as the sinner's substitute, applied to believers in Him for justification.

As the demand of man, Cairns said the atonement was the need of the conscience, which is "the voice of God within us."2

Now this demand of conscience is what the glorious sacrifice of Christ meets; for this demonstrates the righteousness of the penalty affixed to sin, and thus upholds the authority of the Lawgiver; and as every one who is willing to accept the benefits of this sacrifice may be looked upon as having his sin punished in the person of his substitute, even conscience tells him that he may himself go free. This doctrine of the atonement may seem stern and awful, but it must be so to meet the stern and awful demand of conscience...the conscience is now pacified by the blood of Christ.3

The preachers heralding the forensic nature of the atonement in a harsh and unbending manner said little regarding the benefits of redemption. In their theology the atonement issued in an "imputed righteousness." However, in their preaching, the cross culminated in the demand for repentance.4 Perhaps this

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3 Ibid., p. 12. Also see Robert Candlish, Scripture Characters, p. 42. James Veitch: Sermons, p. 123. John Eadie, The Divine Love, pp. 41, 167. Thomas Chalmers, Institutes Of Theology, Vol. 2, p. 87. "In the exposition of this doctrine—the doctrine of Christ's substitution for sinners, inclusive both of the atonement and imputed righteousness—you will find the great instrument for turning sinners unto God. It is the only doctrine by which to meet and to allay the misgivings of guilty nature and by which to substitute in place of all the distrust and despondency which formerly oppressed it, the charm of a felt and confident reconciliation with the lawgiver whom it offended."

4 Thomas Chalmers, Institutes of Theology, Vol. 2, p. 152. "Not only do we offer to every one the remission of their sins, but teach, nay, warn, every one to repent, for that unless they repent they shall perish; or rather, we mix up both, both the good news of forgiveness and the necessity of repentance from the very outset."
continued emphasis on repentance was but a reflection of that rigid Calvinism which forbade any sense of certainty or assurance of salvation for man. This appears to have been the attitude of John Duncan, better known to his students at New College as "Rabbi."

I would not preach the benefits of redemption without preaching Christ, but neither would I preach a benefitless Christ; and though neither should exclude the other, I would rather preach Christ exclusively than pardon exclusively. Men must be taught to seek the Saviour rather than peace.

The salvation secured in the cross could not be taken lightly. Therefore the secondary emphasis was not so much on man's status in terms of justification. The secondary emphasis was on the radical, demanding nature of this salvation. Repentance provided a convenient model to fulfil this need. Principal Cunningham said:

It is quite obvious, even on the most cursory examination of the Gospels, that the doctrine of Repentance and reformation comprehended the sum and substance of the preaching of the Gospel, as exemplified both in the preaching of our Saviour and of His Apostles.

This emphasis on the demand of repentance rather than the benefits of redemption was variously accentuated by these preachers. Alexander Somerville spoke of repentance in terms of self-renunciation. John Brown the United Presbyterian Professor and pastor of Broughton Place Church in Edinburgh advocated the need of "searching sermons" which would set forth the "distinguishing features of the

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1George S. Hendry, op. cit., pp. 170-174. Also the preaching of repentance was the one specific directive in the Confession to the content of the sermon, CF XV/1.

2David Brown, Life Of The Late John Duncan, p. 415. When John Duncan's wife died he said he could not be certain of her salvation but he did have "good hopes for her".

3William Cunningham, Sermons, p. 22. Also see p. 74.

4Alexander Somerville, Precious Seed, p. 203. "That which is renounced is self, as our ground of confidence, and selfishness as the principle of our conduct. In other words, the man is convinced of sin, and relinquishes the world as his portion."
unregenerate and the regenerate.\(^1\) Robert Gordon emphatically stated that "regeneration" demanded "a renovation of the soul."\(^2\) For the more dogmatic Calvinists, the proclamation of the atonement resulted in the insistence on repentance.

The more cautious Calvinists, some of whom would have despised the label, placed more immediate emphasis in their preaching on the benefits of redemption.\(^3\) These were men whose preaching was moving away from a solitary stress on the atonement toward an equal if not primary emphasis on the incarnation. John Eadie, and Norman MacLeod are examples of preachers who saw in the cross the great witness to God's redemptive love for man.\(^4\) For Robert Rainy, the cross culminated in a message of "forgiveness."

Forgiveness is preached or declared to us; and by this preaching God saves them that believe. Therefore God deals with us about this forgiveness, and calls us to deal with Him. He speaks to us and expects an answer. As forgiveness is on God's part given, so on man's part it is expected to be taken and accepted. God holds it out to us for that purpose by preaching.\(^5\)

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1 John Brown, *Plain Discourses On Important Subjects*, pp. 325, 327.
3 Norman MacLeod considered both Calvinism and Arminianism, "isms" to be shunned. He said: "A Calvinistic fanatic has the same scowling, dark, unloving soul as a Franciscan or Dominican fanatic." See Love, *The Fulfilling Of The Law*, p. 151.
5 Robert Rainy, *Sojournings With God*, p. 231. "Forgiveness could not fitly arise for us without the atonement of Christ." In 1884 in a sermon Principal Rainy preached in connection with the University of Edinburgh Tercentenary Celebration, he said: "The purpose for which Christ came was to teach the use of human life, and to reveal the main secret of it. Men, as sinners, were misusing every element of human life, by living in each without God. He came to restore the knowledge of God, and the Fellowship with Him; for want of which men, achieving many things, failed of the main thing." It seems that for Rainy the cross was seen mainly in terms of the total incarnation. See *Faith and Science*, Edinburgh, MacBiven and Wallace, p. 5.
John Robertson of Glasgow proclaimed the cross as but the beginning of a new way of life. 1 William MacKintosh of Scotch Sermons notoriety said that "By his death on the cross...Christ revealed to us the infinite placability of the Divine nature." 2 More revealing of the direction theology was to take was the insistence of John Cunningham that Jesus was our example: "by living like Jesus and dying like Jesus, we manifest God." 3 Obviously all these preachers did not see the same benefits in the cross or the atonement but they were all one in emphasizing the positive results of redemption as opposed to the negative demands.

The declarations of the Confession of Faith as they relate to "Christ the Mediator" were a pregnant resource for the evangelical preacher throughout the nineteenth century. In 1889 Marcus Dods stated:

In regard to the Atonement, I do not know any minister of our Church who would not cordially accept the statement of the Confession....I know many men who would wish to bring this statement into truer and fuller accord with Scripture by adding that Christ's sacrifice of Himself fully satisfied God's love also; but so far as it goes the statement of the confession is true. 4

The interpretation and utilization of the cross and the atonement was neither static nor uniform. In one sense the preacher at the middle of the century saw the cross primarily in terms of a forensic atonement. By the end of the century the cross was seen primarily in terms of the incarnate life and mission of Jesus. This shift of the pendulum from the atonement to the incarnation marks one of

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1 John Robertson, Sermons, pp. 177-178. "Pardon of sin through the atonement is neither, as many souls seem to think, the highest truth, nor the ultimate blessing of Christianity. The ultimate blessing is that conformity to God, towards which the pardon of sin is only the first step."


4 Marcus Dods, Recent Progress In Theology, pp. 14.
the significant theological changes in the Scottish pulpit of the nineteenth century.

c. Of Saving Faith

In the Confession of Faith, salvation was not a one-way street. Salvation was not only the proclamation of God's action in "election" and "redemption", it was also the solicitation of man's response. The Confession spoke of this response as "saving faith." In the Confession, saving faith was portrayed in a very comprehensive manner.

First, faith was described as a "gift of God." This was the premise from which many preachers spoke about faith. Here, faith was but another cornerstone in the scholastic Calvinism of the period. Principal William Cunningham, whose preaching reflected the conviction that right knowledge preceded right action, said:

Faith implies certain objects presented to our minds,—a capacity to perceive, and a disposition to attend to them, and to act under their influence. Now in regard to the Faith of the Gospel, God both gives us the Objects, and enables us to perceive them. Faith therefore is His gift.

Alexander N. Somerville whose evangelistic endeavors on behalf of the Free Church of Scotland earned him the title "the Modern Apostle" said that faith did not

1 CF XIV. This section is titled: "Of Saving Faith."

2 George S. Hendry, op. cit., p. 147. Introducing this section of the Confession, Professor Hendry says that here the Confession "is devoted to the subjective aspect of faith: it presents a description of what faith is when it is viewed as an act or attitude of the believing subject." In CF XI, 1 where faith is spoken of as "the gift of God" it would seem that the stress is objective. It is on the basis of this treatment of faith as objective and subjective, assent and trust, that I use the word "comprehensive" to describe the attitude of the Confession toward faith.

3 CF XI, 1.

4 William Cunningham, Sermons, p. 205.
really belong to man, but was given to man by God at the time of conversion.\(^1\) Principal Robert Rainy tersely stated: "Faith in God is a great creation of the Holy Ghost."\(^2\)

A second concern of the Confession was with the function of faith. Faith was the instrumental means of salvation.\(^3\) John Cairns described faith as "the connection that needs to be acquired."\(^4\) R. H. Story defined faith as:

That which takes us out of ourselves and joins us to Christ, so that, as lying branches springing from the vine, we may bear much fruit.\(^5\)

In his explanation of the instrumental function of faith, the rigid Calvinism of the older evangelical is again evident, for to him faith is more a receiving set than an instrument for transmission.\(^6\) William Arnot of the Free High Church of Edinburgh emphasized that "faith in general is the human capacity for receiving spiritual things."\(^7\) Andrew A. Bonar was more precise: "faith is receiving

\(^1\) A. N. Somerville, *Precious Seed*, p. 145. Also see the biography of Somerville by George Smith, p. 176.


\(^3\) CF XI, 2 "Faith...is the alone instrument of justification."


\(^6\) While the older evangelical stressed the function of faith as receiving, the idea of faith as transmitting was not wholly ignored. A. N. Somerville said: that faith was "the messenger from the soul" who "stretches its wings towards objects which are distant and out of sight, and then, having hold of these remote and invisible things, brings them home to the heart itself, and gives them place and influence there." See *Precious Seed*, p. 142. William Arnot once described this dual function of faith as "getting in and giving out." See *Good Words*, 1862, p. 701.

\(^7\) William Arnot, *Good Words*, "Sermon," 1862, p. 126. In this same sermon Arnot said that "faith is a constitutional capability."
salvation. As the instrument for effecting salvation, faith was an essential concept in the preacher's vocabulary.

The most common interpretation of faith extracted from the Confession, was the idea of belief. Thomas Chalmers said: "saving faith is belief, and nothing more." This emphasis on faith as belief was undoubtedly indicative of an age ruled by reason. Professor James Bannerman of New College once boasted that in contrast to the "independents" who demanded "credible evidence" of faith for Church membership, Presbyterians only required "an intelligent profession of belief." Professor John Brown, of the Broughton Place United Presbyterian Church in Edinburgh, was nicknamed the "old Apprehender" because of the sermonic stress he placed on faith as intelligent belief. As belief, faith lent itself to an apologetical and academic plea for the intelligent grasp of certain propositions.

Finally, the Confession placed supreme priority on faith as trust and commitment. In the first half of the century this idea appears to have been somewhat neglected. Consequently, Edward Irving decried faith as mere assent to

1 Andrew A. Bonar, Redemption Drawing Nigh, p. 46. Bonar also asks: "What is faith but taking with open hand what Christ gives?" p. 6.

2 CF XIV, 2 "By this faith, a Christian Believeth to be true whatsoever is revealed in the word."

3 Thomas Chalmers, Institutes of Theology, Vol. 2, p. 34.

4 William Cunningham, Sermons, p. 90. Cunningham felt that belief hinged on knowledge and understanding. He said: "Before we can rationally believe any doctrine, we must indeed understand what the doctrine is; we must see and perceive the meaning of the statement or proposition to which we give our assent."


6 John Brown, Plain Discourses On Important Subjects, pp. 74, 360, 386. John Brown, M.D., Rab And His Friends.

7 CF XIV, 2 "The principal acts of saving faith are accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life."
propositional truth.

The amazing prevalence of this notion, that faith is no more than the truths believed, and that the truths believed operate like any other truths...proves to me how much the presence of the Spirit hath departed from our sight.¹

To Edward Irving, faith was "a firm and strong assurance of our own personal interest in Christ."² In the last half of the century, faith as commitment, as fiducia, became dominant. John Robertson thus described faith as "the fleeing of the soul into the sure refuge, into which Christ has opened up the way...the flight of the soul into the stronghold of the Divinity."³ Norman MacLeod bluntly proclaimed that "faith is seeing God as a Father, and so trusting Him."⁴ Robert Rainy captured the existential aspect of faith in his preaching. He said that it was "by faith" that "the grace of God becomes spirit and life in the hearts and histories of men."⁵ In 1855, John Caird, the then youthful minister of Errol, proclaimed in one sermon:

To know Christ as my Saviour—to come with all my guilt and weakness to Him....To cast myself at His feet...to trust my soul for time and eternity into His hands—this is the beginning of true religion.⁶

Preaching before the students of the University of Edinburgh in 1889, Marcus

¹Edward Irving, The Collected Writings Of Edward Irving, Vol. 4, p. 80. Irving said: "Faith cannot, must not, dare not, yield herself to the imagination of the mind, any more than to the intellect of the mind. If she yield to the intellect, her sceptre is broken and she is faith no longer." Ibid., p. 20.

²Edward Irving, ibid., Vol. 1, p. 603. In stating his own primary understanding of faith, Irving says that he is relying on "the native and proper Confession of our Church" the Scots Confession of 1560.

³John Robertson, Sermons and Expositions, p. 23.

⁴Norman MacLeod, Love The Fulfilling Of The Law, p. 44.


Dods said:

Saving Faith is that faith in Christ which prompts us to accept and to use all He puts within our reach for salvation, to yield ourselves wholly to His methods, to His discipline, and to His rule, and the true Christian is the man who constantly exercises this saving faith, who uses Christ to bring himself into living eternal harmony with God.¹

Among the contributors to the Scotch Sermons personal commitment appears to have been the only viable model for faith. Subsequently, by the end of the century, especially among those more liberally inclined, faith was tending toward a mild mysticism. D. J. Ferguson writes of faith:

The best witness to its truth is to be found in our own consciousness, in its acknowledged power to satisfy the wants and to develop the capacities of the soul. . . . The faith which then possesses the mind does not rest upon an argument, nor does it require to call authority to its aid. It has all the certainty and spontaneity of instinct or natural endowment, and is at once the living spring of our conscious action, and the consecrating principle of our unconscious influence. It is a faith that cannot be overthrown, and amid the changes of history amid the variations of dogmatic systems and ecclesiastical organisations, amid the "time and chance" of the human lot, its confident expression is in the noble words of the Apostles: "I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers...shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."²

Ultimately the comprehensive concept of faith disclosed in the Confession created difficulty in the pulpit. First, the dogmatic tendency of the pulpit itself often resulted in one man or one period of history emphasizing only one aspect of this faith to the exclusion of the other two facets of faith. Secondly, if salvation was really all of God, and if God's elect were going to be saved, even outside the ordinary means of grace, the very importance of faith itself had to be questioned.³ Consequently, in prescribing faith as essential to a

²D. J. Ferguson, "Law and Miracle," Scotch Sermons, p. 89.
³Gf s, 3. Here the idea of the salvation of God's elect outside the ordinary means of grace is set forth.
salvation which was "all of sovereign grace" the preacher could be nothing but inconsistent and ambiguous. Thirdly, there was the question as to the source of faith itself. The Confession labelled faith "a gift of God." But was such faith a gift given to man universally, or was this faith only given to "God's elect?" In preaching these were the sources of difficulty and debate. The ambiguity and difficulty enshrouding the proclamation of saving faith is best illustrated by a more intensive survey of "faith" in the sermons of four men: John Purves, Thomas Guthrie, Robert S. Candlish and Walter C. Smith.

John Purves, an apologist for scholastic Calvinism and nineteenth century revivalism, is illustrative of the difficulty the notion of faith posed for the preacher who was aggressive in his evangelism. In his book, *Sermons Touching Some Points Much Controverted At Present*, Purves devotes slightly more than a third of his material to a discussion of the nature and function of faith. He begins by simply defining faith as belief in the proposition that "Jesus is the Christ the Son of God." However, Purves adds that such belief is more than mere intellectual assent. John Purves says that belief is also the commencement of

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1CF XI, 1.

2John Purves, *Sermons Touching Some Points Much Controverted At Present*, p. vi. In the preface to this book Purves says: "The writer was anxious to put something into the hands of his own people, which, while not affecting to be a formal discussion of the points referred to, might serve at least as his personal testimony to the fact that there is no inconsistency between proclaiming the Gospel to sinners at large, as freely and openly as words can do, and at the same time claiming all the saving results of this to God's sovereign discrimination grace alone." (p. vi)


4Ibid., pp. 117, 95, 110.

5Ibid., pp. 116, 124, 128. Here Purves discusses faith as belief in a proposition. Yet he says: "The truth before us, to which this belief especially refers, is not a cold abstraction, which, like some mathematical proposition, may
the relationship between God and man. Thus while "saving faith" involves the act of believing, salvation is not really based on the act of belief. Salvation is based on the truth itself which is to be believed.

Nothing is attributed to the mere belief; everything is attributed to the truth believed. The only thing faith does, is freely to take in. It merely receives what he freely gives. Faith does not make salvation. It finds it made to its hand.

Purves could not homiletically resolve the dichotomy between faith as belief in a propositional truth and faith as the reception of God's action in Christ. Purves could only suggest that faith as belief was secondary to faith as the reception of God's saving act. At this point, Purves appears to feel the impasse of his logic for he concludes that faith is the "mystery of mysteries." Yet, the mystery is not in the "act of belief" as one might suppose, "the mystery lies altogether in the thing believed" which is the act of the atonement itself. Ironically, after one hundred pages of argument on both the importance and meaning of "saving faith," John Purves concludes that "the less that is said about

be admitted into the understanding without stirring one single affection of the heart; nor is it like some historical facts... which we may perceive to be true without being at all affected by them," pp. 138-139.

1 Ibid., p. 148. Of this saving faith or belief, Purves says: "It hands us over to that person, as the Being with whom we have to do....It is not really believed, if it does not bring the Saviour and the Sinner into living personal intercourse about that grand matter of salvation, which is all the business of the one and all the blessedness of the others."

2 Ibid., pp. 172, 169.

3 Ibid., p. 167. Purves says here that the function of faith is simply to receive "the perfected salvation of Jesus." Yet this faith is not given to all men. "It is no common, every-day thing. Not the common property of every man, born and baptized in a Christian land." p. 109. Faith is the gift of God.

4 Ibid., p. 179.

5 Ibid.
faith...and the more that is said about the Saviour...the better.”

Looking back, it would appear that as a preacher in a parish caught up in the wonder of a "spiritual awakening" John Purves was proclaiming an activistic faith. Yet as a theologian of the more scholastic and rigid Calvinistic vintage, John Purves employed a model which academically was an empty term...an anomaly. Such was the difficulty confronting many older evangelicals.

Thomas Guthrie is an example of the ensuing ambiguity of faith in preaching. For Guthrie, faith was the instrument imperative to salvation. But, faith was more than a mere instrument. Faith was a movement, a response which Guthrie objectified as "faith in Jesus." In the traditional manner, Guthrie interpreted faith as the gift of God. Yet in his sermons he spoke of faith as a human action

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1 Thomas Guthrie, *Our Father's Business*, p. 227. "In fact, the less that is said about faith—the mere act we mean—and the more that is said about its object, the Saviour, all the better. And the less that people think about faith, and the more they think and hear, and read about the Saviour himself, and his work, and his great salvation, all the better. There is a discoursing about the mere belief, and an exhorting to the mere belief, the only effect of which is to leave the impression on the mind that it is some 'great thing' which people are to do in order to assure their acceptance with God. Whereas, saying nothing, or as little, at least...about the act and the duty, and all about Jesus himself, his cross and his crown; faith, through the spirit's use of this, will spring up as a thing of course."

2 Thomas Guthrie, *Our Father's Business*, p. 227. "In making Jesus the centre of the whole system in showing that there is no other name given under heaven whereby men can be saved but his, and how faith, not good works, is the way to Christ, and how Christ, not the Church or Sacraments, is the way to God, the preacher but declares in words what finds its most best expression in the anthems and actions of the upper sanctuary."


4 Thomas Guthrie, *Man And the Gospel*, p. 213. "And how are we saved by faith? Not by any merit in our faith, for that is the gift of God and the work of His Holy Spirit; and is, so to speak but the rope which the drowning man clutches, and by which another pulls him living to the shore."
and a human response. Hence the ambiguity: Was faith innate in all men or was faith really the unique gift of God to the elect? It appears that Thomas Guthrie was one man who could say that faith was both innate and given. Faith was a capacity universally inherent in all men. Guthrie said: "All men are born with faith... faith is as natural to man as grief, or love, or anger."  

It seems that Thomas Guthrie distinguished between "saving faith" and "faith".

What we want divine grace to do, is not so much to give us faith, as to give to the principle or faculty of faith, which we have by nature a right, holy, heavenward direction; to convert it into faith in things eternal. Let it be sought in earnest persevering prayer. It is "the gift of God." Saving faith has God for its author, the Spirit for its agent, Christ for its object, grace for its root, holiness for its fruit, and heaven for its reward.  

In the actual preaching of Guthrie, this appears to have been a dubious distinction. In practice these two ideas of faith, as human and divine and as innate in all men and given only to the elect, were interchanged without any real qualification. Consequently, it is doubtful whether the parishioner in the pew deciphered this distinction between faith and saving faith. In his proclamation of faith as "saving faith" Thomas Guthrie is an example of a preacher nurturing frustration and uncertainty because of the very ambiguity of his terminology.

Robert S. Candlish sought to extricate faith from its metaphysical

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1Thomas Guthrie, Our Father's Business, p. 227.
3Ibid., p. 253.
4Of the 105 sermons of Thomas Guthrie's I analyzed, this distinction was clearly explained in only this one sermon. As I read Guthrie I was aware that he was inconsistent in the meaning and use he gave to the term "faith" but only in this sermon did I find this inconsistency enunciated as based on a redefinition of faith and a distinction between "faith" and "saving faith."
preoccupation. Theologically, Candlish accepted faith as the "gift of God." In the language of the Confession he gave equal emphasis to faith as assent and faith as trust. Yet Candlish was wary of the preacher whose sermons rotated on faith as the basis of salvation. He says:

And yet, this faith, or believing, or being a believer, is to me so vague, shadowy, impalpable, that I strive in vain to grasp it,—to work it into myself, or make myself into it,—so that I can say I have it, and therefore all is right. Still it is dunned into my ears that I must have it. Without it I am a lost man...Now all this troubles and perplexes me. It looks like putting some unknown, mysterious barrier between my God and me.

Theologically, Candlish preferred to speak of grace as the solution to the mystery of faith.

In effect, Candlish sought to proclaim faith as man's continual response to God. Theologically, Candlish spoke of salvation under three headings: justification, sanctification and adoption. Viewing these three sides of salvation as

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1 By the phrase "metaphysical preoccupation" I mean that the question as to whether faith was from man or from God was a question which the Scholastic Calvinists of the 1840's - 1870's did not resolve. Candlish simply accepted the mystery and then sought to turn the term "faith" into a meaningful homiletical model.

2 Robert S. Candlish, Discourses Bearing Upon The Sonship and Brotherhood of Believers, pp. 103, 159.

3 Robert S. Candlish, An Enquiry Into The Completeness And Extent Of The Atonement, p. 73. "We would still place its seat [faith] in the moral, fully as much as in the intellectual, part of our nature, and make it chiefly consist, not exclusively in the assent or credit given to what God reveals or testifies, but also in our embracing, with a fiducial reliance or trust in whom God reveals as the Lord our Righteousness." Also p. 143 "In so far as saving faith has to do with propositions at all, it is with such as are quite definite and precise, clear, exact, categorical...But, while these definite propositions constitute the warrant or ground of saving faith, and while the belief of them must lie at the foundation of any gracious act or exercise of soul, we cannot but think that saving faith implies in it something more than this belief."

4 Robert S. Candlish, Discourses Bearing Upon the Sonship, p. 163.

5 Ibid., p. 159.
a whole Candlish could speak of faith as it related to each. Yet, he emphasized that "Justification is chiefly, if not exclusively, union and communion with Christ in grace." In talking about salvation, Candlish appears to see faith as most relevant to adoption. Homiletically, this meant that Candlish stressed faith as appropriation and trust or commitment. He said:

The only virtue of faith is that it shuts me up into Christ, and that by it, or in it, I embrace Christ.

For Candlish, faith:

Was the closing of the hand upon what is brought into contact with it, or the action of the mouth on what is put into it, or the heart's warm embrace of what is its nearest and dearest treasure...all which imply the appropriating of what is already perfect and complete.

Since faith was appropriating God's prior action, and since faith was related to adoption, such faith had an interesting existential quality. This side of faith Candlish variously described as "falling in with what God is doing" or "that free affirmative response, that YES!" Such faith was a "gift to be ever freshly and anew" received. As Robert S. Candlish utilized the model of faith in his preaching it seems that faith was an essential ingredient in the formula of salvation only when salvation was seen in its comprehensive nature. The

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1. Ibid., p. 61.

2. R. S. Candlish, An Inquiry Into The Completeness And Extent Of The Atonement, p. 74. Adoption, Candlish described as "union and communion with Christ in his sonship, his filial relation to the Father." See Discourses Bearing Upon The Sonship and Brotherhood, p. 54.


5. R. S. Candlish, Discourses Bearing Upon The Sonship, p. 154. Also An Inquiry Into The Atonement, pp. 60, 64.

beginning of the Christian life was a matter of grace, not faith.

The sermons of Walter C. Smith are illustrative of the role of "saving faith" in the preaching of the more liberal evangelical at the end of the century. Here faith was important in terms of both the commencement and the continuation of the Christian life. For Walter C. Smith, Christianity was "the life of faith."¹

Smith's understanding of faith reflected the changing theological emphasis in the evangelical pulpit in the nineteenth century. Smith believed in a universal atonement and this necessitated the proclamation of a genuine offer of salvation to all men. Concluding a series of sermons in 1867, which saw him accused of heresy, Smith said:

> Is there anything in the gospel which would justify us in regarding it as narrow and intended only for a few? Assuredly not. We may at once set aside all and any explanations of this saying, which go on the assumption that God's mercy is in any sense straitened. Whosoever will, may take of the water of life freely. There is a most absolute and unrestricted offer of salvation; and we are bound to believe that that offer is honestly made, and can be really accepted by every man to whom it is made.²

This conviction that the atonement was for all men altered Smith's portrayal of the essence of God's character. The love of God was given priority over the sovereignty of God.³ The gospel was "the way of salvation" but for Smith salvation was contingent on man's response: "whether we really want to be


³ Walter C. Smith, *Sermons*, p. 2. He described love as the "essence of God" the "root of our Christian faith." He continued: "There was a time when the church largely substituted the mere absolute sovereignty of God for the love which Jesus and John exalted above all his other attributes....He chose to save some, it was said, and others he chose to pass by. Those who were saved owed it only to his grace, and those who perished suffered only for their sins; but the sole cause of the difference in their lot was that God willed to redeem the former." p. 5.
Further this salvation was comprehensive in scope and demanding in its practicality. Smith declared:

This is the high design for which Jesus came and suffered and died, even that he might plant in our bosom as there was in his own, a spirit of love and truth and faith and sympathy,—a divine and inspiring power by which we might be enabled to do the will of our Father in heaven. This only is salvation, brethren, this is the true reconciliation with God...to make us one with Christ as he is one with the Father.\(^1\)

Remember that the gospel is not merely a revelation of what the Lord has done for us, but also a revelation of what He would have us to be, and is anxious to make us. Bring together its divine doctrine and its human duty; and let it be clearly understood that, in addition to our intelligent belief in the scheme of salvation, we must, in order to be the children of God's kingdom, yield a heartfelt consent to the four great laws of that kingdom which Christ here lays down.\(^2\)

The Christian life was a life of faith and to Walter C. Smith faith was not belief, faith was trust. He said of the nature of faith: "It is not a mere belief in certain opinions; the assent of the mind to a certain system of truth. Faith is trust in God."\(^3\) This trust in God was to be continual, incorporating the "present and future."\(^4\) Smith called the Fatherhood of God "the fountain of all sound theology, of all true religion."\(^5\) Consequently "saving faith" was man's "patient reliance on God's fatherly care."\(^6\)

Christ came to reveal to us, not a blind force working in an unconscious universe, not even a supreme and arbitrary will, a person on whose personality, however, there was nothing to which we could attach any cords of love; but a Father caring for the wants, forgiving the sins, leading the steps of His erring offspring; and no prayer is possible except on this foundation, for there is no loving faith without the Fatherhood of God.\(^7\)

Walter C. Smith lived in an age which, as he said in one of his poems, was "losing

\(^2\) Ibid., p. 19.
\(^3\) Ibid., pp. 318-319.
\(^4\) Ibid., p. 241.
\(^5\) Ibid., p. 254.
\(^6\) Ibid., p. 264.
\(^7\) Ibid., p. 224.
faith in God." It was an age "freighted with tons of useless knowledge" and "metaphysics." Smith appealed to the spirit of man by proclaiming that the love of God as revealed in Jesus was enough to merit man's trust.

The difficulty and the ambiguity with which the preacher of the nineteenth century often proclaimed "saving faith" crystallizes both the peril and glory of the confessional situation which was the theological context of preaching. The peril of the Confession was the explicit categories in which its theology was cast. For the preacher these categories could become overly rigid and sterile. Consequently some dogmatically proclaimed the doctrine of double predestination as the very basis of man's relationship to God. Others, equally dogmatic, decried this as a dogma to be most hastily discarded. The glory of the Confession was the latitude with which the preacher appropriated these categories. For example, the cross was the apex of the life of Jesus. This cross the preachers viewed from both the narrow perspective of the atonement and the wider angle of the incarnation. Again, faith was the model expressing man's response to God's action.

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1Walter C. Smith, Poems, "The Letter," p. 133. Smith was also a poet of repute in Scotland and his poems provide good insight into the theological temper of the last quarter of the century.

2Ibid., "Miss Bells Japp," p. 58.

3As one of the given structures within which preaching functioned in the nineteenth century the Confession was not a simple but complex situation. For an analysis of the nature of the given in general terms as important to any discipline see Professor J. McIntyre, The Shape of Christology, pp. 11-18. For an incisive illustration of the complexity and diversity of the confessional situation in Scotland in the last half of the nineteenth century see: Professor A. C. Cheyne, New College Bulletin, Vol. II, No. 1, "Development and Diversity in Scottish Presbyterianism" pp. 16-19. Also Scottish Church History Society, Vol. XIV, "The Westminster Standards: A Century Of Re-appraisal," pp. 199-214.

4George S. Hendry, op. cit., p. 15.
This faith the preacher variously proclaimed as knowledge, assent and trust. Finally, salvation was sometimes interpreted from its initial and individual perspective as a conversion experience. Other preachers saw and proclaimed this salvation as ultimately the almost imperceptible action of God in His world and for His people. It is in the broad swing of the pendulum within these categories of the Confession that the theological context of the nineteenth century pulpit is to be seen.¹

¹Marcus Dods, Recent Progress in Theology, pp. 15-16. In speaking of the status of the Confession in 1839, Dods said: "The sovereignty of the Father, the divinity of Christ, the atoning death of the Redeemer, the authority of Scripture, the final determination of man's destiny at death; these are all held, held intelligently and firmly... all these doctrines are held (but) with a difference."
CHAPTER II

The evangelical pulpit of the nineteenth century was also influenced by the ecclesiastical objective for the Christian ministry. The Presbyterian preacher in nineteenth century Scotland was the product of a well-ordered ecclesiastical process. His ordination as a "minister of the gospel" marked the conclusion of a pilgrimage which led through university and divinity hall and incorporated a probationary period of practical experience. While this process was subject to deviation and even abuse, it at least witnessed to a high ideal. It appears that the Church of the nineteenth century adhered to the conviction of the Scottish reformers: "better no minister at all than an unfit minister."  

The objective behind this ecclesiastical process was a qualified preacher. In the Old Kirk and the Free Church the language of the law regulating licensing was identical: The presbyteries were admonished:

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1 By the word "ecclesiastical" I mean the concern of the Church for preaching as it is expressed in the official records and documents and as it is emergent in the system of education outlined in the official pronouncements of the Church.

2 Throughout this chapter many different Acts and Reports of the churches will be referred to. However, the best single documents of the respective churches outlining their requirements are: The Church of Scotland, Acts Of The General Assembly, 1863, pp. 32-40. The Free Church of Scotland, Acts Of The General Assembly, 1860, pp. 230-236. The United Presbyterian Synod, Proceedings, 1848, pp. 135-142.

3 Stewart Mechie, "Education For the Ministry In Scotland Since The Reformation", Records Of The Scottish Church History Society, Vol. XIV, p. 115.
They shall deliberately and seriously take a conjunct view of the whole trials, and if they shall be of opinion that the student is not properly qualified to perform the duties incumbent upon a preacher of the Gospel, they shall by no means grant him a licence.

In the United Presbyterian Church the language was different but the spirit the same, with even more stress placed on "Presbyterian Superintendence."\(^2\)

**The Criteria For A Qualified Preacher**

How did the Church of the nineteenth century understand and define this objective of a qualified preacher? A preacher's being qualified was judged by

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1. The Church of Scotland, *Acts of The General Assembly*, 1863, p. 38. The Free Church of Scotland, *Acts of The General Assembly*, 1860, p. 236. In the Free Church, the preface to this "Declaratory Act" begins: "The General Assembly having taken under their serious consideration the great danger to which the interests of religion and of this Church may be exposed by licensing any to preach the gospel who are not duly qualified for that important trust, do hereby enact and ordain that, in all time coming, the following regulations shall be strictly observed," p. 230.

2. The United Presbyterian Synod, *Proceedings*, 1848, p. 135. This entire section stating the qualifications for the ministry is titled "Presbyterian Superintendence." While the presbytery supervised the prospective minister from the time he was taken under care until he was ordained in both the Old Kirk and the Free Church, the movement during this century was toward greater centralization in specially appointed committees on a synod level. In the United Presbyterian Church it was the presbytery itself which examined not simply a committee. The Presbytery Minutes of the United Presbyterian Church in Glasgow are a good example of this. Here one reads that after the Presbytery had convened, "the Presbytery resolved itself into committees" and after hearing the discourses of the students on trial for license the Presbytery resumed." See *The Glasgow Presbytery of The United Presbyterian Church*, 1862-1866, 8 Dec. 1863. Also see *The Minute Book Of The United Presbyterian Church*, Edinburgh, 1892-1897, Oct. 1893. In the Minutes of the United Presbyterian Church Presbyteries of Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow it is the exception when the entire presbytery does not either break up into regional groups to hear students' discourses or sit as a presbytery and hear the discourses. By contrast in both the Free Church and the Old Kirk, the students or licentiate did appear before the entire presbytery but it seems to have been the presbytery's "Committee to Examine Students' Discourses" who listened and examined and then reported to the entire presbytery. See *Free Presbytery of Glasgow*, 2 May, 1877. The *Presbytery of Glasgow Records*, 1868-1877, 5 February, 1868, also 11 June, 1873. By 1888 it is obvious in the Presbytery Records of the Old Kirk in Glasgow that the initial examination for licensure is no longer conducted by the Presbytery but by the Synod Committee. See 2 May, 1888.
three criteria: good character, academic proficiency and practical ability.

a. Good Character

The test of character was the test of a man's personal integrity.

Principal Hill said:

A good man is a preacher of righteousness by his life as well as by his discourse. It is one of the great advantages of a standing ministry that it diffuses over the country an order of men who are indispensably bound, by the rules of their profession, to maintain a decency of manners; and who are called by the nature of their office and by the injunctions of Scripture to be examples to the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. By moderation in the innocent pleasures of life they are expected to exemplify the blessed art which is to be learnt in the school of Christ—the art of living in the world without being conformed to it.

At the time of ordination, a minister promised "to live a holy and circumspect life." The test of character was not taken lightly.

The prospective preacher was expected to produce evidence testifying to his integrity. Before a person could enroll in the divinity hall of his Church he had to have the approval of his presbytery. Such approval was not given unless the candidate produced a "certificate" of good character from his own minister. The United Presbyterian Church officially declared:

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1 George Hill, op. cit., p. 85.
2 The United Free Church of Scotland, Acts Of The General Assembly, 1900, p. 7.
3 The Church of Scotland, Acts Of The General Assembly, 1863, pp. 32, 33. This Act anent the Study of Divinity begins: "That no student shall be entered upon the roll of any Professor of Divinity, unless he shall produce to the said Professor a certificate from the Minister of the parish in which he has his usual residence...bearing that his character is suitable to his views." It should also be noted that no presbytery could take a student under its care unless he had resided within the bounds of that presbytery for six months. The Free Church of Scotland, Acts Of The General Assembly, 1860, p. 231. "A certificate from the Minister of the Congregation which he usually attends, or in his absence, or during a vacancy in said Congregation, from some neighbouring Minister, bearing that his character is suitable to his views." The United Presbyterian Church, Proceedings, 1845, 136. "At a meeting of Presbytery held before the examination
Ministers are required to pay particular attention to young men in their congregations who are prosecuting a liberal education, especially to such as have a view to the Christian Ministry from the commencement of their university course; studying to obtain accurate information about their natural abilities, prudence, and piety, and watching assiduously over their religious interests and intellectual improvement.

Each year divinity students were required to produce before their presbytery certificates from their professors and parish ministers witnessing to their continued "good moral character." When the candidate was ready to commence his trials for licensure the presbytery was again reminded:

No Presbytery shall receive any Student upon trials without being satisfied that he is of good report; sound in his principles; pious, sober, grave, and prudent in his behaviour; of a peaceable disposition; and well affected to the happy establishment in this kingdom both in Church and State. And that the Presbytery may proceed with all due caution, in a matter of such peculiar importance, they shall not agree to the motion in behalf of the Student, unless his residence shall produce sufficient testimonials from the Presbytery in whose bounds his residence has chiefly been during the term, bearing that his character is such as is described in the immediately preceding sentence of this paragraph, and recommending him in those respects to the Presbytery before whom the proposal is made, as a proper person to be entered upon trials.

After ordination, character deficiency was often the sordid witness in the courts of the Church to an unqualified ministry. In the Free Church twenty-five of the takes place applicants for admission to the Hall shall be nominated in Presbytery by their Ministers, who shall produce, in addition to the prescribed University certificates, satisfactory testimonials of the church-membership of the Students."

1. The United Presbyterian Church, Proceedings, 1846, p. 135.
2. Church of Scotland, Ibid., p. 33. The Free Church of Scotland, Ibid., p. 232. The United Presbyterian Synod, Ibid., p. 139. The evidence of the various presbytery records examined indicate that such certificates were produced. Often the word "conduct" was used to indicate good character or the phrase "The students character was suitable for the Holy Ministry" or for "his Profession."
eighty-four cases indicting clergy which were brought to the bar of the General Assembly between 1843 and 1886 involved judgments based on moral character. The Church thought it imperative that the preacher validate his moral integrity.

To many, good character was more than personal integrity. It was also the means of measuring the personal piety of the prospective preacher. Professor John Brown of the United Presbyterian Kirk said that "genuine personal religion" was the most important qualification of the ministry. With this Professor Robert Flint of the Old Kirk and Principal Robert Rainy of the Free Church concurred. In the Edinburgh Presbytery of the United Presbyterian Church it was the procedure to examine all candidates on their "personal religion and motives." Apparently such was not always the case in the Edinburgh Presbytery of the Old Kirk for in 1897 the "Committee on the Training of the Ministry" recommended that the presbytery inquire as to the "personal faith in Christ and devotion to his service" of those being admitted as ministerial candidates.

1This is based on my own analysis of Digest And Report Of The Principal Cases Decided In The General Assembly Of The Free Church, 1843-1886, by Thomas Cochrane. While this book includes all the cases coming before the General Assembly, I have only cited those involving ordained ministers. Immorality and drunkenness constituted the majority of charges. There were also charges based on dishonesty and insolvency.

2John Brown, Hints To Students, p. 25.

3Robert Flint, On Theological, Biblical, And Other Subjects, p. 23. Professor Flint wrote: "The prime qualifications of the Christian ministry are those which constitute a personal piety, not those which make a learned or skilful theologian." Robert Rainy, Address To The Students Of The New College, 1882, p. 5. "It is happily not a thing that needs to be argued or demonstrated among us, that only a man who has himself believed the Gospel and felt its power, ought to be a preacher of it." H. W. Smith, The Pastor As Preacher, p. 5. These are lectures delivered to the Faculties of Divinity in the Universities of Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Glasgow in 1882.

4The Minute Book of the United Presbyterian Church, Edinburgh, 1892-1897 5 July, 1892.

5Minutes of the Edinburgh Presbytery, 5 March, 1896. The purpose of this report was to recommend steps to "guard against unsuitable men entering the Divinity Hall."
Also in 1897 the "Committee on Legislation and Church Reform" in the Old Kirk proposed to the General Assembly that Institutes of Pastoral Training be established in connection with the divinity halls. One of the primary purposes of this Institute being the provision of "Systematic training as regards character and devotional life."\(^1\) In at least the Old Kirk it seems that the test of religious character was often perfunctory.

The interpretation of character as personal piety sometimes emphasized a conversion experience. Such was the concern of the United Presbyterian John Brown of Edinburgh. He said that by the phrase "personal religion" he understood what the Bible expressed by such language "as repenting and being converted."\(^2\) This stress on character as conversion was particularly strong in the 1840's and 1850's. During this time testimonials as to a conversion experience appear in the minutes of at least one presbytery when a man was proposed for divinity hall.\(^3\) In 1851 the Free Presbyterian Church of Edinburgh overruled the General Assembly:

**Whereas a converted ministry, is, next to the continual presence of the Holy Ghost, the best gift of the Lord Jesus to His Church, and is to be sought, not only by earnest prayer, but in the use also of all scriptural and appropriate means; whereas it is important that the attention of the Professors and of Presbyteries should be especially directed to this subject, with a view to such methodical and systematic superintendence of students as may be found practicable, in consistency with the principles of this Church.**\(^4\)

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\(^1\) *Reports on the Schemes of the Church of Scotland, 1897, "Committee on Legislation and Church Reform,"* p. 1207. This report castigated the present system of training saying that once a man entered "the Divinity Hall...no sufficient provision exists for testing and safeguarding personal character. No provision exists for training, through systematic devotional discipline, what may be called the ministerial character." p. 1205. "No disciplinary probation of character is provided," p. 1206.


\(^3\) See *Minutes Of The Free Presbytery Of Aberdeen, 1843-1853.*

\(^4\) *The Free Church of Scotland, Assembly Proceedings, 1851,* pp. 173–174. In moving the adoption of this overture a Mr. Tweedie said that the "methodical
In this same period, the Aberdeen Free Presbytery altered their procedure for licensing candidates for the ministry because "none but Godly persons should be committed into the sacred office of the ministry."\(^1\) It was their conviction that the present procedure did not "bring out evidence of the personal godliness of the applicant."\(^2\) In 1862 Charles Brown was commissioned by the Free Church to deliver a series of lectures to the divinity students of that Church. He said: "First, conversion to God, personal Godliness, is the foundation, and an indispensable prerequisite, of the Christian Ministry."\(^3\)

and systematic superintendence" implied two things: First, they were "to impress the student with the necessity of conversion, before he could expect the Divine blessing on his labours." Secondly, "and more closely and personally they should say to him, - Art thou converted? For there may be many who would endorse the doctrine of the need of conversion, but who forget the question."

\(^1\) Aberdeen Free Presbytery, 1843-1853, pp. 351-352. This new procedure involved five steps: 1. The minister was to keep close touch on any young man in the parish in order "to ascertain his spiritual condition." 2. Every member of the presbytery recommending an applicant was to be called on by the Moderator to state his opinion. 3. Once the motion of the applicant has been laid on the table, a committee of three or four including his own minister, "shall take trial of his orthodoxy." 4. Applicants for license residing outside the bounds of the presbytery during the past year will be called on "to produce satisfactory certificates" from the presbytery in whose bounds they lived. Then, before they proceed with trials three or four members of the "Presbytery shall confer" with the man. 5. "Public trials of applicants should not be taken and concluded in fewer than three several meetings of Presbytery." This new procedure replaced the old method which had three steps:

1. A young man is recommended to his probationary trials by his minister. 2. Presbytery agrees to the recommendation. 3. At some period during his trials he is directed to "wait upon the various members of Presbyters...the object of which call is left undefined by the Presbytery."

It should be noted that the committee from which this action originated was created "to consider what steps...should be taken for the purpose of ascertaining the personal piety of applicants of license," p. 346.

\(^2\) Ibid.

\(^3\) Charles J. Brown, Connection Between Godliness and The Christian Ministry, p. 3. The purpose of this particular address was to confront divinity students with these questions: "Am I indeed Christ's? Have I been called effectually...? Know I that conversion which is the foundation and prerequisite, of the ministry?" p. 12.
b. Academic Proficiency

The second criterion of a qualified preacher was academic proficiency. No presbytery was permitted to license a student "unless they are satisfied that he has made a competent degree of proficiency in those several branches of knowledge which are necessary to enable him to be a useful Preacher of the Gospel." Each year the divinity student was required to produce before his presbytery certificates from the professors under whom he had studied testifying to his "proficiency." Proficiency was often the word used by a committee reporting to the presbytery on the examinations it had administered. As good character pointed to the personal piety and integrity of the preacher himself, so it seems that academic proficiency was the criterion for evaluating the intellectual capacity and judgment of the preacher.

In part the standard of academic proficiency indicated the Church's intention that the preacher be a man of broad knowledge and culture. This is evident in the prerequisite courses the Church required prior to admission in the divinity hall. "Latin, Greek, Logic, Mathematics, Moral Philosophy and Natural Philosophy" were the courses required by the Old Kirk. To these the

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3. The Presbytery of Glasgow Records, 1868-1877, 5 February, 1868. Here the committee on candidates reports that they "strictly and privately examined these gentlemen in literature, philosophy, and theology, and were satisfied with their proficiency."

4. The Church of Scotland, *Acts Of The General Assembly*, 1863, p. 32. By 1874, Hebrew Grammar was required by the Old Kirk. See: *Acts Of The General Assembly*, 1874, p. 32. In 1883 English Literature was also required as a prerequisite to Divinity Hall entrance. See: *Acts Of The General Assembly*, 1883, p. 23. Also note the Interim Act and Overture on Entrance Examinations - 1896. It is interesting that in the *Minutes of the Presbytery of Edinburgh*, 12 May, 1880 the Licensing Committee said that it had conducted written examinations in
Free Church by 1860 had added Hebrew and English literature. The Synod of the United Presbyterian Church officially noted:

It is strongly recommended to students to attend such classes as they may have access to for the study of Geology, Chemistry, and other branches of natural science, thus availing themselves of all means of obtaining such general knowledge as may enable them to keep pace with the improvements of the age, and prove subservient to their ultimate object as candidates for the Christian Ministry.

Professor Robert Flint of the Old Kirk declared:

All who are resolved to enter into the ministry of the Christian Church should be men of wide sympathies and many interests. They should certainly be neither recluses nor chargeable with narrow-mindedness.

Primarily, academic proficiency referred to theological knowledge. This is evident in the specific subject matter in which the presbytery or Synodical Committee examined the candidates. "Divinity, Chronology and Church History" were the subjects in which the licentiate was examined in the Old Kirk. By 1880 the records of the Edinburgh Presbytery indicate that the licentiate was also examined in Greek, Latin and Hebrew. By 1890, the synodical examination included "Natural Philosophy, Moral Philosophy, Logic" among other subjects. Likewise in the Records Of The Presbytery of Aberdeen, 27 February, 1877, philosophy is listed as one of the subjects for examination at licensure. The courses prescribed as prerequisite were not taken lightly.

1 The Free Church of Scotland, Acts Of The General Assembly, 1860, p. 230. 233. In the Free Church, the candidate was also examined in philosophy, p. 233. Also see Appendix II - C.

2 The United Presbyterian Synod, Proceedings, 1848, p. 136.

3 Robert Flint, On Theological Biblical and Other Subjects, pp. 85, 86.


5 Presbytery of Glasgow Records, 1868-1877, 10 January, 1868. Here reference is made to examination for candidates for licensure in the subjects of Greek and Hebrew. Presbytery of Edinburgh, 1875-1881, 12th May, 1880. Here Latin appears as one of the subjects in which the Licensing Committee conducted a written examination. Records Of The Presbytery of Aberdeen, 1877-1879, 27 February, 1877. Here Greek and Latin are also mentioned as subjects for examination.
the history of doctrine and English Bible. These were the subjects included in the examination plan of the United Presbyterian Church in 1843 and the Free Church in 1899. In the United Presbyterian Church, the future preacher was also examined in "Hermeneutics" at the time of his trials for licensure. Scottish Presbyterianism was apparently unanimous in the conviction that academic proficiency included both a competent knowledge of theology and the linguistic tools of theology.

In a secondary sense there is evidence that academic proficiency was at times interpreted as right doctrine or theological orthodoxy. While proficiency primarily pointed to knowledge and skill, this knowledge and the demonstration of these skills operated within a definite theological context...the Westminster Confession of faith. Consequently the judgment of the presbytery on the candidates' possession of these skills and this knowledge was in part a judgment on their theological orthodoxy. A candidate could be linguistically skilled and theologically knowledgeable and still fail his academic examinations because his theology was not consonant to the theological status quo of his presbytery.

The catechetical trials through which the licentiate had to pass provided presbytery ample opportunity to ascertain his orthodoxy. A survey of the thesis topics prescribed by the Aberdeen Presbytery of the United Presbyterian Church indicates that the thesis was as much a test of doctrinal orthodoxy as it was a

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2See Appendix II - C, D. Also see the Acts Of The General Assembly, 1860, pp. 232-236, the Free Church of Scotland. Also for Free Presbytery Examination see Minutes Of The Free Presbytery of Glasgow, 19th June, 1876 and 2nd May, 1877.
Aberdeen United PresbyterIan Minute Book, 1867-1873, 12th October, 1869.
3See Appendix II.
4The Church of Scotland, Assembly Papers, 1847, "The Plockton Case."
demonstration of theological dexterity. A survey of the homilies prescribed by the Free Presbytery of Glasgow indicates the same. After ordination deviation from the established patterns of theological orthodoxy emerged in the courts of the Church under the charge of heresy.

If the question is asked as to the thoroughness with which the Church assessed academic proficiency...the answer must be, with increasing efficiency. However, the standard of judgment depended on the presbytery itself. In general the presbytery took seriously its task of superintendence. In one instance

1. Minutes of the Aberdeen Presbytery of the United Presbyterian Church, 1867-1879. The following are some of the thesis topics prescribed: 1. "Is the Decalogue A Complete Rule of Moral Duty?" 2. "Is the Justification Mentioned By James Identical With That Treated Of By Paul In His Epistle To The Romans?" 3. "Did Miracles Cease In The Apostolic Age?" 4. "Are the Histories Of The Bible Divinely Authenticated?"


3. Cochrane, op. cit. Of the 84 cases involving clergy being brought to the bar of the Free Church General Assembly, 9 were on charges of heresy. This was between 1843 and 1886.

4. In all of the presbytery records I have examined one cannot but observe the amount of time the presbyteries gave to the superintendence of their candidates. While this does not indicate the quality of work done by the presbytery there is evidence that they did seriously assume their responsibility.
presbyterial negligence was the result of a system of evaluation which placed
the responsibility of examination on an individual member. 1 Consequently there
was a concentrated movement toward the formulation of Synodical Boards, or Special
Committees to test the student's academic proficiency. As this responsibility
was invested in committees, the presbytery became the body which rubber-stamped
the committee reports. 2 With the appearance of these committees on licensing and
examination there was a corresponding movement toward a more consistently uniform
method of examination. 3 By 1890 the testing of academic proficiency had evolved

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1 In the United Presbyterian Church the action of the 1848 Synod read:
"Members of Presbytery shall be appointed as Examiners in the respective depart-
ments." Proceedings, 1848, p. 137. The Aberdeen United Presbyterian Minute
Book, 1867-1878 indicates that these appointments were made each year and that
each year different men served on the committee. A minute of 3rd January, 1867
indicates that the student came to the home of the examiner in each respective
area of Greek, Latin, Theology, Hermeneutics and Church History. Also see 12th
October, 1869. In one case the "superintendent of examinations" brought to the
attention of the Presbytery his concern because the examiner in Church History
had failed to prescribe the required paper to a candidate. The delinquent Pres-
byter was reprimanded by the Presbytery at their next meeting and made to account
for his negligence.

2 In the Aberdeen Presbytery of the Old Kirk, 24th September, 1889, three
of seven students under-going their trials for licensure failed. See: Minutes
Of The Aberdeen Presbytery, 1889.
An example of the movement to rubber-stamp the report of the committee on
licensure is evident in the Glasgow Presbytery Records, 1868-1877, 1888-1894.
Less and less data concerning the progress and results of the various examinations
is recorded in the minute book. In 1873, June 11th a new committee was formed to
hear "the discourses of students on trial for license" thus taking this duty out
of the hands, or from the floor, of the meeting of the Presbytery itself. By
1888, May 2, a Synod Examining Committee had taken some of the duties from the
Corresponding Committee in Presbytery. In 1868, men were proposed for their trials
for licensure on 5th, February. Thereafter monthly entries concerning these 6
men are found in the Presbytery minutes until the 10th, June when they are licensed.
In 1894, on the 7th March there is the intimation of eleven men proposed for
license. The next entry is 2nd May, 1894 when the men are licensed upon the recom-
mandation of the examining committee. The procedure is much more perfunctory.

3 The movement toward greater uniformity in examination began when Exit
examinations became a requirement from the Divinity Halls and Synod Committees
were established to administer the examinations for licensure. This movement is
illustrated in a comparison of the examination for licensure in the Aberdeen
Presbytery in 1877 and the yearly examinations administered to the ministerial
into a more thorough and standardized pattern.

c. Practical Ability

Ultimately, a qualified preacher was to be a person who could adapt his knowledge to the practical life and concerns of a parish. Professor James Robertson of the Old Kirk said that there were three grounds on which a congregation and presbytery could object to the preaching ability of a "candidate for holy orders." ¹

1. He may preach so as to overshoot the measure of intelligence possessed by his audience.
2. He may preach in such a manner as to disgust, by the vulgarity of his style or the shallowness and lightness of the matter of his discourses, a respectable and well-informed audience.
3. He may preach in such a way as to preach not the living and practical doctrines of the everlasting Gospel.²

candidates in the Edinburgh Presbytery after 1895. In 1877, 1st May, the Aberdeen Presbytery of the Old Kirk convened at Ten A.M. to hear nine men deliver five discourses each: Latin Exegesis, Greek Exercise and addition, Homily, Lecture and Popular Discourse. These trials concluded, according to the minutes, at Twelve Noon. Thus nine men took an average of thirteen minutes each to conclude their Probationary Trials. The next day, 2nd May, 1877 these nine men were further examined in "Church History, Chronology, Hebrew and Greek Scriptures." Within one hour the Presbytery conducted these trials and licensed all nine men. Here the average time was 6½ minutes per man for examination and licensure. See Records Of The Presbytery Of Aberdeen, 1877-1879.

In 1894, 22nd October the Edinburgh Presbytery Committee on Examinations reported that 1st, 2nd and 3rd year divinity students had been given four hour written examinations. The minute on the 21st October, 1895 states that the written examinations were three hours for each year. Each year the Committee also reported the scores of the examinations to the Presbytery. On the 25th March 1895 it is said that an average of 40% was required on all subjects overall to merit a pass and a minimum of 30% on each subject individually to pass. On March 25, 1896 this report is given in the minutes of the Edinburgh Presbytery on the Examination for license: "instead of an average of not less than 40% over all the subjects, and a minimum of 30% on each being required as necessary to pass, except in Biblical Knowledge in which 50% shall be the minimum, 50% on all the prescribed subjects shall be necessary to a pass." See Presbytery of Edinburgh.

In the Free Kirk Proceedings, see The Report Of The Examination Board From 1891 to 1899. Also see Appendix II-C.

¹A. H. Charteris, Life Of James Robertson, p. 39.
²Ibid.
In 1873 the "Committee On The Pastoral Training of Ministers and Missionaries" reported to the General Assembly of the Old Kirk that the training of preachers was deficient unless they had been taught "to apply practically the knowledge" they had acquired in the divinity hall. In 1897 it was the lament of one committee in the Old Kirk that:

the licentiate may find himself, not only almost wholly destitute of the very training especially needed, but even in doubt as to whether he has ever been called to the ministerial life—a doubt rendered doubly bewildering, and sometimes almost overwhelming, by his discovery of inaptitude for preaching and spiritual service to the souls of men.

The criterion of practical ability appears to have been the test to assess a man's adequacy in the pulpit. A. H. Charteris states that "the Church courts were sole judges of a man's fitness to preach, and of his being qualified for ordination to a charge." In the Free Church and the United Presbyterian Church, as well as the Old Kirk after 1874, it was the individual congregation itself which assessed the practical ability of the preacher as the sermon was the basis of the call. While this system was the cause of consternation to one committee of the Old Kirk in the 1890's, this made the ability of the man in the pulpit an issue of first importance in some presbyteries and congregations. David Woodside has written that in the United Presbyterian Church: "The great effort

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1Reports On The Schemes Of The Church Of Scotland, 1873, "Committee On The Pastoral Training Of Ministers and Missionaries" p. 472.


3A. H. Charteris, Life Of James Robertson, p. 64.

4By virtue of the Church Patronage Act of 1874 the call in the Old Kirk was vested in the congregation subject to the approval of the presbytery. See chapter 3: "Preaching the Practical Emphasis of the Church."

5See "Committee On Competitive Preaching", Reports On The Schemes Of The Church of Scotland, 1892, 1893, 1894. In 1892 the committee stated its concern that congregations realize "how much, beside merely hearing him, is essential to their forming a just judgment as to his fitness." p. 1007.
of the Presbytery and Synod with regard to the students of Divinity was to make them preachers.1

The importance placed on the criterion of practical ability is evident in the discourses the Church prescribed to divinity students. In all three Churches the discourses were similar: "An exegesis in Latin on some controverted head in Divinity; A Homily in English; An Exercise and addition; A Lecture on some large portion of Scripture; A Popular Sermon."2 This set of discourses was prescribed on three different occasions during divinity hall, at the trials for licensure, and again at the time of ordination.3

1 David Woodside, The Soul Of A Scottish Church, p. 150.


3 The Church of Scotland, Acts Of The General Assembly, 1849, p. 38; 1863, pp. 35, 38. In the Divinity Hall, the Old Kirk required that the student submit two critical exercises, one in Hebrew and one in Greek. In 1901 the Old Kirk substituted an "English Essay" for the "Latin Exegesis." The Free Church of Scotland, Acts Of The General Assembly, 1860, p. 232, 235. The United Presbyterian Church, Proceedings, 1848. Here the exact
One must further inquire into the degree of assiduity with which the courts of the Church pursued the criterion of practical ability. The test of practical ability was often employed by the Church courts in a perfunctory manner. The presbyteries assigned the texts and subjects of the required discourses with an efficiency which attested to their compliance to the law, but nothing more. Similarly the professors of the divinity halls reported the progress of their students to the presbyteries in a stereotyped manner. While the perfunctory style of these reports indicates adherence to law, it also raises suspicion.

The actual fact is that some professors and presbyteries wielded this criterion of practical ability with alarming superficiality. They simply did not take the time to thoroughly listen, if they listened at all, to the prescribed discourses. Stewart Mechie has indicated the presence of such superficial requirements are less definitive, the action of the Synod simply reads: "In addition to the expository exercises, the homily, lecture, exercise and additions, and popular sermon prescribed by the Professors, the Students are required to produce as many short written essays on the various topics brought before them, and outlines of lectures and sermons, as the Professors may think fit to prescribe." p. 138. In 1891, see Proceedings, p. 27. The United Presbyterian Church in an Act regarding theological education proposed the following schedule of papers for the Divinity Hall: First year - Exegesis to be handed in to the New Testament Professor, and a sermon to be delivered and handed into the Practical Training Professor. Second year - Exegesis to be handed into the Old Testament Professor and a Lecture to be delivered and handed into the Church History Professor. Third year - Thesis to be handed into the Theology Professor and a sermon to be delivered and handed into the Practical Training Professor.

In all of the Presbytery Records listed in the Bibliography it was the practice of either the Moderator or the Committee on Examinations to propose the texts and subjects of the discourses. These texts and subjects as they were assigned to each individual candidate were recorded in the presbytery minutes.

Two very typical examples of the stereotyped form in which the professors reported to the presbyters are these: "He delivered a homily before me which was sustained...his character is suitable for the Holy Ministry." "He (name of student) has attended the Divinity Hall for (here is inserted the number of sessions) sessions, and he has delivered all his discourses required by the laws of the Church." See Free Presbytery of Glasgow, 1848-1856, p. 78. See Presbytery of Glasgow, 1863-1877, 5th February, 1868.
procedure in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. In 1863 the sometimes cantankerous James Begg indicated that the Free Church was not properly enforcing the qualification of practical ability.

The practical result...of our system is just what might have been anticipated. We have a few good preachers, but the mass are most imperfectly trained. For a time, the disappointment and clamour of the people in the Free Church was kept down by the confident prediction of an approaching crop of first-rate ministers. The cry was "They come! they come!" but "hope deferred maketh the heart sick." Twenty years have almost passed since the Disruption, and instead of getting better, matters seem to be gradually getting worse.2

By 1868 the widespread abuse of this test of practical ability gave birth to a 'Committee on Pastoral Training' in the Old Kirk.3 In 1869 this committee reported to the General Assembly:

At the Divinity Halls it often happens that discourses, instead of being delivered, are simply handed in to the professor, or that, from want of time, only a part is read. And the same occurs frequently when students come before Presbyteries for licence. Instead of the trial discourses being taken occasionally during the course of a year... they are often given along with their final examinations at one or two meetings and the students are thus precluded from obtaining any knowledge of the art of delivery which it is of the utmost consequence they should learn under the judicious direction of the professor or the Presbytery.4

In 1853 a United Presbyterian preacher wrote an article in The Christian Journal depicting the superficiality of his own ordination trials.

I was unknown by face to every member then present; there was no evidence that I was a licentiate of the body, or that I was a person who had been called by the Church under their inspection except from the oral testimony of the commissioners who were to prosecute the call... The only ordeal through which they deemed it necessary I should pass was that I shall preach before them... they instructed me that the introduction to the sermon and the announcement of my division

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1 Stewart Mechle, Records Of The Scottish Church History Society, Vol. XIV, pp. 162-164.

2 James Begg, The Art of Preaching, 1863, Edinburgh, James Nicol, pp. 11, 12.

3 Reports On The Schemes Of The Church of Scotland, 1869, p. 421.

4 Ibid.
of the text, was all that they expected....On entering the pulpit
the Presbytery, who were occupying, as was their wont, a large square
pew in front of it, rose and scattered themselves over the area.
The Moderator went into an extreme corner under the gallery."¹

Other presbytery records themselves relate incidents betraying a superficial
standard of examination. In Aberdeen in 1877, the Presbytery of the Old Kirk
took but two hours to hear nine candidates for licensure deliver their discourses.²
In 1891 the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church not only stated the dis-
courses which the student was to deliver in the divinity hall, but also felt it
important to enact that "The above lectures and sermons shall be delivered before
the class or before another audience, but always in the presence of the Professor."³

In the 1880's in the Free Church and again in the 1890's in the Old Kirk, the
furor over the practical training of ministers was in part a judgment on the
superficial manner in which the presbyteries assessed the practical ability of
their prospective preachers.⁴

If some presbyteries and professors were lax in their pursuit of a practi-
cal pulpit, there were others equally impressive who upheld the intended standard
of excellence. James Begg lauded his theology professor at Glasgow, Dr. Stevenson

¹The Christian Journal, Vol. 4, 1853, "Leaves From The Diary Of A

²Records Of The Presbytery Of Aberdeen, 1877-1879.

³United Presbyterian Church, Proceedings, 1891, p. 27.

⁴Reports On The Schemes Of The Church of Scotland, 1897, "Committee On
Legislation And Church Reform," p. 1206. For a practical survey of this debate
see the following committee reports: "Committee On Students Engaging In The
Ordinary Ministry Of The Word," 1888, 1889, 1890, "Committee On Public Worship
and Sacraments," 1890, 1891, 1892, "Committee On Competitive Preaching," 1892,
1893, 1894. Free Church of Scotland, Proceedings, 1886, "Report of College
Committee", p. 6. "Any change for the better in the preparation of the students
for the ministry must lie in the quickened and increased attention of the Church
Courts to their interest." This debate can best be followed by reading the
"Reports Of The College Committee" from 1885 to 1891.
MacGill, as an "admirable critic of sermons."¹ Andrew Thomson, the biographer of Principal Harper of the United Presbyterian Divinity Hall wrote:

There was probably no part of his work as a Professor of Theology in which Dr. Harper more excelled, or was more thoroughly appreciated, than his criticisms on the discourses which the students were required to deliver before him.²

In Glasgow, John Caird was described as "the only professor who made an attempt to teach young men to preach."³ In 1870, The New College, Edinburgh, adopted a new scheme, whereby each student delivered at least two public discourses during his four years at the Divinity Hall.⁴ Among the presbyteries the Aberdeen Free Presbytery admonished its Moderator to "declare with sufficient minuteness the collective mind of the Presbytery as to the merits of the Discourse."⁵ In 1849 this same Presbytery rejected the sermon of one of the candidates for licensure as they were "not satisfied with these Discourses."⁶ While all three of the Churches required that their students appear before their respective presbyteries each year, only the United Presbyterian Church appears to have demanded that the student deliver a sermon or lecture each year.⁷ As the century progressed the

¹Thomas Smith, Memoirs of James Begg, D.D. Vol. I, p. 55. This is a quotation taken from the autobiography by Begg.


³Charles Warr, Principal Caird, p. 186.


⁵Aberdeen Free Presbytery 1843-1853, p. 351.

⁶Ibid., pp. 342-343.

⁷An example of this scheme is found in the minutes of the Aberdeen United Presbyterian Presbytery, 1867-1878. On October 8, 1867, the Presbytery prescribed the following discourses for the men in "the Divinity Hall now in residence in the Presbytery." First year - Homily. Second year - Sermon and Exegesis. Third year - Sermon and Thesis. Fourth year - Sermon and lecture. In 1876 when the
prebyterianies increasingly vested the responsibility of hearing and judging the discourses in the hands of committees. As the judge of the practical ability of the preacher, the presbytery or its designated committee, was a formidable jury. The candidate might receive "no end of praises from the priests" or his discourse might be "torn to pieces by hostile criticism and ultimately rejected."

The ecclesiastical objective was a qualified preacher. Good character

Divinity Hall of the United Presbyterian Church changed from a five year short term curriculum to a three year full term curriculum the Synod enacted the following: "Presbyteries shall arrange for the students under their superintendence appearing at least once before them during the recess, when they shall deliver one discourse each, the discourse required from first-year students to be an Expository Lecture, and the discourse required from second-year students to be a Popular Sermon." See Proceedings, 1876, p. 638.

1 The minutes of the Glasgow Presbytery of the Old Kirk indicate that the 11th June, 1873 was the first time that a separate committee was convened especially to hear the "discourses of Students on trial for license." While the Presbytery still had the right to hear any discourse they desired now it was primarily the responsibility of this committee to hear, judge and report to the Presbytery. See Glasgow Presbytery, 1868-1877. Similarly in the Presbytery of Edinburgh, it appears that by 1880 most of the judging of the discourses was the work of a committee. See Presbytery of Edinburgh, 1874-1881, 12th May, 1880.

By the 3rd October, 1893 it seems that in the Aberdeen Presbytery of the United Presbyterian Church, the students' discourses were listened to and criticized by members of the Presbytery's Committee. See Aberdeen United Presbyterian Minute Book, 1893-1897. In the Edinburgh and the Glasgow Presbyteries of the United Presbyterian Kirk it appears to have been the custom for preliminary examinations to be done in the committee but the final sermons and discourses required for licensure to be delivered either before the entire Presbytery or the Presbytery as a unit dividing into sections to hear and assess the discourses. See: The Minute Book Of The United Presbyterian Church, Edinburgh, 1892-1897. The Glasgow Presbytery Of The United Presbyterian Church, 1862-1866. In the Free Presbytery of Glasgow by the 2nd May, 1877 it was the common practice for a Committee of the Presbytery to hear the sermons and discourses for licensure and then report to the Presbytery their recommendation. See Free Presbytery of Glasgow, 1876-1882.

2 In Glasgow, Aberdeen and Edinburgh Presbyteries the professors in the Divinity Halls were among those on the examining committees.

3 James Brown, The Life Of A Scottish Probationer, Glasgow, 1908. This rather raucous account of the experience of a United Presbyterian Church Probationer includes several letters with reference to his experiences, pp. 69, 70, 77.
was the criterion pointing to the personal piety and integrity of the preacher himself. Academic proficiency was the criterion conditioning the intellectual and theological content of the sermon. Practical ability was the criterion illuminating the necessity of a sermon related to the life and level of the parish. George Hill wrote in his "Theological Institutes" that the Church of Scotland considers as licentiates only "persons of whose character, literature, and abilities, some presbytery" has had "the fullest opportunities of judging."  

In 1879 the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church agreed that in future, Presbyteries shall examine in Theology the students under their care during the recess, and take means to further their progress in personal and practical religion. It was resolved, that in future, the subjects for examination in Trials for License shall include only Systematic Theology, Personal Religion, and the Motives of the Candidates.  

In 1897 the "Committee On Reform" in the Old Kirk succinctly declared: "Wherever conducted, training (for the ministry) must be devotional, intellectual, and practical."  

The System Producing A Qualified Preacher  

The system by which Scottish Presbyterianism hoped to procure a qualified preacher pivoted on a well-ordered approach to the ministry. This process incorporated three distinct and definite stages: university, divinity hall, and probationer. It is to a description of such of these stages that we now turn.

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1 George Hill, "Extracts From Theological Institutes," A Copious And Comprehensive Summary Of The Laws And Regulations Of The Church Of Scotland From A.D. 1560 to A.D. 1850, p. 424.  
2 The United Presbyterian Church, Proceedings, 1877, p. 619.  
3 Reports On The Schemes Of The Church Of Scotland, 1897, p. 1204.
The purpose of the university was to expose the prospective preacher to a general body of knowledge. Yet the Church was uncertain and vacillating in the restrictions imposed on the period of university study. The only precise requirement was that the student present to his presbytery certificates validating his attendance in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Logic, Mathematics, Moral Philosophy, Natural Philosophy and English Literature. In meeting these requirements the Churches encouraged the student to pursue the M.A. degree from the university. However, the degree itself was never a prerequisite for the divinity hall. In fact it was not until the last quarter of the century that it became fashionable for prospective preachers to hold the M.A. degree. Thomas Chalmers, R. S. Candlish, William Cunningham, Thomas Guthrie, Robert Lee, John Tulloch, Norman MacLeod all...

1 See pp. 70, 71 of this chapter and the corresponding footnotes.

2 In the Old Kirk Act of 1863 and the Free Church Act of 1860 the certificates were only required of those not holding the "diploma of Master of Arts." In the Old Kirk by an Act of 1871 those holding the M.A. were exempted from the entrance examination to the Divinity Hall. See Acts Of The General Assembly, 1871. In the "Report of the Committee On Education and Trials of Students" in the Free Church in 1893 two statements are made indicating the preference for the M.A. degree. "The curriculum for admission to the Divinity Hall shall be that required by the M.A. degree." "Graduates in Arts, Law, Medicine and Science shall be admitted without examination in literary subjects provided, that where the degree does not include Latin, Greek, Hebrew, the graduate shall pass on Examination prescribed by the Church." See Free Church Proceedings, 1893.

3 See Appendix I-A, B, C. The few ministers holding the M.A. degree was but a reflection of the status of that degree in Scotland until the last half of the nineteenth century. Alexander Morgan in Scottish University Studies, Oxford, 1933, says that "from the latter part of the eighteenth century the custom of graduating at the end of the course fell largely into abeyance in all Scottish Universities, except Aberdeen," p. 76. Morgan quotes the Report of the Commission of 1826: "This mode of bestowing Degrees was sufficient to lower them in public estimation. They ceased to be objects of solicitude, and in general have been viewed with so little respect...that comparatively few individuals have applied for them."
spent four years in a national university but none of them held the M.A. degree.  

What the Churches desired from this period was "the intellectual aptitude which it is the principal object of the M.A. course of University training to impart." Normally this "intellectual aptitude" was acquired through "four sessions at a National University." However, it appears that the main concern of the Church was that the student pass the entrance examination irrespective of the time spent in the university. This examination was administered by each Church and covered the same general subjects as the M.A. curriculum. In 1851, none other than Principal William Cunningham of the New College stated on the floor of the General Assembly of the Free Church that "he thought there was no necessity for making four years' attendance on the prescribed curriculum indispensable, provided the students admitted to the Hall had the necessary knowledge, and provided that knowledge was duly ascertained." In the same Church in 1885, one of the complaints registered by the divinity students at New College to the "Committee on

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1 Fasit Ecclesie Scoticae.

2 The United Presbyterian Church, Proceedings, 1876, p. 791.

3 In 1863 the United Presbyterian Church carried out a survey of the varieties of theological education pursued in Scotland, England, the United States, Germany and Holland. While this is a sketchy piece of research it is interesting to note that the Free Church of Scotland and the Church of Scotland both state that "four sessions at a National University" is a prerequisite for the Divinity Hall. See: Proceedings, 1863, "Appendix" pp. 16-21. In 1848 the United Presbyterian Church required "at least three sessions at one of the National Universities." Proceedings, 1848, p. 136.

4 All three Churches required entrance examinations prior to entry to the Divinity Halls. See the Church of Scotland Acts, 1863; The Free Church, 1860; The United Presbyterian Church, 1848.

5 Ibid. Also see Appendix II-C for details of the Free Church Examination. See Appendix II-D for details of the U.P. Church examination.

6 The Free Church of Scotland, Proceedings, 1851, p. 191.
the quinquennial Visitation of the college was that there was "much too frequent relaxation of the regulations regarding the Entrance and Exit Examinations."¹

The intellectual aptitude the preacher gained from the university was a general orientation in philosophy and the classics. This emphasis is evident in a survey of the M.A. curricula of the century.² George Jardine, called by G. E. Davie the "chief formulator" of the Scottish University ideal, wrote:

The great end of philosophical education, however, is not to be attained by a mere theoretical acquaintance with the mental faculties, as explained in lectures, or even by the ablest writers in this department of knowledge. It consists rather in improved habits of directing their several energies; in thinking correctly, in reasoning closely, and in the acquired facility of conducting the various processes of generalization, invention, communication, by speech or by writing. A well educated man, accordingly, is not merely distinguished by his knowledge of particular theories, as to the arrangement and distribution of the power of the mind, but by the command, which he has acquired of his faculties, so as to apply them, as occasion may require, in the prosecution of science, of art, or of business.³

G. E. Davie has himself written of this period:

The striking thing about Scottish social culture till about 1850... was the combination of a scholastic intellectualism, as it was exemplified both in the predominant position of philosophy in regard to other subjects, and in the system of examinations and tuition by public debate in class about first principles.⁴

Before the University Commission of 1876, Professor Edward Caird argued that

¹See The Free Church of Scotland, Proceedings, 1885, "Report Of Commission For Quinquennial Visitation Of The New College," p. 17. This diversity in the quality of examination was also cited in the Old Kirk in 1896 when seventy-six divinity students sent a petition on this matter to the General Assembly. See Report On The Schemes Of The Church of Scotland, 1890, p. 1169.

²See Appendix II-A.


⁴George Elder Davie, The Democratic Intellect, p. 24. Davie is an excellent resource on the philosophical basis of Scottish education, pp. 11, 12.
there was no justification for according philosophy, mathematics and physics the privileged status they enjoyed in the Scottish curriculum."¹ Both G. E. Davie and Alexander Morgan contend that it was 1892 before reform came to the Scottish Universities in the sense that Philosophy was no longer the only altar of veneration.² Thus it would seem fair to conclude that the preacher of the nineteenth century entered divinity hall with, if nothing else, a fairly competent philosophical orientation.

The second distinctive feature of the Scottish University was the pedagogical method employed. The lectures were complemented by a formal tutorial system. The purpose of the tutorial was to encourage dialogue between the professor and the students as the content of the lecture was related to the whole of life in general.³ In 1858 the North British Review stated that "the characteristic excellence of the Scottish college is the existence of an actively wrought lecture system, combined with a constant and searching catechetical system."⁴ George E. Davie has observed that this tutorial or catechetical system dominated the Scottish University until 1890.⁵ Davie's verdict is that this system resulted in a very general, some said superficial, approach to education.⁶ This almost utilitarian tutorial nurtured the Scottish "bent for metaphysics."⁷ It is interesting to observe that in the first half of the century, when Jardine's philosophy of education would have been at its apex, the dominant homiletical style

¹Ibid., p. 84.
²Ibid., p. 14, 15.
³G. E. Davie, pp. 14, 15. D. B. Horn, A Short History Of The University of Edinburgh 1556-1889, indicates that Edinburgh was the one Scottish University stressing lectures to the exclusion of the tutorial.
⁴Ibid., p. 14.
⁵Ibid., p. 15.
⁶Ibid., pp. 14, 15, 27, 28.
⁷Ibid., p. 16.
was doctrinal, dogmatic, well-reasoned and clearly outlined. The sermon usually began with an academic or doctrinal emphasis and concluded with a practical application.\(^1\) While it is not the purpose of this thesis to establish which came first, this similarity between the pedagogy of the university and the homiletics of the pulpit must be noted.\(^2\)

b. Divinity Hall

Admission to the divinity hall marked the second stage of the quest for a qualified pulpit. In both the Old Kirk and the Free Church this was a four year curriculum, each term lasting five or six months.\(^3\) In the United Presbyterian Church the term was only eight weeks, but the course spanned five years.\(^4\) In 1876 it was the United Presbyterian Church which pioneered in the three year divinity hall.\(^5\)

The academic emphasis of the divinity hall was the acquisition of a degree

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\(^1\) See chapter 4 of this thesis.

\(^2\) The homiletics of the older evangelical will be discussed in chapter 4. I have said that I would not attempt to establish the priority of the relationship between the university pedagogy and homiletics for three reasons: First, in setting forth the pedagogy of the university, Davie suggests that this may have been part of the Presbyterian legacy, pp. 3-25. Secondly, the preacher while a product of the university system, nowhere states that his homiletics was derived from the university. He gives little reason for his particular homiletical style. Consequently the similarity between pedagogy and homiletics can only be stated. Thirdly, it is not the purpose of this thesis to explain in any detail the methodology or content of the tutorial. This, along with the entire subject of the nineteenth Scottish University, has been competently set forth by G. E. Davie.


\(^5\) The United Presbyterian Church, *Proceedings*, 1876, p. 638
of linguistic proficiency and a competent system of theology. The so called "three sacred languages," Hebrew, Greek and Latin were prerequisites for admission to the divinity hall. In the United Presbyterian Church, three of the five professorial chairs were related to biblical exegesis. Three and often four of the six discourses required during the divinity hall were of a linguistic and exegetical nature. Linguistic facility was imperative to any "preacher of the word." In 1846 at the laying of the foundation stone of the New College, Thomas Chalmers declared:

1Note the content of the curricula of the divinity halls of the three major Churches in Appendix II-B, C, D. In an article in The Scotsman, November 7, 1893, Professor Robert Flint wrote: "The studies pursued in the Faculty of Theology are either of a linguistic or a critical and exegetical, or of a historical, or of a theoretical nature."

2In 1847 there were five professorial chairs established by the United Presbyterian Synod. They were: 1. Sacred Languages and Biblical Criticism, Professor Lindsay; 2. Hermeneutics and Evidences, Professor Eadie; 3. Exegetical Theology, Professor Brown; 4. Systematic and Pastoral Theology, Professor Harper; 5. Ecclesiastical History, Professor M'Michael. See the United Presbyterian Proceedings, 1847, p. 13. After 1876, when the divinity hall changed to its three year curriculum, there were the five following chairs: 1. Hebrew and Old Testament Literature; 2. New Testament Literature and Exegesis; 3. Church History; 4. Systematic Theology; 5. Practical Training.

3The Old Kirk required of their students: "An exegesis in Latin on some controverted Head in Divinity; a Homily in English; a Critical Exercise on some portion of the Original Text of the Old Testament; An Exercise and Addition on some portion of the Original Text of the New Testament; a Lecture on some large portion of Scripture; and a Popular Sermon; and such other Exercises as the Professors shall think proper to prescribe." See Acts Of The General Assembly, 1863, p. 35. In 1901 the Latin Exegesis was replaced by a discourse in English. The requirements were similar in the Free Church. See Acts Of The General Assembly, 1860, p. 232. In 1872 the Latin Exegesis was replaced by a discourse in English. In the United Presbyterian Church there were a set of six similar discourses. See Proceedings, "Appendix On Theological Training," 1891. In 1891 the United Presbyterian Church set forth the following schedule of "papers": First year - Exegesis To New Testament Professor and a Sermon to the Practical Training Professor. Second year - Exegesis to the Old Testament Professor and Lecture to the Church History Professor. Third year - Thesis to the Theology Professor and a sermon to the Practical Training Professor. See Proceedings, 1891, "College Report."
The great object of an education here is that our pupils may learn to understand the Bible and to handle it aright in plying the hearts and consciences of men.

A sound system of theology was the handmaid of exegetical skill. Just as the United Presbyterian Church accentuated exegesis, so the Old Kirk and the Free Church tended toward more of a theological emphasis. This emphasis was particularly dominant in the third quarter of the century. During this period, ecclesiastical history was often the study of the history of doctrine.

Principal William Cunningham, the outstanding spokesman for this emphasis said:

I confine the more formal lectures to a survey of the history of theology and of theological discussions, and shall attempt to apply this in the way of guiding you to correct views of the doctrines which God has revealed in his Word.

In the closing decade of the century, Professor Robert Flint of Edinburgh University offered this advice to students of divinity:

The main part of your work in this Hall should be to arrive at a system of theology. You have no right to set up as religious teachers or preachers if you have only superficial, disconnected, discordant, fragmentary religious impressions and ideas. You are bound as a matter of conscience and of duty, of common-sense and common honesty, to arrive at what may be called a system of theology, before you undertake the

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1 The Free Church of Scotland, Assembly Proceedings, 1896, p. 34.

2 The Old Kirk Theological Faculty was composed of four chairs: Church History, Biblical Criticism, Divinity, and Oriental Languages. This was the case throughout most of the nineteenth century. For a personal assessment of the faculty at Edinburgh see Arthur Gordon, The Life Of A. H. Charteris, pp. 24-25. In 1851, the faculty of New College included two chairs in Divinity, and one each in Church History (which under Cunningham was really Divinity) Hebrew and Oriental Languages and Exegetical. See Hugh Watt, New College Edinburgh.

3 In the Free Church, this is the avowed emphasis of Principal Cunningham. See Free Church Assembly Proceedings, 1856, "College Report", p. 12. In the United Presbyterian Church the text serving as the basis of examination was Hagenbach's, History of Doctrine. See United Presbyterian Proceedings, 1848, pp. 141-142. Later Robert Flint laments the fact that the History of Doctrine is "the missing link in our Theological Halls." See p. 72, On Theological, etc.

4 William Cunningham, Introductory Lecture On Church History, p. 67.
spiritual charge of a congregation, and that system must be in your conviction the true system of theology.

The picture of the divinity hall in the first half of the century was often monotony and inadequacy. In his biography of Professor James Robertson of the Old Kirk, A. H. Charteris says:

There is little distinction to be won in Divinity Halls. Stated lectures, routine examinations and periodical essays or sermons do little to awaken that emulation which alone can bring out the character of a student's mind.²

It has been said, with perhaps a shade of bias, that prior to the advent of Principal John Tulloch to St. Andrews, the "antiquated textbooks and murmur of heavy commentary had sent generations of students to sleep, or filled them with impatience or indignation."³ As a divinity hall student, John Edie rebelled against the dull "symmetry" of John Dick's system of theology.⁴ Campbell Fraser admired Thomas Chalmers as a man, but as a teacher Fraser says of Chalmers: "I somehow failed to find in the lessons of Chalmers the expected satisfying settlement of perplexities of religious thought."⁵ The Scotsman, the foremost newspaper purporting a liberal line, was the most caustic. An editorial on the Scottish Universities made this assessment of theological education:

The Church of Scotland is not a learned Church, nor indeed can be, Presbyterian parity being, but too naturally, the parent of Presbyterian mediocrity. A certain fair amount of intelligence and general knowledge of common books, the Scottish presbyter may reasonably boast... scholarship in the high, that is the German sense of the word, is hardly to be found.⁶

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¹Robert Flint, On Theological, Biblical, And Other Subjects, p. 18.
²A. H. Charteris, Life Of The Rev. James Robertson, p. 16.
⁴James Brown, Life Of John Edie, D.D., LL.D., p. 44.
⁵Alexander Campbell Fraser, Biographia Philosophica, p. 63.
⁶The Scotsman, Wednesday, January 5, 1848, p. 3.
By contrast, the divinity hall of the last quarter of the century was bursting with a new sense of vitality. One need only survey the change in the curriculum to see the evidence of a less rigid approach to theology. In the 1880's the divinity halls of the Church witnessed an astounding growth in enrollment. In the eighties and nineties the discussion and controversy in the courts of the Free Church and the Old Kirk over the content of theological education betrayed both a concern and an interest which had been dormant in the earlier period.

The confusion and controversy surrounding the divinity hall of the nineteenth century was symptomatic of a significant change in the philosophy of theological education. Between 1800 and 1900 the concept of the divinity hall changed from that of a training school to that of an academic institution. This change was most pronounced in the Old Kirk. This change is evident in at least three

1 See Appendix II-B, C, D. Also note that in 1876 the United Presbyterian Church altered their divinity hall and introduced a three year curriculum.

2 See Appendix I-A, B, C. In the Old Kirk statistics of the total number of divinity students are not available prior to 1866 in any committee reports. However, D. B. Horn, op. cit., p. 180, indicates that in Edinburgh this pattern held true. Likewise, in 1899, the Committee on Probationers divulged a list of the total number of Divinity Students in Glasgow from 1865...Again the pattern of a peak enrollment in the mid 1880's was true. See Reports On The Schemes Of The Church Of Scotland, 1899, p. 916.

3 See p. 87 of this Thesis, Footnote 4, for a list of sources on this debate.

4 In a series of articles in the Records Of The Scottish Church History Society, Vol. XIV, Stewart Mechie has documented the changes and problems of theological education in Scotland. However, in documenting the changing pattern primarily as it is evident in General Assembly Acts and Reports of the Old Kirk, Dr. Mechie has not related these changes to a new approach to theological education.

5 This change is also evident in the Free Church even though to a lesser degree. In the United Presbyterian Church, the change is much less pronounced. In 1876 at the time of the inauguration of the three year divinity hall, the Synod declared "The main design of this institution however, being to promote the doughty and effective discharge of pulpit ministrations...that design shall be kept constantly in view." See United Presbyterian Church Proceedings, 1877, p. 632.
observations: First, in the attitude of the professors and ministers toward the function of the divinity hall; Secondly, in the standardization of the regulations governing the divinity hall; Third, in the complete disengagement of the practical from the academic in theological education.

This change in the philosophy of theological education can be fairly well traced in the attitudes of the professors and Churches toward the divinity hall. In the older view of the divinity hall as a training school for preachers, the scale was evenly balanced between the academic and the practical. The Professor divided his time between lecturing and listening to students' discourses.  

Principal Hill, Dr. M'Gill, and Professor James Robertson of the Old Kirk; Thomas Chalmers of the Free Church; John Brown and Principal Harper of the United Presbyterian Church all believed that as a training school the divinity hall was both the place where knowledge was acquired and skills were practiced.  

Under Principal

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1 George Jardine, *op. cit.*, p. 473. In speaking of theological training Jardine writes: "It is very clear that one hour a day is far from being sufficient to enable the professor to perform his duty as it ought to be done. The necessity of devoting time to hear the discourses read which the church demands of every student, leaves to the professor little more than two hours a week for lecturing; and thus puts it entirely out of his power to explain to his pupils the leading doctrines of natural and revealed religion...I have heard of a theological professor whose system could not be expounded in a shorter period than twenty years, and which was consequently shared in equal parts by five successive generations of divinity students."

2 Principal Hill apparently concluded his theological lectures with practical exhortations for preaching. See George Hill, *Counsels*. In Jardine's book, there is an extensive section written by Dr. Stevenson M'Gill on his method of teaching. See pp. 475-480. James Begg, who appears to have been unhappy with the theological training in the Free Church writes of M'Gill: "Dr. MacGill was an admirable critic of sermons...He insisted that the whole class should be present to hear his criticisms, and it was a most profitable exercise. I have seen him sit to hear four or five sermons in succession without taking a note, and then criticise the whole in detail with the most admirable discrimination and judgment. He was strong for short introductions, clear divisions, precise statements of doctrine, and accurate quotation of Scripture." See Thomas Smith, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 55. Also see: William Wilson, *Memorials Of Robert Smith Candlish*, p. 22. Of James Robertson and Robert Lee, A. H. Charteris said: "they were true to the old ideal of the Divinity Hall as the training school of the future ministers."
Cunningham with his concern for a more rigid orthodoxy and John Tulloch of St. Andrews with his search for a more thorough and contemporary articulation of the Christian faith, the scale was weighted toward the academic.\(^1\) By 1869 a report of the Old Kirk's "Committee on Pastoral Training" indicates that the weight was entirely in favor of the academic with the practical side of training virtually neglected.\(^2\) The debate over practical training in the last quarter of the century

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See Arthur Gordon, *op. cit.*, p. 36. The *Institutes of Theology* of Thomas Chalmers are filled with practical references to preaching and the adaptation of theology to preaching. In his address at the laying of the foundation stone at New College, Chalmers said that theology should be treated as "a science and receive an academic treatment".... Then Chalmers proceeded to say that the purpose of the Divinity Hall was to teach men "how they should bring the Word of God to the minds of the people." See *Free Church Proceedings*, 1846, pp. 33-34. John Brown in his pamphlet, *Hints To Students*, stressed the accumulation of theological knowledge and then the utilization of that knowledge "for all the varied purposes of his holy calling," p. 49. Andrew Thompson, in *The Life Of Principal Harper*, says that "there was probably no part of his work as a Professor of Theology in which Dr. Harper more excelled, or was more thoroughly appreciated, than his criticisms on the discourses which the students were required to deliver before him, in rotation," p. 171. Harper was both Principal and Professor of Theology, until his death in 1879. In him, it could be said, the old training school concept of the Divinity Hall survived until the United Presbyterian Church revised its Divinity Hall in 1876.

\(^1\) In contrast to the works of Thomas Chalmers, the *Theological Lectures* of Principal Cunningham are almost barren of any reference to preaching. In his inaugural address, Cunningham said that the purpose of a theological curriculum was threefold: 1. "Communication of professional knowledge." 2. Exposure to a "critical and accurate investigation of the Bible." 3. Instruction in "the leading features of scriptural doctrine." See Cunningham's *Inaugural Address*, p. 47.

In 1865 in a pamphlet, *Theological Controversy*, John Tulloch wrote: "All theological education is based upon this principle: It is necessary for the theological student to be versed not merely in the form of sound words, which he will be called upon to deliver from the pulpit, but also in the forms of opinion which the apostolic doctrine has encountered in different ages, and which have reacted upon it in many ways. He must know, in short, propositions and counter-proposition. Nothing is more common than this spectacle of mistaken dogmatism, arising out of ignorance or disregard of the real import of the opinions opposed to our own." p. 8. Also see Tulloch 1854 *Inaugural Address*, published under the title: *Theological Tendencies Of The Age*.

was in part a reflection of the Church's adjustment to this new philosophy. ¹

In an article in The Scotsman in 1893, Professor Robert Flint of Edinburgh University set forth in six propositions the purpose of the divinity hall as an academic institution:

1. "The most important place for a Theological Hall is that of a Faculty in a University."
2. "The chief studies to be pursued in a Faculty of Theology ought to have been preceded by, and to be continuations of, naturally anterior and auxiliary studies in the Faculty of Arts."
3. "In a Faculty of Theology there should be provision for the teaching of all the chief departments of theological learning."
4. "The chief branches of study in the Faculty of Theology will flourish best, and produce their ripest and most beneficial fruits in an atmosphere of entire academic freedom."
5. "The scientific studies in a Faculty of Theology should be supplemented by strictly professional and if need be denominational training." (This Flint states is now non-existent in the Theological Faculty.)
6. "A Faculty of Theology should be so constituted, animated, and inspired as to contribute to the advancement of theological research and science, the spiritual development of a nation and the welfare of the Church."²

By 1897 this new concept of the divinity hall as an academic institution was completely dominant. The Old Kirk's "Committee On Legislation and Church Reform" stated: "The truth is that at present, strictly speaking, the Church provides no ministerial training: the Divinity Halls at present are not Church institutions. They are academical institutions."³ The discontented complained that the scale had tipped too far in favor of the "academic", however, Principal Stewart of Aberdeen concluded that "nothing which the Divinity Halls have at present can

¹For a good example of the sincerity with which the professors of the Free Church sought to make peace with the practical concern of preaching without compromising what was now their chiefly academic concern, see Free Church Proceedings, "College Report", 1885.

²Robert Flint, "Professor Flint On What A Theological Education Should Be," The Scotsman, Tuesday, November 7, 1893.

be wisely sacrificed in order to make room for pastoral training."

The second indication of a new concept of theological education is evident in the standardization of the requirements governing the divinity halls. By 1877 "entrance and exit examinations" barred the doors of the divinity halls of all three churches. Throughout the century, increasing pressure was mounted in an effort to regulate attendance in the hall and eliminate the abuse of absenteeism which had crept in via the legalized practice of "partial" attendance.1 A. H.

1 Ibid., p. 1232. This committee was critical of the "purely academic" approach to theological education and insisted that "training must be devotional, intellectual and practical." p. 1204.

2 The Church of Scotland, Acts Of The General Assembly, 1877. The Old Kirk was the last to introduce these series of examinations. In 1863 this procedure was approved by the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church. See Proceedings, 1863, p. 683. In the Free Church these examinations had been introduced earlier. By 1864, the Committee on Examinations in the Free Church was providing the General Assembly with yearly lists of those who had passed these two tests.

3 The existence of this practice of "partial" attendance in the Old Kirk has been documented by Stewart McChie, op. cit., pp. 171, 172. George Jardine, op. cit., p. 471, indicates that the practice of partial or "irregular attendance" as it was officially named was very common at the beginning of the century. Jardine says that this irregular attendance meant that the student was in class only a "few days each year."

The Free Church followed the same pattern as the Old Kirk, permitting the student two years of regular attendance and three years of partial attendance. See Acts Of The General Assembly, 1860, p. 231.

In 1863 it was reported to the General Assembly of the Old Kirk that many students could not devote the proper amount of time to their study of theology because they were "overloaded with teaching." See Reports On The Schemes Of The Church Of Scotland, 1863, pp. 355, 356. It is difficult to state how widespread this practice was, but the indication is that this practice of teaching school while studying theology was common. One can only wonder if this in part a reason for the popularity of the United Presbyterian Divinity Hall in the 1850's and 1860's. (See Appendix E.) In 1863 in a survey conducted by the United Presbyterian Church of its divinity hall students, of the 117 students returning the questionnaire, 65 were "employed during the intervals of the Sessions of the Hall" as teachers. Of these 117 students, 66 declared that attendance at a Winter Divinity Session would be "impossible" or "inconvenient." See Proceedings, Appendix on the "Report by the Committee On Theological Training," p. 10.
Charteris could boast that as a student his only written examination was in Hebrew. In 1863 a survey of the divinity halls of the Old Kirk and the Free Church indicated that written examinations were a monthly procedure in all the classes. In 1864 the United Presbyterian Synod resolved that each Professor was to have "weekly written examinations, value the answers and put them with the values assigned to them into the hands of the theological committee." By the end of the century, the "Committee On Probationers" in the Old Kirk concluded that the decline in ministerial candidates was the result of the rigid system of examination. They said of this standardization of requirements:

They form a potent factor in the diminution of students and were intended to do so. But, while the higher quality may be some compensation for the diminished quantity, the door has all but been barred against a class who are very deserving aspirants to the ministry—those who come under strong religious convictions somewhat late in life, after twenty say.

The changing concept of theological education was progenitive to a more standardized and efficient divinity hall at the end of the century.

A third factor pointing to a changing concept of theological education was the ultimate disengagement of the practical from the academic within the divinity hall. In 1893 Robert Flint said:

There is no provision whatever made to guide students for the ministry as to the composition of sermons, the conduct of public worship etc. In a word there is no Practical or Pastoral Theology or any of its branches—no Homiletics, no Liturgics, no Catechetics, no Polemics, no Halientics. Now this is a manifest and glaring defect.

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1 Arthur Gordon, op. cit., p. 37.
2 United Presbyterian Church, Proceedings, 1863, Appendix, pp. 16-18.
3 Ibid., 1864, p. 38.
4 Reports and Schemes Of The Church Of Scotland, 1899, p. 918.
5 The Scotsman, Tuesday, November 7, 1893, "Professor Flint On What A Theological Education Should Be." In an address on "The Training of the Clergy" Flint's colleague in Edinburgh, Professor Dobbie, made a similar confession. Scottish Church Society Conferences, 1894, p. 105.
While Professor Flint recognized that the divinity student had to receive practical training somewhere, he was still convinced that the divinity hall was neither the place nor the time. To divinity students beginning their study, he said:

It is not now your duty to preach the Word of God, but it is your duty to read it, and you will never learn to preach it aright unless you learn to read it aright....I would not advise you to spend time in writing sermons themselves so long as you are in the Hall. You should not have time to do that....

Pastoral theology is a very appropriate subject of attention to a Divinity student. But still how to perform the work of the ministry must always be chiefly learned by the actual doing of the work.

In 1885, Professor T. M. Lindsay said: "We demand one popular sermon and one popular lecture in a four years' course, and that is all the practical training we give our students." In the Free Church the vacuum created by the disengagement of the practical was particularly noticeable in the 1850's and 1860's. However, the reports of the College Committee of the Free Church after 1875 indicate a genuine concern to recover, in some form, the benefits of practical

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1 Robert Flint, On Theological, Biblical and Other Subjects, pp. 6, 12, 55. In 1897, Professor Flint's report to the General Assembly reinforced his conviction that pastoral training not be a part of the three year Divinity Hall, but if necessary be taught in an extra "fourth session." He said further: "The 'hearing of discourses' in the Hall should be abandoned, and something more educational and useful substituted for it." See Reports On The Schemes Of The Church Of Scotland, 1897, p. 1233.

2 Free Church Proceedings, 1885, p. 5. "Appendix To Report Of College Committee."

3 This vacuum is obvious in a comparison of the Quinquennial Visitation Reports before and after 1876. In 1858 only Professor James Bannerman even suggests that he mentioned preaching in his lectures, and here the reference is obviously superficial. In the same year there is no reference to professors listening to sermons. Proceedings, 1858, p. 9-12. In the Free Church Proceedings of 1863 the Quinquennial Visitation Report at Glasgow is much the same, only minor reference to preaching in the sections where the professors describe the content of their courses, and no mention of listening to students sermons. In the Quinquennial Visitation of Aberdeen in 1875 nothing is said about instruction in preaching, but it is observed that the professors do listen to discourses. See Proceedings, 1875, p. 5.
training without diminishing the academic emphasis.¹

The disengagement of the practical from the academic in the divinity hall virtually resulted in a complete dichotomy between the academic and the practical. When professors did allot a time to hear discourses, it was usually squeezed in at the end of the course or scheduled for non-academic hours.² In 1870 the Senatus of the New College inaugurated a plan whereby the students' sermons were delivered in the context of the common worship of the divinity hall.³ In 1871 the Old Kirk introduced a series of lectureships in their divinity halls in an effort to provide a token means of practical instruction.⁴ In 1876 the United

¹ In 1885 the General Assembly of the Free Church sent the following remit to the College Committee: "The Assembly remit to the Committee the further consideration of the practical training of the students, in the hope that, if found expedient or needful as the result of continued inquiry and on due consideration of various suggestions tendered, some improvement on the present system may be discovered, and in the end adopted." Proceedings, 1886, "Report of College Committee," p. 3. In this same report the Committee indexed into two divisions thirteen recommendations to bring about greater efficiency in the practical training of ministers. These two divisions related to the divinity hall itself and to the presbytery. Some suggested more discourses in the divinity hall, and some less. One suggested that the course of the hall be shortened and that a year's probation be effected. One other suggestion was that the divinity hall be strictly for the "theoretical" and the presbytery for the "practical training" only; pp. 5, 6.

² Free Church Proceedings, 1875, "Report of Quinquennial Visitation To Aberdeen." At this time it should be observed that the discourses of the students were given on Saturdays; p. 5.

³ In 1885 the students of New College informed the General Assembly that they desired that "more time be devoted to the delivery of discourses and to practice in extemporaneous preaching." See Proceedings, "Quinquennial Visitation of The New College," p. 16.

⁴ Ibid., 1876, "Quinquennial Visitation Of The New College," p. 10. Here in 1870 the Senate adopted the policy whereby "one-half of the Lectures and one-half of the Sermons shall be publicly delivered as parts of a devotional exercise, or diet of worship, conducted by the lecturer or preacher; it being understood that the students of the third year who do not thus deliver their lectures shall deliver their sermons in this manner during the fourth Session...." "Besides the attendance of the Professors who may be able to be present, the attendance of Students shall be required."
Presbyterian Church established a Chair in Practical Theology. It was the duty of the Professor, John Ker, to lecture on:

...the exposition and enforcement of the Scriptures, the preaching of the gospel...with especial references to preaching; the selection of topics, the planning of discourses and their delivery; together with the practical uses of Scripture and the conduct of public worship in all parts.

Even in this positive move, the changing pattern of theological education is evident. Now the professor of practical theology had the full responsibility for pastoral training while the other professors were free to concentrate on the purely academic. In the New College of the Free Church, the responsibility for practical training fell increasingly into the hands of Professor W. G. Blaikie.

In 1891, Professor Blaikie told the Quinquennial Visitation Committee,

I wish to repeat my strong conviction that practical training is to be obtained effectually in one way only—by our young men becoming assistants to ministers of experience and standing. I should like to see every town minister of a considerable charge provided with an assistant.

As the concept of the divinity hall as an academic institution became dominant, the trend, with few exceptions, was to make practical training auxiliary to the essence of theological education.

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1 United Presbyterian Church, Proceedings, 1876, p. 637.
2 Ibid., p. 795.
3 Observe the manner in which all of the sermons of students are now presented to the practical training professor and the more academic to the others. Proceedings, 1891, The United Presbyterian Church, p. 27.
4 Free Church Proceedings, 1891, "Quinquennial Visitation Of New College," p. 16. In the main body of this committee's report it should be noted that this was one of the suggestions they emphasized; p. 4.
5 One notable exception was Aberdeen. In 1885, Aberdeen reported to the General Assembly of the Free Church that the Students "conducted a mission in a very low quarter of the city." Beside the course in Pastoral Theology where they devoted "one hour every week to the hearing of Pulpit Outlines," two other professors gave time to "exercises...of outlines of popular discourses on prescribed
The ironic corollary to this disengagement of the practical from the academic was the complete breakdown of the law prohibiting divinity students from preaching. If the prospective preacher was receiving little practical instruction in the "clinical" atmosphere of the divinity hall, he was often receiving practical experience in the pulpits of all three Churches. In the Old Kirk where an act of 1854 prohibited students from preaching, the rather frequent lament of the General Assembly was that "the rule prohibiting divinity students from preaching is not being followed." In 1888 it was reported to the Old Kirk General Assembly that the practice of divinity students preaching was common in many parts of the country for two reasons:

1. Many ministers would not be able otherwise ever to be absent from their regular duty.
2. It is a good thing for the students, and for the Church too, that candidates for the ministry should have some opportunity of making public appearances during their College years.

In 1890 an overture was sent down from the General Assembly to the presbyteries which would have permitted "occasional" preaching by divinity students who have completed their "second full Winter Session." Illustrative of the wavering practice of the Churches was the fact that this overture, which ultimately lost, was

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1. Free Church Proceedings, 1885, "Appendix of Report of College Committee" T. M. Lindsay, p. 9. "Clinical" was the word Lindsay coined to describe the practice of preaching in the divinity hall.

2. The Church of Scotland, Acts Of The General Assembly, 1854, p. 35; 1870, pp. 31-32; 1887, p. 60.


approved by 35 presbyteries and rejected by 34. 1 In the Old Kirk, the vacuum in practical training created by the strictly academic concept of the divinity hall was in part compensated for by the illegal practice of "student preaching."

In the Free Church, the situation was much the same. In 1885 Professor James Candlish of Glasgow said that "the theoretical rule of the Church, that students should not preach till licensed by a Presbytery to do so, has come to be practically disregarded." 2 In the same report, Professor Lindsay said:

...many students begin to preach long before they are done with their theological course, and this...has been of great service to them; but they have no guidance given them. There is no supervision, criticism or instruction. 3

Professors James Candlish and T. M. Lindsay, as well as Principal Robert Rainy all adopted the policy of arranging for their students to preach in the stated diet of worship of a particular congregation, and then criticizing their sermon in class. 4 In 1876, the General Assembly of the Free Church was officially informed that 49 of the 100 regular students at New College had "at some time or other preached to Congregations." 5 In the Free Church the emergence of the divinity hall as an academic institution led to the endorsement by the professors of an extra-curricular scheme of practical training.

Even the United Presbyterian Church did not escape this breach of the law regarding the preaching of students. Here the divinity hall and the presbyteries probably retained more of their traditional concern for practical training in

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1 Ibid.
3 Ibid., pp. 8, 9.
preaching. Here too the law was most liberal. From the conception of this denomination in 1848, it had been permissible for students to preach "in cases of necessity." After 1875 the divinity student could preach once he had completed his first term in the divinity hall. Still, in 1859, 1860, 1875, 1882, 1888, 1890, disapproval was officially voiced in the synod regarding the abuse of the law governing the preaching of students.

The disparity between the practice and the law regarding the preaching of students had in part a legal justification. This was pointed out by an Old Kirk committee in 1890. The source of this debate was the "Directory of Public Worship:"

Reading of the Word in the congregation, being part of the Public Worship of God...is to be performed by the Pastors and Teachers. Howbeit such as intend the ministry may occasionally both read the Word, and exercise their gift in preaching in the Congregation, if allowed by the Presbytery.

Ultimately, this disparity between law and practice revealed that while the changing concept of theological education led to a standardization of the academic aspect of the divinity hall, the practical side of the minister's training was at best haphazard. For some the divinity hall was a period perpetuating

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1 The United Presbyterian Church, Proceedings, 1849, p. 201.
2 Ibid., 1875.
3 Ibid.; In 1859, the Synod instructed each Presbytery to make "direct inquiry" into the number of students being called on for pulpit ministrations, p. 224. In 1860, only the Presbytery of Glasgow reported the results of their inquiry to the Synod, p. 326. Also see 1853, p. 482; 1882, p. 590; 1888, p. 72; 1890, p. 386.
4 Reports Of The Schemes Of The Church Of Scotland, 1890, p. 1064.
5 The Directory Of Publick Worship, "Of Publick Reading Of The Holy Scriptures."
the rounded ideal of the qualified preacher.¹ For "a large number, however," there were "really no opportunities of learning what they are to do when they leave the Hall."² In 1886, a contributor to the liturgically-oriented journal, The Scottish Church remarked: "It is strange that in our Presbyterian Church, in which so prominent a place has always been given to preaching, so little attention has been bestowed on the preparation of ministers for this branch of their duties."³ The divinity hall was primarily an academic institution.

c. The Probationer

From the academic atmosphere of the divinity hall, the prospective preacher was hurled into the unpredictable probationary caldron. The probationary period was one of uncertainty and irregularity. In theory, it was the time when the divinity hall graduate acquired practical experience and demonstrated his ability to preach. It was the period between Licensure and Ordination.⁴ The biographer of Robert Rainy described it as the time when the man was "put to the practical work of preaching so that it may be tested how far he has the capacity to use his knowledge for the edification of Christian congregations."⁵ This was the period which spanned the nebulous time from the end of the divinity hall to the time when the preacher was settled in a parochial charge as the minister.⁶ The United

¹By rounded ideal I mean the stress on good character, academic proficiency and practical ability.

²Free Church Proceedings, 1885, "Appendix Of Report Of College Committee, T. M. Lindsay, p. 8.


⁴Reports Of The Schemes Of The Church of Scotland, 1897, pp. 1204-1205.


⁶In all three churches one's name was taken off the probationary role when one was called to a charge and one's name was placed on the list at the time of licensing. See: The Church of Scotland, Acts Of The General Assembly, 1863. The Free Church of Scotland, Acts Of The General Assembly, 1857. The United Presbyterian Church, Proceedings, 1849.
Presbyterian Church imposed a minimal time limit of six months on this period. The Old Kirk, except for a twenty year period from 1874 to 1894, made the probationary period a minimum of twelve months. In the Free Church, with the exception of the period from 1847 to 1854 the probationary period was most indefinite and flexible. For many the life of a probationer was filled with experience and opportunity. However, for a disturbingly large number of probationers this was a time of idleness and frustration.

What was the reason for the inefficiency of the probationary period? In part this was a problem heightened by the Disruption. In part, this was a

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1. The United Presbyterian Church, Proceedings, 1849, pp. 238, 209; 1861, p. 447.

2. The Church of Scotland, Acts Of The General Assembly, 1843, p. 24; 1894, p. 30; 1874, p. 34. Here the General Assembly declared that “Whereas the pressing calls now made for the regular and occasional services of licentiates of this Church render it expedient that students of divinity who have satisfactorily completed their theological course should...be enabled to pass thru their probationary trials.”

3. The Free Church of Scotland, Acts Of The General Assembly, 1847, “That no probationer shall accept of a call until twelve months have elapsed from the period of his receiving licence.” This was repealed in 1854.

4. An author who preferred to remain anonymous published a book entitled: The Decline Of The Pulpit And Its Causes. While this book was more of a tirade against the Free Church and the Old Kirk, it did go through at least five editions. However, the book does marshal numerous facts and claims which demand evaluation. One of these is the contention that the probationary period was one of great abuse. In citing this, the author refers to probationers who were not called on at all during the five years they were licensed; p. 15. Also Marcus Dods, The Early Letters of Marcus Dods, D.D., 1850-1864, pp. 99-372. Dods was an unsuccessful candidate no less than thirty-eight times in the seven years he was a probationer, p. 312.

5. In 1843 the General Assembly of the Free Church enacted the following: “The Presbyteries on whom devolve the duty of supplying the pulpit during the vacancy, shall do their endeavour to secure to vacant congregations an opportunity of hearing such probation as they may wish to hear; but in the present condition of the Church...the Probationers are so few in number in proportion to the demand.” See Acts Of The General Assembly, October, 1843, p. 25. In the same year, Dr. Candlish intimated to the General Assembly that the delay of supplying pulpts by adhering to proper form and procedure should be bypassed. See Free Church Proceedings, May 1843, p. 44. In 1848, Dr. Candlish said that the curriculum at the Divinity Hall had been shortened “in order to supply the demands to labour.” Free Church Proceedings, 1848, p. 145.
weakness augmented by a breakdown of communications between the Churches' committee on probationers, the presbyteries and the vacant congregations. Ultimately, it seems that the inefficiency of the probationary period was due to the excess of probationers. There were more preachers than there were vacant congregations. 

The Churches not wanting to discourage the enlistment of future ministers, were hesitant to speak of an over supply of preachers. Yet throughout the century isolated references were made to this excess of potential preachers. The Commissioners of the Scottish Universities of 1826 to 1830 recommended that divinity students be made to pay class fees as:

The reason for the exemption which was the difficulty of procuring a sufficient number of young men properly educated for the Church had long ago ceased.  

In the General Assembly of the Free Church in 1843, Principal William Cunningham became involved in a debate because he said that "the candidates for the ministry at the present were too numerous, and he would like to see some of them struck off by a particular process." One critic wrote of Glasgow in 1866, that of the twenty-one men who finished the Old Kirk's divinity hall, "not more than ten were settled in the Church during the eight subsequent years."  

1In the Old Kirk see the report of the "Committee on Probationers" after 1885. 1897'Reports,' p. 1056. In the United Presbyterian Church of the "Committee For the Distribution of Preachers" from 1850. In the Free Church where this breakdown of communications is most obvious, see the Report of the "Committee For The Distribution and Employment of Probationers" from 1868. Although this Committee was formed in the Free Church in 1857, it does not begin statistical reports until 1868 and does not even commence an annual report until 1864.  
3The Free Church of Scotland, Proceedings, 1848, p. 139.  
4The Decline Of The Pulpit And Its Causes, p. 18. The anonymous writer of this book does admit to being a Glaswegian.
Church in 1887 the chairman of the "Committee On The Distribution and Employment of Probationers" intimated that:

When the number of Probationers is large and the number of vacancies small, there may be difficulty in working these regulations with the smoothness that is desirable.¹

In the Old Kirk, the "Committee On Probationers" declared in 1896 that one of the "undoubted" reasons for the decline of ministerial candidates was: "The excess of supply over demand which existed for some years and made the chances of employment uncertain."²

This factor of an over-saturated ministry is the conclusion of a statistical survey of the ministry in the Church. This is particularly observable in the period from 1875 to 1899. In the United Presbyterian Church in this period one out of every four men licensed failed to be ordained to a particular charge.³ In this same Church in this period one out of every five men licensed either was dropped from the list of preachers because their time had expired or they were mysteriously "removed at their own request."⁴ In the Free Church in this period one out of every five men entered as a probationer failed to be ordained or settled by the Free Church.⁵ In the Free Church the yearly average of those passing their exit examination from the divinity hall between 1875 and 1899 was

²While one cannot but observe the growth in the number of divinity students in all the Churches in the 1880's, this problem is statistically most observable in this period because the statistics were better documented and fuller at this time.
³See Appendix I-C.
⁴Ibid. This was the phrase used in the official records of the United Presbyterian Church when a man asked that his name be removed from the list of preachers. This always indicated that the man was no longer seeking a parochial charge.
⁵See Appendix I-B.
The average number of names appearing on the list of probationers each year during this interval was eighty-eight. In 1886 of the seventy-one probationers who preached "as candidates" in vacant churches, only eight were elected. In the same Church in 1890 there were "32 giving pulpit supply but without stated work." By 1899 the situation was becoming more stable among the probationers. More and more probationers were employed as assistants or workers in "congregational missions." Still, in both the Free Church and the United Presbyterian Church the successful completion of the divinity hall and the attainment of licensure was no guarantee to a pulpit one could call his own.

In the Old Kirk the statistics are less complete, but again the evidence indicates an over-saturated ministry. Between 1886 and 1899 there were 352 men whose names appeared on the list of "Probationers" by virtue of licensure. In this same period only 745 men left the list to be settled in the work of the Church at home or abroad. In 1896 the "Committee on Probationers" issued an unofficial survey of the relationship between the number of vacancies occurring in the Church and the number of men licensed each year. Between 1886 and 1895 there were 611 men licensed and 488 vacancies. For every five men licensed...

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1 Ibid.
2 Ibid.
3 Free Church Proceedings, 1886, "Report of Committee On The Distribution and Employment of Probationers."
4 Ibid., 1890.
5 Ibid., 1899. In 1899 there were 117 probationers in the Free Church. Of these eighty-one were employed in congregational missions or as assistants.
6 Appendix I-A.
7 Ibid.
8 Reports On The Schemes Of The Church Of Scotland, 1896, p. 961. It should be observed that the figures published in this report were not taken from the previous reports of the "Committee on Probationers." For an unexplained reason the statistics of those licensed each year were taken from another list. Hence
there were only four vacancies.

Another indication of the excess number of probationers is found in the increasing restrictions placed on the length and extent of the "Probationers list." As early as 1849 the United Presbyterian Church had limited the period of time in which one could remain on the list of eligible preachers to six years. In 1867 the Free Church expunged the list after 10 years and in 1872 shortened the tenure of eligibility to six years. In the Old Kirk the probationer was left to make his own way. For 2s. 6d. a year he could keep his name on the list of probationers as long as he desired.

In practice, it seems that the probationary list was more of a liability than an asset. In 1870 eight Free Church presbyteries overtured the General Assembly to the effect that "the Probationers are at present in an unsatisfactory state." The continued presence of a name on the list was a witness to failure. In 1874 the Free Church attempted to bring greater equality to the probationer by enacting a law whereby he was to supply twelve vacant charges in the six years on the roll. The fact was that the percentage of men being called to charges

there is a slight discrepancy between the figures stated in Appendix I-A which were taken from the yearly reports of the "Committee on Probationers" and the figures of this report. However in both cases from 1886 to 1895 approximately one out of every five men licensed presumably failed to secure a charge.

1 This is the official term by which the list of probationers was officially designated in both the Free Church and the Old Kirk.

2 The United Presbyterian Church, Proceedings, 1849, p. 199.

3 The Free Church of Scotland, Acts Of The General Assembly, 1867, Act IX.

4 The Church of Scotland, Acts Of The General Assembly, 1885.

5 The Free Church of Scotland, Assembly Papers, 1870, pp. 125-129.

6 The Free Church Proceedings, 1877.
from the probationary list in the Free Church was very small. In 1885, the Free Church Committee on the Distribution of Probationers reported to the General Assembly:

The Probationers' Committee has had several cases brought under their notice of Congregations preferring to keep vacancies open till students when they wish to choose had finished their course at College, and become ready to receive a call. They violate the law of the Church which requires Congregations to choose their ministers from the existing pastorate or from the body of Probationers.

This situation was not foreign to either the Old Kirk or the United Presbyterian Church. In 1894 a report to the General Assembly of the Old Kirk decried the existing situation in which "a lad of twenty-one, fresh from the Divinity Hall" could be called to "a populous and important situation within three months of his leaving college." In 1896 the Committee on Probationers in the Old Kirk conveyed a memorandum to the General Assembly from the "Glasgow Licentiates' Association:

That observation be taken of the demeaning tendency of candidature at present, owing chiefly to the want of system in the filling up of vacancies.

That consideration be given to the fact that a large number of the probationers, though doing faithful work in their present charges, have no effective means of commending their claims to the committees of vacant parishes.

The life of the Scottish probationer may have been tinged with romance in certain

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1 The annual reports of the "Committee on the Distribution and Employment of Probations" in the Free Church are a good index to the number of potential preachers actually being called to a charge. In 1877, seven of the 101 men who preached as candidates were called to a pastoral charge. In 1885, eighty-seven probationers preached as candidates and eleven were chosen. In 1886, seventy-one probationers preached as candidates with eight being elected.


3 Reports On The Scheme Of The Church Of Scotland, 1894, p. 1088.

4 Ibid., 1896, pp. 958-959.
instances. However, it was never a life of calm or prosperity. For the less fortunate the end was relegation to the status of "occasional supply." This new status was the ecclesiastical destination of all men who failed to procure a charge within their allotted time as a probationer.

The Church was increasingly aware of the liability beclouding the probationary period. The end result, however, was not abandonment, but reform. As has been stated, in 1894 the Old Kirk made the probationary period a mandatory one year exercise for all licentiates. The Old Kirk directed that during this interval the probationer:

1 This romantic side of the Scottish probationer is illustrated in the biography of Principal Harper, p. 20. Also in the Life Of A Scottish Probationer, p. 85. This later classic for a description of the probationary period is also realistic and revealing. For the example in the United Presbyterian Church see: Proceedings, 1859, p. 224.

2 The following is the scale of pay which the three Churches paid the probationer.

In the Old Kirk it was simply stated that the fee was not to "be less than £1 1s., besides travelling expenses, and in all cases where the travelling expenses are not exceptionally heavy, that a fee of £1 10s., besides travelling expenses be paid. See: Reports On The Schemes Of The Church Of Scotland, 1888, "Committee On Probationers" p. 690.

In 1849, the United Presbyterian Church effected the following pay scale: Congregations paying, or who till they became vacant ought to pay a stipend under £150 shall pay Probationers not less than £1 0
£150 to £200 shall pay Probationers not less than £1 5 0
£200 to £250 " " " " " 1 11 6
£250 to £300 " " " " " 1 15 0
£300 to £350 " " " " " 2 2 0
£350 and more " " " " " 3 3 0"


In 1895 the Free Church approved the following pay scale which was the expansion of a scheme set forth in 1870. In this plan the probationer, as in the United Presbyterian Church, received between £1 1s and £3 3s.

3 "Occasional supply" was the status of those who had been a probationer the allotted length of time without securing a charge. See: The Free Church Of Scotland, Acts Of The General Assembly, 1867. The United Presbyterian Church, Proceedings, 1849, p. 200. In the Old Kirk the name of the probationer was simply dropped from the list when he failed to make his annual payment, or if he was dropped for a specific reason, usually moral, he was listed as one "who had been silenced." See Acts Of The General Assembly, 1883, p. 39.
should be encouraged...to give himself specially to the study of the best methods of performing pastoral duty, as well as to the practical discharge of such portions of it as may be instructed to him to the study of homiletics and devotional literature; of ecclesiastical and parochial law; and to familiarise himself, as far as possible, with the general interests and condition of the people.  

The ecclesiastical tradition in Scotland defined the legal context of the pulpit. The demand of the Church was a qualified preacher. In theory this objective embraced a rounded concept of the preacher and his task. A qualified preacher was to be a man of personal piety and integrity. He was to possess a degree of academic and theological proficiency. He was to be able to bring his knowledge to practical use in his preaching.

In practice, the ecclesiastical tradition in nineteenth century Scotland accentuated the academic. Personal piety and integrity were often perfunctory and in too many instances apparently discarded after the prospective preacher's initial encounter with his presbytery. The development of practical ability was either spasmodic or dismissed to the uncertain future in both the divinity hall and the probationary period. Consequently the preacher entered the pulpit of his own parish academically tested but homiletically unknown. The academic accent of the Scottish pulpit in the nineteenth century was thus no accident but the reflection of an ecclesiastical emphasis on academic proficiency in the procurement of a qualified preacher.

\footnote{Reports On The Schemes Of The Church of Scotland, 1894, p. 1038.}
CHAPTER III

THE SOCIAL DEMAND: A POPULAR PREACHER

The nineteenth century witnessed the emergence of what was often called the popular preacher.1 Gavin Struthers, one of the prominent preachers of the Relief Church, writes that it was near the beginning of the century when congregations began their search for "men of popular talents" to fill their pulpits.2 In 1832 John Anderson, whose sketches of the clergy originally appeared in an Edinburgh newspaper, suggested that "eloquence, talent and worth" be the "sole criterion to determine the selection of ministers."3 Thomas Chalmers is quoted by Anderson as saying that he felt "the burden of a popularity of stare and pressure and animal heat."4 In 1835 Henry Cockburn noted in his journal the

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1 The term "popular preacher" does not mean that preaching was more important to the nineteenth century than to preceding centuries. It does not mean that the function of preaching in its theological and liturgical setting became more primary or took on a particularly new significance. The term "popular preacher" indicates that people increasingly attended a particular church because they liked the preacher. Hence the popular preacher was the preacher pleasing to an individual listener. The term "popular preacher" also points to the new awareness of the pulpit that the individual preacher must articulate his sermon to the understanding and interest of his particular congregation. Consequently the term "popular preacher" was always dynamic. Different preachers were popular with different people. Churches prospered and preachers gained their fame on the basis of the appeal of the sermon.


3 John Anderson, Sketches of the Edinburgh Clergy, Edinburgh, 1832, pp. v-vi.

4 Ibid., p. 6.
effect of the Veto Act on the selection of a preacher: "The Wild party" have had the "tendency to apply the Veto unjustly against presentees whom they think not sufficiently popular." In 1848 MacPhail's Journal demurred:

The city and town charges are generally bestowed not on the most learned and able, but on the most popular candidates...and though by a lucky conjunction it sometimes happens that a popular preacher is also a learned and able man, there is no necessary connection between the two.

In 1850 the United Presbyterian periodical, The Christian Journal, justified popular preaching via a kind of homiletical pragmatism:

What is good preaching? Alas! how many answers would be given to this question! And yet is not the true answer—the preaching by which men are saved?...In order to that end, however, men must be brought within the sphere of the pulpit and to bring the greatest number of men within that sphere is our design.

By the last quarter of the century the demand for a popular preacher was nearly universal in Scotland. The popular preacher had become a social necessity if not a theological conviction. In 1884 James Stalker tersely remarked in The United Presbyterian Magazine:

A Scotchman is a sermon-loving animal...and he will never be an acceptable preacher to a characteristically Scottish audience who cannot appreciate the clutch with which they lay hold of the sermon.

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2 MacPhail's Journal, "Church Reform," Vol. 5, 1848, p. 314. It should be noted that the popular preacher was not without criticism. In an ecclesiastical system, see chapter 2, which accentuated the academic, the demand of the larger social context for a popular preacher at times resulted in a clash of values. The mass of society did not judge popular appeal by academic proficiency. Hence much of the criticism of popular preaching resulted from the clash of ideals between the ecclesiastical objective and the social demand.
3 The Christian Journal, "What Is Good Preaching," Vol. 1, 1850, p. 177. H. W. Smith, The Pastor as Preacher, p. 128, emphasised that the sermon "is in theory the most popular of all addresses...in the sermon the preacher deals with man as man."
In 1887, The British Weekly featured a profile of the Broughton Place United Presbyterian Church in Edinburgh under the title: "Prosperous Churches and the Cause of Their Success."

What makes for this prosperity and activity? The activity reacts on prosperity and makes it greater. The succession of men of piety and outstanding ability in the pulpit draws and keeps a large congregation.

The many civic and parochial histories bearing the imprint of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries indicate that the demand for a popular preacher was common throughout Scotland. These writers viewed the growth and decline, the success and failure of each congregation as contingent on the magnetism of the preacher.

The term "popular preacher" primarily referred to the increasing awareness of the reciprocal relationship existent between the preacher and the congregation. No longer could the preacher assume that a congregation would assemble to hear him out of sheer respect for his office. Now a preacher secured an audience only if his sermon was interesting and suited the taste of his congregation. In the pastoral theology lectureship of the Old Kirk in 1882, H. W. Smith said: "To be effective, preaching must take its tone and character partly from the speaker and


partly from his hearers." In 1886 an article in The Scottish Church noted "that a congregation is...impressed by what they hear from the pulpit because of being conscious of a common interest in it." In 1891, Deas Cromarty remarked in her rather racy column in The British Weekly that "the place makes the minister while the minister makes the place." Robertson Nicoll, the editor of The British Weekly was no mean preacher or journalist. Donald Carswell has written with candor:

Robertson Nicoll could always crowd the pews just as he could always sell an article. To him the preachers' problem and the journalists' were substantially the same—to find a market and develop it."

Alexander Whyte, Nicoll's friend and minister at Free St. George's Edinburgh, noted: "Like people gradually gravitate to like preachers." The press did not let the preacher forget this reciprocal relationship linking the pulpit and the pew. In the Disruption fever of 1843 an editorial in The Scotsman stated that "in the quality of preaching every man is entitled to please himself." In 1871, the Westminster Review in an article on religion in Scotland observed:

In towns, where a great variety of preaching is to be had they (the intelligent, educated and successful artisans) may attend the ministrations of some particular clergyman; not because they believe in any divine right attaching to his office, but because they sympathize with his standpoint, his preaching suits them."

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1 H. W. Smith, The Pastor As Preacher, 1882, p. 31.
3 The British Weekly, "Ministerial Miniatures," October 31, 1898, p. 438. This fairly regular column in The British Weekly was written by Deas Cromarty and provides good insight into the role of the "popular preacher".
4 Donald Carswell, op. cit., p. 221.
5 Alexander Whyte, Bunyan Characters In The Pilgrim's Progress, First Series, p. 256.
6 The Scotsman, Saturday, June 17, 1843, p. 2.
7 The Westminster Review, 1871, p. 4.
The British Weekly in 1887 succinctly captured the spirit of the times: "Preaching must interest hearers or it will certainly go."¹

The popular preacher accepted this task assigned to him by the press. Perhaps the preacher could not interest everyone; nevertheless, he set out to interest as many as possible.² In 1848 one preacher wrote:

A preacher may be immeasurably inferior to many others in the vigour of his intellect and richness of his imagination, and yet may be very far their superior in seizing and holding the minds of his hearers. We cannot hope to do good if we do not succeed in gaining the attention of the hearers and our expectations of accomplishing the object of our ministry may be indulged with much confidence, if we can so preach as to compel our hearers...to listen to us.³

Thomas Guthrie did not become a popular preacher by accident. In his autobiography he writes:

In view of going to Edinburgh, I had resolved to adhere to the same style of preaching which seemed to make me popular and acceptable at Arbirlot, concluding that, as God had fashioned all men's hearts alike, human nature was the same in the town as in the country—in ladies and gentlemen as in lads and lassies....I resolved to spare no pains, nor toil, nor time in careful preparation, in making my descriptions graphic, my statements lucid, my appeals pathetic, in filling my discourses with what would both strike and stick.⁴

James Begg caused no small stir with his pamphlet: The Art of Preaching. He said: "Argue as you will, the case at the end of the day will be found to amount to this: A minister can do little good if the people don't like him, and no good

¹The British Weekly, "Is Preaching Doomed?", May 13, 1887, p. 17.
²Ibid., February 8, 1889, p. 233.
³John A. James, An Earnest Ministry, 1848, pp. 270-271.
⁴David K. and Charles J. Guthrie, Autobiography of Thomas Guthrie, Vol. 1, 1874, London, W. Ishbister & Co., pp. 189-190. Guthrie said that "the tree is known by its fruit" and that where an audience was dull or indifferent or sleepy it was because "their minister was a poor, uninteresting preacher," p. 122. Mrs. Oliphant in her biography of Edward Irving, Vol. 1, pp. 68-69, suggests that a popular style was also the goal of Irving.
at all if they won't hear him." 1 William Taylor, a Highland minister, wrote in his diary in 1865:

It seems to me very important that a minister should make himself acquainted with the standpoints of his hearers, and that he should be able to put himself in their place...Thus he will be sure to interest such persons. 2

The 1871 Report of the "Committee on Christian Life and Work" stated that the pulpit of the Old Kirk "has been striving...to render herself more popular." 3 It would seem that the demand for a popular preacher was not in vain. In his St. Giles Lecture of 1881, Archibald Scott observed: "The pulpit of today is more in accordance with the wants of the people." 4

The popular preacher as known in Scotland was the unique product of the nineteenth century. The very term "popular preacher" was a dynamic phrase changing and varying in its meaning as the people who used the term varied in their taste and setting. 5 To label a man a popular preacher was itself a subjective

4 Archibald Scott, St. Giles Lectures, 1881, p. 347.
5 The Christian Treasury, 1851, "Popular Preaching," p. 317. "Of late a good deal has been said...respecting the style proper for the pulpit. Some prefer extreme plainness, and some high polish. No doubt something is due to the peculiar talents of each speaker and something also to the character of each congregation." A. K. H. Boyd, Towards The Sunset, 1883, p. 154. "In this country, with its congregations multiplied beyond all reason, we must be very exceptional...if we cannot find somewhere, the type of worship and the kind of instruction that come home to us. And having found what suits and helps us, we may well invite others to come." Alexander Whyte, The Walk, Conversation And Character Of Jesus Christ Our Lord, 1905, p. 141. "Go and search up and down the whole city and seek out for yourselves...a preacher of authority over you. A preacher who whatever his Church, and whatever his creed, preaches home to your conscience. If he awakens your conscience in you the first time you hear him, take sittings for yourself and for your children before you go home...that is the preacher for you."
judgment conditioned by a variety of social factors. It is to these factors precipitating and conditioning the emergence of the popular preacher that attention must now be focused.

Factors Contributing To The Emergence Of The Popular Preacher

a. The Collapse Of The Parish System

Perhaps the most important factor contributing to the emergence of the popular preacher was the collapse of the parish system. The decay of the parish was largely the result of urbanization and the failure of the Church to keep pace with the shifting and expanding population. In 1801, the population of Glasgow was 77,385 and in 1821 it was 147,043. In Edinburgh during this same period, the population grew from 82,560 to 138,235. During this twenty year period, the net population of Scotland increased from 1,608,420 to 2,901,521. In spite of this expansion augmented by industrialization, only six chapels of ease were built by the Church of Scotland from 1800 to 1823. Thomas Chalmers, the chief

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3 Ibid. In this period Paisley grew from 31,179 to 47,003 and Aberdeen from 27,519 to 44,796.
5 Cornelius E. Smith, *The Attitude Of The Clergy To The Industrial Revolution As Reflected In The First And Second Statistical Account*, Unpublished Doctor's dissertation, The University of Glasgow, 1953. In the second quarter of the century there was a flurry of church extension. Of course there was the Disruption of 1843 which virtually created a new church in every parish. Before that, between 1823 and 1833, Smith notes that 222 chapels of ease were built by the Church of Scotland. However, this activity was more a witness to the evangelistic spirit of the evangelicals than a proof of the ability of the parochial scheme to grow with the population. Thomas Chalmers said: "The truth is, that the great object of extending the church accommodation in cities is, not to meet the demand that
protagonist for a revived and aggressive parochialism in the first part of the
century, observed that the growth of irreligion in the cities was simply the result
of the inability of the Church to go with the times.1

The collapse of the parish system is evident in the patterns of church
attendance in the major cities of Scotland. The people preferred to worship in
churches other than the parish church. This is most vividly seen in an analysis
of the report of the "Religious Instruction Commission" of 1835 for Aberdeen,
Edinburgh and Glasgow.2 In Aberdeen more than three out of every four attended
a Church of Scotland outside the parish in which they lived.3 In Glasgow, seven

1See Appendix III-A. Note that the figures only refer to the Church of
Scotland.

2See Appendix III-A.

3See Appendix III-A.
out of ten attended a church other than the one in their parish. 1 In Edinburgh, where the statistics are least complete, nearly three out of every five in the habit of attending the Old Kirk, preferred an Old Kirk outside the bounds of their parish. 2 While the survey of 1835 gives no reason for this preference and practice, it is obvious that in patterns of church attendance the parish was no longer a viable unit in the major cities of Scotland. 3

One of the reasons for this preference to worship in a church other than the local parish church was the attraction of the popular preacher. Thomas Chalmers implied that church attendance was based on the popularity and strength of the preacher. 4 Often the chapels of ease were filled by young men of earnest and popular gifts. Professor J. H. S. Burleigh has suggested that the multiplication of the chapels of ease after 1825 provided an "alternative to the local parish church." 5 In 1847 an editorial on Sabbath observance in The Scotsman indicted this craving for popular preaching as the cause of the increasing deference to worship in the local parish church:

As two of the most violent supporters of the (closing of the railways on Sundays)...are popular preachers, who every Sunday have crowds of carriages waiting at the doors of their churches, The Scotsman has asked them every week how they can reconcile with their conscience their failure to censure this Sabbath desecration...the desecration of the coachmen having to work on Sunday)...We venture to say that The Scotsman will never get an answer from the parties themselves, but we shall venture to offer him our own theory of their motives. Much as they respect the Sabbath, these clergymen have a still higher veneration for their own particular preaching. If the admirers were content

1 Ibid.
2 Ibid.
3 This same survey suggests that the reverse was true once one left the larger cities. In the country communities, the parish was still a viable system.
with the homely unpopular preacher near his own residence, both he and his coachman might attend church. But it is better that the master should enjoy a more soul-stirring and heart-melting style of oratory than the coachman he left... to take charge of horses.... Hence it is that the popular preacher will never censure the Sabbath desecration that brings a gentleman from a far distance to hear his particular oratory.

Again, the writers of local histories indicate that the attraction of people from other parishes or congregations was commonplace in the emergence of a popular preacher. While it cannot be said that the advent of the popular preacher brought about the collapse of the parish system, it would appear that the collapse of the parish system was conducive to the emergence of the popular preacher.

b. The Growth and Appeal of Dissent

Concurrent with the collapse of the parish system was the growth and appeal of religious dissent. While the Church of Scotland was adding but six chapels of ease between 1800 and 1823, the two largest dissenting Presbyterian bodies, the Relief and United Secession, were establishing 106 new congregations between 1797 and 1819. In fact, between 1787 and 1849 a total of 352 new United Secession or Relief congregations appeared in Scotland. The death blow to the parish system and the ultimate triumph of dissenting Presbyterianism was the Disruption of 1843. At the time of the religious census of 1851 the Old Kirk had

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1. The Scotsman, January 7, 1847, p. 4.
2. See p. 122 of this thesis, footnote #2.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid. In 1850 a Committee of the Aberdeen Free Church Presbytery acknowledged that at the time of the Disruption the Free Church had "unwisely" abandoned the parish system. See The Minutes Of The Free Church Presbytery of Aberdeen.
1,183 congregations attracting 351,454 worshippers. The Free Church and the United Presbyterian Church together boasted 1,354 congregations attracting an estimated 451,499 worshippers. By the middle of the nineteenth century religious dissent was both respectable and numerically attractive.

The growth and respectability of Presbyterian dissent was not all the result of the Disruption of 1843. By at least 1835 Presbyterian dissent was prosperous in all areas of Scotland south of Dundee and Perth. In Glasgow 59.4% and in Edinburgh 53.7% of those attending church worshipped in a church other than the Church of Scotland. In Berwickshire, Roxburgh, Selkirk, and West Lothian attendance was greater in the congregations of the dissenting Presbyterians than in the Church of Scotland. Early in the nineteenth century in the southern half of Scotland the dissenting pulpit provided a challenge to the Old Kirk which could not be silenced nor easily ignored.

Ultimately, the presence of so many Presbyterian congregations, each

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1 Census of Great Britain, 1851: Religious Worship and Education, 1851; London, 1854, p. x.
2 Ibid.
3 See Appendix III-B, D.
4 Summarizing the findings of "The Religious Instruction Commission of 1835" in Edinburgh and Glasgow, one finds that in Edinburgh the "average highest attendance in the Established Church" was 29,370. The "average highest attendance in Other Denominations" was 33,542. In Glasgow the "average highest attendance in the Established Church" was 28,374. The "average highest attendance in Other Denominations" was 41,539. See The First Report Of The Commissioners Of Religious Instruction, Scotland, 1837, pp. 12, 13. The Second Report Of The Commissioners Of Religious Instruction, Scotland, 1837, p. 13.
5 See Appendix III-B.
6 Gavin Struthers, op. cit., p. 432. "The rising spirit of civil and religious liberty in Scotland was attended with rivalry and jealousy among the different religious parties. The emulation was, who should take the lead among the people, whose favor now began to be courted, because their power now began to be felt."
competing for the loyalty of the same people, accentuated the demand for the popular preacher. Certainly the historians of the United Presbyterian Church have not disguised the fact that it was the popularity of their pulpits which held the secret to their success.\(^1\) The Free Church of 1843 not only included the more popular preachers who carried their congregations with them, but the Free Church went out of the establishment with the expressed conviction that in preaching and the selection of their ministers it was "the people who are to judge whether they be edified or not."\(^2\) Neither was the Old Kirk of the post-disruption era immune to the invasion of popular preaching. In 1848 MacPhail's Journal, a periodical of unquestioned loyalty to the Old Kirk, observed that "since the Secession, the general average of preaching instead of being lowered had risen considerably; and this is the general opinion of the lay members of the Church of Scotland."\(^3\) On the one hand the plurality of Presbyterian congregations created a kind of loyalty which encouraged church attendance more out of support for a particular preacher than because of any sincere "love of the word."\(^4\) On the other hand the dissenting church often owed its very existence to the demand of the people for

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\(^3\) MacPhail's Journal, "Church Reform," Vol. 5, 1848, p. 312.

\(^4\) The Free Church of Scotland, Assembly Papers, "Henderson Case," 1844, p. 67. James Mackay, *Grudem And Its Ministers*, Peterhead, 1912, pp. 99, 100. October 25, 1851, p. 2, The Scotsman noting the intense rivalry between the churches remarked: "How these Presbyterians hate one another." In Nov. 30, 1888, p. 73, The British Weekly noted that the members of Free St. Georges and the Free High Kirk never worship in one another's churches because they believe the preachers and their theology to be so opposed to each other.
their own popular preacher. To James Begg popular preaching was the mandate of the Free Church from the people of Scotland. The growth and appeal of dissent depended on the popularity of each particular pulpit and so encouraged the emergence of the popular preacher.

c. Preaching The Practical Emphasis Of The Church

A third factor contributing to the emergence of the popular preacher was the importance attached to preaching in the life of the Church. Practically speaking, preaching was and continued to be the primary emphasis of the Church throughout the nineteenth century. This is evident in at least three areas: (1) In the many descriptions of the religious life of Scotland, (2) In an analysis of the worship of the Church, (3) In the fact that the sermon was the basis on which the congregation selected their minister.

In descriptions of the religious life of Scotland, the pulpit was a dominant factor. In 1843, The Glasgow Herald described Presbyterianism as "essentially a religion of the platform." In 1859 a disgruntled layman wrote in a popular pamphlet:

Sermons and ministers, ministers and sermons, are, somehow, so mixed up with the everyday-life, and so frequently a topic of conversation among nearly all classes, that a stranger can hardly miss remarking it.

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3. The primacy given the pulpit was not new to the nineteenth century. For sources indicating the presence of this emphasis in the preceding centuries see: G. B. Henderson, The Claims of The Church of Scotland, pp. 73, 185; W. G. Blaikie, The Preachers of Scotland, p. 1; Lewis O. Brandow, The Modern Pulpit, p. 285.


5. A Layman On The Idolatry Of The Pulpit, p. 4.
In 1861 a contributor to the *British and Foreign Evangelical Review* said: "The sermon is the palladium of our Church.... With the practice of preaching she stands or falls."¹ In 1871 an analysis of religion in Scotland published in *The Westminster Review* observed that the "country districts" were still "the strongholds of Presbyterianism" for here "the minister is listened to as if whatever he said must have a stamp of heavenly truth."² In his Baird Lectures, John Marshall Lang lamented that in Scotland a congregation was really "a company of hearers of the minister."³ In 1891 an English clergyman writing his "Impressions of Scotland" in *The British Weekly* concluded that the civic motto: "Let Glasgow flourish by the preaching of the Word" still represented the "temper of the people."⁴

The primacy of preaching in the life of the Church is further evident in the worship of the Church. The high central pulpit architecturally testified to the centrality of preaching in worship. To go to church was to attend "the preaching, the hearing of so and so;" it was "marching off to a sermon."⁵ Indeed the sermon appears to have so dominated the service of worship that in 1846 the Free Church and in 1856 the Old Kirk officially stated "that a portion of

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the Scriptures be read at each of the ordinary diets for public worship."¹ In 1861 one periodical pundit said that many people were "depending too much on the person of the preacher...considering the word of God as the preacher's word."² In 1864 Norman MacLeod declared in a sermon published in his periodical Good Words: "I am persuaded that very many who regularly come to Church have never once in their lives joined in its public worship."³

There was often a barrenness of worship but it must not be assumed that patterns of worship were static.⁴ On the contrary it was the nineteenth century that witnessed a renewed interest in liturgy. Various orders of worship were in common use at the end of the century.⁵ However, changing orders of worship did not alter the centrality of the sermon. The liturgically orientated Scoptocatholics were not anti-sermon. Their objective was a more balanced service of worship emphasizing the combined ministry of word and sacrament.⁶ By 1896 the

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²The British and Foreign Evangelical Review, 1861, p. 523.

³Norman MacLeod, "Prayer," Good Words, 1864, p. 731.

⁴Alexander Wright, The Presbyterian Church: Its Worship, Functions and Ministerial Orders, 1895, p. 21. Wright contends that the barrenness of worship was the legacy of 18th century Moderatism.

⁵Reports and Schemes Of The Church of Scotland, 1890, 1891, 1892. "Committee On The Proper Conduct Of Public Worship."

⁶In 1893 the Scottish Church Society held a conference in Glasgow. The papers read there are published under the title: Scottish Church Society Conferences, First Series, Edinburgh, 1894. There John MacLeod and J. Cromarty Smith both made strong statements on behalf of the needed "attention" and "higher apprehension" which should be given to preaching in the context of public worship, pp. 132, 192. In 1899 the Church of Scotland assembled in Glasgow for an official conference on the state of the Church. The papers read there are published under the title: Church of Scotland Congress, 1899. Here J. Marshall Lang and H. J. Wotherspoon sought to bring new meaning to the sermon by stressing the relationship between "worship and preaching" and "Word and Sacraments," pp. 120, 143-144. Lang said that "the matter which bulks most in the talk and the thought of the average church-goer is the preacher and the preaching." Ibid, p. 119.
sermon had been shortened to an average of thirty minutes but The British Weekly suggested that the shorter sermon simply stood at the center of a shortened service of worship. 1 Throughout the nineteenth century worship was primarily listening to a sermon.

Finally, the priority of preaching in the practical life of the Church is evident in the fact that the sermon was the basis of the call. It has been already noted that in both the United Presbyterian Church and the Free Church the congregations called their own ministers and it was on the basis of the man's preaching that they issued the call. In the Old Kirk of the pre-disruption and post-disruption eras the sermon was for all practical purposes the basis upon which the congregation made known their will. The call was signed only after the people had heard the presentee preach. If there was dissatisfaction, the sermon became the basis of protest. 2 After the Patronage Act of 1874, the right of each congregation to choose their own minister became the official practice in the Old Kirk. 3

In the last half of the century most vacant pulpits set off a round of what was called "competitive preaching." This was the process by which vacant

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1 In 1896 The British Weekly conducted a survey of the length of sermons. In this survey sixty-five Scottish Presbyterian Churches were cited. The longest sermon was one hour and eighteen minutes by a Free Church minister in Inverness. The shortest sermon was fourteen minutes by an Old Kirk minister in Dundee. Alexander Whyte of Free St. George's, Edinburgh, spoke thirty-nine minutes. J. Smith of the Broughton Place United Presbyterian Church, Edinburgh, spoke thirty-seven minutes. George Matheson of St. Bernard's Old Kirk, Edinburgh, spoke twenty-eight minutes. J. Sharp of St. Giles spoke fifteen minutes. Taking the mean of the sixty-five Scottish ministers cited, the average sermon was twenty-eight minutes. The British Weekly, March 19, 1896, p. 356.

2 Any single year of the Assembly Papers of the Church of Scotland between 1840 and 1847 will sufficiently illustrate the importance of preaching as the basis of protesting a presentation.

congregations heard a series of preachers electing the one they liked best.  

The confession of probationers and church committees alike indicates that the basis of most calls was the popularity of the sermon. A system and practice which so accentuated the role of preaching could not help but produce attitudes and convictions contributing to the emergence of the popular preacher.

Social Movements Conditioning Popular Preaching

In the nineteenth century popular preaching was conditioned by two major social movements: urbanization and secularization. These movements, which virtually spanned the century, affected preaching. Both movements confronted the pulpit with challenge as well as opportunity. E. Wingfield-Stratfield has stated the essence of the challenge in these words:

Could the people of this island, and particularly its dominant middle class, with its moral earnestness and seemingly limitless resources, bring about the miracle of adjusting human life and western civilisation to the new conditions? Of these two social movements urbanization provided the more overt challenge as is evident in the balder problems of immorality, alcoholism, illiteracy and poverty. The challenge of secularization was more subtle and sophisticated being


2. See Chapter II of this thesis. Marcus Bods, Early Letters, pp. 161, 247-248, 254-255. Reports On The Schemes Of The Church of Scotland, 1894, pp. 1088-1099. Life and Work, August, 1899, p. 143. The Scottish Church, "The Church and Worship," Vol. IV, 1891, p. 164. A. K. H. Boyd, Towards The Sunset, pp. 247-248. "It is no wonder that the people of Scotland have always tried so hard to have a voice in the selection of their ministers, while the people of England have been quite content to have no voice at all. Far more depends here on the man; everything depends on the man. And hence has come the sad result, the people go to church to hear Mr. Such-a-one!"

intellectually and culturally orientated. The changing emphasis of the evangelical pulpit must be seen from within the context of these two movements.

a. Urbanization And The Evangelical Response

Urbanization was the child of the industrial revolution. Born in the previous century, urban life came into rapid maturation in the nineteenth century. The growth of industrial centers, such as Glasgow, placed an unbearable strain on the existing parochial system. The movement of the population from the country to the town was described by one observer as "a flood which swept away all the old relations of urban and rural districts." People who had been reared in rural ways were thrust into urban situations alien to "rural interests." The result of this social upheaval was twofold: a widespread attitude of religious disinterest and the appearance of social vices on a large scale. To the staid but

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1 It is not the purpose of this section to discuss the social aspects of the industrial revolution and urbanization nor the significance of urbanization for the social mission of the Church. Consequently I have stated the essence of urbanization only in its broadest terms. The purpose of this section is to illustrate the new situation and demands with which urbanization confronted the pulpit and to outline the general response of the pulpit. The theological transition from modernism to evangelicalism in the first three decades of the nineteenth century is common knowledge. However, evangelical preaching was more than a theological change. The evangelical sermon was the response of the pulpit to a new social age. Hence this sermon must be seen against the backdrop of urbanization.


3 Duncan Campbell, Reminiscences and Reflections Of An Octogenarian Highlander, p. 593.

4 Ibid.
wary religious community, urbanization appeared to be the basis of irreligion and moral decadence. ¹

Urbanization coupled with the collapse of the parish system confronted the pulpit with the specter of absenteeism and irreligion. This was an unresolved problem throughout the century. Much of Thomas Chalmers' activity in Glasgow between 1815 and 1823 was an attempt to alter the habits of "that mass of human beings whose estrangement from all the sanctities of Sabbath observation is of such deadly import to the well-being of a community."² In 1835 the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, now dominated by the Evangelical Party, enacted a national "day of humiliation" because of "the demerits of this our day" in religious instruction, family worship and church attendance.³ In 1846 the Pastoral Letter of the Free Church emphasized "the prevailing ignorance and practical heathenism of large masses of the people," concluding that "God seems a stranger in the land."⁴ This concern over absenteeism and irreligion reached its climax in 1851 when seventeen presbyteries overture the General Assembly of the Free Church anent the "Spiritual Destitution of the Land." The Synod of Glasgow and Ayr proposed:

Whereas irreligion, neglect of the means of grace, atheistic contempt of God, and antichristian error are alarmingly prevalent over all the land, but more especially wheresoever large masses of the population are drawn together; Whereas this lamentable state of

¹Professor James Robertson of the Old Kirk reminded his final year students that they were going to the "wide wastes of moral heathenism where manufacturing or mining centres are built round with homes of Christless men." A. H. Charters, Life of James Robertson, pp. 311, 361. The British And Foreign Evangelical Review, Vol. 4, 1855, p. 569. Here the phrase "an age of sensual allurements and worldly excitements" was used to describe the times.


³The Church of Scotland, Acts Of The General Assembly, 1835, pp. 43-47.

⁴The Free Church of Scotland, Acts Of The General Assembly, 1846, pp. 91, 93.
things is so rapidly increasing as to be almost already beyond the ordinary means of cure, and threatens soon to obliterate the very appearance of Christianity amongst us and thus to bring down the judgements of God on a people so privileged as we have been .... We overture the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland to take the subject into its consideration.1

In 1863 The North British Review, noted that while the religious condition was better in Scotland than in England, still the "sunken classes are the irreligious classes" who fail to attend church.2 In 1887 the "Lapsed Classes" were the subject of a special report to the General Assembly of the Old Kirk.3 In 1896 the "Commission On The Religious Condition Of The People" reported that "the amount of non-church-going is most serious" embracing all parts of the country and all classes of people.4 Urbanization, which was the concentration of many people in a small geographical area, accentuated for the first time the magnitude of religious indifference.

Urbanization also called attention to the presence of social problems and vices. The nineteenth century was cognizant of widespread illiteracy among the masses of the people.5 Alcoholism appears to have become more troublesome

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1. The Free Church of Scotland, Assembly Papers, 1851, p. 6.
3. Reports On The Scheme Of The Church of Scotland, "Special Report By The Committee On Christian Life and Work," 1887, p. 444. This report on the "Lapsed Classes" included three recommendations: 1. The Church should co-operate with sanitary officials in improving "the physical condition of the lapsed." 2. For the improvement of the moral and spiritual conditions "temperance cafes, reading-rooms and lecture-ships bearing on everyday experience" should be supported. 3. "In regard to spiritual elevation the services of worship in the church might be rearranged so as to make them far more available than now for bringing in those who are unconcerned."
4. Ibid., "Report Of The Commission On The Religious Condition Of The People," 1896, pp. 799-944. Note pp. 822-823 emphasis that non-church attendance is prevalent among the "upper and professional classes...not limited to the working classes."
than in previous periods of Scottish history.\textsuperscript{1} Crime and vice flourished in a disconcerting manner.\textsuperscript{2} The squalor of poverty and inadequate housing gave rise to infectious disease which too often reached plague-like proportions.\textsuperscript{3} To the Church these were evils demanding eradication. These were problems necessitating some kind of spiritual interpretation.

To the Church the diagnosis and prescription were one. At heart the problem posed by urbanization was spiritual...it was man's estrangement from his Creator. The remedy as phrased by Thomas Chalmers was "to superinduce the principles of an efficient morality on the mere principles of nature and there to work a transformation of taste and character."\textsuperscript{4} This was the evangelical understanding

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\item[1] Thomas Ferguson, \textit{The Dawn Of Scottish Social Welfare}, p. 27. The Free Church of Scotland, Proceedings, 1846, p. 112. It is said that here "in the Canongate alone there are seventy-four licensed spirit shops. 57,720 gallons of whisky are annually consumed in that locality." The Church of Scotland, Assembly Papers, 1848. In a petition by John Hope a member of St. Andrew's Church, it is claimed that 60,000 Scotsmen die annually from the effects of "liquors" with "£65,000,000 spent annually on the sale of liquors." \textit{The United Presbyterian Magazine}, "Is Scotland's Morals Improving?" Vol. IV, 1887, pp. 352ff; 398ff; 444.
\item[2] The Church of Scotland, \textit{Acts Of The General Assembly}, 1850, p. 45. Here it is said that between 1830 and 1850 the annual rate of "serious crime" rose from 1,800 incidents to nearly 5,000; "the increase of crime being to that of the population during the same period in the ration of seven to one."
William Tait, \textit{Magdalenism}, Edinburgh, 1840, pp. 2-4, 10. Tait says that there were about 800 prostitutes grossing £200,000 yearly in Edinburgh. Tait continues: "It is painful to reflect on the indubitable fact that the hours of the Sabbath which are set aside for divine service, are those generally selected for these immoral appointments...It is a notorious fact that servants under the pretense of going to church, obtain leave for several hours in the evening of the Sabbath, with no other intention than to spend it in the haunts of wickedness." Also see William Logan, \textit{Moral Statistics of Glasgow}, 1849, Office of the Scottish Temperance League, p. 46.
\item[3] Thomas Ferguson, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 40-63. Robert Buchanan in \textit{The Destitution of the Masses in Glasgow}, 1851, p. 3, says that the average life span in Glasgow was thirty-three years.
\end{itemize}
of the gospel as "the free and full tender of salvation through the blood of Christ to all who will."¹ Later in the century James Wells wrote of the Wynd Mission of the Free Church in Glasgow:

Those who built up the Wynd churches...did not discuss social problems. They were too busy solving them. With them it was plain as day that the material, physical, social and moral conditions of the poor depended on their spiritual condition and that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the only remedy for our manifold miseries.²

While this evangelical diagnosis did not preclude any programs of social welfare, it left such activity totally to the individual. An article in The British And Foreign Evangelical Review described the social responsibility of the Church as threefold:

First the Church should direct special attention towards fostering the spirit out of which all true social improvement springs.
Secondly, we would have churches, or rather preachers, in their public and pastoral work urge on the members of their flocks who have much in their power, their obligation to do what they can for promoting the social prosperity of their neighborhoods.
Lastly we would have the Church to encourage those of her ministers and members who feel a special interest in the subject to do all they can in their individual capacity...for advancing the temporal welfare of the community.³

Ironically the mention of such names as James Begg, Patrick Brewster, Thomas Chalmers, A. H. Charteris, Thomas Guthrie, Andrew A. Somerville and Norman MacLeod indicates that there were those who attempted to face some of the problems of

³ The British and Foreign Evangelical Review, "The Christian Church And Social Improvement," 1861, pp. 695-696. Norman MacLeod was more insistent in his conviction that the Church was to be socially active but the social witness of the Church was still to be largely through individual witness. See Norman MacLeod, Parish Papers, 1862, pp. 228, 229, 239.
urbanization.\textsuperscript{1} Indeed Stewart Mechie, while carefully acknowledging their limitations, has suggested that because of these men the period between 1830 and 1870 was the high water mark of social concern in the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{2}

Ultimately, to view the problems of urbanization as essentially spiritual was to lay the hope for social alteration at the foot of the pulpit.

The response of the pulpit to urbanization was clothed in the language of an evangelical theology. This was generally an aggressive response for the evangelical preacher was both certain of his task and confident in his message. Thomas Chalmers gave evangelical preaching its nineteenth century charter:

\begin{quote}
In order that men may become Christians, there must either be an obtruding of Christianity, on the notice of the people, or the people must be waited for, till they move themselves in quest of Christianity. We apprehend that the former, or what may be called the aggressive way of it, is the most effectual. Nature does not go forth in search of Christianity, but Christianity goes forth to knock at the door of nature, and, if possible, awaken her out of her sluggishness.\textsuperscript{3}
\end{quote}

In the first General Assembly of the Free Church in 1843, one minister speaking of the evangelistic emphasis of that Church said: "Christianity itself is a missionary scheme."\textsuperscript{4} In 1861, The British and Foreign Evangelical Review carried an article in which the author declared: "The preaching that the time requires...resembles missionary preaching."\textsuperscript{5} In the second General Assembly of

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{1}See Stewart Mechie, The Church and Scottish Social Development, for the best description of the social work of most of these men. Dr. Otto Dibelius, Das Kirchliche Leben Schottlands, p. 25, writes: "The substantial gain of the Disruption is that Scotland is the only country in Protestant Europe in which the Industrial Revolution was not the essence of an accompanying decay of religion." This is my translation.

\textsuperscript{2}Ibid., pp. 165-167.

\textsuperscript{3}Thomas Chalmers, The Civic Economy Of Large Towns, Vol. 1, p. 93.

\textsuperscript{4}The Free Church of Scotland, Proceedings, May, 1843, p. 112.

\textsuperscript{5}The British and Foreign Evangelical Review, 1861, p. 527.
\end{footnotes}
the Free Church in 1843, the Moderator, Dr. Brown, asked rhetorically:

> What are all our movements to be directed to? What are we to covet, what are we to sigh for, but that a people may be gained unto the Lord, and brands plucked from the everlasting burning.

Such was the *sitz im leben* of the evangelical pulpit.

The aggressive nature of the evangelical pulpit was not necessarily narrow and restrictive in outlook. Thomas Chalmers, the oft-quoted champion of evangelicalism in its most formative years, proclaimed:

> I assert, with the most unqualified earnestness, that Christianity is the religion of life, and will bear to be carried in the whole extent of her spirit and of her laws throughout all the haunts and varieties of human intercourse...that in her strictest and most essential character she may be introduced into the busiest walks of society and there uphold her disciples in the exercise of that simplicity and godly sincerity which she lays upon them...if she cannot be practical neither ought she to be preached.

Chalmers' *Astronomical Discourses* as well as his *Commercial Discourses* are evidence of one preacher's willingness to venture into alien fields. Another example of daring venture was Patrick Brewster, an Old Kirk minister at Paisley who preached at the Christian Chartist Church in Glasgow in the 1840's. David Woodside says that some of the more prominent Relief and Secession ministers mounted the public platform on behalf of social and political reform. Undoubtedly these men were more the exception than the rule. Yet they witness to an aggressive evangelicalism which cannot be naively labeled as social obscurantism.

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The preacher attempted to alter the trend toward irreligion through the inauguration of services specifically aimed for the working class. ¹ This approach to the working class germinated in the experience of Thomas Chalmers in Glasgow. He suggested that "a Sabbath evening sermon be preached in the church of a city

¹ One tragedy of Victorian Scotland was the failure of the Church to reach the working class. See: Allan A. MacLaren, "Presbyterianism and the Working Class In A Mid-Nineteenth Century City," The Scottish Historical Review, Vol. XLVI, 21, No. 142, October 1967, p. I5ff. First Report Of The Religious Instruction Commission, 1835, p. 32. Here the Commission notes the "indifference to religion and neglect of worship of the poorer classes." The Second Report Of The Religious Instruction Commission, 1835, makes the same observation for Glasgow, p. 33. In 1896 the Old Kirk final report of the "Commission On The Religious Condition Of The People" noted the "serious problem of non-Church-going among the masses of cities," particularly Glasgow and Dundee. See Reports Of The Schemes Of The Church of Scotland, 1896, p. 806.

While it is not the purpose of this thesis to deal at length with the reasons for this failure, it should be noted that there were at least three factors contributing to this:

The first was economic. The people simply could not afford the proper clothes demanded for church attendance. Furthermore the people with lower incomes could not pay the seat rents which in 1835 in Glasgow ranged from 2 to 27 shillings per annum and in Edinburgh were from 2 to 42 shillings per annum. See: First Report Of The Religious Instruction Commission, pp. 26, 27, 32. Second Report Of The Religious Instruction Commission, pp. 22, 33. Also see: Reports On The Schemes Of The Church of Scotland, 1888, "Committee On Seat Rents," pp. 737-751. The Church of Scotland, Acts Of The General Assembly, 1890, p. 56. Session Minutes Of The Charlotte Street United Presbyterian Church, Aberdeen, October 18, 1842; November 1, 1843; January 15, 1849; August, 1849.

The second was cultural. Socially and educationally the pulpit and the preacher were removed from the life and understanding of the masses. Cornelius Smith, op. cit. writes: "It was from a vantage ground of considerable security and elevation that the ministers made their survey of the social life around them. At £200 per annum they had eight times the day labourer's wages." In 1896 the General Assembly of the Old Kirk received a report stating that the existing barrier between the poorer masses and the clergy could only be broken by the clergy actually moving into the "denser parts of the city parishes." Reports and Schemes Of The Church of Scotland, 1896, p. 809.

The third reason was personal and psychological. When the poor person did attend church he was often reminded of his status as a second class citizen. Thomas Guthrie in his Autobiography, p. 367, notes that his church was not "accessible" because "no man likes to be branded before his fellows as a pauper" and for that reason the poor would not accept free sittings. In the Maxwell Church, Glasgow, the visitor or person holding a seat was greeted by this sign upon entering Church:

"Strangers
Will Please Apply To The Door-Keepers For Sittings
To Prevent Inconvenience
To Regular Seat Holders"
parish to a parochial congregation distinct from the day-hearers altogether.1

Men such as Robert Buchanan of the Tron Parish in Glasgow, Robert Lee in Lennoxtown, John Robertson of Glasgow Cathedral, Norman MacLeod of Glasgow's Barony, Professor A. H. Charteris in Edinburgh's Tolbooth and J. H. Wilson of Fountainbridge, Edinburgh all applied this plan to their own situation.2

The evangelical pulpit of the nineteenth century consistently responded to the challenge of urbanization with the proclamation of an individual salvation. Man's personal salvation not social reform was the essence of their message.3 To

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the preacher social evils could only be eradicated through a personal encounter with Christ which would in turn bring the regenerative graces of Christian virtue to all classes of society. In 1823 Thomas Chalmers wrote in his Civic Economy of Large Towns:

The direct good which Christianity does, is when it stamps the impress of its doctrine on the few whom it makes to be the living epistles of Christ Jesus. But they are epistles which...may be seen and read of all men. Society at large may not be able to appreciate the hidden principle of the evangelical life; but they can, at least, pursue the inscription of its visible graces and virtues, and can render them the homage, both of their full esteem and of their partial imitation. It is thus that Christians are the salt of the earth ....The presence of but one Christian individual in a city lane, may tell, by a sort of reflex and secondary influence, on the general tone of his vicinity.

John Eadie, who once "had hopes of the Chartist movement," said in one sermon:

The gospel does not produce uniformity of social condition....Some ride in chariots; and some are humble pedestrians. Some have abundance; others are denied it. Some have increasing stores; and others, with the utmost frugality are still touching the verge of poverty and debt. But this inequality is the means, under God, of developing the choicest of Christian virtues. Were all rich, there would be no room for Christian benevolence.2

In 1885, A. B. Bruce declared in a Sunday evening lecture series on Christianity and Social Life that "The method of Christianity is to work by idealism not by agitation, as a regenerative influence, not as a movement of reform."3 For Bruce, the kingdom of God was this regenerative force in society but the two


2 John Eadie, The Divine Love, p. 254. Also see James Brown, The Life Of John Eadie, p. 17. In one sermon, Robert Buchanan argued that the working class man and economically less privileged man were really better off than "the more successful" with their wealth, for they did not have "the burden and responsibilities of management," see Robert Buchanan, The Book of Ecclesiastes, pp. 186, 187.

conditions for admission to the kingdom were "repentance and faith which may be reduced to one, receptivity."¹ In 1894 Principal Rainy said that the task of the preacher was to confront the individual with God, not to meddle in the "reform of society."²

Our business as ministers is to administer a gospel which comes to men one by one, which sets up the Kingdom of God within them, which prepares them to take in a new spirit the experience of human life, whatever these may be, and which also disposes them in their dealings with others to do justly and love mercy. And those are the primary conditions of true social welfare.³

The evangelical pulpit was at its apex between 1830 and 1870. This was also the period when the Church was more aware of the problems accompanying urbanization. Now after 1870 urbanization did not cease; neither did the evangelical pulpit grow silent. Yet the influence of the older evangelicals was declining even as the traditional approach to the unresolved problems of urbanization was changing.⁴ Consequently attention must now be focussed on the emerging challenge of secularization and the corresponding response of the moral liberal evangelical.

¹Ibid., p. 5.
²Robert Rainy, The Ecclesiastical Outlook, Edinburgh, MacNiven & Wallace, 1894, p. 15.
³Ibid.
⁴In 1874, James Johnston asked in a pamphlet The Ecclesiastical And Religious Statistics Of Scotland, p. 3: "Are the churches in Scotland mere conservative institutions existing for themselves and the salvation of individual souls, or do they exist for the salvation of society, and for the sweetening and sanctifying of all relations between man and man, as well as between man and God." In 1885 D. M. Ross in an address to a Free Church congregation declared: "The mission of Christianity is not merely to save individuals but to regenerate society." See "Christianity and Socialism," Christianity And Social Life, p. 76. Ross's sentiments were echoed by the British and Foreign Evangelical Review, 1888, p. 91: "God has given His Gospel for the regeneration of society as well as for the salvation of the individual." James Stalker, op. cit., said: "The preacher's vocation includes a message to the community as well as to the individual," p. 78. Also see p. 82. Henry Drummond, The Greatest Thing In The World and Other Addresses, pp. 129, 133, retained the concern for the renewal of the cities by means of the gospel. He said: "Christianity is the religion of cities...To make cities —that is what we are here for. To make good cities—that is for the present hour the main work of Christianity. For the City is strategic."
b. Secularization: New Preaching and a New Theology

The challenge of secularization was launched on two fronts: the cultural and the intellectual. The cultural challenge was more direct for it was at once literary and political. The intellectual challenge was more subtle for it was largely the adaptation of the evolutionary theory to the Christian Faith.

(1) Cultural Secularization

The cultural challenge of secularization was primarily reflected in the press and popular literature which increasingly assumed the prerogative once vested in the pulpit. In a provocative essay first published in 1829, Thomas Carlyle said:

"At no former era has Literature, the printed communication of thought, been of such importance as it is now. We often hear that the Church is in danger; and truly so it is in a danger it seems got to know of...its functions are becoming more and more superseded."

In 1849, an article on "Public Worship" in MacPhail's Journal, indicated that

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1 I am using the term secularization in a twofold sense. First secularization indicates the conversion of what were once ecclesiastical or religious or spiritual functions and concerns to secular or non sacred character and possession. In this sense secularization as discussed in this thesis is cultural adaptation. See "Secularization" in the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary. Secondly, secularization is "the philosophy of the things of time." It is the concentration of attention on those subjects and issues which "can be tested by the experience of this life." It is the preference for "the duties of this life over those which pertain to another world." See Christianity and Secularism: A Public Discussion by the Rev. Breinin Grant and George Jacob Holyoake, London, Ward and Co., 1853, p. 8. In this second sense, secularization is of intellectual or academic significance. This second usage of secularization is similar to the definition given in the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, to the term "Secularism."

In 1889, The Scottish Church, Vol. II, New Series, included five articles by Pearson M'Adam Muir on "Secularism." Muir says that two ideas existed at that time as to the meaning of the term, "Secularism." Some held it to be atheistic, excluding belief in God and immortality. Others held that "Secularism" ignored such questions, p. 22.

man must now look to the past if he was to see the pulpit involved in social or political controversy.¹ In 1843 a special "Editorial Preface" in The Christian Journal revealed, though somewhat nostalgically:

There is no department of the British press which is at present commanding a greater amount of influence upon the public mind than what is called the periodicals, from our high-class reviews and magazines, down to the newspaper and the cheapest serial. But while, at no distant day the pulpit had almost the whole field of instruction to itself, the printing-press is now occupying perhaps the larger portion of it... there are millions in our land over whom the pulpit is exercising no influence whatever. These millions receive all their teaching from the periodical press.²

The diminishing influence of the pulpit on public opinion became most obvious in the 1840's and 1850's. In 1856 an editorial on "The Pulpit" in The Witness Newspaper read:

By 1870 the struggle between the pulpit and the press for the domination of men's minds was virtually over. The Westminster Review noted: "The daily press is rapidly becoming the true Church of Scotland."⁴ What is more, this same article declared that the "coming theological change will be hastened not by men who preach two sermons a week in the pulpit but by those who preach daily in the press."⁵

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¹MacPhail's Journal, "Dr. Brunton's Forms For Public Worship," Vol. 6, 1849, p. 423.
In 1882 The Free Church Monthly wistfully noted that the pulpit was "no longer the chief means of instruction and intellectual improvement."¹ The press was the vehicle bearing the cultural challenge of secularization.

The cultural challenge of secularization was threefold: First, there was an overt criticism of preachers and preaching in popular literature. Secondly, there was a concerted thrust to wrench all political power from the pulpit and restrict the jurisdiction of the preacher to "things spiritual." Thirdly, the popularity of the press created the taste for a literary style which placed new demands on preaching.

The anti-clericalism of popular literature is evident in the manner in which the preacher was often portrayed. Perhaps the most influential of the early detractors from the pulpit was Thomas Carlyle. In 1829 he called attention to that "theological Unbelief" which was no stranger "even in the Pulpit itself."² In 1831 Carlyle scathingly analysed religion in general and preaching in particular:

Is it a healthy religion, vital, unconscious of itself; that shines forth spontaneously in doing of the Work, or even in preaching of the Word? Unhappily, no. Instead of heroic martyr Conduct, and inspired and soul-inspiring Eloquence, whereby Religion itself were brought home to our living bosoms, to live and reign there, we have "discourses on the Evidences," endeavouring with smallest result, to make it probable that such a thing as Religion exists. The most enthusiastic Evangelicals do not preach a Gospel, but keep

¹The Free Church Monthly, "The Power In Gospel Preaching," Feb. 1, 1882, p. 37. James Stalker, op. cit., p. 15. "Religion does not permeate life. The Church is one of the great institutions of the country, and gets its own place. But it is a thing apart from the common life, which goes on beside it. Business, politics, literature, amusements, are only faintly coloured by it." The Westminster Review, "The Decay of Faith," 1882, p. 83. "Science, politics and industry, once dominated by clerical ideas and interests, have all gradually emancipated themselves from that hateful control."

describing how it should and might be preached... Religion, like all else, is conscious of itself, listens to itself; it becomes less and less vital; more and more mechanical.¹

For such preaching, Carlyle had one verdict:

In a limited time, say fifty years, hence... the Christian Religion shall have deliquesced into Liberty of Conscience, Progress of Opinion, Progress of Intellect, Philanthropic Movement and other aqueous residues of a vapid badly scented character.²

The anti-clericalism of popular literature was also evident in the pens of the Scottish novelists. In John Galt’s, The Provost and Other Tales, the sermons of Mr. Pittle were described as “just a perfect hushabaa, that no mortal could hearken to without sleeping.”³ In Robert Falconer, George MacDonald indicted the entire class of preachers because:

They never get beyond Judaism. They hang on about the skirts of that cloud for ever.

Ye see, they think as lang’s they see the fog, they has a grup o’ something. But they canna get a grup o’ the glory that excelleth, for it’s not to luik at, but to lat ye see a’ thing.⁴


²Ibid., “Shooting Niagara: And After?,” pp. 299, 300. This essay first appeared in Macmillan’s Magazine, August, 1867. Carlyle was not against all preachers. He had profound respect for his friend, Edward Irving, the subject of a tribute published in Fraser’s Magazine, No. 61, 1835. Hugh Walker in his book The Literature Of The Victorian Era has described Carlyle as symbolic of the moral Scottish character which is “just Calvinism without the Christianity,” p. 31. Basil Willey has written that Carlyle “is the most remarkable example of a phenomenon... typical of the nineteenth century, that of the religious temperament severed from religion.” See Basil Willey, Nineteenth-Century Studies, p. 114.


⁴George MacDonald, Robert Falconer, London, p. 230. In this book the Sunday worship service was described as being “like the church only as a dead body is like a man. There was no fervour in it, no aspiration,” p. 231.
William Alexander portrayed the Rev. Andrew Sleekaboot as a man willing to use the office of the eldership as a bribe to silence the political liberalism of Johnny Gibb. Of course, Johnny Gibb was more honest telling the preacher: "Yer descoorse was mair lika a hash o' Tory poleetics, nor an expoondin' o' the Gospel." In James Hogg’s narrative, *The Private Memoirs And Confessions Of A Justified Sinner*, there is the terrifying preacher Robert Wringham with his harsh view of election austerely proclaiming "that every unrepented sin was productive of a new sin with each breath that a man drew." In this book there is also the phantasmagoric preacher, Robin Ruthern who "electrified and charmed" the people of Auchtermuchty because "nothing in the world delights a truly religious people so much as consigning them to eternal damnation." In *Thrown Janet*, Robert Louis Stevenson described the sermon of Murdoch Soulis on 1st Peter 5:8, "The devil as a roaring lion," as one when "he was accustomed to surpass himself upon that text both by the appalling nature of the matter and the terror of his bearing in the pulpit." The result was that "the children were frightened into fits, and the old looked more than usually oracular." Even in *The Starling*, Norman MacLeod's Rev. Daniel Porteous was suspect:

He preached the truth...but too often as a telegraphic wire transmits the most momentous intelligence; and he grasped it as a sparrow grasps the wire by which the message is conveyed.

2 Ibid., p. 24.
4 James Hogg, op. cit., p. 182.
6 Ibid.
The truth is that most of these portraits of preaching were more realistic than some dared to admit. Still, the open statements of feelings which once were latent in men's minds could not help but feed the ego of popular criticism which in turn nourished the popular preacher. In *Scenes of Clerical Life*, George Eliot poignantly writes:

> We are poor plants buoyed up by the air-vessels of our own conceit: alas for us, if we get a few pinches that empty us of that windy self-subsistence! The very capacity for good would go out of us. For tell the most impassioned orator, suddenly, that his wig is awry, or his shirt-lap hanging out, and that he is tickling people by the oddity of his person, instead of thrilling them by the energy of eloquence. That is a deep and wide saying, that no miracle can be wrought without faith...without the worker's faith in himself, as well as the recipient's faith in him. And the greater part of the worker's faith in himself is made up of the faith that others believe in him.

In the end, it would seem that the critical and negative portrayal of preaching in popular literature played into the hand of the popular preacher. Every preacher was to be judged. Every man was to be his own judge.

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1 The pulpit was aware of the negative manner in which it was portrayed. Still it often choose to discount the criticisms. In *Blackwood's Magazine*, July, 1843, p. 131, Thomas Carlyle was written off as "not being in rapport with the religious spirit of his age." In *The British and Foreign Evangelical Review*, 1854, p. 63, "popular tales and light literature" were castigated because of "the strong undercurrent of hatred to evangelical religion which flows throughout a very large portion of that species of composition." Here, Dickens and Thackeray were set forth as the greatest villains. In time this antipathy toward literature changed. In 1894 Joseph Corbett, the editor of *The United Presbyterian Magazine* advised preachers in the preparation of their sermons "to hold luxurious converse with such attractive friends as 'Adam Bede' or 'Robert Elsmere.'" Vol. XI, 1894, p. 216. In 1884, James Stalker had written in the same magazine: "The secret of a popular and attractive style of preaching lies largely in a constant soaking of the mind with what is best in thought and finest in style in general literature....I can always improve the style of a sermon by reading for an hour at the sinewy English of Thackeray." See: "Ministerial Reading," *The United Presbyterian Magazine*, Vol. I, p. 423.

Secondly, the cultural challenge of secularization demanded that the preacher leave the arena of social and political concern in his sermons and concentrate on things spiritual. This is most evident in the editorial policy of The Scotsman. In January, 1843, the year of the Disruption, an editorial entitled "Danger of Adding To The Power Of The Church" argued that the jurisdiction of the Church was "purely spiritual." In the heat of controversy over the running of Sunday trains, The Scotsman observed that "the clergy lent the aid of their pulpits to the occasion" concluding:

Clergy can do no greater evil to their sacred cause than by using the authority with which it invests them to influence their unwilling flocks for the accomplishment of some purpose of temporal expedience. In this battle the clergy will be sure to be conquered and their defeat will not be without casualties.

In 1851 the social decadence and deficiency of education in Glasgow served notice that "there are some evils that clergy and church cannot reach." To The Scotsman, the pulpit had its own sphere of spiritual responsibility. "To meddle in the Crofter Question" or any political issue was not simply "incomprehensible," it was increasingly intolerable. In 1885 the editor of The Scotsman declared that: "Safety for the Church lay in doing its proper work: it must be wrecked once it rushes out of that sphere into the whirlpools of party or

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1. There are two reasons for confining this argument to The Scotsman. First, it was the most widely circulated newspaper in Scotland after 1855. Secondly, it had gained "a special reputation for its ecclesiastical articles, in which bigotry and illiberalism of every kind "were handled with great freedom, humour and force." The Westminster Review, 1871, p. 30. See: R. M. W. Cowan, The Newspapers In Scotland, Glasgow, 1946, George Cramre & Co., pp. 281, 287.

2. The Scotsman, January 7, 1843, p. 2.

3. Ibid., January 6, 1847, p. 4. Also September 16, 1896, p. 4.

4. Ibid., June 28, 1851, p. 2.

5. Ibid., January 10, 1885, p. 6. Also January 16, 1885, p. 4.
electioneering politics."1

The upshot of this movement to restrict the jurisdiction of the preacher was both critical of any abuse of power by the pulpit and protective of the spiritual sovereignty of the pulpit. Throughout the century the preacher was taken to task when his rigid Sabbatarianism infringed on the freedom and well-being of the community.2 Any pulpit declaration tinged with illiberalism was subject to public exposure.

When a minister preaches in the pulpit or elsewhere, his special view of Sunday observance, and insists that those who do not agree with him are sinful beings, he requires criticism and ought to be dealt with. If a professor of evangelical religion rails at graven images in St. Giles Cathedral, and cries out against the Popish practice of decorating a Church with evergreens, he may properly be classed with the animal that brays. Ministers will be treated as are other men—as men, not semi-divine beings. If they make unwise exhibitions they will be called to order; if they set up absurd pretensions they will be checked, and this will be done, not as against religion, but as against that which disfigures religion and discredits it in the eyes of the world.3

Thus Dr. Story, who later became Principal of Glasgow University, was condemned for publicly stating his political views:

Dr. Story is not the pulpit, he is sometimes in a Pulpit which is a different thing...Dr. Story seems to forget this. He wants to convey the impression that his sayings in politics bear the seal of the Pulpit. In other words, he speaks as if he thought that he, a clergyman may not only enter the domain of political discussion, but must in it be recognized as having a sort of divine right—at least that he must in politics be deserving of as much attention

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1Ibid., May 28, 1865, p. 4.

2Ibid., January 23, 1847, p. 2. This incident refers to a shipwreck at Wick on Sunday in which the cargo was damaged because the people would not work on Sunday. April 6, 1875, p. 4, the pulpit is criticized because several preachers and the Edinburgh Free Presbytery had denounced the theatre as a threat to the pulpit. January 6, 1880, p. 4, the preachers are exposed and excerpts from their sermons cited because some interpreted the Tay Rail Bridge Disaster as God's judgment on Sunday trains.

3Ibid., February 11, 1887, p. 4.
and belief as if he were preaching in the pulpit the truths of Christianity. He will find that this view is in no wise to be accepted...when ministers enter into the discussions of ordinary life they court criticism. He who plays bowls must expect rubbers.  

By this same standard of judgment, Walter C. Smith of Edinburgh's High Free Church was publicly exonerated by the editor of The Scotsman after Dr. Smith had condemned from his pulpit the rancour and bad taste of political controversy:

Dr. Walter Smith's fair and temperate animadversion on the rancorous spirit of political controversy, particularly as displayed in the struggle that has just ended, has been objected to as improper meddling with political matters on the part of the pulpit. The published report does not bear out this view of the discourse. There is in these days very general agreement that the pulpit should not intermeddle in political controversies....Political preaching is a thing to be condemned as a general rule; but under such a condemnation it is absurd to exclude all reference to the public life of the day we live in. Dr. Smith would have made a grave mistake and would have given just offence had he tried in the pulpit to recommend his own views on the Irish question or had denounced any set of political opinion. But he did nothing of the kind. He rather sought to make his hearers think charitably of political opponents....The pulpit does no more "than its duty in pointing out the diseased spots in the body politic."

The attitude of The Scotsman to the pulpit was one of indifference turning to contempt only when the preacher overstepped the boundary of things spiritual. Corporately, preachers were viewed as incorrigible. Individually, "in the pulpit" many appeared as "good honest men trying to do according to their light." Privately, The Scotsman said they were "almost always praiseworthily moral and rarely ill-tempered...men whom it is good to know and whom to know is to like and respect." In part the attitude of The Scotsman reflected an age judging each individual for himself, an age demanding freedom for each man; an

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1Ibid., Aug. 22, 1885, p. 6. In 1875 the editorial column of The Scotsman had a running feud with the illiberal actions of James Begg.

2Ibid., July 20, 1886, p. 4.

3Ibid., Dec. 4, 1886, p. 6.

4Ibid.

5Ibid.
age secularizing poor relief in 1845 and education in 1872; an age drawing a firm line between the sacred and the secular.

The third cultural challenge of secularization affected the style of preaching. The emergence of a popular literary style in turn demanded clarity, sincerity and attractiveness in preaching. The Witness Newspaper with its decided Free Church bias observed that while "popularity in preaching was attainable in well nigh as many different ways as popularity in writing...no preacher ever yet became popular who did not possess a clear, transparent style." An editorial in The Scotsman suggested that the preacher "lay aside the language of the cloth and condescend to good, plain practical English." A writer in The British and Foreign Evangelical Review said that "the sermon best fitted to instruct will be one that is thoroughly concrete." In 1868 John Caird wrote a provocative essay for Good Words on the subject: "The Declining Influence Of The Pulpit In Modern Times." He said:

What were once the tributaries are now the rivals of the church. And society, when it daily witnesses the highest ability in every province of secular activity, is apt to be but ill satisfied with the low standard of excellence in the pulpit. It is damaging to the clerical repute when newspaper articles are clever, and sermons are heavy and vapid; when educated hearers come fresh from the perusal of papers in the periodical press, able and vigorous in

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1See Appendix IV.

2The Witness Newspaper, "The Element Of Popularity," 1855. Also see The Christian Journal, Vol. 7, 1844, p. 541. "Let ministers write for the press, and their discourses are in general pregnant with erudition and argument; but they will not...write for the pulpit what they cannot commit. And this...is the plain reason that in their ordinary every-day sermons we generally hear so much of sameness, so little of argument, so much to forget, so little to recall."

3The Scotsman, March 12, 1875, p. 4.

4The British and Foreign Evangelical Review, 1861, p. 531. In this article, John Caird and Charles H. Spurgeon are cited as the examples of "this concrete, attractive" style of preaching. Also see Vol. 3, 1854, pp. 400-401.
thought, clear in arrangement, convincing in logic, nervous and
telling in style,—to listen to discourses which never rise above
decent commonplace, and often sink painfully beneath it, or when,
after a week in which they have witnessed or read the accounts of
displays of eminent ability, forensic or senatorial...the Sunday
found them auditors of sermons which it was a penance to listen to,
and in the hearing of which only respect for the preacher's office
restrained the signs of weariness while he continued speaking, and
of inexpressible delight when he had done.1

In the words of The Scottish Church, a magazine with high church tendencies:
"If the literature is interesting and instructive, so must the preaching be."2

The Free Church of Scotland Monthly phrased the effect of literature on preaching
in these words:

In this day of newspapers, the human mind resents the hearing again
and again of that which turns truths into truisms and pathos into
platitudes....The newspaper has made it an impossibility for dull
preachers ever to be respected, even if they are tolerated.3

The interest of the pew in the pulpit was not merely contingent on what a man
said, it was conditioned by how he said it.

The secular man of the last half of the century reacted against "preaching
[which] had degenerated into preaching."4 Some considered the gift of fluency
to be "fatal" if it issued in nothing better than "dreary commonplaces."5 The
secular man, to quote Campbell Fraser, wanted nothing of words which had become
the "curtains concealing the realities they were to reveal."6 Empty phrases

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1 John Caird, "The Declining Influence Of The Pulpit In Modern Times,"
Good Words, August 1, 1868, p. 195.


3 The Free Church of Scotland Monthly, "Sleepy Congregations," April 1,
1891, p. 116. Also see April, 1888, p. 101; May 10, 1890, p. 6. Love's Edinburgh

4 The British Weekly, "Letter To The Editor From An Edinburgh Layman,"
September 24, 1891, p. 341.

5 Ibid., "The Ministry In The New Condition," August 1, 1890, p. 209.

increasingly failed to cast "a magical spell...exciting enthusiasm" on the more perceptive listener.\(^1\) In 1890 The British Weekly viewed the "new condition" with penetrating honesty:

> The progress of education, reading and discussion has sharpened men's wits....The preacher now addresses men and women accustomed to good writings...it is bitterly felt that the preacher is a trifler.\(^2\)

Undoubtedly popular literature made the pew "more critical and intelligent."\(^3\)

**(2) Intellectual Secularization**

The intellectual challenge of secularization posed a dangerous threat to theology in the last half of the nineteenth century. If the cultural challenge of secularization primarily attempted to delimit the circumference of the preacher's influence, the intellectual challenge attacked the very basis of the preacher's message. The cultural challenge was basically practical...the preacher must be less pontifical and illiberal in his political and social pronouncements; the preacher must be interesting and lucid if he is to be arresting and popular. The intellectual challenge was basically academic; the very pre-suppositions of God, the Bible, an ordered world of nature, all came under attack.\(^4\)

The intellectual side of the challenge of secularization to preaching was largely a reflection of the more serious challenge to traditional theology. The variations of this challenge to theology have been well documented. In an essay,

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\(^3\) The Scotsman, May 10, 1886, p. 4.
\(^4\) The Scottish Church, New Series, Vol. II, 1889, p. 86. In this article Pearson Muir stresses the anti-dogma nature of secularism.
The Strands of Unbelief—Noel Annan has suggested that it was "the Sense of History and the Call of Morality...that secularized middle-class beliefs." In his book Issues In Science and Religion, Ian Barbour has pinpointed "Darwinianism" as the center of the seismic shock of secularization. Owen Chadwick has perhaps best summarized the content of this intellectual challenge in Britain:

Three forces were driving Christianity to restate doctrine: natural science, historical criticism, moral feeling. Natural science shattered assumptions about Genesis and about miracles. Criticism questioned whether all history in the Bible was true. Moral feeling found the love of God hard to reconcile with hell-fire or scapegoat-atonement.

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The preacher could not ignore the implications of the intellectual challenge to theology in his sermons. By what he said he proved to be either a child of the past or a product of the present. In the *British and Foreign Evangelical Review* of 1861 it was said that "it is in the sermon that men can most easily discover whether the intellectual field of view of the man who occupies the pulpit is a confined or a comprehensive one."¹ In the words of *The British Weekly*: "Unless the pulpit is brought more on a level with the intellectual life of the times, it will continue to lose the ear of men."²

The pulpit became increasingly favourable to the intellectual challenge and the issues involved. When this intellectual ferment was still in its infancy in the 1860's, John Caird noted:

What the future of the church is to be who in this strange time of seething thought and unsettled inquiry can foretell? But be it what it may, one thing is obvious. If we are to make head against manifold opposition without, and much indifference and faint-heartedness within, it will not be merely by ritual improvements,... Still less will it be by ignoring the difficulties of the age and determining to ring for ever, in the old stock phraseology, the changes in the old forms of thought, as if no one had ever asked their meaning, or questioned their authority. But where such means fail, two things, if God and truth be realities will succeed. First, the life of God in our own souls, for life only can diffuse life; and next to that, the power of living thought, of rich and genial culture, of intellectual nobleness in the teachers of the church.³

By 1885 the intellectual challenge of secularization had reached full maturity in Scotland. Joseph Leckie wrote:

What the preacher has to contend with in many of his hearers is an uneasy-half-sceptical frame—a feeling as if he were dealing with things scarcely real or very disputable, a sort of looking down on

¹*The British and Foreign Evangelical Review, 1861*, p. 521.


his position as one quite inferior to that of an expounder of the
certainties of science—a kind of sympathy with science as a return
to reality, and a revolt from authority and dogma and words.  

In The British Weekly in 1886 with its confessed creed of "advanced liberalism"
the preacher was portrayed as either "a distinctly modern type" or somehow linked
to the pulpit of the first half of the century.  

Writing in The British Weekly in 1897, Robert Watson (Ian Maclaren) said:

The preaching of our time is on the whole intelligently directed
to a high end, and well adapted to the circumstances and culture
of the people....Preaching that is not to miss its mark must be
aware of what is going on in the modern mind, the opinions to which
defERENCE is paid, the convictions that are becoming settled....The
old arguments have to be translated into a new language, made more
discriminating, supplemented by fresh proofs and appeals.  

Marcus Dods concluded one sermon with the profound declaration that:

Protestantism and science are allies and blood relations, and if
we are to maintain our religious life at all, it must be in the
full blaze of modern discovery and intellectual light, and not among
the moles and bats in the holes where relics of superstition have
had their haunt."

In the intellectual challenge of secularization, science and history threw down
the gauntlet to theology and the pulpit lent its aid in the articulation of a
response.

1 Joseph Leckie, "Intellectual and Social Hindrances To Christian Work,"

shall seek to expound in this journal will be that of progress...we shall aim
at the ends of what is known as Advanced Liberalism. We are believers in progress
because we are believers in the advancing reign of Christ." In "Ministerial
Miniatures" Deas Cromarty portrays almost every minister as a man of the past
or the present. The above quotation is an appraisal of Hugh Black, the colleague
of Alexander Whyte of St. George's Free Church, Edinburgh, August 6, 1896, p.
245.

3 Robert Watson, "The Ministry," The British Weekly, September 23, 1897,
p. 373.

The response of the pulpit to the cumulative challenge of secularization was one of accommodation. First, there was emergent in the third quarter of the century a new style of preaching. This change was widespread in the pulpit and was largely the assimilation of those factors composing the cultural aspect of secularization. Secondly, in the last half of the century there was a new theology evolving in the sermon itself. This change, while by no means universal or uniform, was largely the adaptation in preaching of those principles which were the source of the intellectual challenge.

In one sense, the pulpit accepted the restrictions of secularization with a mixture of nostalgia and bitterness. This was evident in a whole body of negative literature which mourned "the decline of the pulpit, the decay of preaching, the lost influence of the Church." In 1888 an article in The Scottish Church regretfully mused: "No doubt the pulpit has lost much of a kind of power which it formerly possessed, and the Church has ceased to exercise a kind of

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1 See chapter 6.

2 See chapters 6, 7.

3 James Lindsay, The Teaching Function of the Modern Pulpit, Edinburgh, William Blackwood and Sons, 1897. Much of the talk on the decline of the pulpit was a negative reaction to the cultural restrictions placed upon the pulpit. See: "Modern Preaching," North British Review, 1863, p. 423; Charles Brown, The Ministry, pp. 46-47; John A. James, An Earnest Ministry, p. x.

The phrase "the decline of the pulpit" also had reference to the changing patterns of Church attendance in the last quarter of the century. It does not appear that there was a significant decline in the number of people attending Church. Rather people became "irregular" in their habits of Church attendance. Instead of attending Church two or three times on Sunday, people came once... others would come for several weeks and then miss a Sunday. Finally attendance to services at the time of communion and other special week-day services grew lax. People did not cease to attend Church, they were simply more erratic in their attendance. To many preachers this became evidence of the decline of the pulpit. See: The Free Church of Scotland Monthly Record, Sept. 1, 1866, p. 18; Sept. 1, 1882, p. 258. The Scotsman, April 23, 1895, p. 6. The British Weekly, Feb. 14, 1895, p. 293; Aug. 27, 1896, p. 289; Sept. 1894, pp. 305 and 306. Reports On The Schemes Of The Church of Scotland, "Commission On The Religious Conditions Of The People," 1894, pp. 758, 821; 1893, p. 1060.
influence in the affairs of the world, which she formerly used for her own benefit." A. J. B. Paterson of the East United Presbyterian Church, Duns, was even more woefully dogmatic: "It has come to pass that the preacher...instead of being a living force, has faded into an emblematic figure at christenings, weddings, and funerals." In 1889, Alexander Whyte cast his gaze backward upon the pulpit of an earlier period of the nineteenth century and exclaimed to his audience of Free Church undergraduates: "Gentlemen, you have fallen upon degenerate days in the Edinburgh pulpit." In 1896, Professor W. G. Blaikie looked ahead into the coming century and proclaimed:

Preaching is an art which does not grow easier as the nineteenth century nears its close, and the twentieth begins to cast its shadow before...The zeitgeist is not with the preacher. The age is not an age of faith, but an age of scepticism and materialism.*

Of the several restrictions which secularization placed upon preaching it was the dictum of no politics in the pulpit which met with the most universal acclaim. Theologically, this was in keeping with the contention of many older evangelicals that the world was basically evil. This restriction also complemented the evangelical conviction that the pulpit concentrate its message on God's action for man's personal salvation. David Woodside has written that it was in the middle period of the century when the people began to be convinced that the

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1 "The Membership Of The Church," The Scottish Church, Vol. I, 1888, p. 102. In 1886, an article "The Power Of The Pulpit" in the same periodical declared: "The pulpit has not all the monopoly which it once had. We are not so dependent on it as our fathers were, for religious instruction and consolation," p. 17.


3 "Dr. Whyte With Students," The British Weekly, November 8, 1889, p. 25.

4 W. G. Blaikie, "The Pulpit Of The Twentieth Century," The Free Church of Scotland Monthly, April, 1896, p. 77.

5 See Chapter 4.
church was "much too involved in the political partisanship of the time."\(^1\) John Caird said: "The pulpit is now confined to narrower ground and must depend, for its influence on more legitimate attractions."\(^2\) In a sermon preached before Queen Victoria, Norman MacLeod declared:

In the earlier and more stirring periods of our national history, "preaching for the times" as it was called, was a rule, and not the exception, as it is in these days. Great questions were then at issue, national rather than individual...at such times it could hardly be otherwise than that the clergy, from their relatively superior knowledge and influence...should have taken a prominent place as teachers and leaders in politics. But it is very different now. The increase of education, the vastly improved means of spreading information have...necessarily transferred much of the teaching of the pulpit to the press and to Parliament. We clergy are thus enabled thankfully to withdraw into other spheres suited to the specialities of our experience and calling.\(^3\)

One United Presbyterian minister wrote in his Church's monthly magazine in 1891:

Ministers are no longer leaders of the people in great public questions as they were even half-a-century ago. It is probably well that it should be so. Let them be more than ever preachers of the Word.\(^4\)

The withdrawal of the pulpit from any political relevance was so complete that in 1886 even The Scotsman noted on two occasions: "The pulpit by ceasing to take cognizance of public and national faults may cease to exercise any practical influence on public and national morality."\(^5\) With this statement The British Weekly agreed for in 1891 this publication suggested that in Scotland "the pulpit on the whole is almost too cultured, too respectable."\(^6\) In 1892

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\(^1\) David Woodside, op. cit., p. 212.
\(^2\) John Caird, Good Words, 1863, p. 194.
\(^3\) Ibid., "War and Judgement," 1871, pp. 52-53.
\(^5\) The Scotsman, July 20, 1886, p. 4; November 2, 1886, p. 4.
\(^6\) The British Weekly, March 25, 1891, p. 301.
Men need rest and comfort and peace, and not political harangues, when they sit down in the church. I hope we shall never have a political sermon in the parish pulpit; I hope all parishioners, gentle and simple, will be able to say of the old Church:

"There is yet one place of shelter
Where the foe cannot come,
Where the summons never sounded
Of the trumpet and the drum."

Fifty years have not dimmed my shuddering remembrance of the inflammatory sermons and one-sided prayer that sounded through the country churches in the times before 1843. There, not in the House of God, where the gospel of peace is preached, not where communion cups are handed round, but through the press, on the platform, and in private life let us do what we can to preserve to the Scottish people the patrimony which it cost the fathers so much to win.

Obviously the pulpit found the demand of "no politics in preaching" to its liking.


2 The pulpit easily acquiesced to this political restriction for at least two reasons. First the pulpit in nineteenth century Scotland was never really radical in its political convictions. David Cairns in his Autobiography, notes that the non-conforming position of the United Presbyterians made them sympathetic with democracy, but this did not figure in their sermons, p. 47. At best men such as Principal Harper and John Eadie were moderates seeking mainly a democratic vote for the "vast middle class of the community." See Life of Harper, p. 101. The great concern of dissent was the Reform Bill of 1832 and the repeal of the corn laws in the 1840's. Otherwise their concerns were for the preservation of a religious environment conducive to their own welfare. By the last half of the century their political battle had really been won. If the Old Kirk had tended to be Tory, the United Presbyterian Church tended to be Whiggish. As the political liberalism of the Whigs became dominant the need for political preaching by men of a more liberal political persuasion became less necessary. George Pryde, op. cit., p. 197.

Secondly, the increasing importance given to the popular preacher suggested that politics and popularity did not go hand in hand. Urbanization and secularization were posing serious threats to the pulpit and the preacher could not risk further alienation due to imprudent political pronouncements. To the public eye "good order and good government" had come "in spite of the most bitter resistance of the clergy." See The Scotsman, August 19, 1848, p. 2. In 1857 a contributor to The British and Foreign Evangelical Review, Vol. 6, p. 118, said that "we never knew the pulpit to throw itself into the issues that divide political parties, without contracting a stain and wound upon its sanctity and spiritual power." This periodical was adament in its insistence that "polemical and
The reaction of the pulpit to the intellectual challenge while more varied was, in the main, a movement toward an emphasis on the humanity of Jesus. This stress on the humanity of Jesus sprang from several different sources and expressed itself in several different ways.\(^1\) For some preachers such as Edward Irving, MacLeod Campbell and Norman MacLeod this emphasis was more a matter of theological conviction than any overt accommodation of the intellectual challenge of secularization. Other preachers such as Henry Drummond and Marcus Dods retained the evangelical emphasis on the need of a personal "experience with Jesus" but did so with the equal assurance that evolution and biblical criticism were no longer barriers to Christian belief. Finally, there were the preachers whose more radical theology is exemplified in the Scotch Sermons.\(^2\) These preachers

controversial preaching" was to be avoided. Ibid., p. 109. 1861, pp. 529-530. Also see David Woodside, op. cit., p. 213.

In the last quarter of the century there appears to have been some concern that the pendulum had swung too far. The pulpit was too isolated from social and political concerns. Certainly in the men of the Scotch Sermons of 1880 there was a tendency to feel that the Church must take a more active role in social concerns...and social concerns are seldom unrelated to politics. Also see: W. E. MacFarlane, "The Relation Of The Pulpit To Politics," The United Presbyterian Magazine, Vol. V, 1888, p. 402ff.

The movements mentioned in this paragraph form the nucleus of chapters 6 and 7. In The Scotsman, May 20, 1875, p. 4 an editorial remarked: "Old types of parish ministers are vanishing away, new ones have not yet assumed definite forms." Yet the editor said that the old types were only to be found in "Dean Ramsay's or Lord Cockburn's reminiscences."

It should be observed that this more radical assimilation of the principles of the intellectual challenge came from men who were primarily academics...not preachers. It is interesting that with the exception of John Caird none of the contributors to the Scotch Sermons served in a large city parish. All were either in university positions or in a town and country parish. Obviously, here the preacher had time to reflect on the wider social and intellectual issues, and to phrase a more articulate answer. Charles Warr writes of Principal Caird during the three years he was at Lady Yester's in Edinburgh: "He was too much of a thinker to be content with popular preaching divorced from study and meditation. Lady Yester's left him no leisure for general reading or for making himself conversant to the degree he ought to be with the movements of the day." Thus Caird went to Errol. See Caird's biography, pp. 109-110. It should also be noted that two of the contributors to the Scotch Sermons, John and Patrik Stevenson,
sought to level all barriers between the sacred and the secular. To these preachers few doctrines were sacrosanct. While the response of the pulpit to the challenge of secularization was varied, in the end it was the more liberal and open-minded men who forged a more acceptable path for theology in a new and changing world. The result was what people came to call "a new theology."¹

**Parochial Influences Shaping Popular Preaching**²

Preaching in nineteenth century Scotland was also conditioned by a variety of narrower parochial influences, defying easy categorization. In part the variegated pulpit of Scotland was due to the presence and competition of three major Presbyterian Churches. A geographical survey of the denominational preference of the people of Scotland suggests that preaching was affected by

had strong interests in science. For the biographical data on these men see Fasti. The rural and academic background of these preachers would seem to substantiate what has been an underlying thought in this chapter. Namely evangelical preaching up to 1860 and 1870, must be seen primarily within the context of urbanization, while the newer evangelical sermon at the end of the century must be weighed in relation to the challenge of secularization.

¹The phrase "new theology" is found in The Scotsman, June 3, 1866, p. 4. The British Weekly, June 15, 1899, p. 166 where the term "new Moderate" is also used. Duncan Campbell, Reminiscences and Reflections Of An Octogenarian Highlander, p. 603. George Hope of Fenton Barns notes in 1873 that in the pulpit "Calvinism orthodox or evangelical doctrine, are each succeeding year kept more and more in the background," p. 337. In 1875 Hope says that the Old Calvinism in the pulpit has "toned down and undergone an almost total revolution," p. 348, A Memoir Of George Hope of Fenton Barns.

²By the word "parochial" I mean the narrower, more restrictive and confined factors influencing the individual sermon. We have already noticed the collapse of the parish system. The collapse of the parish system did not alter the conviction that preaching was conditioned by the particular congregation. At worst, the collapse of the parish system simply meant that the focus of parochialism was the congregation instead of a distinct geographical area. See The Church of Scotland, Assembly Papers, 1844, "Reasons of Dissent and Complaint As to Smith and Tolbooth," John Robertson, Sermons and Expositions, p. 235; Pastoral Counsels, p. 207. James Stalker, The Preacher and His Models, p. 113. James Robertson, The Christian Minister, p. 80.
certain regional factors. The general alienation of the working classes and the appearance of several Chartist Churches indicates that preaching was not divorced from social, economic and political associations. Add to this list the idiosyncrasies and conflicting tastes of the human personality and easy pulpit stereotypes become an impossibility.

Yet attention must be focused on some of the narrower sociological factors influencing the patterns of preaching in the individual congregations. That such patterns and preferences in preaching did prevail was acknowledged by the people themselves. Their statements and descriptions of preachers and churches indicates the extent to which preaching was contingent on social factors. These variegated patterns of popular preaching can best be viewed from two perspectives. First, in rural Scotland the popular pulpit was usually the pulpit adhering to the traditional patterns of life and thought. Secondly, the city, with its more complex culture, judged popular preaching from a restricted perspective: that of a stratified society.2

a. The Country Congregation

The religious temperament of the country congregation was guided by an intense loyalty to tradition.3 The golden age of rural life was in the past and

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1 See Appendix III-D.

2 While I am here discussing traditionalism only in relation to rural Scotland, it must not be assumed that traditionalism was restricted to the rural parish. On the contrary, all of the factors creating traditionalism were found in many city congregations. However, in the city, the parochial pattern was more varied and complex. Consequently stratification, not traditionalism, provides the best wide angle perspective on the parochial patterns of the city pulpit.

3 MacLeod, Reminiscences Of A Highland Parish, p. 152. Here MacLeod pays tribute to the loyalty in personal friendship of the "Highland Peasantry." Kenneth MacDonald, Social and Religious Life In The Highlands, pp. 86 and 259 says since
it was from the past that the people derived their religious perspective. The
tradition soliciting this loyalty was rooted in the religious vocabulary of
scholastic Calvinism, the experimental emphasis of Puritanism and the spirit and
enthusiasm of the Covenanters.

Theologically, loyalty to tradition was loyalty to scholastic Calvinism.
This is evident in the universal usage of the Shorter Catechism.\(^1\) In Ayrshire
at the beginning of the century, memorization of the Shorter Catechism was re-
quired in the parish schools and "rehearsed around the common hearth on the
evening of the Sabbath."\(^2\) In the Highlands religious faith was often a mixture
of the "shorter Catechism and fairy stories" though increasingly throughout the
century the people embraced a simple, literal view of the Confession.\(^3\) In
Peeblesshire, at the time of the New Statistical Account, it was claimed that even
the poor possessed "the Bible and shorter catechism."\(^4\) By the close of the century
most of Scotland had discarded the harsher aspects of the Westminster Confession
but in the North of Scotland, both the alterations to the Confession and the

the Bible was not translated into Gaelic until 1801 there were "practically two
Bibles in the Highlands...the written Word of God and the oral traditions of the
fathers, and when the two came into collision the written Word was either set
aside or explained away by the oral."

\(^1\) See page 1 of this thesis.

\(^2\) John Mitchell, "Memories Of Ayrshire," Miscellany Of The Scottish

\(^3\) Elizabeth Grant, Memoirs Of A Highland Lady, London, 1911, John Murray.
For other witnesses to the superstition and superficiality of religion in the
North see The New Statistical Account of Scotland, Vol. XIV, "Inverness—Ross
And Cromarty," pp. 348, 106.

\(^4\) Ibid., Vol. III, Peebles, p. 90. Comparing these two volumes of the
New Statistical Account, (Vol. III and XIV) there is a general tendency to portray
the religious sentiments of the Lowlands as zealous and earnest while those of
the Highlands are superficial.
proposed union between the United Presbyterian Church, and the Free Church were viewed as "a surrender of the Calvinism of the Free Church." To some, loyalty to scholastic Calvinism was really an idolatry of the words and phraseology of the Westminster Confession of Faith.

The religious mentality of tradition was that of experimental Puritanism. This tradition fostered the concern for a personal encounter with Christ which was guided more by one's feelings than "the word of God and testimony of Jesus." This spiritual encounter was subsequently proven by the character of one's life. Here, the legacy of Puritanism was a new legalism. In the border country where the spirit of 19th century Puritanism first asserted itself, the inhabitants of Roxburgh, Peebles and Selkirk were distinguished by their sober, moral and industrious character. When the spirit of rejuvenated Puritanism reached the Highlands in the second quarter of the century, the piper disappeared from the wedding party, mixed dancing was banned, and the dancing of "young women for prizes" abandoned as a part of the Braemar Gathering. The ease with which

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2John Mitchell, "Memories of Ayrshire," op. cit., p. 304. Mitchell writing here of the Secession Church says that "to this unhappy and erroneous leaning they were inclined by...the writings of Puritan divines." Also see John Macaskill, A Highland Pulpit, pp. viii-ix. P. Carnegie Simpson, Life of Robert Reay, Vol. I, p. 451, says that the theology of the North "is not in its true character, a dogmatism; rather is it mystical." The experimental element of the Puritan legacy is most evident in the Friday sessions of the Communion Season when people would sit and share together their conversion experiences at the same time distinguishing the "marks of the true Christian." See Thomas Brown, Annals Of The Disruption, p. 667.


these strictures were accepted in the North suggests more than mere religious revival, they point to a climate sympathetic to the Puritan tradition. 1

Emotionally, the traditionalism of many country congregations fed on the spirit and intense feeling engendered by the Covenanting tradition. 2 It was the "uncompromising fire of the Covenanter" that infused the soul of such men of the North as John Duncan. 3 John Mitchell writes of the people of Ayrshire at the dawn of the century:

All things considered, the intelligence of the public, on religious and other subjects, was, and could not but be comparatively circumscribed. . . . With local news, with the history of the Secession, and with the contending of our forefathers during the times of persecution in Scotland, no small portion of which had occurred within the bounds of Ayrshire . . . . Here the ministry of God's holy Evangel, had, at the imminent risk of their lives, been magnanimously prosecuted by such Christian Heroes as Welsh, Cargill and Peaton. Of these men of God interesting anecdotes derived from a comparatively fresh tradition were told, while the prophecies of some of them were recited, and the terrible vengeance of providence which was represented to have fallen upon the persecutors of the Saints and Servants of God in the district is testified awfully by their dilapidated and haunted mansions or by their impoverished and extinct families, were rehearsed with solemn emphasis around the evening fire, by the old, in the audience of the young, thus creating, or deepening a salutary horror of persecution for conscience sake, as well as strong prepossessions in favour of true religion, of holy courage, and of steadfast suffering for the sake of righteousness and vital godliness. At these times and on these scenes too were occasionally recounted the achievements of Wallace, the Ayrshire hero, and of Robert Bruce... while sometimes

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1 The Disruption Manuscripts, Ibid., p. 14. For an excellent description of the influence of Puritanism in the North in the 18th century see: John MacInnes, The Evangelical Movement In The Highlands, pp.49ff. Robert Wallace in his Autobiography, p. 46, says that it was "in the aristocracy that the heart of the devout Puritan Failed."

2 J. H. S. Burleigh, op. cit., p. 342. Principal Burleigh suggests that in the 1830's and 1840's the revived spirit of the Covenanting period was rather general in Scotland.

anecdotes were told of the rebellions of 1715 and '45, the latter of which some of the narrators might have seen.¹

In his *Circuit Journeys*, Henry Cockburn calls attention to a monument erected in 1831 to the covenanting martyrs in the Gloken Hills:

The funds for the erection of this testimony were produced by a sermon preached on the spot upon the 11th of September 1831, to which, notwithstanding the month and the elevation, about 10,000 people listened. So unchanged are the religious feelings of the Scotch: so unextinguishable is indignation of persecution and admiration of courage. Yet this is the people whom an ignorant Government lately thought would submit quietly to a greatly increased interference of patrons and Civil Courts with their spiritual concerns. The Free Church is the pillar to this folly.²

The traditionalism of country congregations was preserved and exercised with independency of judgment. The people themselves sat in judgment of the sermon. In the many individual descriptions of the character of the inhabitants of rural Scotland words or phrases such as "Shrewd...stern...blind zeal...severe censorship...incorrigible...sagacious...suspicious...cautious...rigid" occur again and again.³ Norman MacLeod wrote that the Highlander was a person who "cherished the memory of insult."⁴ The Seceders of Ayrshire were described as

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¹John Mitchell, *op. cit.*, pp. 280-281. Mitchell also notes that though "books were dear" the scanty library consisted "generally of a big Bible, of the 'Cloud of Witnesses,' of the 'Confession of Faith,' of Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress" or 'Holy War," p. 282. The "Cloud of Witnesses" was a collection of biographies of Covenanting worthies.


⁴Norman MacLeod, *Reminiscences Of A Highland Parish*, p. 156. In 1890 Principal Robert Reany was visiting his daughter in the North and was speaking at a public meeting which the Highlanders "boyocotted because of their hostility against him." *The British Weekly*, July 11, 1890, p. 169.
men whose zeal was honest, but at the same time perhaps too hot occasionally in its manifestations and expressions. Attached to forms, they were apt to magnify things indifferent into undue importance. Strictly orthodox, and specially called forth as they conceived to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, they could hardly bear a deviation from the accustomed expressions which were wont to be used by sound divines in treating of certain doctrines. And perhaps there might be detected occasionally in their aspect and manner, too much severity, while their temper in religious controversy might betray forgetfulness of the Divine declaration 'that the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God,' while their love of the truth, and their desire to convince an adversary, might induce them to commence controversy at unsuitable times and in unfit places, as well as to continue it too long and too vehemently.

Dean Ramsay has said that the "minister's men" were "great critics of sermons and often severe upon strangers, sometimes with a sly hit at their own minister." In the Highlands, Donald Sage writes that one of the duties of an elder was to maintain a running commentary with the other elders during the sermon on "the impression made upon their own minds by the truths they were hearing." In the North of Scotland the entire "class of weavers" was described as:

Intensely theological, often religious, well versed in all the intricacies of Calvinism, severest critics of the minister's discourses, and keenest of heresy-hunters, scenting it from afar, in phrase or simile.

"The clergy," writes Elizabeth Grant, "were reverenced in their capacity of pastors without this respect extending to their persons unless fully merited by propriety and conduct." In the sermon people judged the minister's orthodoxy

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1 John Mitchell, op. cit., pp. 303-304.
2 Dean Ramsay, Scottish Life and Character, p. 307.
3 Donald Sage, Memorabilia Domestica; or Parish Life In The North Of Scotland, 1889, W. Rae Wick, pp. 128-129.
5 Elizabeth Grant, op. cit., p. 208.
and in his life they assessed his piety. In religion, the country congregation looked back to the traditions of the past which they maintained by an often austere and independent standard of judgment.

Perhaps the best example of traditionalism is found in a mysterious group of pious individuals in the North of Scotland called "the Men." These Men were a group of laymen "prominent among their neighbours for any superior knowledge, zeal, or eloquence." As to the religious life, they have been called "the salt of the highlands" because their popularity and influence was very great. The exact date of their origin has been debated, but casting aside

1 Particularly in the North of Scotland in the 1850's there flourished a number of Lay Revivalists: Duncan Matheson, Hay MacDowall Grant, James Turner, Brownlow North. Only Brownlow North achieved the official status of being recognized by a Church, in his case the Free Church of Scotland in its General Assembly in 1859. North appealed to this sense of each individual judging for himself the orthodoxy of the preacher. In one sermon he said: "It is a great truth, though a truth hated and denied by multitudes...that every member of a congregation is bound to prove to himself from the Word of God, that the doctrine of the man who teaches him is according to that Word." See Brownlow North, Ourselves, London, William Hunt and Co., 1866, pp. 264-265. Also The British and Foreign Evangelical Review, 1861, p. 532.

2 "The Men" are a phenomenon of the Highlands requiring more adequate research than has thus far been carried out and then lies within the scope of this thesis. Thus far the best treatment of "the Men" is found in The Evangelical Movement in the Highlands of Scotland 1688 to 1800 by John Macaig, pp. 211-220. For supplementary material see: Thomas Brown, Annals of the Disruption 1843, p. 666ff. Kenneth MacDonald, Social and Religious Life in The Highlands, p. 104ff.


4 The Free Church Monthly, "The Preachings in The Leves," August 1, 1883, p. 232. In the New Statistical Account, Vol. XIV, p. 354, "The Men" are said to be in "almost every other parish in Skye." Charles Rogers, op. cit., says that "the Men" are permitted to exercise a sort of general superintendence both over minister and kirk-session," p. 75. Robert Findlater, who was one of "the Men," was so respected that at his funeral in 1814, "upward of 2,000 people from the neighbouring parishes—some upwards of twenty miles—attended." See Memoir of the Rev. Robert Findlater, The Son, p. 75. Thomas Brown, op. cit., p. 449. Here Brown notes their prominence as teachers.
chronological dispute their roots were in their reaction to "the formalism and deadness of the Established Kirk." ¹

Without a doubt, "the Men" were the religious conscience of the Highlands. They defended the tenets of scholastic Calvinism as they understood them.² They were the epitomy of the spirit of Puritanism in doctrine, dress and asceticism.³ In the tradition of the Covenanter's zeal made them activists; their activism often running to excess in anti-clericalism and anti-institutionalism.⁴


² Robert Findlater, op. cit., was one of twelve men signing a letter simply dated "Invergordon, Ness, 17th September, 1788." In this letter "the Men" stated their purpose and their complaints against the religion they found too prevalent in the Church. They lamented the "corruption in doctrine...[and the] more refined pressing of evangelical duties without an eye to the Spirit of God," pp. 27-30; also p. 14. They considered as most important of the great doctrines "the great and fundamental doctrine of the Atonement," pp. 37, 54. John MacInnes, op. cit., has correctly stated that they "were commonly given to mystical modes of speech and allegorical interpretations of Scripture," p. 215. It would seem that their knowledge of Calvinism was limited.

³In doctrine they emphasized the experimental religion of the Puritans. See Robert Findlater, op. cit., p. 24; Thomas Brown, op. cit., p. 666; Kenneth Macdonald, op. cit., p. 113.

In dress the men often wore a long blue cloak with a handkerchief around their head, their hair being longer than was customary. See Thomas Brown, op. cit., p. 666. MacInnes has said that their peculiar dress was not so much a mark to distinguish them as a group as an indication that they were "old fashioned." See MacInnes, op. cit., p. 218. MacInnes also refers to their ascetic nature: their "austerity of behaviour...their rigid Sabbatarianism, their constant engagement in prayer even when at work," pp. 216-217. John Duncan the weaver-botanist appears to have been one of this order...certainly he wore the traditional blue suit and participated in the various prayer meetings so typical of "the Men"...although he was a more open and enlightened disciple. Yet Duncan was considered to be "eccentric...daft." See William Jolly, op. cit., pp. 252-254.

⁴There were said to be two groups of "the Men", those who were simply devout men pursuing the "true gospel" and those who were more radical. See Thomas Brown, op. cit., pp. 666, 675. Looking back, it seems that Brown was defending the majority of men who sided with the Free Church, although undoubtedly there was a more radical class. See Robert Findlater, op. cit., p. 200. However, from the
Independent in their thinking, "the Men" did not hesitate to cast judgment, often with "narrower and bigoted" bluntness.¹

It was the influence of "the Men" which contributed to the emergence of the popular preacher in the Highlands. "The Men" judged the character and orthodoxy of each minister, supporting those with whom they agreed and deserting those they found wanting.² If there were no preachers they deemed "spiritual" in neighboring parishes, they conducted their own meetings of prayer and exhortation.³ Those preachers endorsed by "the Men" found themselves on trial each Sabbath. "The Men" would sit in a conspicuous place in the Church circulating by their actions their opinion of the sermon.⁴ They would "nod approval or groan disapprobation of the discourse" followed on occasion by observing members of the congregation.⁵ By the example of "the Men" the Highlands exhibited the same traditionalism of religious temperament which in the Borders led to the popularity of the dissenting pulpit.⁶

perspective of the pre-disruption Church it seems that most of "the Men" were anti-clerical, certainly anti-institutional for most of them considered the validity of the sacraments to hinge on the personal character of the minister who was officiating. See Donald Sage, op. cit., p. 270.

¹ The Free Church Monthly, op. cit., August 1, 1883, p. 233. Kenneth MacDonald, op. cit., p. 117.

² The Disruption Manuscripts, op. cit., p. 5. See The Free Church of Scotland Monthly, April, 1899, pp. 76, 77. It is suggested that the neglected choice of "the Men" in the Free East Church, Inverness, led to the establishment of the Free North Church.


⁴ Charles Rogers, op. cit., p. 75.


⁶ Appendix III-C indicates that it was in the Border counties and the Highlands that the United Presbyterian Church and the Free Church enjoyed the greatest plurality. The triumph in Scotland of Evangelicalism over Moderatism
b. The City Church

Preaching in city churches was affected by social groupings and class stratification. Allan MacLaren in a very recent survey of "Presbyterianism and The Working Class" in Aberdeen has shown that each individual congregation usually attracted people of a similar social class. In turn it would seem that the class stratification of the individual congregation was contingent on various styles of preaching. Robert Lee of Old Grey Friars, Edinburgh, refused to give permission for the printing of some of his sermons because: "They contain only matters which are quite familiar to one class of the community." Walter C. Smith noted in one sermon: "There has grown up among us the notion that there is one kind of gospel to be preached to the poor and the ignorant and another to the rich and the educated." The correlation between types of preaching and the social groupings was due to a variety of factors. In rural Scotland the Evangelical victory can be seen as a reflection of the provincialism of the country congregations. Both the Free Church and the United Presbyterian Church provided their areas with what the people viewed as an alternative to Moderatism. See: John Mitchell, op. cit., pp. 297, 301, 302; John MacFarlane, Life and Times of George Lawson, P.D., p. 70; Kenneth MacDonald, op. cit., p. 41; Donald Sage, op. cit., P. 374; William Jolly, op. cit., p. 219.

1 Allan MacLaren, "Presbyterianism and the Working Class In a Mid-Nineteenth Century City," The Scottish Historical Review, Vol. XLVI, 2, No. 142: October 1967, p. 115. MacLaren gives three class groupings: First the upper, middle class which includes advocates, professors, lecturers, bankers, cashiers, accountants, large merchants, manufacturers, builders, shipowners, and landowners. Second the lower, middle class which is doctors, local and government officials, teachers, clerks, small merchants, self-employed tradesmen, foremen. Third a group of employed artisans and tradesmen. In this study I have used the term middle class to largely denote people in the first two groupings of MacLaren. The term working class I have used for all others.


3 Walter C. Smith, Sermons, pp. 207-208. Smith says that people choose to worship in churches on the basis of social standing and approval, pp. 289, 212.
of city congregations is particularly evident in the way the people of the nineteenth century described their churches and their preachers.

First, there was the distinct middle class congregation preferring a more refined and literary pulpit. These were churches and pulpits with a high sense of social propriety. At the head of this list stood St. Giles which was unique as a kind of "national temple."\(^1\) In 1895 the Sunday service of this church was described in *The British Weekly*, as "proper, decorous, traditional, and rather liturgical."\(^2\) David Arnot, one of the nineteenth century incumbents of this famous pulpit, was profiled as an "accomplished artist, sculptor...musician...and poet" as well as an "eloquent and powerful" preacher.\(^3\) Glasgow Cathedral was described as a magnet for "the present day respectability."\(^4\) From 1858 to 1865 the preacher was John Robertson and his read sermons "produced an impression not to be forgotten on an intellectual and cultivated audience."\(^5\) In 1899 the preacher Macadam Muir kept up the tradition as he "read in a resolute voice...with an air of campaign about him and a steady, regimental sincerity."\(^6\) In Glasgow was also located St. Enoch's Church where "wealth and religion went hand in hand."\(^7\) James Henderson,

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\(^1\) *The British Weekly*, Dec. 19, 1895, p. 152.

\(^2\) Ibid.

\(^3\) *Sketches of the Edinburgh Clergy*, a pamphlet, 1865, New College Library, pp. 6, 7. This pamphlet is a surprisingly objective, analytical account of Sunday worship in the various churches of Edinburgh.

\(^4\) *The British Weekly*, June 15, 1899, p. 166.

\(^5\) John Robertson, *Sermons And Expositions*, with a "Memoir" by J. G. Young, p. xlvii.

\(^6\) *The British Weekly*, June 15, 1899, p. 166.

\(^7\) Robert Malcolm, *Clerical Sketches*, Glasgow, W. & W. Miller, 1842, pp. 103-104. This congregation was said to refuse sittings to poor people, p. 101. This book is a series of sketches of Glasgow preachers which originally appeared in the *Scots Times* and the *Scottish Patriot*, p. vi.
the minister here in 1842, was a manuscript preacher whose "composition was clear, chaste and occasionally fine...not given to that impassioned eloquence...calculated to arouse the feelings but...popular with a certain class."\(^1\) Henderson's successor, James Burn, was said to be "graceful and dignified" in the pulpit—blending "unquestionable orthodoxy with rational and responsible conduct."\(^2\) James Veitch attracted "the greatest respectability in point of social position" to St. Cuthbert's to hear his "chaste and classical" sermons, exemplary of "deep culture and considerable learning."\(^3\) Earlier, Sir Henry Moncrieff proved to be a popular preacher at St. Cuthbert's, not because of "eloquence of words or of sentiments" but because of "luminous and powerful reasoning, views clearly stated with simplicity and assuredness."\(^4\) In the eyes of the wife of Principal Story, the foremost preacher in Edinburgh at the end of the century was James McGregor of St. Cuthbert's.\(^5\) She described this preacher as a "man of rare gift and great personal charm" whose "fine frenzy of eloquence could stir the heart or sway the mind."\(^6\) In Edinburgh there was also the father-in-law of John Caird, William Glover, whose "elegant" sermons "characterised by solidity, judgement and erudition of no common order" appealed to the "very large and fashionable" congregation of Greenside Parish.\(^7\)

The more refined and literary pulpit was not alien to either the Free

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\(^1\) *Ibid.*

\(^2\) John Smith, *Our Scottish Clergy*, p. 28.

\(^3\) *Sketches Of The Edinburgh Clergy*, pp. 42, 45.


\(^7\) *Sketches Of The Edinburgh Clergy*, p. 49.
Church nor the United Presbyterian Church. In Edinburgh, the United Presbyterians could point to the "cultivated, serene, graceful preaching" of Armstrong Black at Palmerston Place. Edinburgh's Free St. Andrews, like so many a product of the Disruption, served a distinguished clientele including Lord Gifford, Sir Thomas Thornton, Sheriff Logan, and Dr. John Abercrombie. Here the preaching of Robert John Sandeman, minister from 1873 to 1898 was described as "calm, thoughtful, attractive, and thoroughly evangelical." To these middle class churches, preaching with a sense of propriety appears to have been preaching governed by reason, appealing to men's minds and cognizant of man's cultural heritage.

Secondly, there were those equally distinct middle class congregations preferring preaching exhibiting not less learning, but more vitality. Here the demand was for a practical and persuasive pulpit. In Edinburgh, Free St. George's stood in this tradition. From Andrew Thomson to Alexander Whyte the pulpit of this Church blended dignity with fire, a literary and cultural taste with a spiritual sensitivity cast in the die of a fervid evangelical theology. Such was the

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1 Here Deae Cromarty writes of Armstrong Black: "He knows the Bible, feels the drift of men's minds, and moves in a region not that of fashionable fads," p. 74. The British Weekly, May 28, 1891, p. 74.

2 James M'Intosh, "St. Andrews Church, Edinburgh," The Free Church of Scotland Monthly, November 1, 1899, pp. 248-250. Historically, St. Andrews Parish Church "contained a large number of the foremost men in the legal profession" but only one of these, Henry Tod, came out with the Disruption. Yet it is obvious that this Church was patronized after the Disruption by men of the upper middle class.

3 Ibid., p. 248. In 1870, the translation of George Thomson to Free St. Andrews was resisted by his Presbytery of Kirkcaldy. In defending the translation, the representatives of the Free Edinburgh Presbytery called attention to the "prominence of both the congregation of Free St. Andrews and its pulpit." Free Church Assembly Papers, 1870 "Call to St. Andrews, Edinburgh."

type of preaching consistently attracting "the very best society of Edinburgh." A persuasive and practical pulpit was also the power sustaining the "respectable congregation" of Broughton Place United Presbyterian Church in Edinburgh. This was the pulpit in which John Brown united practicality and rationality into one homiletical objective which he called "apprehension." His son, the well-known writer and doctor, says: "Out of this arose one of his deficiencies. He could go largely into the generalities of a subject...but he was averse to abstract and wide reasoning." Brown's successor at Broughton Place, Andrew Thomson was described as a preacher of "decided talent and practical ability." Hewington United Presbyterian Church was a large, wealthy and enterprising congregation in Edinburgh witnessing to the nineteenth century magnetism of the popular preacher. James Robertson, the preacher under whose leadership rapid growth took place, was described as "a thoughtful and earnest preacher...his discourses characterised by a great fervour...his delivery particularly impressive and winning." Still in Edinburgh, the provincialism of Moody Stuart was attracting Highlanders as well as wealth and nobility to Free St. Lukes. Alexander Whyte who worshipped there on alternate Sundays as a divinity student has described the preaching of Moody Stuart

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3 Dr. John Brown, Rab and His Friends, p. 13.
4 Ibid.
5 John Anderson, op. cit., p. 18.
6 Sketches Of The Edinburgh Clergy, p. 40.
7 Ibid.
8 Kenneth Moody Stuart, Alexander Moody Stuart, pp. 60, 70.
as "spiritual...scholarly...very refined...original...and steeped through and through with a Samuel Rutherford-like sensibility to sin."

This relationship between an affluent congregation and a powerful and persuasive pulpit, is evident in other cities beside Edinburgh. In Glasgow, St. John's Free Church was regarded as one of the "most influential congregations of the city." In the eyes of one observer, this church incorporated "almost all the leading Free Church families" of Glasgow. The initial impetus in this pulpit belonged to the "resistless eloquence" and practical emphasis of Thomas Chalmers. Chalmers's successor, Thomas Brown was described as a preacher whose "power lay in his heart and mind"... whose pulpit manner combined "graceful and varied gestures with a distinct and earnest delivery." John Roxburgh, a later minister of St. John's who had himself sat at the feet of Chalmers in the old Tron Church, was said to be a strong personality in the pulpit pursuing the "cause of vital and spiritual religion as expounded and enforced by Chalmers." In Glasgow's West End, Wellington Street United Presbyterian Church was another fashionable congregation. Deas Cromarty wrote that in this "ostentatious setting" the "chastened eloquence" of James Black, the minister in 1891, did not portray any "offensively prosperous air." In Glasgow also was the Regent Street

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2 "St. John's Glasgow," *The Free Church of Scotland Monthly*, April 1, 1898, p. 80. Also see: John Smith, *Our Scottish Clergy*, p. 49.
6 *The Free Church of Scotland Monthly*, April 1, 1898, pp. 79, 80.
7 *The British Weekly*, April 9, 1891, p. 390.
Secession Church, described as the largest and most respectable dissenting congregation in the city in 1840. Here the "popularity" centered on Hugh Keugh, an "eloquent and amiable preacher" whose sermons were "good, clear, and argumentative." In Aberdeen, the Belmont Street United Presbyterian Church attracted "many of the foremost public men in the city" because of David Beatt, "a preacher with a distinct personality and decided power." The middle class congregations, desiring vitality and persuasive practicality in the pulpit, nurtured preaching appealing to men's hearts as well as men's minds. This was preaching aimed at the total personality of the man in the pew.

Third, there was a simple, less profound and often more picturesque and colloquial type of preaching appealing to all classes of men but particularly attractive to the working class. Such a congregation was Free St. John's in Edinburgh. William Hanna, writes that here sat:

Peers and peasants, citizens and strangers, millionaires and mechanics, the judge from the bench, the carter from the roadside, the high-born dame, the serving-maid of low degree—all for once close together.

1 Robert Malcolm, Clerical Sketches, Glasgow, pp. 36-37. Malcolm says that this Church retained its character attracting the "well-dressed" even though the Church was located in an "unfashionable" district.

2 Ibid.


4 Augustine once wrote that it was necessary for the preacher "to teach that he may instruct...to please that he may hold attention...to persuade that he may be victorious." This was the balanced aim of the class of preachers just described. See Augustine, On Christian Doctrine, The Library of Liberal Arts, p. 133.

5 David K. Guthrie, Charles J. Guthrie, op. cit., p. 220. Among the more famous men worshipping at Free St. John's were: Hugh Miller, Sir James Y. Simpson Lord Rutherford and Henry Cockburn, pp. 222-228.
Such a preacher was Thomas Guthrie, the man Henry Cockburn called: "Our greatest preacher...the orator of the poor."¹ Cockburn has described Guthrie’s preaching as:

Practical and natural; passionate without vehemence...always generous and devoted, he is a very powerful preacher. His language and accent are very Scotch and his gesture the most graceful I have ever seen in any public speaker....Everything he does glows with a frank, gallant warmheartedness rendered more delightful by a boyish simplicity of air and style.²

In Edinburgh James Begg also appealed to "all classes of society," particularly the female servants.³ While his preaching was neither "deep nor profound," Horatius Bonar has said it was "Impressive and his style clear...his utterance was energetic....He did not overshoot his audience so that the common people heard him gladly."⁴ Simple, but powerful preaching was attractive to the working men and women of both Edinburgh’s Fountainbridge and West Port Free Churches.⁵ In Glasgow the Gordon Street United Presbyterian Church reached "all grades and conditions" of men from the rich merchant and manufacturer to the small huxter or hard-working artisan."⁶ The preacher, A. C. Beattie was popular for his message

²David K. and Charles J. Guthrie, op. cit., p. 198. In his Circuit Journeys, Cockburn says that Guthrie preached "with simplicity, assuredness and success, to soothe and elevate the poor by all the hopes and comforts which they peculiarly require," p. 188. While it is not the purpose of this section to refer to the sermon itself, it should be noted that Guthrie himself was aware of his appeal to the working class as when he says in one sermon, "all true followers of Jesus are of the working class" with working class in italics. See T. Guthrie, Man and The Gospel, p. 228.
³Sketches Of The Edinburgh Clergy, p. 11.
⁵The Free Church of Scotland Monthly, August 1, 1898, p. 256. Also February 1, 1900, pp. 25-26. November 1, 1898, West Port is called "The church of the working classes and the very poor," p. 255.
⁶Robert Malcolm, op. cit., p. 128. Also see: John Smith, Our Scottish Clergy, pp. 167ff.
and manner was "homely, yet striking." 1 In Glasgow the Free Church's Wynd Mission burgeoned to twenty-four congregations. 2 In part the success of this effort was due to "racy and powerful" preachers such as Robert Cunningham, an ex-pugilist. 3 In Inverness, the Free North Church owed its existence to "the Men" and their insistence that they secure their own kind of preaching. 4 "The Men," who were themselves largely working class, were not disappointed for the pulpit of the Free North Church prospered as it perpetuated the "powerful, good, solid" preaching that was akin to the provincialism of the Highlands. 5 It seems that the less pompous the preacher, the broader the social base of his influence. To many citizens of the city, preaching was primarily to aim for the heart. The speech of the pulpit was to be that of the common classes. Many members of the more educated and economically substantial classes also found such preaching attractive because it was clothed in human interest. Members of the working classes came to such churches, if they came at all, because this was the one type of preaching they could understand.

Within these three general types of preaching there were still other factors affecting the stratification of the city congregation. Two such factors were education and age.

Among the middle class churches of the city there were those congregations catering even more specifically to the intelligentsia. In Edinburgh the Old Kirk

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1 Ibid., p. 129. Also John Smith, op. cit., notes his "simplest phraseology," p. 165.

2 The Free Church of Scotland Monthly, January 1, 1899, pp. 1-4. It should be noted that in this period the Church tends to speak of its congregations limited to the working classes not as 'Churches' but as 'Missions.'

3 Ibid., p. 4.

4 Ibid., April 1, 1844, pp. 76-77.

5 Ibid., p. 78.
pointed to Old Greyfriars as the nest of the city's "honest intelligent doubters."¹

This was the pulpit of Robert Lee who has been called the "champion of free thought of Scotland."² Lee was followed at Old Greyfriars by Robert Wallace, a "scholarly, cultivated, eloquent preacher."³ The Free Church of Edinburgh had its own intellectual citadel, it was the Free High Church, fittingly located at the top of the Mound. From Robert Gordon to Walter C. Smith, the occupants of this pulpit sought to impress "men of intellectual taste and talent."⁴ Thus Gordon was known for his "thoroughness and impressiveness," Smith, as a preacher "who claimed and used his freedom as a thinking man."⁵ To the outside observer, the pulpit of the Free High Church appeared to be "literary and devotional."⁶

The more intellectual pulpit was not restricted to Edinburgh. In Inverness, the origin of the Free East Church went back to 1798 when permission was granted for the erection of a Chapel of Ease "for the benefit of the better educated classes of Inverness."⁷ David Sutherland, the preacher in that pulpit from 1839 to 1875 was described as "a man of culture...literature and scholarship" whose

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²John Cameron, The Parish of Campsie, 1892, p. 54, related Robert Lee's concern that the church was losing "the aristocracy and educated classes." John Anderson, Sketches Of The Edinburgh Clergy, 1832, describes an earlier preacher in Old Greyfriars, John Inglis, as one whose sermons were of "the high intellectual character...not a preacher for the crowd," pp. 21-22.

³Ibid., p. 17.

⁴The Free Church of Scotland Monthly, June, 1898, p. 128. The British Weekly, April 15, 1887, p. 3.


⁶Ibid.

⁷The Free Church of Scotland Monthly, April 1, 1899, p. 75.
pulpit style was "quiet and thoughtful." In St. Andrews both the Old Kirk and the Free Church reflected the academic atmosphere of the community. In the Old Kirk, John Tulloch was the "favorite" of the students. To at least one student, Dr. Ainslie of the Free Church suffered in his popularity as a preacher for students because his "essay like sermons" gave the impression that he was "never quite able to forget that he was preaching to Sir David Brewster and one or two of the professors." In Aberdeen "the eloquent and thoughtful sermons" of James Leask of the Rosemount Parish Church attracted an educated audience of whom "a very large proportion were university students." Where education was a major factor conditioning the character of a congregation the pulpit was more solemn and scholarly on the one hand and probably more innovative on the other.

Another factor influencing the stratification of the city church was that of age. This is particularly prominent in young people who as a group tended to be attracted to the more dynamic pulpits where they heard a dominant, sometimes unique, personality. Dynamic was certainly one word denoting the preaching of Alexander Whyte and his later colleague at St. George's West, Hugh Black. In part this appeal to university students was a legacy of the earlier preaching of Andrew Thomson. However in 1898 The British Weekly noted, as an apparent

1 Ibid., p. 76.
3 Ibid.
4 Alexander Gammie, op. cit., p. 46.
5 John Lee and Robert Wallace of Edinburgh's Old Greyfriars, Walter C. Smith of Edinburgh's Free High Church, John Tulloch of St. Andrews Parish and John Caird in Glasgow were all noted for their openness to new ideas and new theology. Another innovative and non-traditional layman who was very popular with students was Henry Drummond.
exception, the "very deep impression" Hugh Black was making on the young people of Edinburgh. Unique, was an appropriate description of the sermons of the blind poet-preacher, George Matheson in Edinburgh's St. Bernard's who was extremely popular with the youth of Edinburgh. Similarly, the preaching of John Brown in fashionable St. Andrew's was both dynamic and unique. With his "pawky Scotch humor" this "striking and original preacher" cast his influence on Robert Murray M'Cheyne, Andrew Somerville and a whole "crowd of young men" who became ministers of the Free Church. In Aberdeen it appears that the dominant personality and enchanting enthusiasm of David P. M'Lees of the Woodside Parish Church, G. H. D. MacGregor of the East Free Church, and George Adam Smith of the Queen's Cross Free Church captured for them the allegiance of many of the youth of Aberdeen in the last decade of the century. As young people attended one church and neglected others, they not only exposed yet another layer in the stratified pattern of church attendance; they also cast their vote for the popular preacher.

In part, the theological disputes and homiletical controversies of the century were one aspect of the dialogue, if not the collision, between the various parochial traditions shaping popular preaching. In preaching, this clash was most pronounced in the manuscript controversy. In the country, it was usually essential that the popular preacher abandon any manuscript. Indeed a minister's

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1In 1892 the translation of Hugh Black to St. George's reached the General Assembly of the Free Church. Part of the plea of the Edinburgh Presbytery stressed the importance of a pulpit with "Freshness of Scholarship, likely to attract and be in sympathy with students." Free Church Assembly Papers, "St. George's, Edinburgh," 1892. The British Weekly, December 1, 1892, p. 130.


3The Free Church of Scotland Monthly, Nov. 1, 1899, pp. 247, 248.

call to a particular church was often dependent on whether or not he used a manuscript.\textsuperscript{1} A. H. Charteris has written that freedom from the manuscript was "always an important fact in the reputation of a country minister."\textsuperscript{2} The Scotsman in an editorial comment on a country congregation choosing a minister said: "Rustic audiences have a great respect for lungs and a proportionate contempt for paper."\textsuperscript{3} Even so famous a preacher as Thomas Chalmers could not escape the rejection of the country pew because "he was pewin the paper wi his nose."\textsuperscript{4}

The rural disdain for "the paper" was simply a reflection of the provincial loyalty to tradition. In the Border village of Yarrow, the people were more concerned with the manner of delivery than the length of the sermon. James Russell writes:

The reading was not the preaching of the word in their eyes; they had the high authority, if not of the Bible, at least of the Catechism, for the distinction. It is one which continues still to be made.\textsuperscript{5}

David Woodside contends that in the United Presbyterian Church:

The gospel was to be set forth in its own native majesty....Any attempt to make it palatable to man's heart by fine writing or by "purple passages" could only thwart the real purpose of preaching.\textsuperscript{6}

Henry Cockburn comments on the views of those abhoring a manuscript:

Their...notion is that in communicating the sacred message, the preacher must give forth the inspiration that he feels. Everything

\textsuperscript{3}The Scotsman, December 25, 1875, p.6.
\textsuperscript{5}Ibid., p. 21. See Larger Catechism #159. J. Campbell Smith, \textit{William Wallace, Robert Wallace}, p. 64.
\textsuperscript{6}David Woodside, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 151.
savouring of preparation...seems tainted by art and the world; and
the very composure, which is the principle charm of deliberate fore-
thought is unsatisfactory and even offensive to those who delight
in that excitement which is kindled, as they think by instant con-
tact with the altar....The cooler clergy of Episcopacy and of
Established Presbytery have generally sneered at this spontaneous
enthusiasm, and of course their opponents have courted popularity
by cultivating it. Hence to read a sermon has always been one of
the recognized marks of lukewarmness.¹

To those steeped in the language of the Confession of Faith and the spirit of
the Covenanters, preaching with "paper" appeared to be a sign of the preacher's
"unfitness."²

While the manuscript was often anathema in the country, it was commonplace
in the city. One observer writes that it was John Murray who in 1817 was "one
of the first who introduced into Aberdeen the practice of preaching without a
paper."³ Donald Sage makes the sweeping claim that in Edinburgh in 1813 all the
ministers read their sermons.⁴ While this statement is dubious in its extensive-
ness, it is no doubt true that in Edinburgh the more acceptable preachers used
a manuscript. Thomas Guthrie indicates that in Edinburgh during the first half
of the century there was considerable pressure brought upon the preacher to insure
his use of a manuscript.⁵ Certainly the fact that such well-known preachers as

²David Cuthbertson, The Auld Kirk Minister, p. 31. Also see James Begg,
³James Bruce, The Aberdeen Pulpit, Aberdeen, 1840, p. 52. Originally
this series of articles appeared in the "Aberdeen Monthly Circular."
⁴Donald Sage, Memorabilia Domestica, 1889, p. 237.
in a letter dated 1804 suggests that the general mode of preaching in both
Edinburgh and Glasgow was in the tradition of Hugh Blair, which would also indi-
cate preaching from a manuscript. See: Letters of John Ramsay of Ochtertyle
1799-1812, pp. 123, 33, 34.
Thomas Chalmers, R. S. Candlish, Robert Gordon, Norman MacLeod, John Robertson and Edward Irving used a manuscript indicates its acceptability in the larger cities.¹ In 1878 The British and Foreign Evangelical Review noted with obvious concern:

In Scotland, amongst the Presbyterian churches reading is becoming more and more the rule; and we doubt much if it be maintained that the hold of the pulpit over the people is increasing.²

Viewing the manuscript controversy as it touched the various Presbyterian denominations, it is apparent that it was Presbyterian Dissent which was most unanimous in its disdain for the manuscript.³ In 1849 the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church officially declared:

The reading of discourses in the ministration of the pulpit is contrary to the practice of this Church, and not for edification, [and enjoined] the Presbyteries to take care that the brethren do not deviate from the ordinary practice of the Church in this except in cases where, for reasons shown, leave is asked and obtained from the Presbytery.⁴

Ironically, the success of Presbyterian Dissent in the major cities of Scotland suggests that the disdain for the manuscript was not limited to the country districts.⁵ Obviously there was also a strong element of traditionalism in the cities.

Looking back, it seems that this debate over the use or disuse of a manuscript is illustrative of the restrictive tendency in homiletics in the nineteenth century. Until the closing decades of the century, a man was expected

²The British and Foreign Evangelical Review, 1878, p. 519.
⁴The United Presbyterian Church, Synod Proceedings, 1849, p. 187.
⁵See Appendix III.
to conform to the pattern or tradition of his particular congregation. In a country parish was usually dependent upon the abandonment of the manuscript. In practice this often meant hours of agony in what A. K. H. Boyd called "the laborious...and absurd committing to memory of what cried aloud that it was not extemporaneous." Obviously the extemporaneous sermon was the way out for other preachers, but it is suspected that more than one parishioner's verdict was like George Eliot's character, Mr. Hackitt:

Our parson can preach as good a sermon as need be heard when he writes it down. But when he tries to preach wi' out book, he rambles about, and doesn't stick to his text; and every now and then he flounders about like a sheep as has cast itself, and can't get on its legs again. If a man's temperament left him with no alternative but the curse of "the paper" then he was advised to "use it as if he did not use it." Again, if a man was a United Presbyterian preacher he had no choice but to trust his memory or his extemporary ability. Should the preacher find himself in an Edinburgh pulpit


2 A. K. H. Boyd, "This Ministry," Life and Work, 1891, June, p. 82. This was the retiring moderator's address to the 1891 Old Kirk Assembly. A similar account of the preaching of the United Presbyterian Church is found in Rab and His Friends, p. 97, where Dr. John Brown speaks of the preaching of his father. John MacFarlane in The Life and Times Of George Lawson, relates how in the Secession Church it was imperative that the sermon be committed to memory and that in his first sermon the preacher get through without "sticking" the discourse ...meaning without "any pause, or break-down, or resort to the manuscript," p. 50. A. R. MacEwen, Life and Letters Of John Cairns, p. 317, notes this tendency "to stick" in Cairns' preaching.


4 Charles Brown, The Ministry, p. 32. Also see George Hill, Counsels, p. 68.

5 James Brown, The Life of John Laidie, p. 219. Note, the Minute Book Of The United Presbyterian Church, Edinburgh, October and November 1893 indicates that the "Committee on Delivery of Students Discourses" still enforced this demand of no manuscript, although there was growing concern that some were using notes and manuscripts. The United Presbyterian Magazine, Vol. XXVI, Nov. 1,
the demand was just as narrow and restrictive; popularity was too often contingent upon the successful use of a manuscript. Consequently men, like Principal Cunningham, who had carried the day as popular preachers in other pulpits, met their Waterloo in the Athens of Scotland. As long as the individual pulpit was tied to a rigid traditionalism and an equally stern scheme of stratification, the road to popularity was most often that of conformity to the taste of the people of that particular congregation.

The Non-Theological Nature Of Popular Preaching

The emergence of the popular preacher in the nineteenth century is a witness to the importance of the non-theological aspect of preaching. The emphasis on the non-theological nature of popular preaching is

1882, p. 520. Here it is contended that now reading is "very common in our pulpits." Still reporting a discussion in the Edinburgh Presbytery it was said 80 to 90% of the laity preferred no paper, p. 514.

Andrew Duncan, The Scottish Sanctuary, p. 99. For another record of Principal Cunningham as the "popular preacher" at Greenock see The Free Church Weekly Record, Dec. 29, 1861, p. 97.

2See Early Letters of Marcus Dodd, D.D., 1850-1864, pp. 161, 173, 247, 248. See James Brown, Life Of A Scottish Probationer, pp. 174, 175, 306. The Free Church of Scotland Monthly, March, 1898, p. 53, relates the feeling of disappointment of many members of St. Peters Church in Dundee when Islay Burns succeeded Robert Murray M'Cheyne, M'Cheyne was not an academic and his sermons were more of an extemporary nature whereas Burns was more intellectual and carefully wrote out his discourses committing them carefully to memory. Though Burns succeeded in carving his niche, he was followed in 1864 by Duncan Macgregor, a preacher in the M'Cheyne tradition.
positively evident in many descriptions and definitions of preaching coming from both clergy and laity. George Hill and his son Alexander stressed the two qualities of "distinct enunciation and earnestness."\(^1\) Ebenezer Porter, whose text was prescribed reading in the United Presbyterian Divinity Hall wrote that the three facets of good preaching were "simplicity, seriousness and earnestness."\(^2\) Charles Brown, addressing the divinity students of the Free Church said that preaching was composed of seven properties of which four were non-theological: "direct, easy to understand, lively, assured."\(^3\) In 1854 a writer in *The British and Foreign Evangelical Review* said that preaching must always be "didactic, analytic and that of argument."\(^4\) John Ker said that the three things which gave the "sermon wings" were "style, illustration, feeling."\(^5\) Deas Cromarty wrote in *The British Weekly*: "Large generalisations, the best examples, an eye for effective points, and an individual flavour all through—these make a preacher who can always hold his own."\(^6\) Thomas Binnie observed in *The Free Church of Scotland Monthly* that William Symington of the Great Hamilton Street Free Church, Glasgow, possessed all the gifts which go to make a great preacher: "He had a noble presence, a refined and winning manner, a clear and musical voice, great

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command of beautiful and appropriate language, and an ease and grace in delivery which cannot be described.\(^1\)

The dominance of the non-theological nature of popular preaching is negatively evident in the contempt with which the more theologically acute preachers viewed mere popular preaching.\(^2\) Edward Irving who had caustic words for the popular idolatry of the pulpit cautioned:

Let the priest be careful how he permits idolatry to fasten upon him, however quietly, however insidiously; let him beware how he receive upon himself one portion of that faithful regard which is wholly Christ's. For the idolatry of a multitude though it call itself religious, is a fickle thing; and there is only one of two fates for an idol—either to be worshipped, or to be stamped into powder and trodden under foot.\(^3\)

Norman MacLeod who expressed concern at the "influence of the mob" over the clergy recorded in his diary: "O God in heaven, keep me from courting popularity."\(^4\) John Caird, whom Professor Robert Flint described as "the foremost pulpit orator of his day in Scotland," was equally harsh on the popular preacher whom he described as:

the flippant, showy, ready-tongued, loud-voiced, shallow declaimer, who can easily string together a few common-places of stock theology, relieve them by a certain tawdry brilliance or illustration or a feeble infusion of sentimental pathos, catch the proper pulpit tone of conventional solemnity, and fire off the whole with a declamatory fervour that tickles the ears and secures the votes of the multitude.\(^5\)

Robert Lee, whose preaching appealed to the intellectual skeptics of Edinburgh, satirically condemned popular preaching as "the dignity of the pulpit...the dignity

\(^1\)The Free Church of Scotland Monthly, September 1, 1898, p. 207.
\(^2\)Much of the literature decrying "popular preaching" was the negative reaction of the more academic and theological preacher.
\(^3\)Edward Irving, Collected Writings, Vol. 4, pp. 71, 72.
\(^4\)Donald MacLeod, Memoir of Norman MacLeod, pp. 76, 58, 59.
\(^5\)Good Words, March 1, 1868, p. 197. Also pp. 198, 200.
of dulness! the dignity of fine sentences, holiday phrases and good-for-nothing
generalities." Each of these men decried mere popular preaching. Yet each of
these men, in his own sphere, was a popular preacher.

What precisely were the non-theological factors determining popular
preaching? Three words appear again and again in the many descriptive and criti-
cal assessments of preaching: eloquence, earnestness, edification.

Eloquence reiterated the popular demand that the sermon be delivered in
an interesting and captivating manner. Eloquence referred to the rhetorical
pathos...Fervid oratory...distinct enunciation...striking delivery...flowers of
speech and fine language...classical language...velvet-mouthed preaching" were
all used as synonyms for eloquence.² David M'Lees of Aberdeen was said to be an
eloquent preacher because "his sermons were models of conciseness and lucidity
and characterised by a lofty dignified tone."³ One writer called Thomas Guthrie
"the most consummate orator he ever heard in the pulpit" because of his picturesque
language and thrilling descriptions.⁴ To both Thomas Guthrie and John Ker the
preacher was a painter..."painting in words."⁵ John Caird was said to possess

¹R. H. Story, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 270. Story's wife spoke of "the mere
twaddle" of much popular preaching. Later Reminiscences, p. 69. In 1847, p. 227,
MacPhail's Journal derided the "three popular properties" of preaching as "loosen-
ness, loudness and length."

²Alexander Gammie, op. cit., pp. 112-113. John Cameron, The Parish of
George Hill, Counsels, p. 67. David Woodside, op. cit., p. 167. James Bruce,
The Aberdeen Pulpit, p. 9. John Ramsay, Letters of John Ramsay Of Ochteryre,
1799-1812, pp. 16, 99. Ramsay had sharp words for those who in preaching would
have nothing "but the ice cream of sentiment, heightened by the raspberry flavour
of style pushed to extreme," p. 74. Yet the tenor of Ramsay's many statements
on preaching is that the majority wanted this kind of popular eloquence in the
pulpit.

³Alexander Gammie, op. cit., p. 83.

⁴O. S. Salmond, Reminiscences of Arbroath and St. Andrews, pp. 74-76.

"all the requisites of a great speaker," because among other qualities "he carefully studies even the minutiae of his elocution." Addressing the students of Glasgow University in 1889, Caird said:

Society will never, by reason of advancing culture and the diffusion of literature, outgrow the relish and demand for good speaking, for this, if for no other reason, that besides outward circumstances and accessories, there is something in what we call eloquent speech which by no effort or artifice can be produced in literary form.

Eloquence in one of its many forms was indispensable to the popular preacher.

In 1855 an editorial in The Witness Newspaper inquired:

On what principle does popularity in preaching depend?...on a few pretty feathers; but it is an important talent, depend on what it may; and the pretty feathers, if they secure it, are not to be despised.

Eloquence testified to the preacher's ability to "arrest attention, not otherwise to be won, by the mere play of [the] brilliant faculties" of speech.

Earnestness denoted the concern of the pew for the spirit in which the preacher delivered his sermon. The popular preacher was expected to be a man who spoke with feeling and sincerity. He was to be serious in the pulpit and earnestness was the term measuring his seriousness. Earnestness pointed in part to the more emotional side of the preacher's delivery. Earnest preaching was

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2. John Caird, University Addresses, 1898, p. 345.
3. Donald Sage, op. cit., pp. 310-311. In Aberdeen Dr. Kidd was popular because of his "eccentric" habit of acting the part of the character he was describing.
4. The Witness, 1855. See the collection of editorial clippings in New College Library.
described in such terms as "warm and fervid...affectionate...preaching from the heart...lively vividness...forcible...full of life...extreme vehemence...impressive...animated...direct...unction...passion...energetic."\(^1\) Earnestness was the fire of meaningful oratory, it was called "the soul of eloquence."\(^2\) Thus it was said that "the burning eloquence of Chalmers covered all the faults of his composition, pronunciation and manner."\(^3\) Earnestness was said to be "thought couched in burning words and these burning words uttered with all the impassioned energy and earnestness which their infinite importance demands."\(^4\) Ebenezer Porter wrote of earnestness:

> The highest order of pulpit eloquence is nothing but the flame of enlightened piety united with the flame of genius. When this glows in the bosom it sanctifies and concentrates all the powers of the mind. It makes even the stripling warrior valiant in fight and enables him to cut off the head of Goliath with the sword wrested from his own hand.\(^5\)

John Ker said that the "sympathetic feeling which is put into (a sermon) is the first wisdom in a preacher."\(^6\)

In a secondary sense, earnestness was the emotional marriage of the pulpit and the pew. The popular preacher was a man who roused the feelings of the man in the pew. More than one preacher was rejected by a congregation because his

The British and Foreign Evangelical Review, 1861, p. 521.  


\(^3\) The British and Foreign Evangelical Review, p. 82. John Brown, *Rab and His Friends*, p. 122.


sermons were "lifeless...cold and insipid." 1 Kenneth MacDonald has described the Highlander as one who "likes to have his conscience touched, and he regards preaching that has no rousing effect on him as tame and pointless." 2 Henry Cockburn having "cononically" endured an exceedingly "dull" sermon in Inverary noted in his diary: "God help the natives both for the quality and the quantity." 3 Alexander Gammie called earnestness "contagious enthusiasm." 4 Deas Cromarty described it as preaching "from the heart to the heart in manly piety." 5 Ebenezer Porter said that the earnest preacher "will make you understand him, for he understands himself....He will make you feel for he feels himself." 6 Charles Brown suggested that earnest preaching was "conversation with the hearers." 7 Here there was "no chit-chat...no declamation...no mere oratory...but preaching direct in thought, in expression, in utterance—your whole soul and very eyes in immediate intercourse with your hearers." 8 Earnestness was the gauging by which the congregation measured the preacher's feeling and sincerity. It would seem that this standard of measurement was itself dependent on the mood and feeling of the congregation.

2Kenneth MacDonald, Social and religious Life In The Highlands, p. 10.
3Henry Cockburn, Circuit Journeys, p. 182. This particular volume is a good illustration of the kind of non-theological judgments Cockburn makes of the preachers he hears, pp. 41, 45, 161, 266.
5The British Weekly, November 14, 1895, p. 60.
6Ebenezer Porter, op. cit., p. 62.
7Charles Brown, The Ministry, p. 35.
8Ibid.
Edification was the word describing both the objective of the sermon and
the congregation’s evaluation of the sermon. Edification was the word used in
The Directory For Public Worship, to describe the task of the preacher. ¹ The
sermon was more than an emotional plea and the man in the pew sought something
more than a mere display of the preacher’s seriousness and sincerity. The sermon
itself in its content and the preacher’s style and delivery was to instruct and
bring spiritual profit to the congregation. Thus edification if the last, was
by no means the least of the non-theological factors shaping popular preaching.
One layman protested against a minister’s settlement on the ground that "instruc-
tion and edification are the special and unspeakably important end and object
of his settlement." ² The many cases of contested settlements in the courts of
the Old Kirk in the 1840’s hinged on the contention that the sermon "did" or "did
not edify me."³ In 1888 an article in The Scottish Church queried:

Does the minister always make his pulpit services as interesting
and impressive as he might? People will not go to church if the
service and sermon are not fitted to interest them—and they will
not continue to feel interest, if there is not instructive and
spiritual benefit to be gained.⁴

The word "edify" appears to have been used to cover a variety of demands
as well as eccentricities. It was a respectable term used by the laity to clothe
their dislike for a preacher. In the case of a settlement at the Parish of Insch,
the Presbytery interrogated the protesters as to their use of the word "edify."
One person defined edification negatively as the failure of the preacher to "come

¹The Directory For Public Worship, "Of The Preaching of the Word."
²The Church of Scotland, Assembly Papers, 1844, p. 2.
³See almost any case in the Assembly Papers between 1843 and 1848.
home with power to me."1 Another said: "I mean there were a deal of his words I did not understand."2 Still another declared that the "sermon did not come home to me, as I was accustomed to with the former minister and others."3

To declare that a preacher's sermon was edifying was a judgment illuminating other qualities essential to popular preaching. Edification testified to the ability of the preacher to adapt his sermon to the level of the congregation. There were those who believed that failure "to preach in a style and manner...level to the capacity of those to whom he is to minister" was valid ground for "objection to a presentee."4 Thus an edifying sermon was one adapted to the intellectual level of the congregation. William Corson, the presentee to Girvan Parish, was said by some to be insufficiently educated:

The first thing that struck me was that the discourses appeared to be the composition of a person who was not well educated. His language jarred upon my ear as ungrammatical very frequently, and occasionally it appeared to me that he made use of a wrong word to express the meaning which he had in view. I think that his discourses were unimpressive. There was a want of connection and of a leading idea, and I could not make out what was the leading object he had in view...I could not understand what he meant, and of course, was not edified.5

The preaching of John Caird was viewed by the more erudite Westminster Review as:

Just the sort of preaching that suits a congregation of average intelligence; it does not insult that intelligence by saying trite things in a commonplace way; nor does it go to the opposite extreme for going beyond their depth.6

1 The Church of Scotland, Assembly Papers, 1844, "The Case Of The Parish Of Insch," p. 22.
2 Ibid., p. 25.
3 Ibid., p. 29.
An edifying sermon was one adapted to the theological capacity of a congregation. In Plockton Parish Church, John Stewart was resisted because "his discourses were characterised by a total want of gospel doctrines and that the subject...was not exposted by him according to the doctrines which that subject contained and involved." Marcus Dods believed that popular preaching was selecting subjects "which people will naturally wish to hear" and then "adapting that subject to the intelligence and interest of the people." A. K. H. Boyd tersely wrote: "The very first aim of the preacher should be to interest." A sermon was edifying when it secured attention because of the relevance of the subject to the needs, education, interest, belief and language of the people.

In this century of the popular preacher a pleasing pulpit style was "the only gateway" to success. The pew weighed the pulpit in terms of its own self interest. One writer in The British Weekly bluntly wrote:

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One layman wrote to Robert Murray M'Cheyne: "it was not so much what you said, as your manner of speaking it that struck me." John A. James, An Earnest Ministry, p. 131.

One critic noted that in the pleasing style of Dwight L. Moody there was "a divine providence...an incarnate rebuke...to a system of training which tends naturally to produce profound theologians, cultivated scholars, classic writers, rather than effective popular speakers." See: The British and Foreign Evangelical Review, 1886, p. 98.

The public now-a-days is apt not to care a rap for a minister's pride in his sermon. It thinks chiefly of its own taste and spine.¹

The preacher knew this and many adjusted their style and content to the taste of their hearers. In an induction sermon in Edinburgh, Thomas S. Dickson said: "Your success here, humanly speaking, will depend very largely, if not entirely, upon the ability and effectiveness with which you preach."² A. K. H. Boyd of St. Andrews wrote: "Preachers who cannot preach at all have even fewer opportunities here of holding forth."³ The growing consensus at the end of the century was that preaching, if it was to be effective, was to be popular in style and delivery.

The theological, ecclesiastical and social setting of the nineteenth century gave preaching its impetus. The theological legacy of the Confession of Faith defined the preacher's task and cast his theology into molds which while rigid and sometimes sterile were still explicit and directive. The ecclesiastical environment sharpened the preacher's mind endowing him with those academic tools meant to give his sermons a thorough and scholarly polish. Unfortunately the legacy of the Confession and the objective of the ecclesiastical environment were not necessarily the same as the interests or concerns of the people. The Berechtiung of preaching was theological and ecclesiastical. The sitz im leben of preaching was neither theological nor ecclesiastical...it was social. The man in the pew wanted a faith that worked, a faith fitted to his needs and level

¹The British Weekly, April 9, 1891, p. 390.

²Thomas S. Dickson, "On Preaching," The Free Church of Scotland Monthly, October 1, 1900, p. 230. Also see: James Stalker, op. cit., p. 120. Marcus Dods, On Preaching, pp. 16ff.

³A. K. H. Boyd, East Coast Days; And Memories, 1889, p. 54.
with his understanding. It was the preacher's task to integrate these various demands. The context of preaching was one of challenge and conflict. The content of the ensuing sermon was that of "diversity and development." ¹

"The preacher when he is a theologian at all, ought to be the best of theologians. In his vocation he has an admirable touchstone of doctrines. Those which cannot be preached, or preached with effect, are not true."

The British Weekly, 1894
CHAPTER IV

THE OLDER EVANGELICAL SERMON

The evangelical pulpit of the nineteenth century was formed in the cradle of conflict. In 1800 Moderatism was the firmly entrenched opponent. The Moderate party controlled the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland until 1834. Moderatism dominated the pulpit until at least 1815 if not 1834. Within the Church of Scotland the debates in the General Assembly over church extension and chapels of ease, foreign missions and Bible societies, patronage and ecclesiastical sovereignty all indicate the breadth and intensity of the Moderate-Evangelical controversy. The Disruption of 1843 was the bitter culmination of this conflict.

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1 I. D. L. Clark, *Moderatism and the Moderate Party in The Church of Scotland 1752-1805*, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Cambridge, Kings College, 1964. This thesis which stresses the distinction between Modernism and the Moderate Party is the most helpful study to date on eighteenth century Modernism. In my thesis I am not concerned with the Evangelical Party as such but with the implementation of an evangelical theology in preaching. By evangelicalism I mean that theological movement built on the revealed doctrines of sin, grace, and salvation in Jesus Christ. It should be noted that just as Evangelicalism did not reject natural theology, neither did Modernism reject revealed theology. The difference was one of emphasis.

2 In 1814 Andrew Thomson was called to the new St. George's Church in Edinburgh. In 1815 Thomas Chalmers came to the Tron Parish in Glasgow. Both were immensely popular preachers of an evangelical persuasion. It is also at this time that Presbyterian Dissent with its evangelical emphasis was becoming a strong religious force in the south and central regions of Scotland. See Chapter 3, "The Growth and Appeal of Dissent." It is impossible to fix a date when evangelicalism became dominant in the pulpit. Certainly such was the case by the time of the General Assembly of 1834. However, by 1815 evangelicalism was very strong, if not dominant.
Theologically, Moderate and Evangelicalism were both orthodox but the orthodox theology of this period had a "two-storied character." The lower story was that of natural theology based on reason. The upper story was that of revealed theology.

The Moderate sermon stressed natural theology. The Moderate preacher sought to make his message understandable to his parishioners. To be understood he believed that he must be reasonable. He appealed to man's natural sense of duty. The foremost Moderate preacher of the eighteenth century, Hugh Blair, made ethics the dominant theme in his sermons. In retrospect, the Moderate sermon has been called the Scottish accommodation of eighteenth century

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2. Ibid., pp. 14, 18. Tillich says: "Natural theology is rational theology. Rational theology is a theology which through arguments for the existence of God and the like attempts to build a universally acceptable theology by pure reason." Also see Alan Richardson, *History Sacred And Profane*, p. 21.

3. Ibid. Tillich suggests that the trinity and the incarnation were examples of the doctrines of revealed theology while "the doctrines of creation and providence were doubtful." Principal among the revealed doctrines was that of salvation.

4. I. D. L. Clark, *op. cit.*, pp. 196, 248ff. Here Clark illustrates the attempt of the Moderate preacher to be "reasonable".

5. The Edinburgh Christian Magazine was an organ of the Old Kirk. One of the features of this magazine was the monthly publication of a sermon by an Old Kirk minister. Now the Old Kirk was by no means devoid of evangelical preachers. Still this was the one place where the Moderate preacher survived with a degree of strength. A thorough analysis of all the sermons appearing in this magazine between 1850 and 1854 was made. In at least half of these sermons some subject relating to Christian duties and ethics was the major theme in place of the more obvious doctrines of revealed theology.

6. Hugh Blair, *Sermons*, Vol. I-V. In these 90 sermons by Blair 74 have a decidedly ethical theme. The argument is rational usually pointing to nature or human experience in the world. The major doctrine Blair stresses is providence.
rationalism. At best, the Moderate sermon sought to make the Christian virtues a reality in society. At worst, the Moderate sermon bordered on deism.

The evangelical sermon emphasized the doctrines of revealed theology. The evangelical preacher sought to set the house of orthodoxy in order by reaffirming the revealed doctrines of sin, grace and salvation. Andrew Thomson, the great spokesman for the Evangelical party in Edinburgh in the first quarter of the century, declared in an induction sermon for another minister:

Preach...faithfully and earnestly the sovereign grace of God—the unsearchable riches of Christ—the doctrine of salvation by divine mercy through faith in a crucified Redeemer—and the necessity of holiness as produced by the renewing and sanctifying influences of the Spirit, and as extending to all the affections of the heart, and to all the actions of the life.

Thomas Chalmers, Thomson's counterpart in Glasgow, said that the "essence of good preaching lies in harmonizing justification with sanctification, and in pressing them equally home...it is your part to make full declaration both of repentance

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4 Andrew Thomson, Sermons and Sacramental Exhortations, Edinburgh, 1831, pp. 26-27. Also see Thomson, Sermons On Infidelity, pp. 37, 40, 41. In an introductory lecture in Aberdeen in 1846, J. McLagen defined an "Evangelical Christian" as one "believing the Bible to be true, its doctrines unerring, its authority divine." J. McLagen, Lecture Delivered At The Opening of The Free Church Divinity Hall, Aberdeen, p. 4.
towards God and of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ." Horatius Bonar, who studied his theology under Chalmers, said:

In preaching, we stand at Bethlehem, or at Capernaum, or at Jerusalem. We seek to bring every hearer of our message into direct contact with these places and their events. The power of our testimony lies in the directness of its communication with the manger and the cross; as well as with all between. We set aside the eighteen centuries that have intervened, and we go back to the great fountain-head, as if we were living in the day of Christ, and moving among His miracles and gracious words.

Robert S. Candlish, once described as "pre-eminently the preacher of the Free Church of Scotland," noted in the preface to one of his books of sermons:

I believe that what is required of me is that, on the one hand, I apprehend God's sovereign grace in his justification of the unrighteous through faith in the righteousness of his Son, and in his choice and calling of the unworthy and the unwilling according to his own mere good pleasure; and then, on the other hand, that apprehending this sovereign grace in its immediate personal application to me, and as ruling God's treatment of me, I enter into the spirit of it, and apply it myself to all with whom I have anything to do.... These are the two themes: the sovereignty of his grace in election and vocation.

John Cairns, the well-known preacher and theologian in the United Presbyterian Church, said that "the two watchwords of evangelical religion" are the "atonement" and the "second birth." The early evangelicals emphasized orthodoxy's upper story of revealed theology.

The "older evangelical" preachers were characterized by their dogmatism. In part, their dogmatism reflected their own personal background. To most of

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1 Thomas Chalmers, Institutes of Theology, Vol. 1, p. 275. Chalmers places great stress on the harmonization of these two doctrines in preaching. Also see: Vol. 2, p. 110.

2 Horatius Bonar, Light and Truth, 1869, p. 6.


4 John Cairns, The Morning Star And Other Sermons, 1892, p. 311.
these men Moderateism had been a possible option: an option they soundly rejected. Men such as Robert Gordon (1786-1853), John Duncan (1796-1870), Andrew Thomson (1779-1831), Thomas Chalmers (1780-1847) and John Brown (1784-1858) all studied under professors of Moderate persuasion.¹ Chalmers, whose rejection of Moderateism took place near the close of his first pastorate, later wrote to his congregation at Kilmany: "You have taught me that to preach Christ is the only effective way of preaching morality in all its branches."² Other men, younger in age, came under the influence of Chalmers at Glasgow or Edinburgh. Such men were: A. N. Somerville, the Bonar brothers, A. Moody Stuart, Robert M. M'Cheyne, John Cairns, R. S. Candlish, William Cunningham.³ To these men Evangelicalism was a cause; a cause contending against Moderateism. Their sermons revealed the depth of their conviction.⁴ They were dogmatic and their preaching reflected both the ardor of

¹ William Hanna writes that Chalmers, like all divinity students at this time, left the divinity hall "nearly as entire in the sufficiency of natural theology as in the sufficiency of natural science," op. cit., Vol. I, p. 26. John Brown, an older evangelical, took his divinity in the Seceders Divinity Hall. However, at university he would have been exposed to the Moderate influence.

² Thomas Chalmers, Sermons. "An Address To The Inhabitants of Kilmany," A bound collection of pamphlet sermons, New College, Library, p. 43. See pp. 41ff for Chalmers' testimony as to the change in his preaching after his rejection of Moderateism.

³ The biographies of all these men will illustrate their common dependence on Chalmers. All studied under Chalmers at Edinburgh except R. S. Candlish who took his training at Glasgow but William Wilson, the biographer of Candlish notes the influence of both Andrew Thomson and Thomas Chalmers on Candlish, pp. 28, 29. All of the men mentioned here, with the exception of John Cairns, ultimately went out with the Free Church. Cairns was a United Presbyterian preacher, yet he was strongly influenced by Chalmers and so impressed Chalmers that Chalmers hoped Cairns would come into the Free Church. See A. R. MacEwen, Life and Letters of John Cairns, p. 250.

⁴ R. H. Story in his Life of Robert Lee, Vol. I, pp. 19-20, notes that with the emergence of evangelicalism there was a new "kind of preaching more direct and earnest than had been common, but imbued in many cases with the rigid and narrow Calvinism of Jonathan Edwards." The Inaugural Sermon by Nathaniel Paterson at the opening of New College, 1850, illustrates this conviction of a mission against Moderateism, pp. 11-12.
their mission and the certainty of their revealed theology.

The "older evangelicals" sermon was denoted by two basic characteristics. The first concerned the content of the sermon. The sermon focused on the doctrine of salvation, emphasizing the atonement. The second concerned the style of preaching. The sermon was formal in structure; it was both doctrinal and definitive.

An Emphasis On The Doctrine of Salvation

Man's salvation in Jesus Christ was the great theme of the evangelical pulpit.¹ The "older evangelical," being a man with definite ideas, knew exactly how he was to proclaim this theme of salvation.² In preaching the doctrine of salvation he was first to awaken man to his sense of sin and need of a saviour. Secondly, he was to proclaim the Christ of the cross as the answer to man's need and sin's only remedy. Finally, he was to stress the personal and continuous nature of salvation in man's pilgrimage in this life.

¹The Christian Journal, 1844-1855, is a good example of the older evangelical emphasis on salvation. Regardless of the subject of the sermon, the preacher usually concluded with a plea for personal salvation. The Christian Treasury, 1847-1852, shows even less variety in subjects. Of the thirty-three sermons analyzed, salvation is the dominant theme in twenty-one sermons. The Free Church Pulpit, a three volume collection of 126 sermons, is a good example of the preaching of the older evangelicals, for this group was most dominant in the Free Church. Also see The Church of Scotland Pulpit, a two volume collection of thirty-six sermons. The sermons here are orthodox, but there is less of the dogmatism of the evangelicals.

²Dean Ramsay, op. cit., p. 82. Ramsay says that in contrast to the evangelical preachers of the 17th and early 18th centuries who stressed all of the fundamental doctrines of faith...the fall, Christ, the New Covenant, etc. ...the evangelicals of the 19th century explained simply "the gospel scheme of salvation and regeneration." The best theological source for a more academic treatment of the doctrine of salvation is Chalmers' Institute of Theology, Vol. 1 and 2. The section "Subject Matter of Christianity."
a. Man As A Sinner

Salvation was contingent on man’s response for only a convinced sinner would respond to God’s action in Christ. It was the preacher’s task to make man aware of his sin. In the preface to a book of his sermons Thomas Chalmers wrote: "If there be one truth which, more than another, should be habitually presented to the notice and proposed to the conviction of fallen creatures, it is the humbling truth of their own depravity." 1 John Brown advocated "searching sermons" with "a full and plain exposition of the characteristic lineaments of the regenerate and unregenerate character—that you all may have the means of knowing what you really are." 2 John Cairns, one of Brown’s successors in the United Presbyterian Divinity Hall, described man "at his best estate" as but "a worm, a leaf, a blast, a shade...the victim of folly and sin." 3 Robert M. M’Cheyne, William Burns of Kilsyth, A. A. Bonar, and A. Moody Stuart all demanded an emphasis on sin for preaching was to "have teeth" and be "painful" if it was to achieve its ultimate goal: a "broken heart." 4

1 Thomas Chalmers, Sermons Preached In The Tron Church Glasgow, p. xi.
2 John Brown, Plain Discourses On Important Subjects, p. 327. Also p. 325.
3 John Cairns, Christ, The Morning Star and Other Sermons, p. 38.

In a letter written in 1845 Cairns confides: "I have been preaching a doleful course of sermons on Sin. It has been dreary work to myself, and I dare say the people are half-tired, half-ashamed, half-frightened by the doctrine. Suppose you were lecturing half a session on "Poisons," while the one-half of the class supplied you with subjects in every variety of stupor, delirium and convulsion gratis! It wears out the soul in a way I had no conception of, to deal with such themes earnestly and faithfully." See A. R. Mackwen, op. cit., p. 254.

wrote: "It should be an aim of preaching to bring sinners to plead guilty before God, to feel themselves in excuseless guilt, shut up to the sovereign mercy of Him against whom they have sinned...to this all must come who are reconciled to God." Andrew Thomson made sin the stringent first-principle in the way of salvation. He declared in one sermon:

That we may understand, therefore, the full import of this term, salvation...we must look to the situation in which we stand as sinners. We must look to it in its every aspect and in all its extent. We must judge of it and estimate it...according to the established fact and right reason, according to the maxims and principles, and declaration of the Word of God. And we must not turn away from any view of it that may present itself in the course of our contemplation, merely because it shows us to be involved in greater guilt...However bad, and alarming and revolting any feature of our state may be...we must fix our regards upon it...it is only by such a thorough survey of the subject, and such an honest determination of the questions, what are we—what is our condition—what is due to us and what is awaiting us as the subjects of God's moral government?—it is only in this way that we can see either the necessity or the fitness of any scheme that may be devised for our deliverance.

This stern emphasis on sin gave the older evangelical sermon a piercing quality.

Theologically, the preacher brought man to the bar of judgment through his appropriation of the law of God. The law was "the schoolmaster" preceding the gospel. Thomas Chalmers advised his divinity students:

By reading what Scripture tells of God's law, or by urging that law in all the breadth and loftiness of its requirements from the pulpit, you are on the patent road for convincing men of sin. The Bible in effect affirms our sinfulness, when it affirms the high demands and prerogatives of a law which every enlightened conscience must feel that we have fallen from. There is not, therefore, a likelier expedient than a close and faithful preaching of the law, for giving success and efficacy to the preaching of the gospel.

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3 Thomas Chalmers, Institutes of Theology, Vol. 1, p. 268.
4 Ibid., p. 392. Also p. 145.
Correspondingly, Horatius Bonar, defined the law as the disclosure of the will of God with "The Ten Commandments the summary of God's will." The law was the "sinner's...sentence of condemnation." By the "preaching of holy law," declared Robert M. M'Cheyne, "the mouth is stopped and all the world becomes guilty before God." The law was also the common denominator between Adam and contemporary man. Man's failure to keep the law was but a witness to his relatedness to Adam's sinful nature. In words disclosing the federal theology underlying the preaching of the older evangelical William Cunningham said:

The truth of the fact that man has an ungodly depraved nature...is derived from his connection with Adam. This ungodliness and depravity of nature, which all who are descended from Adam by ordinary generation inherit, is the source or origin of all the actual transgressions which abound in the world.

The law of God was the theological maxim indicting man as a sinner.

Homiletically and psychologically, man was made aware of his sin through the preacher's utilization of conscience. Thomas Chalmers said that there must

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4 *The Confession of Faith*, Chapter XIX.
6 William Cunningham, *Sermons From 1828 to 1860*, pp. 79, 80. Also p. 88.

7 In passing it should be noted that conscience was also emphasized by common sense philosophy. See S. A. Grave, *The Scottish Philosophy of Common Sense*, Oxford, 1960, p. 244. Thomas Brown wrote: "Conscience is our moral memory...it is the memory of the heart....It truly doubles all our feelings when they have been such as virtue inspired; and it truly multiplies them in a much more fearful proportion when they have been of an opposite kind—arresting, as it were, every moment of guilt, which, of itself, would have passed away, as fugitive of our other moments, and suspending them forever before our eyes in fixed and terrifying reality." Thomas Brown, *Lectures On The Philosophy Of The Human Mind*, Edinburgh, 1851, p. 70. Dugald Stewart referred to conscience as the "moral faculty" or "our sense of duty." He argued that the moral faculty
be more than the preaching of the law: "there must be both a conscience and a consciousness awakened." Conscience was the voice of God within man which could not be silenced. John Cairns warned:

Flee from the accusations of conscience,—you cannot, for they are a part of yourself. Bury them in sleep,—they wake to care you with visions. Drown them in debauch,—they spring up from the bottom of the winecup to bite like a serpent and sting like an adder... You cannot argue yourself out of these convictions, for they are deeper than all sophistry; you cannot blunt them by promises of amendment, for God requires them by appeals to the mercy of God.

Similarly, A. N. Somerville declared: "God has left, in charge over you, Conscience, who with eye of lightning issues at intervals from the dark chamber, to shake, like Belshazzar with dismay." To the older evangelicals, preaching to man's conscience was simply the awakening of man to his need of salvation. John Brown avowed that "the Christian Minister must call for the thunders of angry omnipotence to rouse a slumbering world." A. Moody Stuart contended that:

The spirit and conscience of man are the candle of the Lord; and He takes the candle into His own hand, and searches the inward

was "an original principle of our nature, and not resolvable into any other principle or principles." He also spoke of the moral faculty as "the supreme authority of conscience" for "the least violation of its authority fills us with remorse." See Dugald Stewart, The Philosophy Of The Active And Moral Powers Of Man, Vol. I, 1828, pp. 152ff., 295. In this volume most of Book Two is concerned with the moral faculty.

3 A. N. Somerville, Precious Seed Sown in Many Lands, 1890, p. 36.
4 Ibid., pp. 171ff. James Buchanan, The Office And Work Of The Holy Spirit, p. 37. In this book which is a good resource of the theology underlying the preaching of sin, Buchanan says: "I believe that every conscience will do the preacher's work, by convincing you of this great truth [your sin] provided only it be duly instructed in the things of the Kingdom of God."

depths of the heart; the thoughts, the feelings, the desires, the whole inner man. When the Lord lights the candle of conscience...it shows us what we are and what we have done.¹

Preaching the fact of man's sin became synonymous with an attempt to stir man's conscience.

b. Christ Is Man's Saviour

Man's indictment as a sinner necessitated the proclamation of Christ as man's saviour. Thomas Chalmers said:

Suppose, then, that you have already preached and pressed home the law upon your hearers, and that some one of them, convinced of sin, is under the guidance of this schoolmaster—earnestly and anxiously in quest of salvation, you will now have to preach Christ to him; and this surely is setting forth an object distinct from himself and away from himself. And so God is said to set forth Christ as a propitiation for the sins of the world.²

Psychologically, only Christ could bring healing to the man broken and battered by the coercive preaching of sin. Man, whom the preacher described at this stage as "helpless and without means of defense" a "mere lump of hell and sin," could not help himself.³ Legally, sin had to be punished and Christ was set forth as the substitute of "guilty men."⁴ Theologically, salvation was grounded in the righteousness of Christ and now this became the theme of the preacher's message.⁵

In preaching Christ as man's hope for salvation, the concern of the older evangelical was more soteriological than Christological. Consequently,

⁴Andrew Thomson, Sermons on Various Subjects, pp. 411, 412.
God's revelation in the incarnation was obscured by God's saving act in the atonement. The preacher accentuated the cross, for to him preaching Christ was preaching Christ crucified. To these men the cross was the purpose of the incarnation. Christ was man's substitute and his death was portrayed as a ransom, a satisfaction, a sacrifice. John Cairns saw the cross as God's answer to a broken law and a guilty conscience:

Now this demand of conscience is what the glorious sacrifice of Christ meets; for this demonstrates the righteousness of the penalty affixed to sin, and thus upholds the authority of the lawgiver; and as every one who is willing to accept the benefits of this sacrifice may be looked upon as having his sin punished in the person of his substitute even conscience tells him that he may himself go free. This doctrine of the atonement may seem stern and awful, but it must be so to meet the stern and awful demand of conscience...the conscience is now pacified by the blood of Christ.

In the words of Principal Cunningham: "the Death of Christ...is the foundation of all our hopes of pardon and acceptance with God and eternal life." Since the preacher's concern was soteriological, he viewed the life of Jesus through the single lens of the cross.

This soteriological emphasis issued in a Christological weakness. The cross accentuated the divine character and mission of Jesus at the expense of his humanity. Andrew Thomson suggested, on one occasion, that Jesus was not

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1 See Chapter I, "Of Christ The Mediator."


4 William Cunningham, Sermons From 1828-1860, p. 131.

5 Thomas Chalmers, Institutes of Theology, Vol. 2, p. 460. In this lecture on "Christ's Divine and Human Nature," Chalmers emphasized the necessity of the incarnation in and of itself with particular reference to the humanity of Jesus. At the end of this lecture Chalmers said that he had not talked about the incarnation in reference to the atonement because: "We wish to confine ourselves to
completely human because he was sinless:

The Son of God did not take to him a human body, such as is found everywhere among the children of men; a body was prepared for him, and from the kind of preparation that took place and the peculiar circumstances attending it, we are distinctly and emphatically taught to regard his body as thoroughly free from moral pollution.

The Bonar brothers were often imprudent in their treatment of the incarnation which they described as "not enough...falling short of our wants" and "but the scaffolding for the atonement." Such statements left their Christology suspect.

In a sermon published in *The Christian Treasury* in 1870, Horatius Bonar asked,

> Of Christianity, what is the essential characteristic, the indispensable feature from first to last? Is it the incarnation or blood-shedding? Is it the cradle or the cross? Is it the scene at Bethlehem or at Golgotha? Assuredly the latter!

Even men such as Principal Cunningham, John Cairns and Robert S. Candlish neglected the incarnation in their preaching. Their concern for doctrinal accuracy caused them to emphasize the cross as the essence of salvation. They disregarded any

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historical approach to the human life of Jesus. Principal Cunningham summarized the doctrine of salvation in this trinitarian formula: "The Father being represented more immediately as devising, the Son as executing, and the Holy Ghost as applying the salvation of the Gospel." For most of these men, the tendency to disparage the incarnation arose from their overzealous concern for an aggressive proclamation of God's saving act in Christ. For them salvation was primarily a matter of man's status before God.

This neglect of the incarnation in preaching is evident in the preachers' selection and treatment of sermon texts. Those texts illustrative of the humanity of Christ were seldom used. The theme of their preaching was, "Christ crucified." In effect this meant "Pauline Preaching." Correspondingly only one out of ten sermons was based on a text from the Synoptics. Then the text

1 For R. S. Candlish, the death and resurrection of Christ was to be the theme of his preaching. See Life In A Risen Saviour, p. 14. For John Cairns, the essence of the gospel was "the Redemption of men by Jesus Christ" with the atonement the essence of the plan of salvation. See Christ The Morning Star and Other Sermons, pp. 23-27, 357, 358. The sermons of Cairns, Candlish and Cunningham provide insight into the cause of their neglect of the incarnation. First their preaching was doctrinal. This mitigated any really expository approach to preaching and lessened their interest in history. John Cairns said in one sermon that the idea of the atonement was lost if "emphasis falls upon Christ's example, or upon a new life which he begins in them by the Holy Spirit." Christ and The Meaning of Life, p. 252. Secondly, in their development of a text their determination to be definitive negated their appreciation for mystery and to them the incarnation was a mystery.


3 John Kennedy, Sermons, New College Library, p. 550. This is a bound collection of fifty-two sermons preached by John Kennedy of Dingwall and published in the Northern Chronicle, Inverness, 1882-1883. They provide insight into the older evangelical sermon in the Highlands where Kennedy was well-known.

4 See Appendix IV-A. Of the 907 sermons analyzed by men I have called older evangelicals, only 109 or 12.0% took their texts from the Synoptics. Correspondingly, 351 or 38.7% of their texts came from the New Testament Epistles. 88 texts or 9.7% came from the Gospel of John. However John, which in its theological outlook is different from the Synoptics, was concerned with the contention against unbelief and the fostering of faith in the Christ. Thus it is not
was usually but a pretext for a doctrinal dissertation. In Andrew Thomson a
text from the Synoptics was never interpreted in relation to either its biblical
context or the human life and message of Jesus. The text was always servile to
some arbitrarily imposed theological concern.¹ Theologically, Thomas Chalmers
was one grand exception of this tendency to ignore the incarnation.² Yet his

surprising to find that the Fourth Gospel was the second most utilized textual
source for the older evangelical, Romans being the most used. Yet the preacher
turned to the Fourth Gospel, not because he wished to stress the incarnation,
but rather because the "most important feature of the Johannine composition" was
the discourse material accentuating man's personal salvation experience with
Jesus. See Reginald H. Fuller, A Critical Introduction To The New Testament,
pp. 168, 173, 179.

¹Of the sixty-eight sermons analyzed of Andrew Thomson, seven had a
Synoptic text. Of these, four were based on Luke 8:18, "take heed, therefore,
how you hear" and published under the title: Sermons On Hearing The Word Preached,
Edinburgh, 1825. In these sermons there is no reference made to the life of
Jesus. Rather the sermons consisted of ten observations on how people listen to
a sermon. The emphasis was on soteriology. In his Sermons and Sacramental
Exhortations, one sermon on "Christian Beneficence" was preached on Matthew
25:35, "I was a stranger, and ye took me in." The occasion of this sermon was
a collection on behalf of Spanish and Italian refugees, at the request of the
Lord Provost and the Magistrates, p. 161. Again two sermons were preached on
the theme "Encouragement To Prayer"; the text, Matthew 7:7, "Ask, and it shall
be given you." Again the text and the human life of Jesus was totally alien to
the doctrinal purpose of the sermon which in this case was the importance of
prayer in the pilgrimage of life.

The other books of published sermons included in this study by Andrew
Thomson are: The Doctrine of Universal Pardon Considered and Refuted, In A
Series of Sermons, 1830; Sermons On Infidelity, 1821; Sermons On Various Subjects,
1829. Thomson's lectures were not included in this survey.

²In the lecture hall, Chalmers made perhaps the best statement of the
implications of the incarnation for preaching of any older evangelical in the
first half of the nineteenth century. In his lecture on "Christ's Divine and
Human Nature" he said: "When I see in the person of Jesus Christ how the every-
day virtues and commonest occasions of life were throughout impregnated with the
very spirit of Divinity, I think I can better understand, when told to resemble
Him, what it is to be filled with the whole fulness of God. And here let me
instance with what admirable effect this doctrine may be brought to bear on the
great and mischievous delusion... You will find an obstinate and deep-rooted
prejudice against the full exposition of certain virtues by the minister, and
equally full exposure of certain vices. There is toleration for a sermon on
the duties of the Sabbath, but there is no such toleration for a sermon on any
of the week-day duties. The truth is, that with these latter there stands
associated the feelings or the imagination of a certain taint of earthliness.
imperative insistence on the full humanity of Jesus only occasionally appeared in his preaching. When Chalmers did turn to the Synoptics, it was usually to expound some ethical aspect of the Christian life without reference to Jesus; or to commend the propagation of the gospel as the primary mission of the Church.  

Robert S. Candlish also ignored texts relating to the humanity of Jesus. Recent research has made the point that Candlish's view of the atonement marked a mild departure from what was customary among the older evangelicals because

The business of the pulpit is held to be secularized by any allusions to the business of common life, though introduced for no other purpose than the Christian regulation of it....This dissociation in the minds of the people, of common life from Christianity, is a sore evil, nor can a more affectual argument be brought into the rebuke and the resistance of it than our Saviour's incarnation. He seasoned with the heavenly all the footsteps of His life on earth, and in these steps we are required to walk. There is not an occasion in the history of man which does not admit of highest sacredness....The minister surely may well descend to preach that which the Saviour descended to exemplify; nor should a man disdain to be told, in all fidelity and minuteness, of that which set as a grace or a propriety on the character of the incarnate God." See Institutes of Theology, Vol. 2, p. 459.

1 Thomas Chalmers, Sermons Preached In St. John's Church, pp. 104-105 is an example of Chalmers affirming the true humanity of Jesus in a sermon, but this is rarely done.

he firmly grounded the atonement in the incarnation. Yet this made very little difference in Candlish's preaching. He turned more often than some to the Gospel of John but again his treatment of these texts are soteriological not christological. In the Johannine discourses of Jesus, Candlish simply found a biblical source for his proclamation of the cross, the atonement, and the new birth.

Horatius Bonar is yet another older evangelical whose soteriological concern distorted his Christology. Bonar believed in the true humanity of Jesus but he seldom referred to it in his preaching. Indeed only eight percent of his sermons were based on Synoptic texts while nearly forty-seven percent of his preaching was based on texts gathered from the more soteriological passages of the Epistles. In Bonar's treatment of the Synoptic texts it was also the doctrine

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2 Of the 130 sermons analyzed by R. S. Candlish, thirteen had Synoptic texts, and twenty-three were based on the Fourth Gospel. Limiting our observations here to one book of his sermons, *The Gospel of Forgiveness*, eight sermons were based on John's Gospel and seven of them were rooted in the discourses of Jesus. In all eight sermons the major theme related to either the cross and the atonement or man's salvation in the "all-sufficient Christ." Candlish was fond of using the phrase "our Lord" which is a term seldom used by other of the older evangelicals. Certainly Candlish was moving in the direction of those men whom we will call the "liberal evangelicals," yet his basic orientation was with the older more dogmatic evangelicals. He appears to be a preacher who senses the importance of the incarnation yet since his homiletical thrust is salvation as concerned with man's status not man's character he always sees salvation as grounded in a limited atonement, pp. 1, 38, 37, 67, 74, 82, 96. Also see An Inquiry Into The Completeness And Extent Of The Atonement, 1845, p. xxxii. This survey of Candlish's use of texts is based on his books of sermons found in the Bibliography. The only known collections of sermons not read are his two volume *Discourses on Genesis* and his *Discourses on Ephesians*.

3 Horatius Bonar, *Family Sermons*, p. 6. Speaking of Bethlehem, Bonar says, "The Word was made flesh! He became truly man—man all over, within and without, in body, soul, and spirit; in everything but sin."
of the cross and the atonement which predominated.¹ When Bonar did have reason to refer to the life of Jesus it was the supernatural Jesus rather than the human Jesus which he portrayed.

He [Jesus] preached...by what he did. He went about healing all manner of sicknesses and all manner of diseases. He raised the dead; he cast out devils; he opened the eyes of the blind; he unstopped the ears of the deaf; he gave feet to the lame; he fed the multitudes; he forgave sins and received sinners; he sought and found the lost. Each one of these acts spoke of the divine free-love that was now richly going forth toward the sons of men.²

Bonar selected and interpreted his sermon texts in the light of his soteriological concern.

The older evangelicals were fervid in their proclamation of the good news of salvation. In Moderatism they saw an orthodoxy mired in natural theology and tending toward deism. In their reaction, the pendulum swung too far toward an undiscerning utilization of soteriology. Homiletically, orthodoxy became top heavy with an excessive emphasis on the cross and the divinity of Jesus, and a salvation primarily concerned with man's status before God.

c. Life is a Pilgrimage

In their sermons, the older evangelicals often spoke of the way of

¹Of the 161 sermons analyzed of Horatius Bonar, fourteen had Synoptic texts, seventeen were from the Fourth Gospel and seventy-five were from the Epistles. In his collection of sermons, Family Sermons, Bonar gives his Synoptic Texts such titles as: "The Servant of Sinner," "The Surety's Baptism," "The Cross The Expression of Man's Unbelief." In this volume thirteen sermons have Synoptic texts. In all thirteen sermons the emphasis is soteriological with the dominant theme being the cross. See pp. 11, 64, 79, 96, 157, 249, 330, 376, 416. This survey includes all of Bonar's sermon collections found in New College Library. Other books by Bonar were like sermonic essays and in these he did not use texts. Such books reflected, however, his pietistic bent. See Night of Weeping, Morning of Joy, Until The Day Break, and Man His Religion and His World.

²Ibid., p. 17. Also The Rent Veil, pp. 12-13, "God did come down to men; but not to converse...not to commune in love...He came to declare his righteousness, and yet to reveal His grace. He came to condemn, and He came to pardon. He came to show how utterly he abhorred sin, and yet how graciously he was minded toward the sinner."
salvation as a pilgrimage. John Brown portrayed religion as "a way, a path, a road."

1 He described man's life as "a journey through time, toward eternity." This pilgrimage was often qualified by such phrases as "Christian pilgrimage... the narrow way...a holy walk...God's way of holiness...coming up out of the wilderness... a life of self-denial...being glorified...promoting the glory of God." 2 Principal William Cunningham used such metaphors as "walking with God," "The business of life" and "progress in holiness" to illuminate the pilgrimage motif. 3 He said:

When God has conducted His people through this pilgrimage, having kept them for a season under the discipline of trials, and under a system of outward means,—in which the ministry of the Gospel occupies a most prominent place,—they shall at last be admitted to that state where there is no more ignorance and no more darkness... where they shall walk continually in the light of the Divine countenance, and enjoy without interruption the Beatific Vision. 4

The concept of the Christian life as a pilgrimage was a graphic homiletical model enabling the preacher to portray the way of salvation as both process and progress.

This pilgrimage was a journey between two poles. First, there was the moment of embarkation which marked each individual's entry into the Christian life. Secondly, there was the ultimate point of termination marking the end of

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1 John Brown, Plain Discourses On Important Subjects, Edinburgh, 1852, p. 149.
2 Ibid., p. 147. Also see pp. 157-158.
4 William Cunningham, Sermons, p. 309.
5 Ibid., p. 333.
this life and man's pilgrimage in this world.

The pilgrimage commenced with what many called the "great change." This "change" was personal and inescapable, for man was a sinner. James Buchanan, Professor of Theology at the New College, Edinburgh, wrote:

Every one must see, that if, when God saves men, he brings them into his kingdom, and places them under his own holy government, it is impossible, in the very nature of things that they can enter it without undergoing a great change; and in this light there is a self-evident truth and certainty in the words of our Lord, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."1

James Robertson, the Old Kirk Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Edinburgh, also noted:

The Gospel produces a marvellous change in the heart of every man who receives it, a change that cannot fail to manifest itself in his walk and conversation. If he was a drunkard, it makes him sober—if a sensualist, chaste—if a thief, honest—if a liar, truthful.2

Andrew Thomson described this "change of character and change of condition" as a "revolution."3 R. S. Candlish insisted that the beginning of this pilgrimage necessitated "a great change, a new creation, a new heart, a renewing of the mind."4 For John Brown this "change of mind" was "the wicket gate at the head of the way."5

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1 James Buchanan, The Office And Work Of The Holy Spirit, p. 22. Also p. 10. Buchanan also spoke of this change as the "sinner's conversion." He said there were three steps to this conversion. 1. "The conviction of sin," p. 76. 2. "To enlighten the mind in the knowledge of Christ, as being in all respects just such a Saviour as he [the convicted sinner] needs," p. 82. 3. "To renew our wills, or to make us willing to be saved by Christ on Gospel terms," p. 85.

2 James Robertson, Old Truths and Modern Speculations, 1859, p. 211.

3 Andrew Thomson, Sermons on Various Occasions, p. 4.

4 Robert Candlish, The Two Great Commandments, p. 85. In Sermons, pp. 67 and 103 Candlish uses such phrases as "your first conversion," and "dying with Christ" to describe the onset of the Christian life.

5 John Brown, Plain Discourses On Important Subjects, p. 186.
Preachers used a variety of terms to describe the beginning of the Christian pilgrimage. John Cairns related the onset of the pilgrimage to the doctrine of redemption insisting that redemption was first "a personal Christian experience."¹ Robert Gordon spoke of this beginning as "regeneration" which was:

a renovation of the soul, extending to all those desires and affections and principles of action, which go to constitute the true character of a rational and accountable creature; and when it is spoken of, therefore, as a transition from death to life.²

Conversion was the word frequently used by the Bonar brothers, Alexander Somerville and Robert M. M'Cheyne.³ "Repentence" and "being born again" were two phrases used by Principal Cunningham.⁴ The precise word used to describe the onset of this pilgrimage varied from man to man and sermon to sermon. It was the fact that man had knowingly commenced the Christian pilgrimage which was important to the evangelical preacher. Robert M. M'Cheyne said

Dear friends, have you had this beginning? Have you undergone conversion—the new birth—grafting into Christ? Call it by any name you will, have you the thing? Has this union to Christ taken place in your history? Some say, I do not know. If at any time of your life you had been saved from drowning,—if you were actually drowned and brought to life again,—you would remember it to your dying hour. Much more if you had been brought to Christ. If you had been blind, and by some remarkable operation your eyes were opened when you were full grown, would you ever forget it? So, if you have been truly brought into Christ, you may easily remember it. If not, you will die in your sins.⁵

¹ John Cairns, Christ, The Morning Star and Other Sermons, pp. 23, 357, 358. Cairns also uses such terms as "conversion," "The second birth" or the "new birth" for his experience, pp. 26, 314, 315.

² Robert Gordon, Sermons, p. 220.


⁴ William Cunningham, Sermons, pp. 21, 23, 24, 29, 30.

Death, the second advent, and the judgment were the terms used to denote the end of the pilgrimage. Andrew Thomson began one sermon on the second advent with this statement:

The coming of our Lord Jesus Christ literally refers to his appearing at the last day as the judge of the world. But in its substantial meaning, and as to all its practical effects, it may be considered as equivalent to our departure from the present into the eternal state; because when we die, not only is our future condition as much determined as it will be when Christ is actually revealed to decide upon it with all the solemnities of a public procedure, but we do in reality enter into that scene in which his award shall fix us when he pronounces our final sentence.

To R. S. Candlish death and the second advent were penultimate to man’s personal confrontation with Christ in judgment:

Death is our going to Christ. The second advent is his coming to us. Death is, in a solemn sense, isolation. The second advent is union and reunion. Death is abstraction, spirituality. The second advent is substantial embodiment, fresh corporeity. Death is silent and successive taking man after man noiselessly away, one by one. The second advent is simultaneous, one blast of the trumpet summoning all together. Death is the preparation for judgment. It is the apprehension or arrest of the parties who are to be judged. The second advent is the judgment itself. It is the great and final assize. It announces the irreversible, eternal issues.

The sobering subjects indicating the end of the pilgrimage were expounded in a variety of ways. In some sermons there was an almost haunting sense of doom and fatalism: One preacher wrote in a sermon published in The Edinburgh Christian Magazine:

Death is the portal to the great judgment hall; and guilty fear antedates the sentence which awaits us there. It is a guilty conscience which makes cowards of us all.

In other sermons death and the judgment were used to goad man in his pursuit of good works:

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1 Andrew Thomson, *Sermons on Various Occasions*, p. 469.
Brethren, each of us here is embarked on a great mission for God. Each of us has a great work to perform. For the performance of that work, we have assigned to us a limited time....As we speak, the grains of the sand-glass are falling. Every beat of our pulse, every throb of our heart is bringing us nearer the judgment.

Other preachers saw in these subjects graphic examples of the uncertainty of life.

The night of human life comes on at any hour of the day—involving many in a moment, in the blackness of darkness for ever. There are many who are sunk in night, whose privileges and opportunities are terminated in the very morning of their lives....How very seldom do men...really act upon the principle that they "know not what even an hour may bring forth" and spend their hours as if each successive one might be their last?

Again death and the second advent were sometimes proclaimed as the joyful culmination of the Christian pilgrimage. Robert S. Candlish positively welcomed the second advent as the "defeat of death and a hostile world and the restoration of paradise:"

He returns in triumph to this earth which was the scene of his suffering and shame. And lo! at his bright appearing, his buried saints start forth in immortal beauty from their tombs; his living servants shine in the bloom of an undying youth; and a renovated world rejoices in the endless life, the unchanging and unclouded sunshine of paradise at last restored.

Death, the second advent and the judgment were solemn reminders that just as the Christian pilgrimage necessitated a distinct beginning, so it reached its climax in a definite if abrupt conclusion.

The portrayal of life as a pilgrimage indicated a negative view of the world. To most older evangelicals the world was evil and the pilgrim was to be wary. In this "hostile world" cautioned R. S. Candlish, "Satan is far more

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than a match for you in this game of craft and compromise and conciliation. Beware how you step out of your own proper sphere.\(^1\) Horatius Bonar wrote that "while conversion calms one kind of storm it raises another, which is to be lifelong."\(^2\) Bonar concluded that the image of life as a battle was "one of the most inevitable conclusions" to be drawn "from the gospel."\(^3\) Robert M. M'Cheyne also stressed the evil of the world, declaring that in "his darksome pilgrimage" the Christian's "welfare is peculiar...deep-seated, agonizing, and ceases not till death."\(^4\) To Andrew Thomson the world was a wilderness and life a grave test of endurance as the pilgrim pursued his great objective: complete salvation in that life transcending death. In a sermon, "The Penitent's Prayer," Thomson declared:

> To us that land of vision is only in prospect, the salvation which dwells in it is only the object of anticipation. We are yet in the wilderness where there are enemies to assail us, and allurements to lead us astray, and difficulties to perplex and bewilder our thoughts, and sins to burden our conscience, and disturb our tranquillity, and many evils to remind us that we are still in a state of trial and must still expect to have much to do, and much to suffer. Even here, however, amidst all that bedims our views, impairs our comfort, and endangers our well-being, we are permitted to see the salvation prepared for us and conferred upon us, in such a light as fully to satisfy our minds of its infinite excellence, and its unbounded sufficiency.\(^5\)

The sobriety with which the older evangelical proclaimed the pilgrimage was partially due to his heightened sense of judgment. To these men the final judgment cast its spectral shadow over all of life. They envisioned themselves as men on trial and believed that the manner in which they conducted their life

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3. Ibid., p. 150.
would tip the scales of ultimate judgment for good or for ill.¹ Robert S. Candlish declared in one sermon:

You shuffle off this mortal coil. But it is only for a season.
You are to begin again to live in the body. And how you are then
to live in the body, will turn upon how you are living in the
body now.²

Principal Cunningham described man as existing in the "state of probation."³

Andrew Thomson portrayed man as "in that course of life we must pursue as candidates for heaven."⁴ Other preachers emphasized man's ethical duties because:

"Our position in the Kingdom of Glory will be regulated by the extent to which
we exercised the virtues and cultivated the graces, and displayed the mild, pure
affections of Christians."⁵ John Cairns said:

¹ The older evangelical felt that the principles of this pilgrimage of
life were built into the structure of the world and that rewards and punishments
were inevitable because of the consistency of nature. Thus the preacher would
turn to natural law for the vindication of the pilgrimage motif with its rewards
and punishments. See William Cunningham, Sermons, pp. 17, 25, 26; James Veitch,
This belief in reward and punishment was also evident in common sense philosophy.
Dugald Stewart writes: "Notwithstanding the seemingly promiscuous distribution
of happiness and misery in this life, the reward of virtue and punishment of
vice are the great objects of all the general laws by which the world is governed.
The disorders in the meantime which, in such a world as ours, cannot fail to arise
in particular instances, when they are compared with our natural sense of good
and of ill desert, afford a presumption that in a future state the moral govern¬
ment which we see begun here will be carried into complete execution." See
Dugald Stewart, op. cit., Vol. 2, pp. 167 and 108ff. In Stewart it should be
noted that in Book Two the argument for the "moral powers of man" hinges on the
moral faculty or conscience. In Book Three man's duty in life is related to God's
moral government in life which concludes with an argument of reward and punishment
and "a future state." Book Four then treats man's duties in respect to his fellow
creatures.

² R. S. Candlish, Life In A Risen Saviour, p. 345.


⁴ Andrew Thomson, Sermons On VariousSubjects, p. 416.

⁵ The Edinburgh Christian Review, Vol. 5, p. 259. This magazine featured
a sermon by an Old Kirk preacher monthly between 1850 and 1854.
Heaven and Hell are but the summation of our daily thoughts and feelings and actions! You put a slate into the hands of the school-child, who then writes down the sums, till the line is drawn, and the amount set down, neither less nor more...when all is stated, all that we have done, all that we have been, death draws the line and adds the items; and this sum—total, proclaimed in judgment, is the best or the worst to us for all eternity.¹

This then was the way of salvation as outlined in the older evangelical sermon. The sermon began with an emphasis on man's sin and concluded with the promise of death and judgment bringing either the reward of heaven or the punishment of hell. Between the somber enunciation of these facts there was the good news of God's saving act on the cross issuing in a plea for man's personal response both in a moment of change and conversion as well as continually in a life of self-discipline and good works. In this theology of salvation, man himself was the object of the preacher's sermon. Thus the sermon was both informative and urgent, moving and at times terrifying, intellectual and emotional, objective and subjective. The preacher's sermon was pointed toward the whole man. The older evangelicals stressed the objectivity of the cross while they searched subjectively for man's personal encounter with Christ.

A Formal Homiletical Style

The certainty with which the older evangelical proclaimed the way of salvation issued in a formal homiletical style. First, the sermon was largely the exposition of the doctrines of the Westminster Confession. The understanding with which the preacher approached his task, the hermeneutical principles by which he interpreted his text, the content and style of his sermon all expressed his conviction that preaching be doctrinal. Secondly, his sermons had a definitive structure. The context of the sermon was often polemical or apologetical;

¹John Cairns, Christ, The Morning Star, pp. 174-175.
the sermon was distinctly outlined; the style was straight-forward yet personal.

a. A Doctrinal Sermon

The understanding with which the preacher approached the sermon indicated his allegiance to doctrinal preaching. John Brown noted in one sermon that the preacher's "first object must be to communicate accurate views of the various doctrines and precepts of the revealed system."¹ Andrew Thomson described "the religion of Christ" as a "system [consisting of] various parts...the parts may be separately examined and separately illustrated and from each of them we may deduce what is both true and useful."² In his farewell sermon to the New Greyfriars Church, Edinburgh, 1814, Thomson said that in preaching he had "insisted strenuously on the doctrines of grace as the peculiar and leading doctrines of the gospel."³ John Cairns exclaimed that as the "apostolic doctrines" had been committed to the Church and its faithful preachers "the pulpit was never to...descend from this pre-eminence."⁴ As the doctrines of revealed theology were the truths committed to the preacher the preacher was described as "a witness coming from God to tell us of certain things which he knows to be assuredly true."⁵ In 1851 the Free Church Magazine contained this pontifical declaration:

¹John Brown, Plain Discourses, p. 252.

²Andrew Thomson, The Doctrine of Universal Pardon Considered and Refuted In A Series of Sermons, p. 343.

³Andrew Thomson, Sermons and Sacramental Exhortations, p. 509.

⁴John Cairns, Christ, The Morning Star, p. 26. Ebenezer Porter, op. cit., p. 69, wrote: "Sermons in which the doctrine of the atonement and other essential doctrines of the gospel are avowedly discarded or decidedly overlooked some altogether short of evangelical preaching."

⁵Horatius Bonar, Light and Truth, p. 173.
If preaching does not contain a solid substratum of what is doctrine and objective, the preacher is as a man building without a foundation.  

Hermeneutics has been defined as "the science of the method of the right interpretation of Scripture." In the hands of the older evangelicals, hermeneutics was the science by which scripture was utilized to substantiate doctrine. As a result, systematic theology was the master, not the servant of scripture. The preacher treated the Bible as a reservoir of texts which served as the springboard for his doctrinal discourses. The dominance of dogmatic theology over hermeneutics is clearly evident in the various lectures by Thomas Chalmers on the interpretation of scripture and preaching.  

Chalmers treated hermeneutics under the heading "Scripture Criticism." He said that the object of scripture criticism was "the integrity of the text

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3. This statement must not be construed as a criticism of the older evangelical for it is a practice not limited to this one group. Indeed Paul Tillich has argued that "the Bible as such never has been the norm of systematic theology. The norm has been a principle derived from the Bible in an encounter between Bible and Church." Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 1, p. 56.  

4. This particular hermeneutical survey is limited to Chalmers for two reasons. First, he was the great theological figure of the first half of the nineteenth century and it is his teaching which shaped the thoughts and homiletical practice of many of the older evangelicals. Secondly, he is one theologian who deals with the significance of hermeneutics and preaching in the greatest detail. In this case four lectures by Chalmers, all found in his *Institutes of Theology*, will form the basis of this survey: Volume 1: "On Scripture Criticism," pp. 277-328; "On Systematic Theology," pp. 329-360. Volume 2: "Recapitulation Of Our Views on Scripture Criticism," pp. 16-30; "On the Distinction Between The Mode in which Theology should be learned at the Hall, and the Mode in which it should be taught from the Pulpit," pp. 473-486.
and the interpretation of it."¹ To achieve this twofold objective, Chalmers suggested a three-pronged methodology which he called "the philological, the contextual, the doctrinal."² On the one hand Chalmers argued that these three approaches to biblical interpretation were all inter-related. He wrote:

In the act of determining the meaning, whether of a passage or the nature and truth of a doctrine, we shall find that these hinge on the meaning of particular words, and that we must have recourse to the philological. On the other hand, in fixing the sense of a particular term or phrase, we have often to borrow light from the adjoining sentences whereon it stands in connexion, or even fetch it from the greater distances of a still wider and more comprehensive survey, as when we found our conclusion on the analogy of the faith, and thus call in the aid both of the contextual and the doctrinal.³

On the other hand, Chalmers believed that the doctrinal approach to hermeneutics was the most important for it was the final classification, the net result of the philological and the contextual. He dismissed the philological as "unimportant" and argued that "what is true of the doctrinal is true...in a less degree of the contextual."⁴ On one occasion Chalmers informed his students that the real value of philological and contextual hermeneutics was simply that:

you will be able to distinguish between that which is of doctrinal importance, and that which is not so; and at the same time will not

¹Thomas Chalmers, Institutes of Theology, Vol. I, p. 282. In his Theological Lectures, William Cunningham writes: "The object of hermeneutics is to point out the ways and the means by which we may attain to the most accurate, the most extensive and the most certain knowledge of the whole statements contained in the sacred Scriptures." See p. 552. Also pp. 551, 553, 559.
²Ibid., p. 299.
³Ibid.
⁴Ibid., pp. 308-309. On pages 302-320 Chalmers engages in a long discussion of the merits and demerits of philology or scripture-criticism in the narrower sense of linguistic and textual analysis. Here he acknowledges that this aspect of hermeneutics has been weak in Scotland as compared to England and Germany, pp. 318-319. He believes that such study has value when the beliefs of the Church are under attack, p. 317. Yet he argues that much of this sort of study is not important for either doctrine or practice, p. 304. It is often very esoteric and thus unimportant, p. 308. Clearly Chalmers' double-talk on this subject shows that he does not really know what to do with the coming of age of biblical criticism.
fall to remark how much the plain sense of the Bible, in whole hosts of unquestioned and unquestionable passages, is on the side of orthodoxy.\footnote{Ibid., p. 315.}

For Thomas Chalmers hermeneutics was the science of the doctrinal interpretation and utilization of scripture.\footnote{Also see William Cunningham, \textit{Theological Lectures}, pp. 556-557. Speaking of doctrine or "those great fundamental truths so plainly revealed in Scripture," Cunningham writes; "The use and application of an accurate knowledge and a critical study of the Scriptures, so far as these great truths are concerned, is not so much to discover or to find them out, but rather to settle accurately what are the particular passages of Scripture, which most certainly and conclusively establish them."}

The doctrinal hermeneutic of Thomas Chalmers was based on two primary principles. First, systematic theology was to determine the interpretation of any given text. Second, the true doctrine of the text was usually obvious and emergent in other parts of the Bible.

Systematic theology became the judge and guardian of proper hermeneutics. Chalmers writes that it is systematic theology which "gives both energy and guidance to the investigation of Scripture criticism."\footnote{Thomas Chalmers, \textit{Institutes of Theology}, Vol. 1, p. 344.} It is systematic theology that is to "direct investigation" for doctrine is to scripture what "an hypothesis is to science."\footnote{Ibid., p. 345.} Consequently Chalmers would not have the preacher inquire of a text "what does this mean?" Such vague and general questioning would leave one to "wander in trackless uncertainty."\footnote{Ibid., p. 349.} Rather the preacher must specifically ask whether or not this particular doctrine is the meaning of the text. In this way, Chalmers says, there is reflected a "system" of doctrine which "arrives much sooner at a conclusion and sound interpretation."\footnote{Ibid., In Principal Cunningham, this rules out virtually any sense of history and historical criticism in textual analysis. See Cunningham's \textit{Theological Lectures}, pp. 588ff.} To Chalmers...
"the mere linguist is to Scripture what the mere observer is to science. ... He is like an observer going forth, innocent of all theory in the field of nature."¹ Since systematic theology was concerned with "the whole subject-matter" of the Bible and the philological and the contextual hermeneutic with usually only a word, sentence, or passage, it was the task of systematic theology as the sum of doctrine "to sit in judgment" over the whole interpretation of the Bible.² In effect this meant that for Thomas Chalmers, and most of the older evangelicals, doctrine formed the essence and determined the meaning of any given text. In 1863 one writer in the North British Review indicating the direction of the more liberal evangelical pulpit cast a negative verdict on the older hermeneutic:

System must grow out of interpretation, not interpretation out of system. Let dogmatics no more dominate exegetics, then exegetics shall supplant dogmatics.³

The second principle of Chalmers' doctrinal hermeneutics follows; the doctrine of a given text was both obvious and emergent in the whole of the Bible. He writes:

The most important truths of Christianity should be the most obvious ... and generally speaking they are the least useful things in the system of divine truth, which either occur so rarely, or are situated so reconditely among the remoter portions of Scripture, as to call for the application of Scripture criticism in its utmost skill and utmost strenuousness.⁴

Furthermore the meaning of one text was illuminated by other texts for when a doctrine was so common to the Bible, scripture could be called on to interpret

¹Ibid., p. 330.  ²Ibid., p. 358.
³The North British Review, 1863, p. 445. In this same article, the writer notes that in the evangelical pulpit in Scotland doctrinal preaching so abounded that there was "scarce the inculcation and enforcement of a specific duty or Christian virtue per se."
Indeed the "essential doctrines" were so universal in scripture that Chalmers could boast: "Even in the most slovenly and careless of its versions, all the essential truths of the Bible are conveyed to us." When on certain occasions the preacher was confronted with an obscure text or rare doctrine the recommended solution was the abandonment of both the text and the doctrine. In the end, doctrinal hermeneutics was in danger of becoming a closed system eliminating alien evidence or new interpretation.

Chalmers' accentuation of the doctrinal to the abatement of the philological and the contextual in hermeneutical theory led to the virtual negation of the philological and the contextual in the sermon itself. In the pulpit Chalmers urged the preacher to forget the exegetical and linguistic background and get immediately to the doctrine of the text. With complete confidence in both the content of scripture and the understanding of the man in the pew, Chalmers said:

The very utterance of your text will generally be enough for gaining their assent to the doctrine which it enunciated, or, at the most, the concurrence of a few decisive testimonies from other parts of Scripture, will abundantly suffice in the way of argument ... I would curtail the formal proof of a doctrine, that room might be left for an object ulterior to that, and in which the mere verifying of the proof is conviction.

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1Ibid., p. 301. Also see Cunningham's Theological Lectures, p. 580.
2Ibid., p. 301. Also p. 314.
3Ibid., p. 300. In his Theological Lectures, p. 554, William Cunningham illustrates this from his own experience. For one specific occasion he selected a text which he thought compatible to his subject (doctrine). His investigation proved otherwise so he simply left that text for another one which would substantiate the doctrine he wished to express. Cunningham told this to illustrate the necessity of a critical study of texts. Ironically, it also witnesses to the fact that the doctrine to be expounded dictated the use of scripture, not vice versa. In a sermon preached in Obisdale and published in the Northern Chronicle John Kennedy of the Dingwall Free Church was gravely concerned of the new trend in hermeneutics noting, "The old method of using Scripture texts as satisfactory proofs of a doctrine is to be exploded." See Sermons, p. 331.
In part Chalmers' theoretical preference for the doctrinal reflected the practical bent of his mind. Doctrine was the sum of the hermeneutic process. Since the pulpit was not the lecture hall, Chalmers reminded his students that the methodology of the latter did not fit the purpose of the former. Doctrine was to be applied to the heart and life of the man in the pew.

It is not necessary to expend time in the establishment of a doctrine, if their minds be already established in the truth of it. And the plain reason why we grudge unnecessary time in arguing the truth of the doctrine, is, that really there is too much else to do with it. You have to urge the truth upon their consciences. You have to open a way for its influence upon their hearts. You have to address it to their hopes or their fears, or their purposes of obedience.

Chalmers said that one of the principal objects of theological education was the preacher's acquisition of right doctrine. In theory Chalmers utilized hermeneutics to substantiate and illuminate doctrine. For Chalmers, the doctrinal sermon was the practical culmination of a systematic theological process.

The doctrinal sermon was usually based on a single text of scripture. Since expository preaching was traditionally limited in Scotland to what was called the "lecture," the sermon was drawn from a more concise segment of the Bible. This was the suggestion of the Directory of Public Worship, for the preacher was advised to solicit from his text "the chief heads and grounds of doctrine which he is to raise from it." The preacher's preference for a text

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1 Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 304.
2 Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 481.
3 Ibid., p. 480.
4 Ibid., p. 473.

5 The lecture, which was an expository and critical commentary on a longer passage of scripture, was in 1854 said to have been common in Scotland for three hundred years and "the constant practice" in the "forenoon service." The British and Foreign Evangelical Review, Vol. 3, 1854, pp. 661-662.

6 The Directory of Public Worship, "Of The Preaching of the Word." Here it is also implied that the text should be brief although the preacher "may go on in some chapter, psalm, or book of the holy scripture, as he sees fit." Professor George Hill advised his students: "preach textually, that is, to choose a passage bearing upon one point." See Counsels, p. 44.
of a single verse was so common among the older evangelicals that virtually any one of their books of sermons could be summoned as evidence. Of the 126 sermons in the three volumes of *The Free Church Pulpit*, ninety are based on a single verse. Of the twenty-six sermons found in the two volume collection, *The Church of Scotland Pulpit*, twenty-four are based on a single verse of scripture. The dominance of the single text in the sermon suggests that the preacher had no expository notions and substantiates his over-riding doctrinal objective.

Obviously preachers handled the doctrines to be expounded in various ways. Principal William Cunningham and Robert M. M'Cheyne nakedly exposed the doctrine at the beginning of the sermon by simply stating what it was and how they proposed to investigate it. Robert S. Candlish sometimes gave the impression that his preaching was more biblical because of his profuse use of scripture. However he usually treated his text in a doctrinal manner quoting scripture to prove his doctrine. His *Life In A Risen Saviour* is a series of twenty sermons.

1 *The Free Church Pulpit*, Vol. 1, 2, 3.

2 *The Church Of Scotland Pulpit*, Vol. 1, 2. Also see Associate Sermons, Vol. 1 and 2. Here 27 of 32 sermons had a single verse text. In The Relief Preacher, 16 of 24 sermons had a single verse text.

3 See Chapter 1, "Of Christ The Mediator," for the doctrinal style of Principal Cunningham. In an ordination sermon, M'Cheyne said that the minister was to "preach the word...with doctrine." See Andrew Bonar, *Memoir and Remains of R. M. M'Cheyne*, pp. 353-364. Of the twenty-six sermons included in this book, thirteen had the doctrine distinctly stated at the beginning as the "doctrine" to be expounded or, "I now draw this doctrine," Actually what M'Cheyne calls doctrine could more properly be called a proposition stating his purpose. These are examples of what he calls doctrine:

"Christ offers himself as a Saviour to all of the human race," p. 322.
"Christ is a merciful High Priest," p. 347.
"Glorying in the Cross," p. 370.
"The good way of coming before the Lord," p. 376.
"Christ in you the hope of glory," p. 409.
"The gospel should be preached first to the Jews," p. 441.

4 In the preface of his book on *The Completeness and Extent Of The Atonement*, Candlish notes that the question of the "reprobate" is a "question
on First Corinthians fifteen in which he discourses on the doctrine of the resurrection and the life everlasting. Similarly, The Two Great Commandments is a collection of seventeen sermons on Romans twelve expounding the duty of man to God and his neighbor.

The diversity of doctrinal preaching is evident in the way different men utilized the same text and theme. For example, in three sermons on Genesis 5:24, three preachers set forth the same theme, "walking with God," in three different ways. Donald Ross, a Church of Scotland minister, stressed the graces of Christian character and piety in applying this doctrine. William Anderson, of the Free Church, accentuated man's personal "fellowship with God" in the midst of a sinful world demanding separation. John McDonald, whose sermons on this

for the theologian, rather than the commentator, to discuss," p. xii. In another sermon on the death of Christ, Candlish dismisses any historical inquiry as not his purpose, rather he wished to investigate "the essential rule or principle in the holy administration of God, which...the death of Christ is seen to assert and vindicate." See Life In A Risen Saviour, pp. 19, 20. Also see Candlish's Sermons, p. 68. John Smith in Our Scottish Clergy, 1848, says of Candlish's treatment of the text: "The meaning he affixed to the text was not its true meaning and the text was at best a motto."

1Robert Candlish, Life In A Risen Saviour, 1858. In the preface to this book, Candlish writes: "I have by no means aimed at anything like a complete commentary or exposition. I have...abstained from minute criticism," p. v. The outline of this book is twofold: First: "What is implied in the denial of the resurrection." Second: "The Nature of The Future Body."

2Robert Candlish, The Two Great Commandments, 1860. In an introduction to this book, Candlish again says that he did not attempt to deal with the scripture text "critically or even exegetically," p. x. He writes, "The Discourses when preached were meant to be practical...in an evangelical point of view. I endeavour, throughout, to carry the stream of sound doctrine through all the departments of duty that I have to survey," p. xiv. Candlish then proceeds to mention the specific doctrines which were the essence of these sermons.


4The Free Church Pulpit, Vol. 3, pp. 544-552.
subject appeared in *The Christian Treasury*, minimized the progressive character of salvation in his desire to force his hearers to certify that they were "saved" and "reconciled with God."¹

As the hermeneutics of Thomas Chalmers illustrated the doctrinal basis on which scripture was interpreted, so his preaching illustrated the manner in which doctrine dominated the sermon. The doctrine to be expounded linked together the theme, the text, and the proposition of the sermon. In the theme Chalmers usually stated the doctrine. In his text there was the biblical verification of the doctrine. The proposition, which usually came at the conclusion of his introduction, stated how he was to treat the doctrine. The following illustrations drawn from two collections of his sermons, *Sermons Preached in The Tron Church* and *Sermons Preached in St. John's Church, Glasgow*, illustrate this inter-relatedness between theme, text and proposition in doctrinal preaching.

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<th>Theme</th>
<th>Text</th>
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<tr>
<td>The Mysterious Aspect Of The Gospel To The Men Of The World</td>
<td>Ezek. 20:49 &quot;Then said I, Ah, Lord God! Doth he not speak parables?&quot;</td>
<td>In the prosecution of the following discourse, we shall first state the ground on which the religion of the New Testament looks so mysterious a thing to the men of the world, and then conclude with a short practical remonstrance upon this subject.</td>
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<td>Gratitude, Not A Sordid Affection</td>
<td>I John 4:19 &quot;We love him, because he first loved us.&quot;</td>
<td>Let us endeavour, first, to rescue the love of gratitude from the imputations which have been preferred against it,—and secondly to assign to the love of kindness manifested to the world in the gospel, and to the faith by which that love is made to arise in the heart, the place and the pre-eminence which belong to them.</td>
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<td>The Natural Enmity Of The Mind Against God</td>
<td>Rom. 8:7, &quot;The carnal mind is enmity against God.&quot;</td>
<td>Let us first offer some remarks on the affirmation of the text, that the carnal mind is enmity against God—and then shortly consider, how it is that the gospel of Jesus Christ suits its applications to this great disease.</td>
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<td>On The New Heavens And The New Earth</td>
<td>2 Pet. 3:13, &quot;Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.&quot;</td>
<td>First, in the new economy which is to be reared for the accommodation of the blessed, there will be materialism, not merely new heavens, but also a new earth. Second, that as distinguished from the present, which is an abode of rebellion, it will be an abode of righteousness.</td>
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<td>On The Doctrine Of Predestination</td>
<td>Acts 27:22, 31, &quot;And now I exhort you to be of good cheer; for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.&quot;</td>
<td>This doctrine has been so injudiciously meddled with...that it were well for us all could we carefully draw a line between the secret things which belong to God, and the things which are revealed, and belong to us and to our children. With this view we shall first, lay before you the observations which are suggested by the immediate history in the passage submitted to you. And second, we shall attempt to evince its application to us of the present day, and in how far it should carry an influence over the concerns of practical godliness.</td>
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The doctrinal preaching of Thomas Chalmers produced two kinds of sermon outlines both of which indicated his concern for the practical application of doctrine. First, there was the sermon with a short introduction followed by distinctly enunciated heads, under which he explained and applied the doctrine. He developed a sermon on "The Preparation Necessary For Understanding The Mysteries Of The Gospel," from Matthew 13:11, 12 in the following manner:

I. What it is that we ought to have, in order to attain an understanding of the mysteries of the gospel.
   A. We ought to have an honest desire after light, and if we have this desire, it will not remain unproductive.
   B. We ought to have a habit of prayer conjoined with a habit of inquiry; and to this more will be given.
C. We ought to do all that we know to be God's will, and to this habit of humble earnest desiring reformation more will be given.

II. How it is that the mysteries of the gospel are, in many cases, evolved upon the mind in a clear and convincing manifestation.

Secondly, there was the exposition-application type of sermon in which Chalmers did not always formally state his proposition nor give the sermon distinct heads. In these sermons he began with an exposition of the doctrine and the principles involved and then midway through the sermon changed direction and applied the doctrine to the personal life of the listener. Thus a rather theoretical disputation on "the nature of the sin against the Holy Ghost" is suddenly thrust in the face of the audience as Chalmers queries:

And now for the interesting question,—How am I to know that I have committed this sin, that is said to be beyond the reach of forgiveness?  

For Thomas Chalmers, and for most of the older evangelicals, the sermon was the living voice of a virile dogmatic theology. Thus a formal homiletical style was evident in a sermon minimizing expository and exegetical preaching. The doctrinal sermon ruled the day and dictated the plan of sermon preparation. If occasionally such preaching became dry and metaphysical, the concern for the practical application of doctrine to life possessed the potential to arrest wandering thoughts and rouse drooping eyelids into alert attention and introspective concern. Thomas Carlyle wrote of the sermons of Thomas Chalmers: "They were usually the triumphant on-rush of one idea with its satellites and

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1 Thomas Chalmers, Sermons Preached In The Tron Church, Glasgow, pp. 84-112. In this well-outlined type of sermon, the very last major heading was usually the personal application of the doctrine.

2 Thomas Chalmers, Sermons Preached In St. John's Church, Glasgow, p. 339. In this sermon thirteen pages are given to the exposition of the doctrine and twenty-two pages to the practical application of the doctrine.
supporters.\textsuperscript{1} For the older evangelical, the doctrines of a revealed theology were the life and pulse of the pulpit.

b. A Definitive Sermon Structure

The formal homiletical style of the older evangelical gave the sermon a definitive structure. Certainty of right doctrine produced a style of preaching marked by concreteness, clarity and confidence. This definitive character is apparent in the polemical nature of their preaching, their distinct proposition and outline, and their straight-forward yet personal style.

The older evangelical sermon often betrayed a polemical attitude. At the beginning of the century Andrew Thomson and Thomas Chalmers contended with rationalism and deviations from the doctrines of Westminster. Andrew Thomson preached a series of twelve sermons on The Doctrine Of Universal Pardon Considered and Refuted. He delivered a series of nine Sermons On Infidelity with deism and atheism primary targets of attack as he defined the doctrines of "revealed religion." His Sermons On Hearing The Word Preached illustrate the nature of polemical preaching. Each of Thomson's major points was worded in a negative instead of a positive manner. He observed that people hear a sermon in one of ten ways...all of which are bad:

1. Some hear with indifference.
2. Some hear with all the disadvantages that result from a want of preparation.
3. Some hear without sufficient attention.
4. Some hear with prejudice and partiality.
5. Some hear without sufficient humility.
6. Some hear merely with a view to criticise.
7. Some hear with levity.
8. Some hear without self-application.
9. Some hear without any firm and steady view to practice.
10. Some hear without any serious regard to a future and eternal world.\textsuperscript{2}


\textsuperscript{2}Andrew Thomson, Sermons On Hearing The Word Preached, Edinburgh, 1825, pp. 8, 23, 39, 58, 73, 85, 100, 110, 125, 139.
Thomas Chalmers usually had to have an opponent with whom to shadowbox in his sermons. He begins his oft-quoted sermon, *The Expulsive Power Of A New Affection* in these words:

There are two ways in which a practical moralist may attempt to displace from the human heart its love of the world—either by a demonstration of the world's vanity...or, by setting forth another object, even God, as more worthy of its attachment....My purpose is to show, that from the constitution of our nature, the former method is altogether incompetent and ineffectual and that the latter method will alone suffice for the rescue and recovery of the heart from the wrong affection that domineers over it.¹

Polemicism often set the tone in the older evangelical sermon because the preacher made his positive assertions in the context of negative statements.

In the last half of the century, the older evangelicals retained the disputational flavor of their predecessors. For them the evils were those of intellectual secularism and religious ritualism. John Cairns, who was Professor of Apologetics in the United Presbyterian Divinity Hall, reflected his apologetical concern in his preaching.² In *Life In A Risen Saviour* Robert S. Candlish contended with those who denied the resurrection.³ James Veitch, of St. Cuthberts, had "an intense dread of the Broad School" and much of the contemporary trend of thought.⁴ At the induction of another minister he declared from the pulpit:

Others may deem it their superiority that they follow the course of modern enlightenment, but as ministers of Christ we are set for the defence and confirmation of the Gospel, and it is ours in our several places to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.⁵

¹ Thomas Chalmers, *Sermons Preached In St. John's Church*, pp. 57-58. Also Chalmers' *Astronomical and Commercial Discourses*.

² See Cairns' sermon "Opinions About Jesus Christ," *Christ, The Morning Star and Other Sermons*, pp. 244ff, for an example of his apologetical preaching. Also note his book *False Christs And The True*, Edinburgh, 1864.

³ Robert S. Candlish, *Life In A Risen Saviour*.

⁴ James Veitch, *Sermons*, 1830, p. 27.

⁵ Ibid., p. 360; also p. 299.
Principal William Cunningham lashed out at "Traditionalism, or Tractarianism, or Semi-Popery...Hierarchism, Sacramentalism and Ritualism."¹ Horatius Bonar decried the havoc Darwinism was bringing to bear on the doctrine of human depravity in these words:

Such are the representations of sin with which we find a large amount of the literature and the religion of our day penetrated. Humanity is struggling upward, nobly self-reliant! The race is elevating itself, for the Darwinian theory has found its way into religion,...and Christianity is a useful help to this process of self-regeneration, this development of individual constitutions, by which perfection is to be reached at last and the kingdom won! Thus does many a prophet speak peace when there is none....Of what avail this calling evil good and good evil, will be in the great day of reckoning, a coming hour will shew.²

The older evangelical's proclamation of sin, grace and salvation was often polemical because to his way of thinking he was contending against "False Christs."³

The definitive character of the older evangelical sermon is also evident in the preacher's definite statement of both the proposition and outline. The clarity of the proposition and outline left little doubt as to the preacher's purpose in a particular sermon. The sermon commenced with a brief introduction relevant to either the text or the doctrine to be expounded, proceeded to a clearly stated explanation of the doctrine, and concluded with a practical and

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¹William Cunningham, Sermons, p. 394.

²Horatius Bonar, God's Way Of Holiness, pp. 22–23. Note also The Christian Treasury, 1852, p. 62, where Bonar says: "The doctrine of the future punishment of sin, has perhaps been more widely questioned in our day than in any other age. Hell is denied, Torment is denied." Also see his pamphlet Truth and Error, Edinburgh, 1866.

³See the book by John Cairns bearing this title.
personal application of the doctrine. The outline itself was obvious. There were usually three or four major points, always two and sometimes eight, which in turn could be divided into several distinctly headed minor points.

The sermons of John Cairns, who was offered the leading United Presbyterian pulpits in both Edinburgh and Glasgow, are a model of this homiletical transparency. In his collection of sermons, Christ, The Morning Star, every sermon begins with a one or two page introduction which in turn concludes with a proposition and leads into the first of the major headings. The following three sermons illustrate Cairns' distinct homiletical structure as well as his theological emphasis in preaching.

Theme: Christ, The Morning Star
Text: Revelation 2:28, 22:16
Proposition: It is plain that Christ will not for the first time become the morning star to His people when He bestows Himself as their final reward, since He is so already in the present life; and hence we must understand Him as promising to give Himself in a higher measure as the reward of their fidelity. Our inquiry will

1 Of the eighteen sermons in the first volume of The Church of Scotland Pulpit, sixteen reflected this basic structural similarity. Of the fifty-two sermons in the first volume of The Free Church Pulpit, forty-eight had this common homiletical scheme. In the sermons analyzed in the periodicals The Christian Treasury, The Christian Journal, The Edinburgh Christian Magazine, the vast majority again fit this pattern both of outline and of a theological approach akin to the older evangelicals.

2 In analyzing the outlines of the sermons in the three periodicals in this period it was apparent that there was no great tendency to have simply three points, although three is the mean. The preacher simply made what points were necessary, although at this time the exact number of points in a sermon was less than in the sermons of Andrew Thomson. In The Christian Treasury of thirty-three sermons analyzed, twenty-five were distinctly outlined. Nine sermons had two points, eleven had three points, three had four points, one had five points and one had six points. In The Christian Journal, ten sermons followed this homiletical pattern. One sermon had one point; three had three points, three had four points; two had five points, and one had six points. In The Edinburgh Christian Magazine, twenty-nine of the thirty-three sermons analyzed had a definite outline. Of these eleven had two points, eleven had three points, three had four points, one had five points; two had six points; and one had eight points.
lead us, in the opening up of this great promise, following the light of the figure in it, to consider in what sense Christ is to His people the morning star of time, and then in what higher sense He will be to them the morning star of eternity.

Outline: 1. His light shines after darkness.
   2. His light transcends all comparison
      A. Christ is pre-eminent in His titles
      B. Christ is pre-eminent in His office
      C. Christ is pre-eminent in His history
   3. His light ushers in perpetual day.

Conclusion: In conclusion, let me remark how all the blessedness of this indispensable, incomparable, everlasting gift is enhanced by the fact that Christ is at once the gift and the giver....Men and brethren, this is the prize of our high calling! Ought it not to lift us all above the works of darkness, above the fashions of the world, above the vanities of time, and to concentrate all our energies in one prolonged, persevering, and through grace, victorious effort to win Christ and be found in Him?

Theme: The Mystery And The Glory Of Redemption
Text: Isaiah 55:8, 9

Proposition: In order to give unity to the subject, I shall say nothing specially of the ways of God in Creation and in natural Providence; but limit myself to Redemption, showing how in various departments, the ways of God are superhumanly mysterious and yet divinely glorious.

Outline: 1. In regard to the need of redemption
   2. In regard to the purpose of redemption
   3. In regard to the plan of redemption
   4. In regard to the progress of redemption
      A. The rate of its progress
      B. The instruments of its progress
      C. The hindrances to its progress
   5. In regard to the limits of redemption

Conclusion: What should be our sentiments, dear brethren, as we this day once more, in holy communion, draw near to a God in Christ, so unutterably above us, and yet who has come so inexpressibly nigh?...Let us put off our shoes from our feet, for the place where we are is holy ground. Let us bow down before Him.

Theme: Justification
Text: Romans 4:5

Proposition: My design is not to preach a controversial sermon, but to see how this doctrine really fits into the context of God's word and of Christian experience.

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1 John Cairns, Christ The Morning Star, pp. Iff.

2 Ibid., pp. 140ff. In the conclusion, this sermon is a polemic against the doctrine of universalism.
Outline: 1. I begin with a brief explanation of what I understand justification to be.
   2. Now let us present one or two texts, which from their connection cannot mean anything else than this scheme.
      A. Some objections to this doctrine
   3. We are thus led to consider the tribute to this doctrine in Christian history, which is an ever-accumulating argument in its favour.
      A. The early centuries
      B. The Reformation
      C. The recovery of this doctrine in the Reformation Churches. (Here Cairns speaks of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries)

Conclusion: Let me, in closing, impress upon others, as upon myself, that this is not a mere question of speculative theology, or even of Scripture interpretation. It is the gravest and most serious practical question which any of us can ever have to face—the question whether at the bar of God we are ourselves absolved through the merits of Christ, or are still under condemnation. This doctrine comes down to us in the experience of others, with the marks upon it of pain and anxiety, of heart-piercing trouble and agitation, leaving a record which never can be obliterated. It is not right in us to treat it wholly with curious interest.

As the clarity of the preacher's outline explicated his purpose, so the certainty of his speech implied that his statements were beyond doubt, even question. The verbs of the sermon were definite and concrete, unimpaired by conditional clauses and words such as "possibly," "maybe" or "should." The preacher said "it is obvious" not "it would appear." "You must" instead of "you should." "We know" in place of "we think" or "we hope." Any suggestion of doubt or confession of mystery was rare. On occasion the older evangelical acknowledged the mystery of the fall and the incarnation but invariably he choose to accept such mystery in silence and turned to the more certain resolution of the cross. For Robert S. Candlish the certainty of the cross was grounded in


2 William Cunningham, *Sermons*, pp. 25, 26, 74, 389.

his unswerving view of the substitutionary atonement:

Every theory that has been or can be proposed of the suffering life and cruel death of Jesus, the Holy One of God, apart from the recognition of his vicarious character and standing, fails, and must fail, to satisfy a simple mind. The whole story is a confused, inconsistent, inextricable, incomprehensible enigma; a dark riddle, as regards the government of God; a strange anomaly that shocks the moral sentiments of men. It is the doctrine, or rather the fact, of his substitution for you, which alone harmonizes and hallows all. On any other supposition, the evangelical records are as void of clear meaning as any complicated tale of romantic fiction.

Andrew Bonar, though less a theologian than Candlish, began one sermon with this somewhat rash pronouncement: "Be sure of this,—the Spirit that led you to Christ is in you tonight; and now I want to shew you some of the ways He is working in you." The certainty of the preacher's speech reflected that certainty which Sir William Hamilton once described as the distinctive characteristic of the Scottish School of Philosophy. In his Lectures On Metaphysics, Hamilton said:

The Scottish School of Philosophy is distinctively characterised by its opposition to all the destructive schemes of speculation—in particular to Scepticism, or the uncertainty of knowledge; to Idealism, or the non-existence of the material world; to Fatalism, or the denial of a moral universe.

The sermon outlines of Horatius Bonar are an example of yet another technique employed by the preacher to give his sermons the ring of ultimate certainty: the use of questions and answers. Bonar's questions were the simple: who, what, when, why. While he appeared to be interrogating his subject, he was shrewdly drawing from it only the answers he sought and implying that this was in fact the complete unraveling of unerring truth. In a sermon titled "Looking Unto Jesus" based on Hebrews 12:1, 2, Bonar began: "In considering our text

1 Robert S. Candlish, Sermons, Edinburgh, 1873, p. 45.
more minutely, let us ask and answer the three following questions: 1. In looking, what do we see? 2. In looking, how are we affected? 3. In looking, what do we learn?” In the sermon Bonar answered each of these questions, but there was no exegesis, no historical study done of the text. In fact, the text was only alluded to, Bonar turned to other parts of the Bible to find support for his answers. While exegetically weak, Bonar’s use of questions was psychologically magnetic. In a sermon on John 20:11-14 and the inability of Mary to recognize the risen Christ, he said: “How could it be so?...Let us then ask what hindered the recognition?” On this question Bonar then built the outline of his sermon. In another sermon “Bethlehem And Its Good News” Bonar simply inquired: “What it is and what it teaches.” In the sermons of Horatius Bonar, questions were not woven into the argument and the text of the sermon, they were merely the basis of the proposition and they served the heads of the outline.

The result was a sermon exuding simplicity, finality, obdurance.

The definitive sermon of the older evangelicals was sparsely straightforward. Good literary style was not their concern. Their consuming passion was the proclamation of God’s action in Jesus Christ. It was said that the “burning eloquence of Chalmers covered all the faults of his composition, pronunciation and manner.” John Bonar wrote in the preface to the sermons of Principal Cunningham: “he let [style] alone, as what he had no need of; and as

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1 Horatius Bonar, “Look Unto Jesus” Sermons; this a collection of Bonar’s pamphlet sermons found only in New College Library.

2 Ibid., “A Present Saviour.”

3 Horatius Bonar, Family Sermons, p. 4. Also see p. 13 and Bonar’s sermon on “Nazareth And Its Good News.”

4 The British and Foreign Evangelical Review, Vol. 3, 1854, p. 662. Also see p. 82.
little had he time for it."¹ A. R. MacEwen has said that John Cairns wrote his sermons "with partial indifference to style."² While preachers such as R. S. Candlish could be poetic on occasion, their use of illustrations from sources outside the Bible were rare. Andrew Somerville, the one notable exception among older evangelicals, did use contemporary stories and anecdotes yet in setting forth his rules for sermon preparation his obvious objective was the simple communication of truth unmarred by fine sentences or literary embellishments.³

Andrew Bonar stated the raisond'être of plain preaching in this dictum: "Preaching is no preaching unless I speak with the solemnity and earnestness and affection that Jesus would have had had he been there."⁴

The definitive nature of the older evangelical sermon was sealed by its intensely personal character. The polemical context, the clear outline, the straightforward style made the sermon definitive, but the personal pronoun "you"

¹William Cunningham, Sermons, pp. x, xi.
³George Smith, A Modern Apostle: Alexander N. Somerville, p. 27.
⁴Marjory Bonar, Reminiscences Of Andrew A. Bonar, p. 96.
was the arrow piercing the listener in the pew and leaving him unable to evade the fact that this sermon was for him. Andrew Thomson concluded one sermon on "The Gospel of Salvation:"

Gladly, my friends, would I close with the mention of those pleasing anticipations. But I must offer a single word to those with regard to whom no such anticipations can be cherished or expressed. There are some in every congregation, and no doubt there are some among you, to whom the salvation we have been speaking of is but a name or an idea. You are indifferent to it, you have rejected him who brings it, you are not walking in the way which leads to it. You are contented with the world, you are living in ungodliness and unbelief, you are trusting in the unaccompanied mercy of God, you are relying on your own doings and deservings for obtaining what you acknowledge that you must have or perish. But have you in good earnest, made up your mind to rest in such refuges or lies... Death is coming upon you; are you prepared to die... Judgment succeeds death; and are you eased in innocence or in hardihood?â¦

Thomas Chalmers said, "By pinning your creed to your minister, you put the whole of this provision [God's saving act] away from you." John Cairns usually used the pronouns "I", "we" or "us" throughout his sermon until the conclusion when he would use "you" to relate the practical side of his doctrine to the life of each person. The preacher was personal in his conclusions because in the final analysis religion was personal. Principal Cunningham said:

If therefore, you would cultivate true religion,—if you would discharge the duties which you owe to God, and prepare yourselves for the everlasting enjoyment of His presence,—you must habituate yourselves to view God's character in the light of the Gospel.

Robert S. Candlish captured this conviction that preaching be personal when

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1 Andrew Thomson, Sermons On Various Subjects, pp. 296-297.

2 Thomas Chalmers, Sermons, "The Two Great Instruments" New College Library, p. 10.

3 John Cairns, Christ, The Morning Star, pp. 14, 38, 56, 93, 242, 351. Cairns' use of the pronoun "you" also suggests that when he used it he was not identifying with his congregation but considered himself to be in another, probably superior, spiritual class.

4 William Cunningham, Sermons, p. 209.
he declared:

In preaching the gospel, we have to address multitudes and masses of men, and, in a sense, to address them collectively or miscellaneous. But we have no collective or miscellaneous method of salvation to propose. We have no message to any crowd, as such. Our message is to every one in the crowd; separately and personally; to every man, woman, child; isolated and apart.¹

Andrew Bonar, who in a letter to a friend described himself as "no speaker—only a talker" couched his personableness in a conversational style.

Are you willing to detect yourself? Ask yourself, "Why am I not willing to do as Jesus did at Nazareth, though unnoticed? Why am I complacent at any good thing I say or do? Are not these to a real saint as natural as streams to a spring? Am I independent of money and comforts, or name and praise for my heaven, finding it in Jesus? The Spirit has found you out, for He never knew a time when He opened the door of your heart. Your conscience may be quiet by your profession. Look on sin as you see it in the law and in the Cross."²

To the more liberal evangelical, this use of the personal "you" was frowned upon as indicative of a clerical feeling of spiritual superiority.³

The soteriological emphasis and the formal homiletical style of the older evangelical sermon fit together well. The doctrinal content of the sermon was beyond question. The martial tone of the preacher was commanding and unwavering. The good news of God's action in Christ and the definite manner in which this message was proclaimed were the characteristics of the older evangelical pulpit. In spite of these general similarities the older evangelical sermon was not that of a production-line mentality. Soteriology is a very broad concept and a commonly held soteriology could be enunciated in a variety of ways.

² Marjory Bonar, Reminiscences Of Andrew A. Bonar, pp. 49, 292.
³ See Chapter VI, "The Descriptive Sermon."
CHAPTER V

VARIENT EMPHASES IN THE OLDER EVANGELICAL SERMON

The older evangelical sermon was usually orientated in one of two directions. Either the sermon assumed a more dogmatic and academic character or it was orientated in an ultra-spiritual, hence pietistical direction. The more dogmatically orientated evangelical viewed salvation as it were through a telescope, stressing the magnitude, the totality, the comprehensive nature of the way of salvation. The more pietistically orientated evangelical viewed salvation as it were through a microscope, magnifying the various stages on the way of salvation and bringing to each stage both a sense of urgency and a specific direction. In part this variation in orientation reflected the personal concern, experience and background of the preacher. The result was individuality and diversity within the older evangelical pulpit.

Toward Dogmatism

The more dogmatic orientation of the older evangelical sermon was rooted in the divinity hall. The preacher mirrored the scholarly emphasis of the training for the ministry in Scotland.¹ The preacher generally used a manuscript in the pulpit.² Indeed, the preacher himself was often the member of a theological

¹See Chapter II of this thesis.
²See pp. 189ff. In the United Presbyterian Church the manuscript was disallowed and men such as John Brown would spend long hours committing their manuscripts to memory. Sir George Bruce says that there were times when John Cairns' memory would fail him whereupon he would take "the manuscript from his pocket with apparent unconcern, place it in the Bible and read it to the end." See A. R. MacEwen, op. cit., p. 317.
faculty. John Brown, John Cairns, Thomas Chalmers, William Cunningham and James Robertson were all professors. Robert S. Candlish while still the minister of St. George's Free Church, Edinburgh, served as Principal of New College from 1862 to 1873. None of these men were theological recluses. They represent at its best, what some historians have described as the intellectual thrust or "Presbyterian thoroughness" of the Scottish pulpit.¹

These preachers were men with a traditional theological perspective. They were loyal to the Westminster Confession of Faith.² Their dogmatism was that of scholastic Calvinism. The sovereignty of God in relation to man's salvation was the sine qua non of the pulpit. While earnest and evangelistic they seldom gave the impression that everything depended on either one particular sermon or man's immediate response.³ Consequently, their utilization of the doctrine of salvation was more comprehensive for they stressed God's action in its breadth and totality as they understood it.

Their comprehensive view of salvation issued in a threefold emphasis in preaching. First, salvation was seen to be continuous: it was a process. Second, the preacher stressed the objectivity of God's action in his conviction

¹Yngve Brilioth, A Brief History Of Preaching, p. 162. Lewis G. Brastow, The Modern Pulpit, p. 290. These judgments must be accepted with serious limitations, namely the fact that the writers are making a great generalization on the basis of the sermons of a very limited number of men.

²See Chapter I, pp. 5ff. John Kennedy of Dingwall says that in his sermons he "was conscious of the desire that [they] should be in accordance with ...the Confession of Faith." See Sermons, p. 609.

³This is particularly noticeable in the sermons of Andrew Thomson and Thomas Chalmers where they would often, in an unannounced manner, extend one sermon into two or three sermons in order that they might fully develop the outline they had announced at the beginning of the sermon. See Andrew Thomson, Sermons On Various Subjects, sermons #19, 20, 21. Also see Thomas Chalmers, Tron Church Sermons, sermons #4, 5, 6, 13, 14.
that preaching was to enlighten the mind. Third, since salvation was continuous and comprehensive, doctrine was to be blended with duty, justification with sanctification, faith with works.

a. Salvation A Process

To the dogmatically orientated evangelical, salvation was continuous and therefore proclaimed as a process. He did not minimize the necessity of a "new beginning" but he never forgot that man's entry into the Christian life was only the beginning. He did not necessarily reject "sudden" or "instantaneous conversion" but to him such experiences were not to be treated as the norm of the Christian life. In his sermon he would speak of "coming to Christ" of "being born again" or "being converted" but the subjective experience of conversion was

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1 In the 1844 General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, this question of preaching for conversion was the subject of a major debate. Principal Cunningham and Professor John Duncan were among those who stressed that preaching was to be for more than mere conversion. See Proceedings, pp. 57ff. Also see Minutes Of the Presbytery of Aberdeen, 1840, for the questionnaire on the Inquiry into Revivals. Macmillan's Journal, Vol. 4, 1874, p. 15. Professor John Duncan wrote: "Regarding Instantaneous Conversion—I believe that a man may come into a new world consciously, in an instant of time, and that through no specific agency. But I must equally affirm that in the very nature of things the three elements stated in our Catechism as parts of the effectual calling are essentially necessary—the "conviction of sin" the "enlightening in the knowledge of Christ" and the "renewing of the will." They are terms of a sequence. Thus conviction may be pungent, yet come short of the cutting off of the legal hope; that belongs to the enlightenment in the knowledge of Christ. And this, again, may be keen, may be terribly vivid, and yet "the will" remains unpliant and unrenewed. I believe that the act of "renewal" is instantaneous; but there is a power as well as an act, and in its development to the observation of others or even to a man's own consciousness, it may be slowly progressive." See David Brown, op. cit., p. 409. This debate reoccurred in 1874 and 1875. The disputants were John Kennedy of Dingwall, the more scholastic Highlander, and Horatius Bonar, a pietist and defender of D. L. Moody. See the following three pamphlets for this debate. John Kennedy, Hyper Evangelism: Another Gospel Though A Mighty Power, 1874; A Reply To Dr. Bonar: Defence Of Hyper-Evangelism, 1875. Horatius Bonar, The Old Gospel; Not Another Gospel But The Power Of God Unto Salvation, 1874. These pamphlets suggest that this cleavage within the older evangelical pulpit was continuous through much of the nineteenth century.
as such was not the dominant theme in his message. 1 Robert S. Candlish spoke of "your first conversion" in a tone suggesting that man was to expect other similar religious experiences because conversion was continuous and salvation a process. 2 John Brown, on one occasion phrased the task of the preacher in terms of man's progressive salvation: "The conversion, improvement and final salvation of those entrusted to his care, are the ends which he ought consistently to keep in view." 3 James Veitch was most adamant in his rejection of preaching which solicited "immediate results" and "sudden conversion." 4 Such preaching Veitch called "misdirected zeal" for to him salvation was a process from beginning to end:

The Gospel does not profess to transform men miraculously...it does not change them all at once, but conducts them through a course of trial and discipline; its net encloses fish both good and bad; the tares and the wheat must in this world grow up together. 5

The dogmatic evangelical, being a person of keen theological perceptivity, accentuated the magnitude of salvation by contrasting and comparing various theological terms commonly associated with soteriology. For example, Thomas Chalmers insisted that reconciliation not be equated with salvation. Reconciliation was simply "the portal" to salvation. 6 Reconciliation referred to "an event that

1 For an example of the more generalized and less pressured way in which the dogmatic evangelical proclaimed the beginning of the Christian Life see Andrew Thomson, Sermons On Hearing The Word Preached, pp. 142ff.

2 Robert S. Candlish, Sermons, p. 103.

3 John Brown, Plain Discourses, p. 252.


5 Ibid., pp. 221-222, 247.

6 Thomas Chalmers, Sermons Preached In St. John's Church, p. 117.
has already happened—salvation, [to] an event that is to come."¹ Andrew Thomson began one sermon by noting the various words used to qualify the term "gospel" thereby indicating the comprehensive nature of God's action for man.

The Gospel is combined with a variety of terms, indicating a corresponding variety of character and of excellence. It is called the Gospel of God, to intimate that it comes from Him and that it reveals his will. It is called the Gospel of Christ, to denote that Christ is the author of the blessings which it discloses, and that he brings the message which it contains. It is called the Gospel of peace, thereby declaring its purpose to be that of making reconciliation between God and man. In the words of my text it is called the Gospel of our salvation, to draw our attention to it as unfolding the method by which it has pleased our Heavenly Father to save us from our sins.²

John Cairns also said that "the word gospel has many sides" and settled on the idea of "redemption" as expressive of "the essence" of the gospel.³ To Cairns, redemption embodied four revelations: "First as a divine saving plan; secondly as a personal Christian experience; thirdly as a collective spiritual history and fourthly as an endless development."⁴ Robert S. Candlish, in his attempt to emphasize the continuous and comprehensive nature of salvation, insisted that justification and sanctification and adoption were connected with each other.

Concluding a series of sermons on this theme Candlish said:

All three together may be taken as constituting the one union and communion with Christ which is at once gracious and glorious; and that each of the three apart may be viewed as having both a gracious and a glorious aspect and bearing....Justification is chiefly, if not exclusively, union and communion with Christ in grace; sanctification is union and communion with him partly in

¹Ibid., p. 116.
²Andrew Thomson, Sermons On Various Subjects, pp. 273-274.
³John Cairns, Christ. The Morning Star, p. 357.
⁴Ibid., p. 23.
grace and partly in glory; adoption is union and communion with him in glory only.1

When viewed through the telescope of theology, salvation was a doctrine too grand for simple and universal categories. Consequently the more dogmatic evangelicals sought to capture the magnitude of God's sovereign action by their comprehensive proclamation of salvation as a process.

b. Preaching To Enlighten The Mind

The grandeur of God's saving activity led to an objective emphasis in the sermon of the more dogmatically orientated evangelical. The sermon was to enlighten man's mind. As a preacher he did not wince at the doctrine of predestination.2 While forgiveness and repentance were essential elements in his soteriology, he did not make God's forgiveness contingent on man's repentance. He proclaimed both as "gifts...imparted by Christ in the exercise of his sovereignty."3 Justification was objectively presented "not as inward change" or transformation of character but as a change of man's very state due to the "righteousness of Christ."4 The traditional doctrine of the substitutionary atonement remained central to man's salvation, for legally this was man's one "sure hope furnished through the blood of propitiation."5 The Church and the

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1 Robert S. Candlish, Discourses Bearing Upon The Sonship and Brotherhood of Believers, p. 61. Also see pp. 39, 40. In the context of these sermons, Candlish defines grace as "the redress of what is wrong, the remedying of what is amiss, in our condition and character," p. 40. Glory he defines as "the attainment of what is positively good; for our being endowed with excellency and beauty; for our being elevated in rank and having our nature perfected," p. 40.


3 Andrew Thomson, Sermons On Various Subjects, p. 9.


5 James Veitch, Sermons, pp. 7, 123. Also see Chapter I, p. 48.
sacraments were treated with greater respect for the Church was "man's servant...appointed to be the instrument, the means and minister of his salvation."¹ God's grace was the theological touchstone of salvation for Christianity was the progressive infusion of "the life of grace" in the place of the "life of nature."² The dogmatic evangelical was a convinced Calvinist and his objective utilization of theological terms suggests that to him salvation was primarily God's action and only secondarily man's response. Salvation was concerned with man's status before God.

The more objective emphasis of the sermon was conditioned by the preacher's conviction that salvation was in part dependent on right thinking. The emphasis was on faith as belief, and belief was to be rational.³ In a sermon on "Salvation By Grace," Andrew Thomson described the faith essential to justification as "that very exercise of the mind which refers the whole of our redemption to the love of God, as manifested in Jesus Christ."⁴ John Brown said that to him faith was "the belief of the saving truth" whereas other evangelicals viewed faith as "dependence on that Saviour whom that truth reveals."⁵ Since faith was right belief, the preacher sought to enlighten men's minds for he reasoned that "the Gospel itself" always dealt with men "as rational and moral agents."⁶

¹ Robert S. Candlish, Two Great Commandments, p. 116.
² James Veitch, Sermons, p. 141. Also see pp. 211 and 325 for Veitch's stress on the Church and the sacraments.
³ See Chapter I, "Of Saving Faith."
⁴ Andrew Thomson, Sermons and Sacramental Exhortations, p. 12.
⁵ John Brown, Plain Discourses, p. 356.
⁶ James Veitch, Sermons, p. 221.
Indeed "reason and conscience" made man responsible for his "spiritual impotence." Principal William Cunningham noted in a sermon:

Before we can rationally believe any doctrine, we must indeed understand what the doctrine is; we must see and perceive the meaning of the statement or proposition to which we give our assent.

It was this kind of reasoned and didactic preaching which Principal Robert Candlish urged upon the divinity students of New College:

To give instruction, to convey information, to investigate, elucidate, and explain difficult problems in theology and religion...to open up the Scriptures, and unfold in an orderly way their inexhaustible fulness of grace and truth as containing...the unsearchable riches of Christ,—to discuss controverted questions and establish dogmatical conclusions;—to be the expositor and defender of the whole truth as it is in Jesus: these are works within the sphere of the preacher's province.

c. Doctrine Blended With Duty

The sermon of the dogmatic evangelical was more than a mere recitation of the doctrines of revealed theology. He believed that right doctrine issued in duty. He blended faith with works in an attempt to infuse a working salvation into the crucible of life. He related justification to sanctification.

Andrew Thomson told his congregation in St. George's, Edinburgh:

4. It should be noted in passing that these ideas of doctrine and duty were both important terms within the framework of the Scottish philosophy of common sense. In the *Active And Moral Powers* by Dugald Stewart if one substitutes the word doctrine for the word principle, then doctrine and duty are the structure of Stewart's moral philosophy. His *Active and Moral Powers* is composed of four books: Book One - "Of Our Instinctive Principles Of Action." Book Two - "Of Our Rational And Governing Principles Of Action." Book Three - "Of The Various Branches Of Our Duty." Book Four - "Of The Duties Which Respect Our Fellow Creatures." Also see S. A. Grave, *op. cit.*, pp. 224ff. In 1856, at the death of Sir William Hamilton, the chair of Logic and Metaphysics at Edinburgh University was contested by James Frederick Ferrier of St. Andrews, one of Hamilton's former pupils. It was believed that Ferrier had forsaken the Scottish School of Common Sense. His application was opposed and his
The word that is preached communicates to you a system of doctrine and of duty which all the art of man could never have formed or discovered.  

Principal William Cunningham contended that "it is from the Doctrines that we learn what are the Duties incumbent upon us, and it is from the Doctrines that we are to derive the motives from which the Duties are to be discharged." Thomas Chalmers berated the mere proclamation of the revealed doctrines of grace as nurturing "a stealthy and secret Antinomianism" in the Church. It was Chalmers' conviction that "both the preachers and the hearers were ...bedimmed and bemused upon the question" of the relationship between doctrine and duty, faith and works. Consequently, Chalmers made it plain in both his sermons and his more formal Institutes of Theology, that while "salvation is of grace...it is to works." The dogmatic evangelical was equally critical of preaching which abandoned either doctrine or duty because it was his conviction that the sincere profession of faith would validate itself in the common life of the Christian.

appointment lost. His opposition was centered in the clergy of the Free and United Presbyterian Churches. See E. S. Haldane, James Frederick Ferrier, pp. 9, 74. The leader of the opposition was John Cairn who in an earlier letter to Sir William Hamilton said: "I am more indebted to you for the formation of my intellectual habits and tastes than to any other person; and I shall bear, by the will of the Almighty, the impress of your hand through any future state of existence." See A. R. MacSwan, op. cit., p. 65.

1 Andrew Thomson, Sermons On Hearing The Word Preached, p. 83. Also Sermons On Infidelity, pp. 103ff.

2 William Cunningham, Sermons, p. 50.

3 Thomas Chalmers, Institutes of Theology, Vol. 2, p. 269. Here notice should be made of the entirety of chapter 8: "On The Preaching Of Good Works and All Virtue."

4 Ibid.


6 Ibid., pp. 231-232. Here Chalmers criticizes the evangelicals for their failure to preach "virtue, character, conduct." See p. 242 for his criticism of the legalists, who negated the doctrine of grace.
Robert Gordon declared: "Reason is given to expect wherever a profession of faith is made, that its fruits will appear in all holiness of life and conversation."¹

In the sermon this dual emphasis on doctrine and duty, faith and works, was spoken of theologically as justification and sanctification. Thomas Chalmers said that the harmonization of these two doctrines was "the essence of good preaching."² He advised his students:

Preach much and earnestly on justification; but preach as much and as earnestly on sanctification. Give your hearers well to understand that all who are justified are also sanctified; and that while confidence in God's offered reconciliation is the proper outset of Christianity, it is the outset of a new life as well as of a new hope.³

The doctrine of sanctification was most compatible to this dual emphasis on faith and works. Chalmers described sanctification as "the principle of being resolved at all hazards to follow the will of God."⁴ John Cairns depicted sanctification as a "working faith."⁵ Robert S. Candlish defined sanctification as "communion with Christ in his holiness" and viewed it as both continuous and progressive:⁶

My union and communion with Christ in his holiness may indeed be perfect in germ or embryo, in virtue of my participation, in my new birth, with him in his birth. But the germ, the embryo, must grow... The growth, therefore, may be slow, interrupted, painful. But it is a growth which cannot but go on to ultimate perfection.

¹Robert Gordon, Sermons, p. 232.
³Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 110.
⁵John Cairns, Christ, The Morning Star, p. 279. Also see p. 314.
⁶Robert S. Candlish, Discourses Bearing Upon The Sonship and Brotherhood of Believers, p. 45.
It is the growth of that holy nature,—that element of holiness—which I have in common with him who by his Spirit makes me and keeps me one with himself.¹

In an essay on "The Work of The Spirit" Professor James Robertson of the Old Kirk wrote: "He who possesses faith, has entered upon the path of improvement as a moral and religious being."²

The dogmatic evangelical's utilization of the doctrine of sanctification was illustrative both of the comprehensive nature of salvation and the comprehensive content of his sermon. Addressing the students of New College in 1871, Principal Robert S. Candlish declared that the "entire range of human experience, the vicissitudes of human life, the rich resources of human history over all the world" were freely open to the preacher in his sermon.³ Concluding his farewell sermon to his New Greyfriars congregation in Edinburgh in 1814, Andrew Thomson urged his parishioners to:

Show that the sanctifying influence of the gospel is minute and universal; that it extends to every situation of life and every branch of duty; that it regulates alone the inward temper and the outward behaviour. Show it in the fervour of your piety, in the integrity of your dealings, in the purity of your conversation, in the warmth, the extent, the activity, the disinterestedness, the spirituality, of your benevolence. Show it in your several relations—as husbands and wives—as parents and children—as brothers and sisters—as masters and servants—as teachers and taught—as neighbours and friends. Show it in your various circumstances—in riches and in poverty—in prosperity and in adversity—in health and in sickness—in joy and in sorrow—in obscurity and in eminence—in society and in retirement—in youth and in advanced age—in life and at death.⁴

This was the kind of preaching Thomas Chalmers commended to his students as "the

¹Ibid., pp. 52-53.
⁴Andrew Thomson, Sermons and Sacramental Exhortations, pp. 509-510.
holiness of social virtue."¹

While the more dogmatic orientation of the older evangelical sermon was comprehensive, it carried with it one weakness. There was no concrete doctrine of assurance. A telescopic view of salvation was not conducive to clarity in every detail. With characteristic firmness, the preacher asserted that conversion was the beginning of the Christian life. Yet this was an experience about which the preacher himself was hazy.² Men were told that he must be converted but seldom what he was to do to be converted, for conversion was the work of the Holy Spirit and as such a mystery. Ironically the older evangelical proclaimed a definitive faith which had little place for mystery. Indeed the older evangelical’s disdain for mystery tended to magnify, out of proportion, that which was ambiguous or mysterious in his own system. In the end, this uncertainty as to man’s duty at the onset of the Christian life resulted in a basic uneasiness as to man’s personal salvation.³ At best man was told that "labor and perseverance" might bring a "full assurance of faith."⁴ In a sermon preached on Philippians 2:12, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling," Robert Gordon said:

Our text is a very unequivocal declaration on the part of the apostle that if believers do not fall away, it is because they are habitually and powerfully influenced by the fear of so falling;


² In one sermon on "The Means of Regeneration" Robert Gordon says that he "cannot tell how" conversion takes place as to its nature and manner. Yet in the next sentence he says that the conversion experience is "very distinct and intelligible." See Robert Gordon, *Sermons*, p. 223. Also see James Buchanan, *The Holy Spirit*, pp. 76-87, 183.


that if the work of their salvation is carried on and ultimately perfected, it is because they are feelingly alive to the danger of its being arrested or retarded; and that they are thus saved by fear.¹

Ultimately, the only solace the preacher could offer any harassed person was that "The Lord knoweth them that are really his...the world may not know them; they may scarcely know themselves; but the Lord knoweth them."² Here, the dogmatic evangelical had the last word: man's uncertainty as to any assurance of his salvation was but a witness to the preachers' underlying conviction that salvation was all of God.

The strength of the older evangelical sermon tending toward dogmatism was the harmonization it sought to produce between preaching and theology. Thomas Chalmers, John Cairns, Robert S. Candlish, to name three, were respected theologians as well as outstanding preachers. These men built a bridge between the professor's lectern and the pulpit. The dogmatic evangelical, whether or not he held the official title of professor, was both preacher and theologian. His sermons were not without their weakness, but usually it was a weakness consistent with his system of theology. The sermon tending toward dogmatism, was free from the contemporary peril which Helmut Thielicke has called "the dualism between preacher and professor."³

Toward Pietism

The older evangelical sermon was also orientated toward pietism. The preachers taking this direction were a distinct and influential group concentrated in the Free Church. Robert M. M'Cheyne, William Burns of Kilsyth, John Purves

¹Robert Gordon, Sermons, p. 455.
²Robert S. Candlish, Sermons, p. 228.
³Helmut Thielicke, The Trouble With The Church, pp. 28ff.
of Jedburgh, John Milne of Perth, Andrew and Horatius Bonar, A. Moody Stuart and Alexander Somerville were among the preachers said to belong "to that pietistic order who...attracted to the Free Church all that was best in Scotland."¹ These men were the prominent clerical figures in the Scottish revivals of the late 1830's and early 1840's, the mid 1850's, and the Moody campaigns of the 1870's. With these men the evangelistic fervor of the older evangelical usually spelled revivalism. The fact that Andrew and Horatius Bonar, A. Moody Stuart, and Alexander Somerville all served as Moderators of the Free Church witnesses to the respectability of this group in nineteenth century Scotland.²

These men tended to share a common background. Brought up in the Old Kirk they went out with the Disruption. Their own religious experience was usually of such a nature that either they could pinpoint the moment of their conversion or their change was so prolonged that it involved periods of inner despair and agony.³ Their education found many of them in Edinburgh in the late 1820's and the early 1830's. There they heard Edward Irving lecture on the Book of Revelation


²A. Moody Stuart was Moderator in 1875, Andrew Bonar in 1878, Horatius Bonar in 1883 and A. N. Somerville in 1886. In passing it should be observed that the impact of Dwight L. Moody on Scotland was very great. These ministers were among those prominent in the various Moody campaigns. The period in which these men served as Moderators corresponds to the period of Moody’s activity in Scotland.

³Note especially the Memoirs of Robert M. McCheyne, pp. 13-41 and the Diary and Letters of Andrew Bonar, pp. 3-10. The experience of these men should be then contrasted with that of such men as John Cairns, see his biography, pp. 17ff; also R. S. Candlish, in his Letters, pp. 52-55. The religious experience of the first two men was emotional, that of the latter more intellectual. In Thomas Chalmers one must also be careful not to confuse his more emotional conversion to evangelicalism with his more intellectual conversion to Christianity. Chalmers always said that the latter was the time when he became a Christian. See William Hanna, op. cit., Vol. 1, p. 155.
in 1829. The urgency of the preaching of these men was in part due to their heightened awareness of the parousia, augmented by the pre-millennialism of some of them. Their involvement in the movements of revival led them to vigorously defend instantaneous conversion as authentic if not normative.  

The pietism of these men had two distinct characteristics. First, they stressed the necessity of a personal conversion experience. In this they attempted to bring a sense of certainty to what was often the uncertain commencement of the Christian life. They demanded a radical religion of the heart as well as the head. In this they made conversion a subjective experience and focused attention on man's will. In their attempt to break man's will and move man to conversion they interpreted the events at the end of life's pilgrimage in their harshest manner. Secondly, they emphasized Christian holiness. Piety, in the best sense of the term, was a concern of the older evangelical tending toward dogmatism as well as the liberal evangelical at the end of the century. The men tending toward pietism attempted to systematize the holy life and consequently were legalistic in their predication of right and wrong. In emphasizing a religion of the heart, the pietist was often sentimental in his sermons. Yet he was not theologically ignorant or disdainful. On the contrary, he was a staunch defender of the scholastic Calvinism of the Confession of Faith. This was, in the main, the theology behind his preaching.

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2 This is particularly poignant in the preaching of the Bonars and R. M. M'Chayne. At a prophetic conference in Edinburgh in 1838 Andrew Bonar said, "50 years ago, those of us who held this truth were very few and much despised." Now, Bonar notes that such views are widely held and accepted. Marjory Bonar, Diary and Letters, p. 369.

3 At the time of the Moody revivals, 1874, Horatius Bonar wrote: "In truth all conversions must be sudden if they are the work of the Holy Ghost. They who deny such suddenness must believe the process of conversion to be in part a human one." See The Old Gospel, p. 32.
a. The Conversion Experience

The older evangelical sermon tending toward pietism sought to dispel the haze enshrouding the beginning of the Christian life. Consequently in preaching there was the earnest quest for man's experience of true conversion. Robert M'Cheyne stated the reason for this emphasis most succinctly:

Here I would observe what appears to me a fault in the preaching of our beloved Scotland. Most ministers are accustomed to set Christ before the people. They lay down the gospel clearly and beautifully, but they do not urge men to enter in. Now God says, 'Exhort, - beseech men, - persuade men; not only point to the open door, but compel them to come in.'

William Burns, M'Cheyne's colleague in the revivals at Dundee, described such preaching as "a demonstration of the Spirit." He decried those who in preaching "substituted the intellect for the heart." Horatius Bonar defended the pietists' rigorous demand for a conversion experience on seemingly pragmatic though sincere grounds:

While the preaching of a guarded gospel may lead to no backslidings, it will accomplish no awakenings; so the question will come to be this, Is it not better to have some fallings away, because none have been shaken? What preaching produces, upon the whole, the most conversions, and brings most glory to God?

In his attempt to clarify the onset of the Christian life, the pietistic evangelical stressed man's subjective response more than God's objective action in Christ. He attempted to be both simple and explicit in his solicitation of

1 Andrew Bonar, Memoir and Remains of R. M. McCheyne, p. 358.
3 Ibid.
4 Horatius Bonar, God's Way of Holiness, pp. 66-67. In another sermon written at the conclusion of his ministry, Horatius Bonar looked back over his ministry and said, "The keynote which I struck was, 'Ye must be born again;' and that message found its way into many hearts. It repelled some, but it drew many together." See Horatius Bonar, D.D., A Memorial, p. 91.
the conversion experience. William Burns proposed four questions as a basis for man's self-authentication of this experience:

Would you then wish to know whether you are built upon this sure foundation? If so I shall willingly assist you to make the trial.

1. Have you ever seen the utter insufficiency of every other foundation so as to feel yourself shut up to the faith of the Lord Jesus as your righteousness?
2. Have you perceived and felt Christ to be precious to you, so that your building on Christ has been an act at once of necessity and free choice?
3. Where is your habitual dependence? Is it upon Jesus Christ alone, or is it upon Him and something else?
4. Is the life you live a life of faith on the Son of God?

Alexander Somerville prescribed five steps essential to the "new birth" but he too found difficulty in illuminating the mystery of the commencement of the Christian life as four of his five suggestions hinge on the equally ambiguous term "things."

1. Renounce all things that you may win Christ.
2. Bear the loss of all things for the sake of Christ.
3. Do without all things if you have Christ.
4. Count that you have all things if you possess Christ.
5. Submit at all times to the will of Christ. Follow Jesus only; follow Jesus fully; follow Jesus alway.

Horatius Bonar was less explicit but more simple in his description of conversion as the cessation of all human effort and work and "simply the belief of the truth."

Since the pietist sought a religion of the heart and stressed man's response, salvation seemed to be increasingly contingent on man's will. It was said that before a man could be converted he had to endure "a certain amount of preliminary mental suffering." In his incisive essay, "Modes Of Conducting

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1 Islay Burns, op. cit., p. 287.
2 Alexander N. Somerville, Precious Seed, p. 160.
3 Horatius Bonar, Truth and Error, p. 79; Light and Truth, p. 133.
4 Horatius Bonar, God's Way Of Holiness, pp. 56, 57.
Revivals," William Burns declared the use of "spiritual terrors and distresses" to be providential as the preacher was "to use all means to save some even pulling them out of Hell." A. Moody Stuart who described conversion as the gate at the head of the narrow way declared: "The gate is too narrow for human pride; the heart must be broken down to pass it and broken and contrite through all the way." The preacher justified his most bitter and brutal denunciations of man as but God's voice awakening the will by disclosing to man his true nature.

The pietistic evangelical was particularly penetrating and uninhibited in his use of death, the parousia, the judgment and hell. These more indeterminate, and therefore disquieting, doctrines were the anvils on which the preacher hammered out his message of salvation. Death was "an evil and a penalty...yet God's instrument for opening prisons, and unloosing chains, and disengaging the higher vitalities and perfections of being." In a revival sermon preached in a churchyard, William Burns concluded:

O will you not embrace the faithful saying? Will you not believe the gospel? Dearly beloved friends, the time is at hand when that trumpet shall sound, when that sand-glass of time shall be emptied of its last grain, when these graves shall be opened and the dead raised, the bodies which sleep around us in this churchyard awaking to life and coming forth to shame or honour.

The parousia was described as "the awful advent which ends all hope." Robert M. M'Cheyne appealed to the fear and hopelessness brought by the parousia in his quest for man's conversion:

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1 Islay Burns, op. cit., pp. 230, 239.
5 Islay Burns, op. cit., pp. 259-260.
6 Horatius Bonar, A Memorial, p. 62.
When Christ shall appear,—the holy Jesus, in all his glory,—
then brazen faced sinners will begin to blush. Those that never
prayed will begin to wail. Sinners, whose limbs carried them
stoutly to sin and to the Lord's table last Sabbath, will find
their knees knocking against one another.

The judgment was "God exercising [his] attribute of justice." It was the pros-
pect of judgment which brought many sermons to a shattering conclusion as seen
in this excerpt from the preaching of Horatius Bonar:

Unready sinner! yonder is the Judge, and the throne, and the
gathering crowd, waiting their sentence! Hear the shout and the
trumpet and the thunder, and the voice of Majesty! Are you looking
out, or are you asleep? Are you preparing, or are you resolved to
risk everything and brave the Judge of all? What is time worth?
What is gain, or pleasure, or sin, or earth worth? Nothing. What
is the soul worth? What are heaven, and God, and Christ, and the
kingdom, and the glory, worth? Everything. And yet these are
nothing to you! One piece of earth's gold, one acre of land, one
smile of gay companionship, one wreath of the world's honour, one
day of time's power and greatness, you would prefer to all that is
divine and eternal! O madness of the human heart, how unsearchable
and incurable! O spell of sin, how potent and enthralling, O snare
of the evil one, how blinding, how fatal, how successful.

The judgment ended in either reward or punishment. The idea of an ultimate
reward provided the pietist with added incentive in his quest for man's con-
version.

The end of punishment was hell, and this was the subject utilized by
the preacher to strike terror and crush the resisting will of man. Hell, as
described in a sermon title by Andrew Bonar, was "Dreams Gone and Desolations
Come!"

They used to have their dreams about Hell. They said it was no-
where; they scoffingly proclaimed that the idea of it was only
a device of some who wished to terrify their fellows....But they

1Andrew Bonar, Memoir and Remains of R. M. McCheyne, p. 368.
2John Purves, Sermons Touching Some Points Much Controverted At Present,
3Horatius Bonar, Family Sermons, p. 318.
4Marjory Bonar, Reminiscences Of Andrew A. Bonar, p. 41.
have been rudely awakened out of their dream. They see hell now. There it is, stretching out on every side. They will never forget the gates that shut upon them as they entered, precluding every hope of escape. O dreadful darkness! tormenting devils! unfeeling company? Now and then, it may be, some of the lost cry one to other, "How long?" and one to the other utters the terrible response, "For ever and for ever!" They find now there is a real hell, and that it has everlasting pains, and thirst such as a man sometimes felt on earth when he would have given kingdoms for one drop of water... The infinite God in very truth has poured out vials of wrath on sinners. ¹

The intensity with which many pietists utilized these eschatological elements reflected the pre-millennialism which convinced them that the second coming and the judgment were at hand. ²

The weakness of the older evangelical sermon orientated toward dogmatism was its failure to articulate a firm doctrine of assurance. The strength of the older evangelical sermon orientated toward pietism was its definite doctrine of assurance. In developing this doctrine the pietist was more dependent on the "Marrow of Modern Divinity" than the Westminster Confession of Faith. ³ The pietists' conviction as to the necessity of this doctrine in preaching grew out of his intensified views of the parousia:

The very thought of the Lord's Second Coming raises in us the conviction that we need assurance of our salvation ere we can welcome that event which opens eternity. The man who is to delight in Christ's Second Coming must have not only a hope, and a good hope, of his own salvation, but must have assurance of eternal life in Him, rejoicing in that blessed hope as being his sure heaven. ⁴

His interrogation of man was sometimes harsh and severe, never-the-less he could promise the man "coming to Jesus" the immediate assurance that by simply

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¹ Andrew Bonar, Gospel Truths, pp. 207-208.
² Andrew Bonar, Redemption Drawing Nigh, pp. 5, 12.
⁴ Andrew A. Bonar, Redemption Drawing Nigh, pp. 5, 12.
believing his ultimate salvation was certain. Andrew Bonar said:

This simple, direct Assurance is got by what we discern in Christ Himself; not by what we discover about ourselves. It is got by what we believe about Christ; not by what we know about our own act of faith....In a word, this direct and immediate Assurance is found by my discovering that Christ, God-man, is the very Saviour for my needs and wants, my sins and corruptions.¹

To Horatius Bonar instantaneous conversion and immediate assurance were simultaneous with man's act of belief:

A Christian is a saved man! And he knows it! It is his belief of the gospel that saves him, that alone! Yes; he is saved at once, and saved for all eternity, and that simply in and by believing.²

The pietist proclaimed man's simple but sincere belief as the essence of salvation. He prefaced this act of belief with all the terror and emotionalism of preaching designed to break the will.³ He appended this act with certainty and assurance and here his preaching had a positive element wanting in the sermon of the more traditional and dogmatic older evangelical. With certainty as well as a winsomeness often lacking in other pietists, A. N. Somerville declared:

Christ's blessings are not merely freely given. They are for ever bestowed. He who is saved shall not be lost. He who is justified shall not be condemned. He who is born of God shall not again become a child of the devil. "My sheep shall never perish."⁴

¹Ibid., pp. 342-343.
²Horatius Bonar, Light and Truth, p. 379.
³This preparatory phase of salvation was prior to conversion, but an essential step to conversion which was contingent on man's belief. The more liberal evangelical (see Chapters 6 and 7) often stressed salvation as man's simple belief in Jesus but he did not subject man to the terror of breaking the will. Horatius Bonar therefore decries this newer preaching. He says: "Their object in simplifying faith is to bring it within reach of unrenewed man, so that by performing this very simple act he may become a renewed man. In other words, their object is to make man the beginner of his own salvation." See Truth and Error, pp. 82-83.
⁴Alexander Somerville, Precious Seed, pp. 12-13, 177-178.
b. Christian Holiness

Holiness was the second theme in the sermon orientated toward pietism. This radical demand for righteous living indicates the austerity and sincerity with which the preacher viewed the Christian life. A. Moody Stuart, whose elders at St. Luke's Free Church once rebelled against the highly introspective nature of his preaching, said:

The narrow way may always be recognized by these two beautiful tokens, forgiveness of sins and holiness of heart and life. These remain the same all the way through, yet always beautiful; new and living through the daily sprinkling of the atoning blood and the daily quickening of the Holy Spirit.

In his closing address as Moderator to the General Assembly of the Free Church in 1875, Moody-Stuart said, "Absolutely sinless holiness is our only scriptural standard, and the least sin is not to be tolerated in us." Moody-Stuart outlined four "means to attaining holiness:"

1. We receive holiness by faith.
2. We obtain it by intensity of prayer
3. We obtain it by solemn and unreserved dedication of ourselves to God in Christ.
4. There are daily lessons to be learned in detail.

Horatius Bonar who defined holiness as "likeness to God" and "spiritual perfection" declared:

This newness is comprehensive, both in its exclusion of the evil and its inclusion of the good. It is summed up by the apostle in two

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2. A. Moody Stuart, Recent Awakenings And Higher Holiness, Pamphlet, New College library, p. 37.

3. Ibid. In this address Moody-Stuart rejects what he calls Christian perfection. Christian holiness is the process of sanctification which he calls a "trying, humbling, yet most glorious process," p. 36. This closing address is an example of the rigorous two-fold theme of pietist preaching. "Preaching Salvation to the Lost," pp. 41ff. "Higher Holiness," pp. 26ff.
things, 'righteousness and holiness'... It is then to a new standing or state, a new moral character, a new life, a new joy, a new work, a new hope, that we are called.\(^1\)

Robert M. M'Cheyne said that holiness was "every real Christian making progress ...advancing, getting higher, nearer to Canaan, riper for glory."\(^2\) To Andrew Bonar, holiness, which was "living for Christ" was so imperative to the whole scheme of salvation that he ruled out death-bed conversions.\(^3\) A. N. Somerville did not use the word "holiness" to any great extent. He preferred to speak of backsliders whom he considered to be very numerous and whom he defined as "those falling away from previous attainment in spiritual things."\(^4\) While the preacher tending toward pietism proclaimed salvation as belief in Jesus; while he articulated an immediate doctrine of assurance; he nonetheless insisted that belief issue in responsible and holy living.

As the pietist usually hardened the tenets of the older evangelical, his directives for the life of holiness suggested legalism. In preaching this emphasis on holiness was wholly spiritual and personal as opposed to social and ethical. He advocated complete withdrawal from the world in place of discriminate living in the world. Brownlow North, an Anglican educated at Eton and Oxford who was so influential as a lay revivalist in Scotland that in 1859 the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland officially recognized him as an Evangelist, declared:

I would define the world to be a compound of persons, and place, and pursuits which do not glorify God and which bring no honour to the name of Jesus.

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\(^1\) Horatius Bonar, *God's Way Of Holiness*, pp. 7-8, 16, 176.


\(^3\) Marjory Bonar, *Reminiscences Of Andrew A. Bonar*, p. 273.

That man cannot be said to be coming out from the world who habitually associates, on terms of intimacy and friendship, with persons to whom he cannot freely talk about Jesus. That man cannot be said to be coming out from the world who seeks his amusement in places to which he knows it would be mockery to ask Jesus to go with him. That man cannot be said to be coming out from the world who, for the sake of any temporal advantage, engages in pursuits on which he cannot kneel down and ask God's blessing.¹

Unlike most dogmatists, the pietist specifically named the "evils" to be avoided. Horatius Bonar said, "Let us not try to combine the novel and the Bible, the closet and the ball-room."² Robert M. M'Cheyne was particularly stringent, thundering:

How dare you cross the threshold of a theatre or a tavern any more! What the Spirit of God amid the wanton songs of a theatre, or the boisterous merriment of a tavern! Shame on such practical blasphemy....You must never cross their threshold any more. What shall I say of games—cards, dice, dancing? I will only say this, that if you love them, you have never tasted the joys of the new creature....What shall I say of simpering tea-parties, the pleasures of religious gossiping, and useless calls, without meaning, sincerity, or end? I will only say, they are the happiest of God's children who have neither time nor heart for these things.³

A. N. Somerville was much less militant allowing "the character of the concert"

¹ Brownlow North, Ourselves, 1866, p. 73. The role of the lay revivalist cannot be minimized, particularly in the North of Scotland. Brownlow North was perhaps the most widely recognized and his collection of sermons provides worthy insight into the message of these lay preachers. Another preacher worthy of note was Duncan Matheson whom the Duchess of Gordon employed as a lay missionary and who was offered ordination if he would go to New Zealand. Hay Macdowall Grant was yet another lay Anglican preacher active in the North of Scotland. In 1859 Grant's revival efforts were supported by the Old Kirk minister of Greyfriars Church, Aberdeen, Mr. Smith; and Smith was brought before the bar of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland where he was defended by Norman MacLeod. All three of these lay preachers were active in the three emergent Presbyterian churches, particularly in the North of Scotland, and in the city churches of the clergy of this more pietistic persuasion.


to determine its status and observing that while the "Waltz and the Galop" were to be shunned there were other dances "free from objection."

Still, Somerville tended to say what was right and what was wrong in his attempt to be explicit in his direction of the holy life. Among the older evangelicals, these men were not unique in their abstinence from such social pleasures. They did, however, differ from most of the more dogmatic evangelicals in denouncing such social activities in their preaching.

As the pietist proclaimed this two-fold message of conversion and holiness his sermon was sometimes inclined toward sentimentalism. The terror and anxiety he provoked in his usage of eschatology was somewhat countered by his recourse to terms of endearment. In speaking of the gospel he employed such conditioning adjectives as "precious... dear... sweet promises... sweet invitations." A sermon telling the story of a remarkable conversion was titled: "Another Lily Gathered." The minister was addressed as an "Angel Worker." The Christian message was likened to a basket of fruit in a garden setting:

> The beautiful clusters I have spoken of represent the Promises of God, those exceeding great and precious promises, in which the blessings of the everlasting covenant are stored up, and by which we are said to become 'partakers of the divine nature.' Now let me open the basket, and take out a few of its delicate specimens. Ah, here is a beauty! We must handle it softly. See how symmetrical in shape, how perfect in form, is each grape! The fruit seems as if it would melt on the lips.

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2 Alexander N. Somerville, Precious Seed, pp. 140, 250.

3 Andrew Bonar, Memoir and Remains of R. N. McCheyne, p. 496.

4 Marjory Bonar, Reminiscences Of Andrew A. Bonar, p. 256.

5 Alexander N. Somerville, Precious Seed, p. 235. This kind of preaching is found particularly in The Christian Treasury, the periodical edited by Horatius Bonar.
In the sermon tending toward pietism, romanticism, the spirit of the age, became sentimentalism.

The sentimental language of the pietist would appear to have been the result of a religion centered primarily in the heart. The preacher was the analyst of "the human heart, in its motives and inner workings." To make his point in a sermon, Robert M. M'Cheyne said to his congregation, "Put your hand on your heart. Has it lost its burning desire after earthly things?...Do you feel that Jesus has put the nails through your lusts?" The pietist believed that "the study of truth in its dogmatical form...robbed it of its freshness and power." He therefore advocated "devotional" preaching. Robert M. M'Cheyne listed the Song of Solomon as one of his favorite books for preaching because:

If a man's religion be heart religion—if he hath not only doctrines in his head, but love to Jesus in his heart—if he hath not only heard and read...but been brought to cleave unto him...then this book will be inestimably precious to his soul for it contains the tenderest breathings of the believer's heart towards the Saviour, and the tenderest breathings of the Saviour's heart again towards the believer.

In preaching to the heart, the pietist turned to the language of the heart. He appealed to man's feelings, his moods, his emotions as well as his mind; only then, he reasoned, could he persuade man's will.

The varying emphases of the older evangelical sermon points to the diversity and latitude of the older evangelical pulpit. While the sermon was usually inclined toward either dogmatism or pietism these two tendencies were

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3. Horatius Bonar, The Schools Of The Prophets, p. 36.
4. Ibid.
not exclusive of each other. Even those preachers whose sermons shared a similar emphasis articulated their message with varying sentiments. Thus A. N. Somerville spoke with a mildness alien to the more turgid Bonar brothers. Professor John "Rabbi" Duncan incorporated both the academic argumentation of dogmatism and the legalism of pietism in his sermons. Thomas Chalmers was not given to the harsh denunciations of Andrew Thomson nor R. S. Candlish to the cold scholasticism of William Cunningham. The older evangelical was traditional in his theology but here theological uniformity did not prohibit variety in preaching.

The older evangelical dominated the Scottish pulpit in the first half of the nineteenth century. Under Andrew Thomson, Thomas Chalmers and John Brown evangelical preaching acquired a new respectability. In Thomas Chalmers the evangelical pulpit became aggressive and innovative in its attempt to recapture the masses lost to the Church through urbanization. Under William Cunningham and John Cairns, the older evangelical became increasingly scholastic and defensive, even combative. In the Bonar brothers and A. Moody Stuart preaching was inwardized as theology began its withdrawal to the citadel of man's heart. Yet, even as the older evangelical pulpit receded alternate forces and preachers were emerging to dominate the last quarter of the century and issue in a more liberal evangelical theology and sermon.
CHAPTER VI

THE EVANGELICAL SERMON IN TRANSITION

The last half of the nineteenth century witnessed the appearance of a more liberal evangelicalism in both the pulpit and the religious press. In 1855 John Caird's sermon "Religion In Common Life" was described as marking "a new era in pulpit thought" in Scotland. In 1866 Norman MacLeod was arraigned by the Glasgow Presbytery of the Old Kirk because he had departed from the traditional and Confessional understanding of the "Sabbath-day" in his preaching. In defense, MacLeod acknowledged that indeed he had "taught against the Confession of Faith" and further "asserted that all had done the same or did not in every iota believe the Confession." In the same year, Walter C. Smith was brought to the bar of the Glasgow Presbytery of the Free Church because of a series of Sunday morning lectures entitled "The Sermon On The Mount" in which he said:

The New Testament is now the one complete and sufficient will of God for our salvation; so that even were the ancient Scriptures ...to be lost...yet we should still have the whole will of God, the perfect law of life, the complete scheme of grace, all absolutely essential to the salvation of men.

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1 Charles L. Warr, Principal Caird, p. 141.


3 Walter C. Smith, The Sermon On The Mount, p. 62. Also p. v.ff. Smith, as was MacLeod, was really challenging the idea of the law or the preaching of the law which had been so central in the older evangelical proclamation of the way of salvation.
In 1871 the formerly conservative *British and Foreign Evangelical Review* declared that its new purpose was:

To develop a free believing theology by which the evangelical faith of the church shall be harmonized with all discovered truth, and shall itself be placed upon a safe scientific basis.¹

1875 to 1880 was the period in which liberal evangelicalism came of age. In 1875 *The Expositor* commenced publication with the promise that its attempt to "teach and preach" would "be informed by no narrow and sectarian spirit. It will face difficulties honestly, it will deal with them sincerely, its tone will be broad, generous, catholic."² During the winter of 1875-1876 a group of young men in the Free Church influenced by the evangelism of Dwight L. Moody organized what they called the "Gaiety Club." For some twenty-five years members of this club faithfully met to discuss problems in theology and share together religious experiences. Included in this group were Henry Drummond, James Stalker, John Watson (alias Ian MacLaren) and George Adam Smith.³ In 1877, charges of heresy were levelled against Marcus Dods because of his sermon on "Revelation and Inspiration."⁴ In 1879 a group of prestigious ministers in the Old Kirk published the notorious Scotch Sermons. These they claimed were "specimens of a


² This was also the time of the Robertson Smith heresy trial in the Free Church. This was the major case marking a new era for higher criticism in Scotland. I have refrained from further discussion of this trial for two reasons: First, it has already been emphasized in other works to which little could be added. Second, Smith was brought to trial on the basis of his academic lectures and articles, not because of his sermons, although he was a preacher who attracted large audiences.


⁴ George Adam Smith, *The Life of Henry Drummond*, London, Rodder and Stoughton, 1902, p. 103. The other members of this club were Provost Swan of Kirkcaldy, James Brown, John F. Ewing, D. M. Ross, Frank Gordon, Robert Barbour, Alexander Skene and Dr. Hugh Barbour.

style of teaching, which increasingly prevails amongst the clergy of the Scottish Church.¹ Their opponents were quick to shout "heresy."²

By the advent of The British Weekly in 1886, liberal evangelicalism was well established. This was probably the most prominent religious periodical at the end of the century. Robertson Nicoll, the Free Church preacher and editor of the paper, said that The British Weekly would pursue the course of "advanced liberalism [because] we are believers in progress because we are believers in the advancing reign of Christ."³ There was no preacher whose sermons so dominated the pages of The British Weekly as those of Alexander Whyte of Free St. George's, Edinburgh. Unlike the older evangelical pulpit which oscillated between pietism and dogmatism, the "more liberal evangelical" pulpit was less easily defined and more diversified.

The more liberal evangelical sermon was no sudden innovation. Preceding the acceptance of the evolutionary theory and higher criticism together with the reorientation of certain theological concepts, there was a period of theological restlessness. During this time there was a reaction against an overly rigid allegiance to the Confession and a corresponding return to the Bible as the basis of authority and preaching. This was the period in which the neglected doctrine of the incarnation returned to prominence. In these years many of the

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¹Scotch Sermons, 1880, p. v.


³The British Weekly, November 5, 1886, p. 1.
better known preachers were struggling to make the proclamation of the gospel less a matter of doctrinal disputation and more the description of a way of life. Consequently the "liberal evangelical" sermon must first be seen against this background of subtle but significant transition.

1855 to 1880 was the time of transition in evangelical preaching. This was the first phase in the development of a more liberal evangelicalism. The preachers of this period were by no means at one in either their theology or their style of preaching. Thomas Guthrie, Principal Robert Rainy and Professor A. H. Charteris were more backward looking in their theology but in spirit and style their sermons marked a definite departure from those of the older evangelicals. Norman MacLeod, John Robertson, John Ker and George Gilfillan were theologically more forward looking yet restrained in their pronouncements and robbed by death of entering the era which belonged to the "new theology." Preachers such as John Caird, John Tulloch and A. K. H. Boyd were men whose ministry spanned the last half of the century and whose sermons reflected the change and diversity of the more liberal evangelicalism.

The obvious changes in this period of transition were twofold: there was a change in the attitude and style of the sermon and there was a shifting theological emphasis in the sermon. The change in attitude and style was apparent in the anti-dogmatism in the pulpit, in the preacher's quest for practicality and in a sermon which was descriptive and less definitive. The alteration in theological emphasis was concentrated on the incarnation and the atonement. The result was a sermon accentuating belief in Jesus and stressing the love of God.

**Changes In Attitude And Style**

a. The Emerging Anti-Dogmatism

The anti-dogmatic mood of preaching was evident in the growing conviction
that the pulpit was not the place for doctrinal argumentation. Religion was not a question of right thinking, and belief was more than mere assent to right doctrine. Thomas Guthrie, who along with Norman MacLeod and John Caird was said to be the leading preacher in this period, declared: "Let theologians settle the metaphysics of the Fall; their business may be to know how we become sinners; our first business is to know how we are to be saved." In its rebellion against dogma the evangelical pulpit was seeking a freedom and veracity which it felt to be constrained in the Confession. On such grounds John Robertson refused to "perplex" his congregation "with the metaphysical difficulties" of theology confessing:

It is a growing and apparently a well-founded opinion that our creeds have frequently been too minute, descending too much into details, and seeking to limit thought upon points, on which, not only without impropriety, but with advantage, it might have been left unfettered.\(^1\)

The creedal orientated sermon was denounced as "dead orthodoxy...chilly doctrine...book-theology...Pharisaism."\(^3\) In 1869 Norman MacLeod noted in his journal:

I feel a great difference from looking at revealed truth, not as it dovetails into a system of theology, but as it appears in the light of God, as revealed in Christ. A divine instinct seems to assure me "this is true," "It is like God," "it is in harmony with all I know of Him."\(^4\)

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\(^1\) Thomas Guthrie, *The Gospel In Ezekiel*, 1856, p. 31. The statement that the three outstanding preachers in Scotland during this period were Thomas Guthrie, Norman MacLeod and John Caird was made by A. K. H. Boyd. See A. K. H. Boyd, *A Volume Of Selections*, p. 177.


John Tulloch, and later John Ker, advocated a use of the Bible free from a hermeneutic which reduced "the book of God to a set of doctrinal moulds."¹ This was the period in which many preachers concluded that Christianity could not be proven.² In part, the anti-dogmatism of the pulpit was a reaction against the considered obscurity of older evangelicalism.

Positively, the anti-dogmatic mood reflected the preacher's increasing awareness of the innate mystery in life. In the pulpit this issued in a new sense of wonder as the preacher probed the significance of this mystery. History was "the darkened stage where walks at times the shrouded sovereignty of the Most High."³ The relationship between predestination and freedom was not discussed for it witnessed to the mystery innate in life. John Ker said: "That God can create, throw out a world from Himself and remain infinite is a mystery. That he should confer freedom on intelligent beings and still control them, is another mystery."⁴ The way of salvation so definitely outlined by the older evangelical was increasingly viewed as a process soliciting wonder. God's act in Christ for man's salvation while set in history became an act of mystery. Robert Rainy declared: We cannot determine how that great task took shape as it offered itself to our Lord; a mystery cleaves for us to the method and the means, for we can give no final and complete account of how His submission and suffering availed to set us right in reference to those elements of our state as sinners. But yet we have enough; we have the links, needed, in order that the mystery, everywhere felt

³George Gilfillan, Alpha and Omega, p. 189.
⁴John Ker, Thoughts For Heart And Life, p. 161.
where God is present, may lay effective hold on our mind and heart and history.¹

Salvation was by grace, but grace was itself the supreme mystery. John Eadie said:

The mode in which divine influence operates is usually beyond human analysis and detection. It comes when many perceive it not; it comes when many expect it not. It comes to its own appointed place...We are not to seek to solve the mystery, but our special desire should be to feel the blessing.²

Robert Rainy was even more emphatic stating:

It is always to be acknowledged with the deepest thankfulness and gladness that this mystery of grace is far too great to be explained in all its parts, so that no mystery should remain. If that were to be done, every step and element of the process would have to be reduced to some analogy, drawn from human experience and sanctioned by general human consent. That cannot be done.³

At the heart of this faith to be proclaimed was mystery; a mystery which to John Ker was itself a source of religious experience.

There is a source of wonder in the mysterious which surrounds man ...it comes from the sense of what we can touch with our thought but cannot comprehend...It is here, that man comes into contact with religion, with a God, with an eternity.⁴

One result of this anti-dogmatic mood in preaching was the emergence of a new sense of tolerance. In a book of sermons published in 1865, A. K. H. Boyd described the spirit of "intolerance...as a perilous reef, on which many souls have been wrecked; and on which many more that were not utterly lost, have suffered damage of spars and hull."⁵ Boyd pled for tolerance on those issues

² John Eadie, op. cit., p. 223.
³ Robert Rainy, Sojournings With God, p. 308.
⁴ John Ker, Sermons, p. 31.
and beliefs not essential to Christianity. He said:

The Apostle's meaning is quite plain. He has been arguing for charity, forbearance, toleration, among Christians, in matters not of vital importance: a lesson not less desirable and needful in Scotland in the nineteenth century, than it was in Rome in the first. He has been trying to get people to believe, that though a man think differently from you and me on any point short of the great essential doctrines of Salvation, he may yet be a conscientious Christian man, acting according to his light; and, as in the presence of God, trying to do what will please Him.  

George Gilfillan conceived of the responsibility of the Christian in the world as a non-essential matter demanding tolerance:

Christian duty varies at different times and in different circumstances....One man is to live a good, holy life, the sound of which is not audible to the world....Another is to carry on some calm work of benevolence, such as visiting the poor or distributing tracts; a third is to stand up prominently...against some prevailing evil; a fourth is to seek to revive or build up some Church or congregation; a fifth is to hurry after some detachment of the anti-Christian foe...; preacher of the word at home.  

John Eadie likewise pled for tolerance in accepting the differing ways in which the spiritual life expressed itself in people:

Religion, though it sanctify mental power in the children of God, does not give it an equal strength in all of them; and while it elevates and purifies the heart, it does not produce a uniform evenness of ardour and love. There are some believers in whom intellect predominates; and the "full assurance of understanding" is their goal; others in whom emotion has a constitutional empire, and who find a more natural delight in devout meditation than in profound reflection. Some have an instinctive tendency to ruminate on the past, and on what has been done for their soul; others are led forward to sanguine expectation, and find their paradise in the "full assurance of hope." One class tends to look more to Christ without them in His atonement; and another class inclines to look more to Christ within them by His Spirit. There are those of a darker hue, who prefer to walk in the valley, humming psalms of penitence and there are those of a bright nature, who love to traverse the mountains, chanting hymns of triumph. Babes are found by the side of perfect man.

1 Ibid., p. 241.
2 George Gilfillan, Alpha and Omega, pp. 342-343.
3 John Eadie, op. cit., p. 281.
In 1860 at the time of the excitement produced by the religious revivals in Scotland, Norman MacLeod counseled his parishioners:

While conversion is absolutely necessary for every man, we by no means assert that its inner history must, in each step, be necessarily the same.

Let us beware of dogmatizing irreverently as to when and how that living Spirit shall operate on the souls of men, who worketh according to His own counsel of unerring and inscrutable wisdom.¹

This spirit of tolerance was also evident in a hesitancy to proclaim a particular theory of the atonement. A. K. H. Boyd wrote: "It seems plain that a vital thing which cannot go amid all coming changes, is the way of salvation through the Atonement of Christ."² Yet Boyd declared specific theories of the atonement to be "sometimes confused...the production of minds inveterately crotchety."³ To him, "the Atonement was [a] pure matter of revelation... [which] must be drawn from the Word of God."⁴ Increasingly the preacher made less of the nature of the atonement as he accentuated the benefits of the atonement. Robert Rainy, who in theory held to the older understanding of the atonement, in preaching stressed the atonement as the basis of forgiveness without disclosing his own forensic view of the atonement.⁵ Likewise, Norman MacLeod who called the atonement "the grandest expression of His love to us," refrained from theorizing about the atonement, only stressing that it was for all men.⁶ John Robertson who held similar views of the atonement said:

Different views may be taken as to the nature of the atonement, and the grounds upon which an atonement was required. You may

¹Norman MacLeod, Parish Papers, pp. 208, 218.
³Ibid., p. 8.
⁴Ibid., p. 9.
⁵Robert Rainy, Sojournings With God, pp. 231-233, 244. Also see Patrick C. Simpson, The Life of Principal Rainy, Vol. 1, p. 424.
⁶Norman MacLeod, Parish Papers, pp. 5, 6.
think, and rightly, that a complete theory on either branch of the subject is beyond the powers of the human mind. But there cannot be a doubt that the Scriptures do teach that we are indebted to the life and death of Christ for the good hope toward God we are permitted to cherish, that life and that death having been needful that our sins might be forgiven.1

Tolerance, the neglected grace of the older evangelical pulpit, and mystery, the forgotten notion in the doctrinal sermon, both contributed to the anti-dogmatic mood of the evangelical sermon in this period of transition.

b. The Quest For Practicality

In this period of transition, the evangelical pulpit was engaged in an earnest quest for practicality, for earthiness in preaching. Thomas Guthrie who believed that religion lived in action and walked among men said:

Fire low...suits the pulpit not less than the battlefield. The mistake common to both soldiers and speakers is to shout too high, over people's heads; missing by a want of directness and plainness, both the person they preach to and the purpose they preach for.2

John Caird, whose preaching was at its zenith in Glasgow between 1856 and 1863, acknowledged to his West Park congregation that the demand of the age was not for theory and doctrine but for "the real and the practical."3 John Ker, whose fame as a parish preacher was also won in Glasgow in this period, wrote:

The final test of every religion comes to be its moral strength—its power to set before the man the right and good, and to induce him to follow them. By this, religion, whatever its formal evidences and its promises, must consent to be tried. This does not destroy the value of doctrine, it only subjects it to a practical proof: "What do ye more than others?"4

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1 John Robertson, Sermons and Expositions, pp. 134-135.
3 John Caird, Aspects Of Life, p. 266. This evaluation of Caird's preaching in this period in Glasgow is made by Donald MacLeod in an introduction to Caird's book, Essays For Sunday Reading, p. xii.
4 John Ker, Thoughts For Heart And Life, pp. 106-107.
In Edinburgh, Robert Rainy demanded that preaching be practical, noting:

Preaching should be loyal and evangelical; while, at the same time, I say that it ought to grapple frankly with the various elements and aspects of things presented in the Scriptures and eminently with those which are ethical and practical.1

With this A. K. H. Boyd of St. Andrews concurred, insisting that faith be connected with works and "Evangelical doctrine with morality."2

In part, the practical concern of the pulpit in this period grew out of the preacher's own experience in city life and his sensitivity to the secularizing spirit of the age. John Robertson and Norman MacLeod in Glasgow, Thomas Guthrie and A. H. Charteris in Edinburgh were all preachers sharing this concern for practicality and all were engaged in a ministry focused, in part, on the working classes of society. John Caird wrote in the pages of Good Words and declared to his Glasgow congregation:

There is a secret feeling often in the minds of practical men that ministers do not know much of the world; and that, if they did, they would see how impossible it is to carry out all this fine talk about heavenly-mindedness and superiority to the world's vanities and pleasures amid the rough business of everyday life. Men like very well to hear all this solemn, elevated sort of discourse about piety and holiness. It is the sort of thing for the Sunday and sermons; but the feeling is, "we must make allowances for clerical ignorance of life; sermon goodness must be discounted before we can make use of it in business."3

A. K. H. Boyd suggested that to be practical, preaching had to come from men who themselves knew life, its "human ties and human worry" if it was to "come home to men's business and bosoms."4 In an era in which secularization was

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3 John Caird, Essays For Sunday Reading, p. 145. While this collection of sermons was not published until 1906, it originally appeared in Good Words, in 1863. Also see Aspects Of Life, p. 367.
4 A. K. H. Boyd, A Volume Of Selections, p. 34.
restricting the pulpit to a narrower sphere, John Robertson insisted that the objective of practical preaching was "To spiritualise the secular."1

In part this quest for practicality in preaching was dependent on a new attitude toward the world. Whereas the older evangelical emphasized the evil nature of the world as necessitating either withdrawal or severe discrimination, the preacher in this period of transition stressed the responsibility of man in the world as he began to see that this was God's world. John Ker noted that:

There are some who have thought that we would be more pure and Christian if we were to withdraw from the activity of life to the solitude of the cell or desert. Such a withdrawal must always be impossible for the mass of men, and it is in direct opposition to the example of Christ, and to the spirit of the gospel. The Lord Jesus Christ mingled with men all through his own life, and touched them in every relation of theirs. The world is his world, and it is open in its entire breadth to those who belong to him.2

To Thomas Guthrie the Christian was always "to live for others."3 He said: "If Christian men and women are to retire from the world,—pity the world! how is it to be converted?"4 While Robert Rainy depicted the world as one of man's "adversaries" he continued: "With this world we are and must be in contact all our life."5 Norman MacLeod who attempted to make benevolence part of the spiritual mission of the Church in the world wrote his parishioners:

If ever society is to be regenerated, it is by the agency of living brothers and sisters in the Lord; and every plan, however apparently wise, for recovering mankind from their degradation, which does not

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2 John Ker, Sermons, p. 334.

3 Thomas Guthrie, Our Father's Business, p. 89. Also see Speaking To The Heart, p. 146.

4 Thomas Guthrie, Speaking To The Heart, p. 146.

5 Robert Rainy, Sermon Preached In The High Church, Edinburgh On Occasion Of The Death Of The Very Rev. William Cunningham, D.D., p. 7.
make the personal ministrations of Christian men and women an essential part of it, its very life is doomed, we think to perish. It is thus that our Father has ever dealt with His lost children. He has in every age spoken to men by living men.¹

To MacLeod the mission of the Church was twofold: "First within itself... and second beyond itself and includes the good done, by the whole body to the world without."² John Robertson also rejected any isolationist attitude toward the world for he said that this was "God's world... not the devil's world" and in this world the Church was to be "a community of interest and work."³

The preacher attempted to achieve practicality in his sermons in various ways. In Thomas Guthrie, there was an emphasis on good works. Now to Guthrie there were two sides to salvation: "The remission of sin and justification of the sinner," and "The renovation of the soul."⁴ Salvation as justification pointed to God's action and this was a mystery.⁵ Salvation as the renovation of the soul pointed to man's character and to man's active participation in salvation.⁶ The latter was the side of salvation emphasized by Guthrie for here he could be both concrete and practical. In this sense good works was the essence of his preaching. Guthrie said: "Far from holding good works cheap, we say that by them God is glorified, by them faith is justified, and by them on the great day of judgment shall every man be tried."⁷ Theologically, good works

¹Norman MacLeod, Parish Papers, p. 239.
²Ibid., pp. 228-229. Also see Love The Fulfilling Of The Law, p. 76.
³John Robertson, Sermons and Expositions, p. 91. Also see Pastoral Counsels, p. 305.
⁵Thomas Guthrie, Our Father's Business, p. 185.
⁶Ibid., pp. 227-228.
⁷Thomas Guthrie, The Gospel In Ezekiel, p. 211.
became the proof of Christianity.

Now what is true of the nature of the soil is equally true of the religion of the soul. You can always judge it by what it yields. In both cases the crop is the test of character.¹

The true evidence of our state is to be found in our hearts and habits.²

Guthrie's emphasis on good works also had its social justification. Referring to the state of religion in vogue in the 1860's Guthrie observed: "Perhaps there never was a time when the mere profession of religion was a less satisfactory test of its reality than at present."³ Summing up the necessity for practical preaching Guthrie declared: "Morality without religion is a dream but not less a dream and wild a dream is religion without morality, that lies in the cold assent of the understanding to truths that never touch the heart or effect the conduct."⁴

The quest for practicality in the sermons of Norman MacLeod is evident in his proclamation of Christianity as "life itself."

Christianity is not the philosophy of life, but life itself: and is a revelation, not of abstract truth, but of the living personal God to living persons as His children, whom He hath created to glorify and enjoy Him forever.⁵

Life was a gift of God.⁶ Man's responsibility in the "race of life [was] simply the doing of God's will, in the acceptance of that which God sets before us day by day."⁷ MacLeod rejected a religion simply based on a creed and demanded a

² Thomas Guthrie, Speaking To The Heart, p. 176.
³ Ibid., pp. 274, 175.
⁵ Norman MacLeod, The Christian Ministry, p. 7.
⁶ Good Words, 1873, p. 421.
⁷ Ibid., p. 727.
religion of the heart. He stressed that salvation was a way of life here and now, "not a blessing which we get for the first time when we die in reward for our being good here." He advised his parishioners that when they were in doubt as to some course of action in their life, they should ask: "How would Jesus Christ act as a member of society—whatever His occupation might be, whether as buyer or seller, planter or builder, merchant or minister, ruler or subject?" At times he could be very explicit in his attempt to make Christianity a practical way of life. Concluding a sermon at the start of the New Year, MacLeod outlined eight practical objectives for his congregation. MacLeod sought to impress his listeners with the urgency of turning faith into work: "the good done by us...alone can afford satisfactory evidence of a true and living faith in Jesus." As a way of life, MacLeod said: "The end of Christianity is to make us Christ-like; the Gospel is glad tidings of goodwill in order to draw forth goodwill in return. Salvation is the change from enmity to goodness." There was a positive spirit, a new sense of optimism in Norman MacLeod's sermons. Christianity was taken out of the sphere of abstract doctrine and placed in the arena of life and personal experience.

The quest for practicality in preaching was also evident in the developing social conscience of the pulpit. In the 1850's Thomas Guthrie exposed the drunkenness, vice and immorality of the city in a series of sermons entitled:

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1Ibid., 1864, p. 166.  
2Ibid., p. 24.  
3Norman MacLeod, Love The Fulfiling Of The Law, p. 76.  
5Good Words, 1866, p. 770.  
6Norman MacLeod, Love The Fulfiling Of The Law, p. 44.
The City Its Sins and Sorrows. In 1855 John Caird began his now famous sermon before Queen Victoria with these words:

To combine business with religion, to keep up a spirit of serious piety amidst the stir and distraction of a busy and active life—this is one of the most difficult parts of a Christian's trial in this world. It is comparatively easy to be religious in the church ... but to be religious in the world—to be pious and holy and earnest-minded in the counting-room, the manufactory, the market-place, the field, the farm—to carry out our good and solemn thoughts and feelings into the throng and thoroughfare of daily life—this is the great difficulty of our Christian calling.

Caird was sensitive to the difficulty "of being good and holy at once in the church and in the world." Yet the preacher's recognition of this problem and his speaking prophetically to this need was no easy task. George Gilfillan noted with regret that it was one thing to denounce "the scandalous sins such as drunkenness and licentiousness" and quite another to strike down the more "expensive frivolities." He lamented:

How slow the pulpit is to launch its anathemas against wickedness in high places, against the hughtiness of our aristocracy, the grasping greed of our merchants, the trickeries of our lawyers, and the barbarities of our soldiers.

Just how difficult and precarious it was to venture outside the accepted and

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1 Thomas Guthrie, The City Its Sins and Sorrows, pp. 1ff. This sold over fifty thousand copies. See John Ker, Thomas Guthrie, D.D., New College Library, p. 234.

2 John Caird, Religion In Common Life. 1855, Pamphlet in New College Library, p. 3.

3 Ibid., p. 274.

4 George Gilfillan, Alpha and Omega, Vol. 2, p. 325. In his most provocative and incisive book on this subject of Christianity in this period of transition George Gilfillan writes: "Our pulpits are generally silent on public questions—and silent, because, first, no one expects them to speak; because, secondly, many of their occupants are afraid to speak out; because, thirdly, others of them could not speak to the purpose; and because, once more, their word would not now have much weight, or exert much power." See Christianity And Our Era, p. 38.

5 Ibid.
narrowly interpreted role of the gospel is evident in the apologetic tone with which preachers haltingly spoke to the public mind. Concluding a sermon on the "Places and Forms of Worship," John Robertson said:

Now, my friends, I have done. I can hardly say that I have preached this morning an eminently gospel sermon, but I have stated to you honestly and plainly the best opinion I am able to form on certain matters of some interest...matters which are much in the public mind, and on which it is I think, quite consistent with his duty, that a Christian minister should expound his ideas from the pulpit.1

A. K. H. Boyd went out of his way in one sermon to assure his congregation that in his practical interpretation of the text, "speaking the truth in love" he had been preaching the gospel and not just ethics.2

So we take the text as reminding us, that as professed disciples of Jesus' Truth, Truth, Life, and Way, we are to be faithful in all our dealings with our fellowmen. There is to be no trickery; no indirect conduct; none of that petty Diplomacy which some people think such a proof of astuteness and wisdom. There is to be no taking advantage of the ignorance or simplicity of other people; we are faithfully to keep engagements and promises; we are to represent the sayings and doings of others with scrupulous fairness. And all this, not as a question of morality, of sound ethics; I am not preaching morality to you today; I am preaching the Gospel.3

Cautious though it was, this period of transition with its quest for practicality was the beginning of a more social emphasis in preaching.

c. The Descriptive Sermon

The anti-dogmatic mood of the pulpit and the preacher's quest for practicality altered the style of the sermon itself. As the sermon grew less definitive it became more descriptive. The development of the descriptive sermon

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1John Robertson, Pastoral Counsels, p. 200.

2The Bible, "Ephesians 4:15."

3A. K. H. Boyd, Sunday Afternoons In A University City, pp. 231, 232. This same trepidation is apparent in a sermon by Boyd on Lent. Boyd was active in the Church Service Society. See Seaside Business On Sunday, pp. 50ff.
in this period of transition is particularly evident in the preaching of three men: Thomas Guthrie, George Gilfillan and A. K. H. Boyd.

In Thomas Guthrie the more formal style of the older evangelical sermon was exchanged for a procedure allowing more freedom of expression. The sermon, while well-outlined, was usually lacking the formally stated proposition as found in Thomas Chalmers and John Cairns. Guthrie's preaching was topical but the topics were more evenly divided between the practical virtues and concerns of the Christian in life and the more formal doctrines of a revealed theology. For Thomas Guthrie the supreme task of the preacher was to communicate, and to communicate he had to secure the attention and interest of his hearers. His style and language had to be arresting. Guthrie writes in his autobiography:

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1 I have selected these three men because their sermons are most illustrative of the various aspects of this new and descriptive style of preaching. Thomas Guthrie was the most famous preacher of the three men. In contrast to the sermon of the older evangelical (a sermon which was usually devoid of illustration, formal and closely argued), Guthrie typifies the picturesque language and vivid story or anecdote to be found in some of the more liberal evangelical sermons. George Gilfillan, a United Presbyterian preacher from Dundee, was not as famous as Guthrie in the pulpit. Yet his collection of sermons, Alpha and Omega, give the best single illustration of the degree to which at least one preacher turned to secular literature for sermon illustration. A. K. H. Boyd was possibly the most renowned essayist in Scotland. While his pen was more potent than his pulpit voice, his many printed sermons provide the most exhaustive illustration of the new concern for style, how something was said, in the more liberal evangelical pulpit: a style more personal and lucid.

2 See Thomas Guthrie, The Gospel In Ezekiel, for an example of Guthrie's well-outlined sermons. See his Man and The Gospel for an example of sermons which usually lack any formally divided outline. In both of these books, most sermons lack any formal proposition, although on occasion Guthrie did use the formal proposition. See The Gospel In Ezekiel, pp. 85, 86.

3 In Our Father's Business, Guthrie's sermon topics are: "Our Model; Our Object; Our Chief End; The Glory of God; Our Chief End: The Good of Man; Christian Decision; The Christian's Work; Perseverance In Well-Doing; Man's Inability; God's Ability; Good Works." In Man and The Gospel his sermon titles include: "True Religion, Doing Good and Being Good; Purity; The Poor; Charity; Risen With Christ."
I set myself vigorously to study how to illustrate the great truths of the gospel and enforce them, so that there should be no sleepers in the church, no wandering eyes, but everywhere an eager attention. Savingly to convert my hearers was not within my power; but to command their attention, to awaken their interest, to touch their feelings and instruct their minds was and I determined to do it.

To this end, I used the simplest, plainest terms, avoiding vulgar but always, where possible, employing the Saxon tongue—the mother-tongue of my hearers.¹

In a letter to a fellow clergyman, Guthrie described the task of the preacher as "Proving, Painting, and Persuading."² Similarly Guthrie described himself to an artist friend as also "a painter; only I paint in words."³

The sermons of Thomas Guthrie exhibited the graphic language often employed in the more descriptive sermon. As a preacher, Guthrie particularly excelled in telling stories, many of which were sea stories. Concluding one sermon Guthrie said:

During a heavy storm off the coast of Spain, a dismasted merchantman was observed by a British frigate drifting before the gale. Every eye and glass were on her, and a canvas shelter on a deck almost level with the sea suggested the idea that there might be life on board. With all his faults, no man is more alive to humanity than the rough and hardy mariner; and so the order instantly sounds to put the ship about, and presently a boat puts off with instructions to bear down upon the wreck. Away after that drifting hulk go these gallant men through the swell of a roaring sea; they reach it; they shout; and now a strange object rolls out of that canvas screen against the lee shroud of a broken mast. Hauled into the boat, it proves to be the trunk of a man, bent head and knees together, so dried and shrivelled as to be hardly felt within the ample clothes and so light that a mere boy lifted it on board. It is laid on the deck; in horror and pity the crew gather round it; these feelings suddenly change into astonishment; it shows

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²Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 190.
³Ibid., p. 189. In an essay: "The Archbishop's Statue," A. K. H. Boyd writes: "There never was greater orator than Guthrie....Give Guthrie any mortal, not truly an idiot, for a few successive Sundays, and at the end of these that mortal would be listening open-mouthed." See A. K. H. Boyd, *East Coast Days And Memories*, pp. 56, 59.
signs of life; they draw nearer; it moves, and then mutters—mutters in a deep sepulchral voice—"There is another man." Saved himself, the first use the saved one made of speech was to seek to save another. Oh learn that blessed lesson. Be daily practicing it. And so long as in our homes, among our friends in this wreck of a world which is drifting down to ruin, there lives an unconverted one, there is "another man" let us go to that man and plead for Christ....The cry, "Lord save me, I perish," changed into one as welcome to a Saviour's ear, "Lord save them, they perish." ¹

On one occasion Guthrie's description of a shipwreck was so realistic that a young naval officer, seated in the front row of the gallery, sprang to his feet and threw off his coat in an effort "to man the lifeboat." ² Such impressionistic preaching could at times become emotional as when Guthrie compared the cost of forgiveness to God with a parent bending over a dying baby. ³ Again his imaginative speech was capable of re-creating the historical setting and mood of his sermon texts. In a sermon on Jerusalem during the exile, Guthrie captures the mood of desolation with this opening description:

"The holy cities are a wilderness; Zion is a wilderness; Jerusalem is a desolation." So low as this had the fortunes of Israel ebbed, when the words of my text were penned. Judah was in chains the people were captives in the hands of the heathen—exiles in the land of Babylon. Jerusalem lay in ruins; the grass grew long and rank in her deserted streets; an awful silence filled the temple; the fox looked out of the window, and the foul satyr had her den in the Holy of Holies. No plough turned a furrow in the field the vines grew wild and tangled on crumbling terraces; nor cock crowed, nor dog bayed, nor flock bleated, nor maid sang, nor shepherd piped, nor smoke curled up from homestead among the lonely hills. The land was desolate, almost utterly desolate. ⁴

For Guthrie graphic preaching rested on the use of "pure, pithy Saxon" and the abandonment of unnecessary adjectives. ⁵ Descriptive preaching was dependent

¹ Thomas Guthrie, The Gospel In Ezekiel, pp. 21, 22.
³ Thomas Guthrie, Speaking To The Heart, p. 35.
on the preacher's ability to personify the feeling and frustrations of man in his vulnerability. In a sermon on "The Undecaying Power and Grace of God" Guthrie magnified the immutability of the divine by accentuating the temporality of man:

Ah! The time comes when the actor must leave the public stage; when the reins drop from the leader's grasp; and the orator's tongue falters; and the work-man's stout arm grows feeble; and the fire of wit is quenched; and the man of genius turns into a drivelling idiot; and men of understanding, without any second birth, pass into a second childhood. But the time shall never come when it can be said of Jesus, his hand is shortened, that it cannot save.\footnote{Thomas Guthrie, \textit{Speaking To The Heart}, p. 48.}

In the sermons of Thomas Guthrie, descriptive preaching emerged in the form of the well-told story and language which was simple but graphic.

The sermons of George Gilfillan, a United Presbyterian preacher in Dundee, illustrate the new appreciation of literature in preaching. In a book published in 1851, entitled: \textit{Christianity And Our Era: A Book For Our Time}, George Gilfillan wrote:

Many of our literary men professedly abstain from churches, because they hear nothing: that is new, or that is calculated to please their peculiar taste.

The views entertained by many of our Christians and clergy-men about literature are...false and one-sided. Many of them look on literature as intensely and intrinsically opposed to the spirit of religion....Literature, strictly speaking stands to religion in a neutral position. It is the written worship of material and intellectual beauty, and ere it can be set in antagonism to Christianity, it requires...to be desecrated; and ere it can become its friend and ally, it must be consecrated....The value of literature does not lie simply in what it is, but in what it may be made to do.\footnote{George Gilfillan, \textit{Christianity And Our Era: A Book For Our Time}, pp. 30, 31.}

Gilfillan, who in 1848 refused the Chair in English Literature at Belfast, made literature his servant in preaching.\footnote{George Gilfillan, \textit{George Gilfillan: Letters and Journals}, p. 180.} Wordsworth, Defoe, Milton, Coleridge,
Byron, Pascal, Dante, Shakespeare and Schiller were some of the men summoned to add illustrative interest to his preaching.\(^1\)

In his frequent appeal to literature, Gilfillan always used the literary quotation or characterisation to his own purpose. Robinson Crusoe illustrated "God's solitude...the Divine loneliness."\(^2\) The Ghost in Hamlet was reflective of the guilt of Cain.\(^3\) Dr. Johnson's fear of death because of his innate sense of sin was similar to the relation of sin to death in both Aaron and Moses.\(^4\) Byron and Shelley served as examples of men who "endowed with all the earnestness, courage and energy of the prophet...turn their powers to fearful abuse."\(^5\) Gilfillan was critical in his use of literary figures. He was cautious in his appropriation of the novel but generous in his use of poetry. He once wrote that he would have felt more at home in a "London pulpit."\(^6\) Gilfillan used literary quotations to embellish the descriptive sermon.

The sermons of A. K. H. Boyd are a good example of the homiletical and literary technique employed in descriptive preaching. Boyd, who was said to be "better known than any other Scottish clergyman of his day" outside Scotland, placed more emphasis on the form than the content of the sermon.\(^7\) In an essay, "The Art of Putting Things," Boyd writes:

> What nonsense it is to say, that the effect of anything spoken or written depends upon the essential thought alone! Why, nine-tenths of the practical power depends on the way in which it is put.\(^8\)

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The manner in which the preacher expressed himself was of first importance to Boyd because the object of the sermon was not to make man know, it was to make man feel.

It is a noble gift, when a man is able to put great truths or momentous facts before our minds with that vividness and force which shall make us feel these facts and truths in their grand reality. A great evil, to which human beings are by their make subject, is, that they can talk of things know things and understand things, without feeling them in their true importance—without realizing them. There appears to be a certain numbness about the mental organs of perception; and the man who is able to put things so strikingly, clearly, pithily, forcibly, glaringly, whether these things are religious, social, or political truths, as to get through that numbness, that crust of insensibility, to the quick of the mind and heart, must be a great man, an earnest man, an honest man, a good man.

Probably in the pulpit more than anywhere else, we feel the difference between a man who talks about and about things, and another man who puts them so that we feel them.

In one sermon to his congregation in the parish church of St. Andrews, Boyd decreed:

Unless you feel, each of you, the presence of God here now just as forcibly and awfully as if the flames of Sinai shone on your face, or the still small voice that spoke to Elijah fell thrilling on your ear—unless you do all this, you, even now, are hearing without understanding, and seeing while you do not perceive.

True religion was man feeling within himself the force of what he heard and confessed. True preaching was communicating this truth with such "interest" and attraction that men did feel.

The sermons of A. K. H. Boyd were themselves patterned after the style of a literary essay. First, like an essayist he did not attempt to treat his

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2. A. K. H. Boyd, Sunday Afternoons At The Parish Church, p. 41.
4. By essay I mean a relatively short composition dealing with a single subject, written from a personal point of view, and in a style which while easy and light and sincere does not boast of finality or completeness. See The Encyclopaedia Britannica, "Essay."
subject in any exhaustive or definitive manner. He had no use for preaching
which attempted to be too minute, for to him there were certain ideas and beliefs
which were grounded in mystery. He began one sermon relating to the incarnation
and the atonement by admitting:

I have always shrunk from anything like prying too minutely into
the mysterious Personality of our Saviour....It is possible that we
may know Him...whom to know is life eternal without any going into
metaphysics that recall that most dreary if most orthodox confession
commonly called the Athanasian Creed....There is a certain sense of
irreverence in presuming to look too closely into that awful Nature;
with its capacity of unspeakable misery; with its blending in one
Person, of the Godhead, and of Manhood that can be tempted, can be
weary, can suffer, can die....We know, concerning Him, that which
is revealed to us: Farther than that, we do not know. And to seek
to be wise beyond what is written, is presumptuous foolishness.

Like Thomas Guthrie, Boyd seldom built his sermon around a clearly stated pro-
position thereby giving himself more freedom in the development of his subject.
Indeed the themes of his sermon were usually too broad for exhaustive treatment.

In his informal and conversational approach to preaching A. K. H. Boyd usually
gave the impression that more could be said on the subject. Beginning a sermon
entitled "Praying Everywhere," Boyd said:

In thinking of this text...I purpose to turn away entirely from
the little niceties and difficulties of criticism, with which it


themes dealt with in this book were: "Intolerance,...Work,...Intercessory
Prayer,...Patience,...Needless Fears,...Praying Everywhere."

3 The more informal and indefinite style of Boyd should not be taken as
indicative of a light-hearted attitude toward preaching. It has been said that
one of the marks of the essay style of writing is the "easy, cursory way" it
deals with a subject, yet such as is always the "light result of experience and
profound meditation." See *The Encyclopaedia Britannica, "Essay." In two
neness, "The Country Parson's Life" and "The Art of Putting Things," Boyd indi-
cates the great preparation he put into the composition of his sermons so that
he would speak with both "clearness and interest." Obviously his informal style
was the formal result of hard work and planning. See A. K. H. Boyd *A Volume of
Selections*, pp. 19, 20, 34, 35.
has been surrounded by people who had more time for that kind of thing than we have; and to take the text in its broad and solemn sense, as suggesting the duty and privilege of keeping a praying spirit: of keeping our hearts so that we shall be always and in all places ready to turn to God in prayer: and of living in that atmosphere.\(^1\)

When introducing some new aspect of his sermon Boyd would say: "there are other thoughts suggested on which we may dwell," or "the second thought suggested to us by the story is" or "I think my text warns us."\(^2\) Concluding a sermon on the text "you have need of patience" (Hebrews 10:36), he said:

> We might go on to point out various other sources of that peculiar state of mind in which patience becomes needful: but we have already suggested to you enough to make you see that...we may well understand our text as spoken to every member of the human family.\(^3\)

As an essayist, Boyd did not pretend to be treating his subject exhaustively.

Boyd's essay-like approach to preaching is also evident in the personal manner in which he developed his text. He did not stand aloof and treat the material of his sermon in an impersonal way.\(^4\) He used the pronouns "we", "our", "us" and "I" instead of the pronoun "you" for he always identified himself with both his text and his audience.\(^5\) In a sermon entitled "Martyrs," Boyd's thought progressed by way of a series of flashbacks in which he interpreted his text, Revelation 2:13, by recounting the "thoughts which occurred to me as they sang the Te Deum" in a parish church years ago.\(^6\) In a sermon based on Psalm 119:96,

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2. Ibid., pp. 10, 76, 80, 82, 98. 3. Ibid., p. 302; also p. 84.
5. A. K. H. Boyd, *Sunday Afternoons In A University City*, p. 225. Here Boyd denounces preaching in "a severe, harsh, overbearing manner." He warns that preachers are not to "address the congregation of hearers, as though they were outside sinners, worse than himself."
he developed his argument via a description of the feelings of the Psalmist, careful to insure at the same time that he and his congregation had "an eye to our own individual experience." In his preaching Boyd was obviously intent on drawing his parishioners into the living soul of Scripture so that together "we can see" and "feel" the meaning of the text. In A. K. H. Boyd, the descriptive sermon was modelled after the literary essay. While resolute, there was no impression of finality. In his sermons he described his own feelings and experiences; he attempted to describe the feelings of the people of the Bible: in this personal and descriptive method of preaching he attempted to capture the feelings of his parishioners. With him descriptive preaching became synonymous with psychological preaching.

The Theological Change: The Renaissance Of The Incarnation

As the sermon of the older evangelical was dominated by the doctrine of the atonement, so the sermon of the more liberal evangelical came to accentuate the doctrine of the incarnation. It was in this period of transition that the pendulum swung from the atonement to the incarnation.

The restoration of the incarnation to a place of centrality in preaching had been earlier evident in the sermons of Edward Irving. For Irving the incarnation was more important than the atonement. In one sermon he declared:

So necessary is it to have one man, even the man Christ Jesus, to look to, as the great prototype of spiritual men, that I have no hesitation in setting this view of the work of the Son of God on a level with, if not above, the view of Him as an atonement. And therefore it is that in this whole discourse on the incarnation I have sought to bring out the humanity of Christ in its true colours: while I never lost sight of His Divinity. For, once say that in any part of His life He is not imitable, He is not approachable and you do open the widest door for mysticism and superstition to enter in.  

\[1\] Ibid., pp. 153ff.  
\[2\] Ibid., pp. 107ff.  
Such conviction influenced Irving's choice of sermon texts and topics. Over half of his texts came from the Gospels. In a series of sermons on the incarnation Irving intimated that he turned away from the Epistles to the Gospels because here he found discourses of a "prophetic character...stern or severe" and more compatible to the "present church, which is all but apostate." Like many preachers in the last half of the century Irving rebelled against the insincerity of religion. Yet Edward Irving, 1792-1834, lived in the wrong half of the century. He once described the incarnation as "the infinitely pregnant mystery" but living in an era suspicious of mystery he was accused of heresy. Irving refused to recant. To him the issue hung on one's view of the humanity of Jesus. If Jesus was not human as well as divine, Christianity was invalid. He argued:

The great point between us...is not whether Christ's flesh was holy—for surely the man who saith we deny this blasphemeth against the manifest truth—but whether during His life it was one with us in all its infirmities and liabilities to temptation, or whether, by the miraculous generation, it underwent a change so as to make it a different body from the rest of the brethren. They argue for an identity of origin merely; we argue for an identity of life also. They argue for an inherent holiness; we argue for a holiness maintained by the person of the Son, through the operation of the Holy Ghost. They say, that though his body was changed in the generation, He was still our fellow in all temptations and sympathies: we deny that it could be so; for change is change; and if His body was changed in the conception, it was not in its life as ours is. In one word, we present believers with a real life; a suffering, mortal flesh; a real death and a real resurrection of this flesh of ours: they present the life, death and resurrection of a changed flesh; and so create a chasm between Him and us which no knowledge, nor even

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1 In the Collected Writings of Edward Irving are to be found eighty-six sermons. Of these fifty are from the Gospels: sixteen from Matthew, twenty-five from Luke and nine from John.

2 Edward Irving, Collected Writings, Vol. V., pp. 370, 371. This particular volume is largely given over to a series of sermons on the incarnation delivered to the National Scotch Church, London, in 1828.

3 Ibid., p. 395.
imagination, can overlap. And in so doing, they subvert all foundations; there is nothing left standing in our faith of Godhead, in our hopes of manhood.\textsuperscript{1}

Irving's argument did not convince his contemporaries and he was officially cast out of the Church.

In this period of transition the earlier verdict concerning Edward Irving's view of the incarnation was reversed. Increasingly preachers turned to the Gospels and discovered the Jesus of history.\textsuperscript{2} Professor A. H. Charteris wrote of Edward Irving: "One may think that enough would have been done if the courts had joined him in preaching the real humanity of the Saviour of men, and had admonished him to be careful of using words...which could not but seem to simple minds to mean that the Redeemer's person had in it an element of sin."\textsuperscript{3}

In a sermon on Jesus Christ "The Manifestation of God," John Caird declared to his Glasgow Congregation:

By the constitution of His person, Jesus is to us a manifestation of God. The incarnation, the mysterious embodiment of the divine in the form of the human, meets a deep necessity of our nature, supplying, as it does, to our feeble apprehensions, a visible, palpable object on which they may fix in the effort to think of God, and to our sympathies and affections in the endeavour to love Him.\textsuperscript{4}

\textsuperscript{1}Ibid., p. 566. Also see Vol. IV, p. 526.

\textsuperscript{2}While all of the preachers in this chapter are considered to be liberal evangelicals, there were really two phases in the evolution of the liberal evangelical sermon. This first phase I have called the period of transition. The preachers most prominent in this phase were Edward Irving, Thomas Guthrie, George Gilfillan, Robert Rainy, John Edie, John Ker, Norman Macleod, John Robertson, and A. K. H. Boyd. John Tulloch and John Caird were also prominent in this period. While I will be citing them from time to time they are ultimately placed in the period of the more mature liberal evangelicalism. I have attempted to read all of the sermons by these men which were available in book form in New College Library, Edinburgh. 447 sermons were read by men prominent in this transitional phase in the evangelical sermon. Of these 114 were based on the Synoptics and 61 on the Fourth Gospel.

\textsuperscript{3}A. Gordon, \textit{The Life Of Archibald Hamilton Charteris}, p. 437.

\textsuperscript{4}John Caird, \textit{Sermons}, 1858, p. 123.
John Ker, who saw in the incarnation "the greatest proof of the Divine," observed:

We are ready to think of Christ as if, by his Divine nature, He stood above all the sense of human infirmity. But He felt it, and fell back on the same sources of support... We might doubt the true Divinity of Christ as soon as his real humanity, for He must touch both, and touch them entirely, if He is to bring them together.

Norman MacLeod said that "the purpose of the Incarnation... was not to change the infinite and unchangeable God, but to change man, to reconcile man to God." Concluding a series of sermons addressed to the working class of his Glasgow parish, Norman MacLeod emphasized the hope derived from the incarnation:

Thank God for such a revelation as this of Jesus Christ.... It assures us that though "fools and slow of heart to believe," yet this Prophet will not reject us; that though we are nothing in the great world, yet this Jesus will walk with us and enter our homes, that though for a time we may not know who is with us, yet he will in his time and way reveal his presence and interpret those burnings of the heart which softened and soothed us when we knew not who had kindled them; that though the day is far spent, yet we need not fear the night, however dark and mysterious it be, for we have Jesus with us—Saviour and Brother, who will "abide with us and never leave us."

In an era seeking a Christianity which was genuine and practical the incarnation became the theological basis of preaching.

The renaissance of the incarnation resulted in a reorientation of the atonement. The man most responsible for the new understanding of the atonement was John MacLeod Campbell, like Irving a deposed minister of the Church of Scotland. In 1856 Campbell published his mature view of the atonement. His

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4. Campbell's case was resolved in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, 1831.
thesis was that the atonement presupposes and rests on the incarnation. Campbell viewed the atonement from two perspectives which he called "retrospect and prospect." In retrospect the atonement was "Christ's dealing with man on the part of God... and His dealing with God on behalf of man." In prospect the atonement made the humanity and the righteousness of Jesus the norm of Christian living.

The perfect righteousness of the Son of God in humanity is itself the gift of God to us in Christ—to be ours as Christ is ours, —to be partaken in as He is partaken in, —to be our life as He is our life: instead of its being... ours by imputation. In retrospect the atonement was concerned with man's status before God. In prospect the atonement affected man's character.

In his view of the atonement, Campbell assumed that Christ had died for all men and that the gospel was a universal option for all men. In this period of transition the pulpit was quick to make the universal atonement one of the major tenets of preaching. John Eadie, John Ker, George Gilfillan, John Caird, A. K. H. Boyd and Norman MacLeod were among those preachers whose sermons pulsated with a new sense of freedom because of this belief.

This period witnessing the renaissance of the incarnation with its new understanding of the atonement saw new emphases emanating from the pulpit. The love of God emerged as the great theme of the sermon. Belief in Jesus became the great plea of the evangelical preacher.

a. Proclaiming The Love Of God

It was in the third quarter of the century that the preacher rediscovered the love of God and made this a major theme in his sermon. Thomas Guthrie

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1 Ibid., pp. xvii, 22, 23, 206, 207, 278, 279.
2 Ibid., pp. 110ff, 130ff.
3 Ibid., pp. 111, 115.
4 Ibid., pp. 132, 133.
5 Ibid., p. 2.
faulted the Westminster Confession because there was "no mention of love" in its
definition of God. 1 John Robertson declared it to be "the leading function of
the ministerial office to proclaim the love of God." 2 John Eadie published a
book of sermons, The Divine Love, in which he described love as the essence of
the incarnation and the evidence that one was a Christian.

Christ came into the world to teach and illustrate love. Love is
the very soul of His system. All its doctrines lead to love as
their centre, and all its duties depend upon it for their ful-
filment. Love is the essence of all its promises, and the lustre
of all its hopes. It teaches that love to Jesus should fill the
heart and that the entire life should be swayed and consecrated by
its influence. . . . He who loved us and gave himself for us, is the
model we are summoned to copy in all our words and deeds.

The DIVINE LOVE produces in the believer's heart the
reflection of itself. . . . love to the brethren is only another form
of loving Christ. 3

To Norman MacLeod, Christianity was nothing less than people living the life of
love. 4 Writing to his congregation in 1862 he said:

I at once frankly express my earnest conviction that this, if true,
involves the truth of what are recognised to be the other "peculiar"
doctrines or facts of Christianity—such as the divine, as well as
the holy and perfect character of the Person we love; His atoning
work as the grandest expression of His love to us; and that which
most of all kindles love in us to Him; the teaching of the Holy
Spirit, through whom alone we can so perceive the spiritual charac-
ter and glory of Jesus as to admire and love Him. . . . These, I say,
and other doctrines appear to me to be involved in the very idea
that Christianity is supreme love to Jesus Christ. 5

Love, in the words of Principal John Tulloch, was axiomatic as the "life of
God...the mind of Christ...the health of the Church." 6

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1 Thomas Guthrie, The Gospel In Baekiel, pp. 61, 63.
2 John Robertson, Pastoral Counsels, p. 291.
4 Norman MacLeod, Love The Fulfilling Of The Law, pp. 29, 76, 111, 149.
5 Norman MacLeod, Parish Papers, pp. 4, 5.
6 John Tulloch, Sundays At Balmoral, p. 53.
This emphasis on the love of God reflected the optimism resulting from the new understanding of the incarnation and the atonement. There was a new tone in the pulpit. The spirit pervading the sermon was more free and joyful. In his Reminiscences and Reflections, MacLeod Campbell wrote:

"My labour was to fix their attention on the love of God revealed in Christ, and to get them into the mental attitude of looking at God to learn His feelings towards them, not at themselves to consider their feelings towards Him. As to these, I taught them to be consistent in their admission of their not being what they should be, and also to know that they could not by any blind effort make themselves what they should be...and so to come under the natural power of the love, the forgiving, redeeming love which was set before them."

Robert Rainy, minister of Edinburgh's Free High Church and later Principal of New College, accentuated the "good news of Forgiveness" in his preaching.

"Yes my brethren, God is not a wilderness to His people, neither is His Gospel a dry land of barren words and abstract principles. God is love. With Him is the fountain of life....No good thing will He withhold from that that seek Him."

"Ah, but my brethren, there is hope for us yet. Christ is come to make us young again—to make a beginning of it, that shall have its outcome in a better country, where the people are forgiven their iniquities."

Taking as his text "speaking the truth in love" A. K. H. Boyd observed:

"It is a beautiful combination—truth with love. It makes the truth infinitely pleasanter to hear....It makes the truth infinitely more efficient to do its work. Truth, spoken in love, has incomparably greater force to do good,—to direct people, to mend people...to draw poor sinful creatures like us to Christ and salvation,—than truth spoken in severity."

Writing in Good Words in 1872, John Tulloch nailed his optimism to "The Divine Fatherhood" whose essence is love:

"Love is the essence of the Divine Fatherhood in Christ. It sums up all its other meanings....The lack of faith to look beyond the

2. Robert Rainy, Sojournings With God, pp. 21, 168.
darkness and evil of the world, and to read the Divine meaning of good in all nature and providence is for many men, something to be deplored than to be wondered at. But this Divine meaning has been brought near to us all in Christ. In Him the great source of all being is perfectly good.

In a New Year's sermon in 1874 Norman MacLeod was exuberant in his quest for salvation:

What a joy it is to be able...to offer you all good, and to know that whatever is worth possessing and enjoying for ever is most surely yours, if you will but know and love Jesus Christ.

Proclaiming the love of God issued in vibrant preaching.

In this period of transition, the preacher was not forgetful of the more severe aspect of God's character. The wrath of God, the justice of God and the judgment of God were often proclaimed as the reverse side of God's love. In a sermon preached before Queen Victoria, John Tulloch minced no words in declaring that man's rejection of God's love resulted in man's experience of God's wrath.

To them that reject His love, His will is no longer one of love, but of wrath. His name is no longer a name of endearment but of terror. It is of the very essence of the Divine love that it should not spare, the impenitent and unbelieving. It is the very nature of the Divine Fatherhood that it should cast from its embrace those who disown its solicitations....Brethren, it is the very love of God which, despised, makes the wrath of God. It is the very Fatherliness of the Divine which makes it a "consuming fire" against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men.

John Badie said that while "Christ's love is without bounds and without end," it did not preclude "discipline and correction" in its pursuit of righteousness. Thomas Guthrie interpreted the more apocalyptic and eschatological passages of the Bible as truths accentuating God's love for man.

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1John Tulloch, Good Words, 1872, p. 199.
2Norman MacLeod, Good Words, 1874, p. 123.
God indeed, tells us of hell, but it is to persuade us to go to heaven, and as a skillful painter fills the background of his picture with his darker colours, God puts in the smoke of torment and the black clouds of Sinai, to give brighter prominence to Jesus, the cross of Calvary, and his love to the chief of sinners.¹

In a sermon on "The Perpetuation of Character In the Future Life," A. K. H. Boyd said: "There is great severity in God's character, as well as incomprehensible love."²

Norman Macleod was described as preaching "a merely genial and after-dinner sort of Liberalism,"³ yet his sermons are a poignant example of the more liberal evangelicals' utilization of God's wrath and judgment in this period of transition. Death, heaven and hell were common themes. In his Parish Papers, Macleod devotes at least half of his sermonic essays to the themes "The Final Judgment" and the "Future Life." These were not symbolic events to Macleod. In one sermon, "The Books Shall Be Opened," he spoke of providence, memory, conscience and life as the basis of the final judgment.⁴ In developing these subjects Norman Macleod determined to be "practical" not "speculative."⁵ He depicted heaven as the apex of God's love.⁶ Of hell he said:

A soul separated from God or from all other beings in the universe is hell...It is hell when love is banished from every bosom, love in none of its forms is ever found in its society, but each soul lives apart amidst the crowd, wrapt in the burning fire of its own hate, and for ever gnawed by the worm of undying selfishness.⁷

Like the older evangelical, Macleod used death, heaven and hell as goads to spur...

²A. K. H. Boyd, Sunday Afternoons In A University City, p. 21.
⁴Ibid., pp. 68–77. ⁵Ibid., p. 56.
⁶Norman Macleod, Love The Fulfilling Of The Law, pp. 77, 78.
⁷Ibid., pp. 84, 85.
his parishioners to greater deeds of love and labour. Yet, on occasion, MacLeod could give these themes of severity a positive twist because of his ultimate confidence in the sovereignty of God which he called love.

Even in this world, never yet emptied of a God of love, states of society have existed, and still exist... which would be hell to any man who had ever known or loved God. Do not say again that the world will never come to this. I know it won't. But my confidence rests in God, not in men who now reject His kingdom and refuse to do His will.

At the time of his fatal illness, MacLeod said:

Let us thank God for His love. After all... death is a wrong name for it is birth into the true life.

In MacLeod's sermons there was a spirit of optimism but it was not the naive or idealistic optimism of later liberalism. MacLeod proclaimed God's love as justice and judgment as well as goodness and forgiveness.

b. Inducing Belief In Jesus

The renaissance of the incarnation coupled with the new understanding of the atonement led to a new emphasis on man's response to God's love. To the more liberal evangelical God's action while complete and open to all men necessitated man's acceptance. "Believing in Jesus" was one phrase used to describe man's response. Inducing belief in Jesus was thus a major objective in preaching.

In soliciting man's favorable response to God's action, the liberal evangelical both simplified and intensified the idea of belief.

In urging belief in Jesus, the more liberal evangelical accentuated the simplicity of belief. Norman MacLeod, who made frequent use of this phrase, said:

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1 Norman MacLeod, Good Words, 1866, p. 770; 1867, p. 19.
2 Ibid., 1872, p. 627.
3 Donald MacLeod, Memoir of Norman MacLeod, Vol. 2, p. 376.
This consecration or simple yielding of ourselves to God, in itself occupies little time—no more necessarily than the uttering of an intelligent "yes" or "no" whatever the preliminaries that may lead to this point, or the momentous consequences that may follow from it. 1

George Gilfillan spoke of "the simple act of believing on Jesus" as the beginning of salvation. 2 Robert Rainy called the gospel "glad tidings of great joy" because all man need do is "ask for it and it is given to them for the asking." 3

Belief in Jesus while disarmingly simple was demanding in its sincerity. A. K. H. Boyd wrote that believing "the truth as it is in Jesus" was not self-inflicted torture nor the transformation of life into "a long dull agony so God will pardon you." 4 Yet the result of this belief was a "living, experimental" faith whereby the Christian attempted to live "in a healthful spiritual atmosphere...saturated through and through with Christ." 5 Belief was not intellectual assent, it was trust and commitment to Jesus. Such belief, declared John Caird, was the cornerstone of true religion:

To know Christ as my Saviour—to come with all my guilt and weakness to Him in whom trembling penitence never fails to find a friend—to cast myself at His feet in whom all that is divine holiness is softened, though not obscured, by all that is beautiful in human tenderness—and believing in that love stronger than death which for me, and such as me, drained the cup of untold sorrows, and bore without murmur the bitter curse of sin, to trust my soul for time and eternity into His hands—this is the beginning of true religion. 6

Belief was the evidence of man's "own personal interest in Christ." 7 MacLeod

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1 Norman MacLeod, Good Words, 1872, p. 428.
3 Robert Rainy, The Everlasting Gospel, pp. 3, 4; Sojournimg With God, p. 177.
4 A. K. H. Boyd, Seaside Musings On Sundays, p. 79.
5 Ibid., pp. 80, 81.
6 John Caird, Religion In Common Life, p. 27.
Campbell preferred the word repentance which he defined as "the heart turning to God and putting trust in God and glorifying God as God." John Ker said:

We may be brought to the conviction that there is an architecture of the universe by the study of its physical laws, but to believe firmly in an Architect requires some personal contact with Him, and to have faith in Him as a Father and a Friend requires the surrender of ourselves. There is no other way, to live a spiritual life we must choose to live and in the choice of life comes the conviction of its reality and of its divine excellence.

Believing Jesus was trusting Jesus. It was committing oneself to Jesus' way of life. In a book of sermons published in 1865 Professor Robert Flint insisted that salvation was only "obtained through Faith" yet he viewed with contempt those who said that man had to "only believe." For Flint faith was not a "simple act"; true saving faith demanded the concentration of the "whole soul." While simple because of its immediateness and explicitness believing Jesus ruled out cant and necessitated personal experience.

Belief in Jesus was not simply an act occurring at one moment in a person's life. Belief was to be continuous. The more liberal evangelical of this period accepted the validity of conversion experiences but to him the question was never "when did you first believe?" The question was "are you believing and trusting Jesus now?" Norman MacLeod always spoke in the present tense inquiring "Do we believe in Jesus?" His cousin, the famous John MacLeod Campbell, spoke of belief as "the test of the presence of real faith," defining belief

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1 The Whole Proceedings in the Case of John M'Leod Campbell, Part 2, p. 187. Also see Reminiscences and Reflections, pp. 25ff.
3 Robert Flint, Christ's Kingdom On Earth, p. 229.
4 Ibid., pp. 230, 231.
5 Norman MacLeod, Good Words, 1861, p. 700; 1862, p. 387; 1866, p. 419.
as "seeing what is given you in Christ." ¹ John Ker described man as searching for "the salvation of the Lord" and warned that "there is not a spot in the search after God where he is entitled to sit down and rest."² A. K. H. Boyd described belief and repentance as the two requirements necessary for man's personal salvation and insisted that both be continuous.³ To Boyd the sincerity of a man's belief was evident in the way he lived. To believe was "to feel... to realize" in life the truth of Jesus.⁴ Inducing belief in Jesus was not the same as preaching conversion. Belief in Jesus was continuous; it was comprehensive; it was not doctrine; it was personal experience. It was "the power to realize spiritual things."⁵

By 1875 the divergent elements of evangelicalism were heading toward their Armageddon. The balance of power was shifting in favor of the more liberal evangelical. A descriptive sermon, a disdain for dogmatism in the pulpit, an appreciation for mystery, the centrality of the incarnation, an atonement for all men, a God whose essence was love, a belief in Jesus which was simple but demanding; these were the new elements secured in the sermon during the ascendancy of liberal evangelicalism. In 1876 the final conflict came in the heresy trial of Professor Robertson Smith. The issue was higher criticism. In 1881 he was condemned and deposed of his Old Testament chair in Aberdeen Free Church College. This case marked the end of the first phase, the period of

¹ J. M. Campbell, Reminiscences and Reflections, pp. 152, 153.
² John Ker, Sermons, pp. 348, 349.
⁴ A. K. H. Boyd, Sunday Afternoons In A University City, pp. 34ff. In a sermon entitled "Realization" Ker deals specifically with this theme.
⁵ Ibid., p. 38.
transition in the emergence of a more liberal evangelicalism. Ironically Robertson's defeat was the coup de grâce of older evangelicalism.
CHAPTER VII

THE LIBERAL EVANGELICAL SERMON

After 1880 the more liberal evangelical sermon became dominant in the pulpit. The sermon reflected all of the changes wrought by the earlier liberal evangelicals in the period of transition. "Reductionism" was the trend, for the preacher continued to whittle down the "huge tissue of orthodoxy" in his attempt to gain practicality.¹ The liberal evangelical of this period was equally firm in his rejection of dogma and his commitment to tolerance. His style of preaching continued to be descriptive but style became less a matter of importance and the once vivid outlines of the older evangelical were now blurred and foggy.²

¹"Reductionism" was a phrase used by the Scottish Congregationalist, P. T. Forsyth, in his Lyman Beecher Lectures in 1907; see P. T. Forsyth, Positive Preaching And The Modern Mind, p. 133. Also see W. L. M'Farlan, "The Things Which Cannot Be Shaken," Scotch Sermons, pp. 219ff.

The continued practicality of the sermon is evident in the sermon themes and titles. Alexander Whyte once preached a sermon on enjoying a holiday and another on reading a newspaper; see The Walk, Conversation And Character Of Jesus Christ Our Lord, pp. 243ff, 253ff. Henry Drummond's "Christmas Booklets" included "The Programme of Christianity," and "The City Without A Church"; see The Greatest Thing In The World, pp. 71ff, 127ff. Also see John Caird, Aspects of Life; Robert Flint, Christ's Kingdom Upon Earth.

²In Scotch Sermons only one sermon in the series has a clearly enunciated outline; see pp. 51ff. In John Caird's, University Sermons the outline is usually blurred. In Caird's Aspects of Life, the sermon is usually obviously outlined. Likewise Alexander Whyte at times follows a formal outline in his sermons and other times abandons such a plan. When the more liberal evangelical did outline his sermon he only enunciated his major heads. The minute and detailed outline of such older evangelicals as John Cairns appears to have been discarded.
He continued to turn to the Gospels more frequently in his sermon text. The incarnation was the theological basis of the sermon but no longer was it necessary to posit the incarnation against the atonement. That debate was largely settled by the earlier liberal evangelical. The more liberal evangelical preacher in this period clearly built on the achievements of his predecessors.

What then was the difference between the liberal evangelical in the closing decades of the century and his forebears? In part it was the generation gap; men such as Norman MacLeod did not live long enough to drive their stakes into this new era. For those men living long enough to span the two phases of liberal evangelicalism, evolution and higher criticism often brought about the parting of the ways. In the Robertson Smith heresy trial men such as Robert Rainy and A. H. Charteris were opposed by Alexander Whyte and Marcus Dods who defended Smith. Robert Flint, John Tulloch, John Caird and Henry Drummond were examples of the more apologetic preachers who defended evolution in their sermons and even sought to establish a positive relationship between science and Christianity. By contrast the earlier liberal had been silent even negatory on

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1 See Appendix IV-B, C. Also see *The British Weekly*, March 26, 1896, p. 379. In a survey on sermon texts for the Sunday of March 8, 1896, three-fourths of the texts were from the New Testament; one-sixth were taken from the Gospel of John. The other favorite books in order were: First John, Luke, Matthew, Mark, Hebrews, Acts, First Corinthians, Romans.

2 George Adam Smith and Marcus Dods were both leaders in the area of biblical criticism. This was the subject of George Adam Smith's Lyman Beecher Lectures in 1899: *Modern Criticism And The Preaching Of The Old Testament*. John Tulloch, *Movements Of Religious Thought In Britain During The Nineteenth Century*, p. 332, believed that this study had done much good for both the Bible and preaching. Also see G. F. Barbour, op. cit., pp. 201ff.

3 Henry Drummond was the great proponent of evolution among theologians in Scotland at this time. His Lowell Lectures in Boston in 1893 were titled *The Ascent of Man*. For these lectures he was brought to the bar of the Free Church Assembly but defended by Marcus Dods and James Stalker the charges were dismissed. An earlier work by Drummond on *Natural Law in the Spiritual World* was attacked in a pamphlet by James Denney. See James Denney, *On "Natural Law*
these issues. As the century drew to a close men such as Robert Rainy showed greater tolerance in these areas but somehow these issues were never part of their creed. The liberal evangelical of this later mood believed in both evolution and biblical criticism and publicly affirmed his belief.

Two distinct patterns were evident in the background of the more liberal evangelical of this period. One group was centered in the Old Kirk. They were a close knit fraternity with John Tulloch, John Caird and A. H. Story among their leading spokesmen. Many of them had contributed to the Scotch Sermons. They were academically proficient and ultimately a number of them left their rural parishes for academic posts. They were, in some respects, the more radical of the liberal evangelicals and more reflective of the influence of contemporary German thought. Their theology was not really less orthodox than that of the

in the Spiritual World." Drummond's use of evolution in his sermons was the basis of much of his optimism. He once said, "Nothing happens by chance in the world. God is a God of order and of good and evolution is that rule of order"; see The Greatest Thing In The World And Other Addresses, p. 245. Also see Robert Flint, Sermons and Addresses, p. 78; John Tulloch, Sundays At Balmoral, pp. 37, 57-59; Alexander Whyte, Bible Characters: Adam To Achan, pp. 9-12.


2 The contributors to the Scotch Sermons were: John Caird, John Cunningham, D. J. Ferguson, William Knight, William MacKintosh, William L. McFarlan, Allan Menzies, James Nicoll, Thomas Rain, Adam Sempie, John Stevenson, Patrick Stevenson, R. H. Story. Of these men, John Cunningham became Principal of St. Mary's College, St. Andrews; William Knight was a Professor at St. Andrews; Allan Menzies became Professor of Biblical Criticism at St. Andrews; R. H. Story was later Principal of Glasgow University, succeeding John Caird. John Tulloch, though not a contributor to this volume of sermons, was also principal at St. Andrews. For this particular group of men the universities at Glasgow and St. Andrews appear to have been points of gravitation and education.

3 John Tulloch in his inaugural lecture at St. Andrews in 1854 paid tribute to the thought of Schleiermacher. While he is critical, his main point of departure from Schleiermacher is his substitution of the Bible for the Church as the final basis of authority; see Theological Tendencies Of The Age. John Caird is the outstanding example of right-wing Hegelianism in Scotland; see Introduction To The Philosophy of Religion. In some of these sermons there is also the suggestion of a Hitzchlian influence. The United Presbyterian James Orr
liberal evangelical found in the Free Church, but the ipseissima verba of a more evangelical theology were often missing in their sermons.

The second group of liberal evangelicals was centered in Edinburgh and the Free Church. They included such men as Robert Flint, Marcus Dods, Henry Drummond, Alexander Whyte, George Adam Smith and Walter C. Smith. Many of them had studied Old Testament at New College, Edinburgh, under A. B. Davidson, himself suspected of being the father of biblical criticism in the Free Church. These men were aggressive in their evangelism although they cast their evangelistic endeavors into new molds. In contrast to the aloof stance of the more liberal evangelicals in the Old Kirk, these men were ardent in their support of Dwight L. Moody but their liberalism brought consternation to many of Moody's more conservative followers. These men of the Free Church were also influenced by

was very critical of the influence of Ritschlian theology in Britain; see The Ritschlian Theology, particularly chapter 8, "The Ritschlian Theology And The Evangelical Faith."

1 Of the men mentioned, all were members of the Free Church except for Robert Flint. Flint was Professor of Divinity at the University of Edinburgh. Flint appears to have been sympathetic to the liberal evangelism of the Free Church. He actively supported Henry Drummond in his work among university students as well as Dwight L. Moody.


3 Henry Drummond's paper, The New Evangelism, is the best single index to the evangelism and theology of the more liberal evangelical in contrast to the older evangelicalism.

4 The biographies of all of these men substantiate their allegiance to Dwight L. Moody. Especially interesting is Henry Drummond's Dwight L. Moody with an introduction by George Adam Smith. By contrast it is curious that the studies of men such as John Caird and John Tulloch are silent about Moody. In her Later Reminiscences, pp. 67-68, J. L. Story, the wife of Principal Story, indicates her own personally positive impression of Moody.

The advent of Dwight L. Moody in Scotland in 1873 was like the lull before the storm, the storm being the Robertson Smith controversy commencing in 1876. One striking feature of Moody's impact was the loyalty he commanded from the divergent groups within presbyterianism. As might be suspected, pietists such as Andrew and Horatius Bonar, Andrew Somerville and A. Moody Stuart were at the
contemporary German theologians, many of them having spent a period of time in study in Germany. In George Adam Smith this group included the leading Old Testament critic in Scotland, if not in Britain. In Henry Drummond they boasted the leading spokesman of theistic evolution. Yet their sermons retained many of the phrases of the evangelical vocabulary and their speech appears to have betrayed an evangelical eloquence. While some of them were accused of heresy, on the whole they proved that a man could be both liberal and evangelical. 1

front of his campaign. Equally involved were a number of theological professors. In December, 1873, a "call to prayer" was sent to every minister in Scotland in connection with Moody’s meetings in Edinburgh. Among those signing this appeal were Professors W. G. Blaikie, A. H. Charteris, Thomas J. Crawford, James MacGregor and Robert Rainy. See R. Peddie, A Consecutive Narrative Of The Remarkable Awakening In Edinburgh, p. 5. A. K. H. Boyd, Marcus Dods, John Ker, Alexander Whyte, James Stalker, George Matheson and William Robertson of New Greyfriars were among the ministers in sympathy with Moody’s efforts in Scotland. See W. R. Moody, The Life Of Dwight L. Moody, pp. 164ff; Recollections of P. L. Moody And His Work In Britain, a pamphlet by D. L. to be found in New College Library; The British Weekly, September 23, 1897, p. 361. As a result of Moody’s influence the Gaiety Club, an evangelistic program among university students and later a group for more liberal theological discussions, was formed. See G. A. Smith, The Life Of Henry Drummond, p. 108.

The influence of Dwight L. Moody upon the Scottish religious atmosphere appears to have been rather considerable. His influence upon the sermon per se, was minimal. His simple message was that because of the love of God, men were to "believe in Jesus." Moody did not pretend to be a theologian. His magnitism was found in his simple sermons and his genuine humility and tolerant even admiring attitude toward men holding differing views. Thus he invited to his Northfield Conferences in the United States men such as Henry Drummond whose evolutionary sympathies he did not share, and George Adam Smith whose own theoretical views of higher criticism he rejected. Drummond especially gave time and energy to Moody’s campaigns in Scotland. Drummond wrote: "It is not too much to say that Scotland would not have been the same today but for the visit of Mr. Moody and Mr. Sankey; and that so far-reaching was, and is, the influence of their work, that any one who knows the inner religious history of the country must regard this time as nothing short of a national epoch." See Henry Drummond, Dwight L. Moody, pp. 81, 82. George Adam Smith wrote at the time of Moody’s death: "To me it is very clear that we have lost not only one of the strongest personalities of our time, but a man who was more able than any other to act as a reconciler of our present divisions." See Henry Drummond, Dwight L. Moody, "A Personal Tribute" by George Adam Smith, p. 4.

1 Marcus Dods, Henry Drummond and George Adam Smith were all accused of heresy but the charges were ultimately dropped as men such as Robert Rainy moved to make certain that the tragedies of the Robertson Smith Trial were not repeated.
If it is correct to say that theological diversity and homiletical variety were the keynotes of the nineteenth century pulpit, at no time was this more true than in the closing decades of the century. With a spark of prophetic insight John Stevenson of Glamis said:

> When the historian of the future seeks to trace the development of religious life in the nineteenth century, he will find it no easy task to discover its vital elements amid the antagonisms of doctrinal belief and the conflicts of ecclesiastical power.

The liberal evangelical was not easily given to labels. Freedom of spirit, catholicity of mind, an unpredictable quest for practicality: these were the attitudes with which the preacher approached his task of sermon composition. Consequently any examination of the more liberal evangelical pulpit in this period must beware of over simplification. While outlining the path pursued by the preacher, it must be remembered that the unique characteristics and common themes of liberal evangelicalism were appropriated in a variety of ways.

There were three unique characteristics appearing in the more liberal evangelical sermon in this period. First, there was a new perspective in preaching. Preaching was consigned to religion as opposed to theology. Preaching was to appeal to man's motives, his imagination, his heart, his spiritual instinct. Preaching to man's intellect alone was discouraged. Second, there was a new appropriation of the Bible. The Bible was a human book and its message was to be proclaimed in a human way. Third, there was a new soteriological emphasis. Salvation was stressed as a matter of character, not of status before God.

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See Liliam Adam Smith, *George Adam Smith*, p. 83. Donald MacMillan, *The Life Of Robert Flint*, p. 270, writes that at this time "the theological world was divided into two camps...Evangelicalism and Broad Churchism." He says Flint "belonged to neither school...transcended both."

Its Unique Characteristics

a. A New Perspective In Preaching

The more liberal evangelical preacher viewed his task from a new perspective. Preaching increasingly came to be associated with religion as opposed to theology. Theology was "intellectual," it was "science." ¹ Religion was "spiritual"; it spoke to the "spiritual instinct," the Geist of man. ² John Tulloch, sometimes called the father of modern liberalism in Scotland, said: "Truth on its intellectual side is hard to find. It is the possible quest of only a few...the essential weakness of many modern schemes of religion is that [they are] schemes of intellectualism." ³ He observed:

Practically life is built upon confidence, and the religious life certainly rises out of it, and men learn to act upon it. Knowledge never displaces it here. However closely we may rest in the Divine, in the end it is the rest of trust and not the insight of knowledge. We feel God rather than know Him; feel Him as a presence rather than know Him as an object. And every step we make in the Divine life we must still trust; we must often stretch forth our hand in the darkness. ⁴

John Caird, who exercised considerable influence over theological students in this period, described personal piety not theological knowledge as "the first

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³ John Tulloch, Sundays At Balmoral, p. 87.
⁴ Ibid., p. 50. The text of this sermon was 1 Cor. 13:9, "For we know in part." The theme was "Christian Agnosticism." Tulloch made three points: 1. The necessity of trust. 2. The necessity of tolerance...when we know so little. 3. The necessity of charity for all true tolerance springs from a bond of love.
qualification of the religious instructor."¹ Walter C. Smith of Edinburgh's Free High Church was equally direct, stating, "Theology is not piety....Therefore Jesus does not say 'Have you sound ideas on the doctrine of the atonement?'" He asks: "Lovest Thou me?"² In a sermon entitled, "Religion, The Open Air Of The Soul," George Adam Smith declared:

It is not profession which reveals where a man puts his trust. It is the practice and discipline of life, betraying us by a hundred commonplace ways, in spite of all the orthodoxy we boast.³

In a series of lectures delivered to the theological students of the Old Kirk in Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Glasgow, Henry Wallis Smith insisted: "the aim of the preacher is not literary or intellectual, but spiritual."⁴ Alexander Whyte said that "self-knowledge" not knowledge of doctrine was the "root of all real religious knowledge" and "all preachers" were "at one" on this.⁵ The preacher was to "bring real personal religion home to the experience and the heart."⁶ This meant that he was "to preach not Theology but Religion."⁷ In aligning preaching with religion, the sermon was to be addressed to man's "spiritual instinct."

Since preaching was consigned to man's "spiritual instinct" the preacher appealed less and less to man's reason. This was the blunt pronouncement of

¹ John Caird, Aspects Of Life, pp. 253, 254. Caird said that while the truth of revelation was to be believed and accepted, this belief was "unsupported." It was not derived from "reason." He said that in man there was "a silent oracle...an unwritten revelation...unbiased conscience," pp. 2, 3. Also see What Is Religion, p. 20; University Sermons, pp. 116, 117.


³ George Adam Smith, Four Psalms, pp. 74, 75.


⁵ Alexander Whyte, Bunyan Characters, First Series, p. 32.


⁷ Ibid.
Henry Drummond in a paper, "The New Evangelism," read to the Free Church Theological Society in Glasgow 1892: "The leading faculty of the new theology is not to be reason."\(^1\) Drummond found reason wanting because here the "soul-food was taken out of the truth and the husks thrown to the intellect."\(^2\) He asserted: "Reason is not large enough to be the organ of Christianity."\(^3\)

Preaching was to stir man's spiritual nature. Such preaching Drummond believed should be addressed to man's "Imagination."\(^4\) He said:

"All [Jesus'] most important sayings are put up in such form as to make it perfectly clear that they were deliberately designed for the Imagination.

You cannot indeed really put up religious truth in any other form. You can put up facts, information, but God's truth will not go into a word. You must put it in an image. God Himself could not put truth in a word, therefore He made the Word flesh. There are few things less comprehended than this relation of truth to language.

The purpose of revelation is to exhibit the mind of God—the unsagbundner Geist. The vehicle is words, unbundnen Worten. What words? Words which are windows and not prisons. Words of the intellect cannot hold God—the finite cannot hold the infinite. But an image can. So God has made it possible for us by giving us an external world to make image-words.\(^5\)

The language of imagination was the parable, the metaphor, the axiom and the paradox for only these could "burst the shell of words."\(^6\) Drummond equated imagination with faith, intuition and subjective idealism.\(^7\) He concluded: "As preachers our aim must be, not to prove things, but to make men see things."\(^8\)

The preaching of Alexander Whyte of Free St. George's West, Edinburgh,

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2 *ibid.*, p. 34.
3 *ibid.*
4 *ibid.*, p. 32.
5 *ibid.*, p. 29. Also see John Caird, *Essays For Sunday Reading*, p. 70.
6 *ibid.*, pp. 31, 32.
7 *ibid.*, p. 34.
8 *ibid.*, p. 35.
has been described as "sanctified and soaring imagination."¹ For Alexander Whyte preaching to man's spiritual nature was the same as preaching to the heart. Religion was rooted in the heart and the preacher was defined as "The prophet of the heart."² Whyte once said: "Your eye is the shortest way to your heart."³ In his sermons he appealed to man's imagination for here was the optic nerve of the heart. In a sermon on "Imagination In Prayer" Whyte called imagination "The noblest intellectual attribute of the human mind;" the "inward eyes."⁴ In the preaching of Alexander Whyte it is apparent that the language of imagination was the language of imagery. In a sermon based on the Bunyan Character in the Holy War, Clip-Promise, Whyte said:

The grace of God is like a bullion mass of purest gold, and then Jesus Christ is the great ingot of that gold, and then Moses, and David, and Isaiah, and Hosea, and Paul, and Peter, and John are the inspired artists who have commission to take both bullion and ingot, and out of them to cut, and beat, and smelt, and shape, and stamp, and superscribe the promises, and then to issue the promises to pass current in the market of salvation like so many shekels, and pounds, and pence, and farthings, and mites, as the case may be. And it was just these royal coins, imaged and superscribed so richly and so beautifully, that Clip-Promise so mutilated, abused, and debased, till for doing so he was hanged by the neck till he was dead.⁵

Whyte preached at least 111 sermons to his congregation on Bunyan's Characters for his desire was that his parishioners would "enter with mind, and heart, and conscience, and imagination into Bunyan's great conception of the human soul."⁶

³A. Whyte, Bunyan Characters, Third Series, p. 38.
⁴A. Whyte, Lord Teach Us To Pray, pp. 243, 244.
⁵A. Whyte, Bunyan Characters, Third Series, pp. 98, 99.
⁶Ibid., p. 6.
The liberal evangelicals addressed their sermons to the spiritual nature of man for differing reasons. First, preaching delimited to the spirit of man reflected the new understanding of religion. Religion was not a formal system of belief; religion was a way of life, a relationship. Marcus Dods insisted that religion was not morality. 1 Religion was not the Church. 2 Religion was the recognition that "the Supreme as the Incomprehensible Spirit who underlies all existence... is our absolutely holy and loving Father." 3 Religion was that "permanent" relationship with "the absolutely holy and loving God" in which man himself became holy and loving. 4 Religion was the method by which man was united with God. Christianity was simply "Christ's method of uniting us to God." 5 Dods once defined a Christian as:

The man who has received the Spirit of Christ.... All the knowledge that a man needs to make him a Christian is only the knowledge that Christ can and will bestow the Holy Spirit; for the one article of the Christian creed is faith in a new living and supreme Christ. All the action that is required to make a man a Christian is that action which consists in truly depending upon Christ for the Holy Spirit. 6

Again, preaching to man's spiritual nature was the result of the continuing liberal emphasis on Christianity as a practical way of life, a life of love. Walter C. Smith called "love the body and symbol of Christianity" and declared that the Golden Rule was the "guiding principle of life." 7 George Adam Smith, the popular young preacher at Queen's Cross Free Church, Aberdeen, held an

2 Ibid., pp. 82ff.
3 Ibid., pp. 76, 77.
4 Ibid.
6 Marcus Dods, Christ and Man, pp. 120-121.
enlarged and social vision of the kingdom of God. He wrote:

The leal love of God is every day. There, in that commonplace daily light: in that love which is as near you as the open air and as free as the sunshine, are the life and exultation which you seek so vainly within yourself.¹

Faith as "belief in certain opinions; the assent of the mind to a certain system of truth" was discarded.² Faith was "trust in God" and this was a trust which proved itself in "the common affairs and interests of life."³ "Religion" said Walter C. Smith, "is neither a doctrine of truth nor an emotion of piety but both working together to bring about a life of practical goodness."⁴ Yet to emphasize the practical was to minimize the doctrinal, for the task of the preacher "from beginning to end" was to "bear on the actual business of the moral and spiritual life."⁵ The principles of the spiritual life were "love ...sincerity...faith...sympathy."⁶ Practical preaching accentuated a religion of the heart for only then would the individual Christian be motivated to live out the life of Jesus.⁷ George Adam Smith began a communion sermon with this affirmation:

Religion is a fountain of life or nothing at all. When it is practised as a round of solemn functions, or trusted only as the assurance of a future salvation, or obeyed as a series of precepts and doctrines; then the soul is deceived and starved; and we need the voice of Jesus to cry loudly in our ears—¹¹

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¹George Adam Smith, *Four Psalms*, p. 36.
³Ibid.
⁶Ibid., p. 317.
came that they may have life and that they may have it abundantly. Every heart will tell itself that this is the gospel which it requires.¹

Alexander Whyte advocated preaching to man's motives for "our motives are the secret springs of our hearts."² Preaching was often addressed to man's spiritual instinct not because the preacher disdained the intellect nor abandoned any system of doctrine, but because such preaching was felt to be the only practical way to foster a living faith.

Finally, the sermon was often addressed to man's spiritual instinct, for the preacher believed this to be his most effective answer to the intellectual challenge of secularization.³ This was particularly true in apologetical preaching. The liberal evangelical believed that Christianity was centered in man's spiritual nature and this meant that man was both free to follow Christ and believe what he would.⁴ The Bible was not to be squared with evolution nor the authority of scripture defended on the basis of inerrancy.⁵ In a sermon preached to the students of Glasgow University, Professor Robert Flint attempted to speak to man's spiritual nature by appealing to man's conscience for belief in Christ was a matter of the heart.

Some of you have the most radical doubts as to Christianity. So be it. Although I have no time to consider how you may

¹George Adam Smith, The Forgiveness Of Sin, p. 238.
²Alexander Whyte, With Mercy And With Judgment, pp. 44-45.
³See pp. 159ff. of thesis.
⁴D. J. Ferguson, "Law and Miracle," Scotch Sermons, p. 82. Here Ferguson says that the three issues demanding accommodation were science, history and biblical criticism. In this sermon Ferguson does not commit himself one way or another to these issues he simply argues that man was free to believe these new concepts and still be a Christian.
have come to your doubts, or what may be the worth of the
grounds on which you would be prepared to defend them, I have
a word to you also.

There are some things which, happily you cannot very
easily doubt. You can no more doubt, for instance, the testimony
of your consciences than you can doubt the testimony of your
eyeight.

Well, let this conscience scrutinize and judge your own
moral lives. It is what it ought to do. It is its appropriate
function and work within you. ¹

We constantly hear of young men having had their faith shaken
by, for example, some metaphysical theory of the limits of
knowledge, or some scientific or so-called scientific theory
of evolution, or certain critical investigations into the origin
and composition of books of Scripture, or some ingenious specula-
tion as to the credibility of miracles; and it may be that we are
asked to indicate how the doubts which have thus been raised should
be dealt with. In the vast majority of cases it is, I believe,
comparatively useless to deal with them directly, because they have
mainly risen from there having been no real faith in Christ, or even
serious and reasonable consideration of Christ's claims, to start
with. ... If you realize in some fitting measure your own condition
as a sinner, and seriously consider how the Gospel responds to
your wants as a sinner, then, but only then, can I entertain a
good hope that you will see that Christ stands in an altogether
exceptional, yea unique relation to you.²

In another sermon, John Caird reminded the students of Glasgow University that
faith was always personal and grounded in that internal spirit common to both
man and God.³ Such faith could only be experienced and "discerned" by the
individual.⁴ Therefore faith need not fear nor spurn the "questioning or criti-
cism of documents, the clashing of scientific facts with sacred narratives, the

¹Robert Flint, Sermons, p. 75.
²Ibid., p. 76. Also see in this volume "Some Requirements Of A Present-
Day Christian Apologetics," an address by Flint before the Edinburgh Diocesan
Church Reading Union in 1899, pp. 299ff.
³John Caird, Christian Manliness, pp. 23ff. In his University Sermons,
p. 76, Caird sees religion as above intelligence.
⁴Ibid., p. 25.
philosophical assaults on miracles."\(^1\) Indeed such questioning only strengthened "the witness of the Spirit of God within your breasts."\(^2\) In a sermon addressed to the students of Edinburgh University, Marcus Dods noted that while the atonement and the divinity of Christ were the "two fundamental doctrines" one did not have to believe in either to be a Christian.\(^3\) This was true because "reunion to God depends so much more on the conscience and on the heart than on mental enlightenment."\(^4\) Dods said that the simple question for believing faith was "Do you believe in Christ as able to bring you into fellowship with God?"\(^5\) As an apologetical preacher, the more liberal evangelical did not condemn evolution nor deny biblical criticism. He simply appealed to man's spiritual instinct and he attempted to make this appeal both intelligible and conclusive.

As religion was more and more restricted to the spiritual nature the preacher became increasingly tolerant and the sermon more mystical. For John Caird religion was "more catholic than all creeds"; religion was "love and loyalty to Christ."\(^6\) "The essence of religion [was] piety."\(^7\) Caird's religious

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\(^1\)Ibid. In Scotch Sermons, pp. 20ff., Caird attempts to make Christianity reasonable to those not believing in the divinity of Christ. His approach is not to argue either the divinity or humanity of Christ but to set forth the "Divine" potential latent in man himself because of Christ.

\(^2\)Ibid., p. 26. See An Introduction To The Philosophy Of Religion. In appealing to the Geist innate in man, Caird emphasized that religion was both "feeling" and "knowledge," pp. 156, 165. While religion was centered in man's "rational and intelligent nature," religion was not a "purely intellectual thing," p. 152. Caird said: "In estimating the religious character of individuals...we must regard as of primary importance, not the element of feeling, but the objective character about which we feel; we must look beyond feeling to that intellectual activity by which feelings are determined," p. 176. For men like John Caird, preaching to man's spirit was not anti-intelligence.


\(^4\)Ibid., p. 9. \(^5\)Ibid., p. 11.


\(^7\)John Caird, Essays For Sunday Reading, p. 243.
faith was increasingly clothed in mysticism. He said:

In religion, the humility before God which is deepest is that not of blind assent to incomprehensible dogmas or obedience to authoritative precepts, but the profound humility of a spirit to which has been vouchsafed some measure of spiritual insight, and which, in the contemplation of God's revealed will, is penetrated with awe and reverence for a Mind, which it knows, yet can never know, for a truth and goodness and beauty which it understands, yet can never exhaust or be found out to perfection.¹

R. H. Story, Caird's successor as Principal of Glasgow University, defined rationalism as man putting reason in the place of conscience "and accounting for everything in heaven and earth by the strict rules of logic."² In a weighty Christmas Eve sermon, Story said that conscience and the spirit were the true foundations of religion.³ These were the basis of "all that deserved the name of religious growth, progress, improvement."⁴ Professor Knight of St. Andrews summed up the reason for this emphasis on the spirit: "In every age religion has found a home in human consciousness...Religious intuition never dies."⁵ The more liberal evangelical agreed that preaching was to be addressed to man's spiritual instinct if for differing and at times conflicting reasons. A religion of the spirit replaced the old dogmas of right doctrine. The true basis of faith was experience not reason. The logic of the heart and the conscience was to rule the logic of the mind. Preaching was to be seen in a new perspective: the perspective of religion and religion was spiritual.

¹John Caird, Christian Manliness, p. 25.
²R. H. Story, Creed and Conduct, p. 25.
³Ibid., p. 4. Also see R. H. Story, "Christ's Authority," Scotch Sermons, pp. 382, 383.
⁴Ibid., p. 6. Also see John Tulloch, Sundays at Balmoral, pp. 174ff.
b. A New Appropriation Of The Bible

The more liberal evangelical was inclined to believe that he had fostered a return to true biblical preaching. A. K. H. Boyd comparing the sermon in the Church of his youth to that in the sunset of his life said: "The preaching is incomparably better....Then they were often theological expositions, God's plain and powerful Word has its place now."¹ Principal John Tulloch declared that the critical study of scripture had transformed the Bible from "a mere repertory of doctrinal texts" into "a living literature."² In his manifesto, "The New Evangelism," Henry Drummond decreed: "the New Evangelism must not be doctrinal...this simply means that a man is to go to a reliable edition of the Bible for his truth and not to theology."³ In 1886 an editorial in The Scotsman observed:

Amid the growing doubt of stereotyped propositions to support a living faith; amid the almost universal impatience of the religious world to discharge itself forever of the scholastic ingenuities with which it has been so long and so fatally hampered; amid the general upheaval of external authority, and the ever-widening dissent among the Churches, the Bible itself is rising out of the smoke and clamour of conflict into purer air.⁴

The belief that preaching had become more biblical reflected the new understanding of the Bible evident in the last quarter of the century. The continuing reaction against dogma obliterated the use of the Bible as a bibliography of doctrinal proof texts. The inherited views of revelation and inspiration were reinterpreted, altering the concept of biblical authority.⁵ The

¹ A. K. H. Boyd, Towards The Sunset, p. 240.
² John Tulloch, Movements Of Religious Thought In Britain During The Nineteenth Century, p. 332.
³ Henry Drummond, The New Evangelism And Other Papers, pp. 20, 21.
⁴ The Scotsman, April 28, 1886, p. 6.
⁵ Marcus Dods, Revelation and Inspiration, p. 15. "When we speak of revelation we mean the imparting by God Himself of knowledge about Himself which
Bible was the infallible rule of faith; it was "God's book" but the Bible itself was not "the revelation of God." 1 The dogmas of verbal inspiration and inerrancy were discarded as distortions of the view of scripture found in the Confession of Faith. 2 The Bible was authoritative because it was true; it was not true because it was authoritative. 3

While this new understanding of the Bible was supremely the result of the acceptance of biblical criticism, the liberal evangelicals were virtually unanimous in their insistence that this was no subject for the pulpit. George Adam Smith bluntly dismissed young preachers who discussed such questions in their sermons as "badly trained asses" declaring: "The pulpit is not the place for criticism; if a man has not a gospel to preach, he has no right to be there." 4

1 R. H. Story, op. cit., p. 27. Also see Robert Flint, Sermons, p. 323. Marcus Dods, Revelation and Inspiration, pp. 13, 14. Dods says that it is through the Bible that the knowledge of God comes, for the Bible is "the literature in which the revelations are recounted and preserved."


3 W. L. M'Farlan, "Authority," Scotch Sermons, p. 204.

It was his conviction that the application of higher criticism to the Old Testament had only made the Bible more "ethical and evangelical." The preaching of Alexander Whyte betrayed little awareness of higher criticism, yet on one occasion he said:

That wonderful discovery and operation of our day which is called Biblical Criticism has let in a most piercing and searching and edifying light, not only upon Bible books, but also upon Bible men.

In a paper on The Teaching Function Of The Modern Pulpit, James Lindsay of Kilmarnock wrote:

We ought never to forget what irrelevancy marks that criticism, so far as direct spiritual purposes or aspects are concerned, no matter how noble or needful as a preliminary such critical inquiry may be. For when the higher criticism shall have ended its task and done all that it can do for us, our work as spiritual thinkers and Christian teachers will still wait to be done.

Addressing the divinity students of the Old Kirk, Henry Wallis Smith noted the valuable benefits of biblical criticism on theological study but concluded that "the results of this advance can be used in the pulpit only to a very limited extent directly."

While indirect, the effect of higher criticism on the sermon was still significant. The preacher's new understanding of the Bible issued in a new appropriation of the Bible in preaching. The Bible was still the word of God but only indirectly. The Bible was also the word of man and as such was

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1. Ibid., p. 26. See George Adam Smith, The Preaching Of The Old Testament To The Age, p. 33. Smith says in his inaugural address as the Professor of Hebrew in the Free Church College, Glasgow, "In this country at the present day nearly every leader in Old Testament criticism is a believer in evangelical Christianity."

2. Alexander Whyte, Bible Characters: Gideon To Absalom, p. 185.

3. James Lindsay, The Teaching Function of the Modern Pulpit, p. 44.

appropriated as a human book.

The preacher's appropriation of the Bible as a more human book is evident in the variety of ways in which he developed his sermon text. On the one hand he approached the Bible as a human book. The biblical writers were human beings. The situation to which they originally spoke were human, historical situations. Preachers became interested in the sitt im leben of the text. On the other hand this new appropriation of the Bible meant that the preacher was to apply his sermon in more of a human, practical, manner. Some still interpreted the text in a doctrinal manner although they did so with greater tolerance and less dogmatism. The preacher turned more frequently to history as a means of illuminating ancient customs and providing new insight into possible interpretations as the circumstances of the sermon text were explored. On occasion the preacher approached his text psychologically, attempting to probe the mind and motive of the author. The text itself was often examined critically. At times the preacher gave his text a new translation in an effort to gain new insight and correct false interpretations. Again the text was accepted as having been originally addressed to a specific situation in life. In speaking to their

1 Henry Drummond, The New Evangelism, p. 54. "We have got our Bible. The theory of development, the study of the Bible as a library of religious writings rather than as a book; the treatment of the writers as authors and not as pens; the mere discovery that religion has not come out of the Bible, but that the Bible has come out of religion; these announcements...have opened up a world of new life and interest to Christian people."

2 Robert Flint, Sermons. Flint was a doctrinal preacher but he was no dogmatist. His theological emphasis is evident in the titles of his sermons: "The Divine Will, Christ Suffering For Sins, The Lamb of God, Christ Made Unto Us Wisdom, Christ Made Unto Us Righteousness, Christ Made Unto Us Sanctification, God's Sovereignty."

3 George Adam Smith, The Forgiveness Of Sins, pp. 29ff; Marcus Dods Isaac, Jacob And Joseph, pp. 23ff; John Tulloch, Sundays At Balmoral, pp. 176ff.

4 R. H. Story, Creed and Conduct, pp. 93ff.

5 Ibid., pp. 49ff, 64ff.
own contemporary concern some preachers sought to elicit an ethical or spiritual meaning from the text which could in turn be relevantly applied to the immediate life and interest of their congregation. When following this latter method, the preaching of the more liberal evangelical was often no more biblical than that of the older evangelical. For the doctrinal presuppositions of the older evangelical, the liberal evangelical simply substituted his own ethical concerns.

The appropriation of the Bible as a human book was most evident in the many sermons based on the personalities of the Bible. Indeed, the vibrance of the character sermon was the most significant contribution of the liberal evangelical pulpit to nineteenth century homiletics. While the character sermon was not unique to the more liberal evangelical, he popularized this form of address.

George Adam Smith observed:

How often has one seen an Old Testament character, whom one once knew alive, bound to the chariot wheels of some violent dogmatist and dragged round the whole citadel of Christian theology, till there was as much life left in the battered corpse as in Hector's own!...On the other hand, if we will go to the characters of the Old Testament as they are, and treat them, not as our dead prey, but as our masters and brothers, whom it is our duty to study with patience and meekness, there is almost no end to the real benefit they shall do us.

George Matheson of St. Bernard's Parish Church, Edinburgh, Marcus Dods, George Adam Smith and Alexander Whyte were all masters of the character sermon.

There were numerous reasons for the popularity of the character sermon.

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1 John Caird, University Sermons, pp. 322ff.

2 While it is generally true that the sermons of the more liberal evangelical were more biblically orientated than those of the older evangelical, this statement is not without some notable exceptions. John Caird is such an exception. In University Sermons, his most common method is to first examine the meaning of his text, usually in just two or three pages. Then on the basis of an idea he believed to be couched in the text he would devote the remainder of the sermon to a practical discussion of the implications of this ethical or spiritual insight for mankind at that time.

3 George Adam Smith, The Preaching Of The Old Testament To The Age, pp. 48, 49.
Walter C. Smith said that "for one soul saved by Christian precept, you find twenty saved by Christian example." Preaching which accentuated the personalities of the Bible was preaching by example not by precept. Alexander Whyte, who once called the parables "portraits," emphasized the people of the Bible in his sermons because in them man saw himself. Marcus Dods informed the students of the Free Church College, Glasgow, that character preaching "enables us to touch upon delicate matters of personal and home life which we could never have the audacity to select for treatment." In his sermon on Zechariah, Marcus Dods suggested that preaching focussing on certain periods and people in history was "serviceable" for all generations because "the history of God's people very much repeats itself." James Lindsay wrote that it was not the task of the preacher to "throw light on scripture;" rather he was to "make scripture throw light on his own observations." The character sermon accomplished this par excellence.

The prince of preachers in terms of the character sermon was Alexander Whyte. In Whyte's treatment of a biblical character his sense of history and psychology plus a descriptive imagination were his tools to relevance. He usually elicited one spiritual or personality trait from his subject which was

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5 James Lindsay, *The Teaching Function of the Modern Pulpit*, p. 51.
6 G. F. Barbour, *The Life of Alexander Whyte*, p. 224. Speaking of Whyte's preaching Barbour says: "As time passed, his preaching concentrated more and more on the study of characters, and his interpretation increasingly became intuitive and psychological."
applicable to his parishioners. Cain was the story of "all envious-minded men." 1

Noaah was the first mystic. Isaac in his infirm years was the father of all those people who are weakly and tender merely by their indulgences.” 3

Esaum was a reminder that all men have “a profane mind and hard heart.” 4

Joshua was an example of the "admiration and reverence for great and good men" to be found in youth. 5

Whyte’s characters were always human. Having elucidated the human element of his characters, Whyte was able to forcefully, and imaginatively speak to that same human trait in his listeners. Speaking of the faith and courage of the "Woman With The Issue Of Blood" Whyte said:

One stolen touch was sufficient for an issue of blood; but a long and close lifetime of absolute clasp of Christ will not heal us of our sin! Only, with all that we must not despair. We must not go back....Let us be like this bleeding woman. Tonight, put out your hand and touch Christ. Never mind the gaping crowd pressing behind and before on Him and on you. They are nothing to you, and you are nobody to them. Never mind what they do, or do not do. They are not bleeding to death like you, and they are no rule to you. They did not come up here to-night on your errand. You are as good as dead, and this may be your last chance of Christ. Make a grasp at Him. Make a great grasp, however unceremonious and desperate, at the hem of His garment. Actually stretch out your hand where you now sit, and the stretch of your hand will sacramentally help your heart. Never mind the people in the same seat staring at you, and thinking you are mad. So you are, and you need not sit and look as if you were not. Never mind that you have not all your days till tonight so much as once touched Christ by faith. This woman had suffered enough to drive her beside herself for twelve years before she ever thought of the hem of His garment, and she went home that night healed of her plague. Press through, and grasp tight, and hold fast till you hear him say, "Somebody is detaining me." 5

In one of his last sermons Alexander Whyte took as his subject death and judgment.

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1 Alexander Whyte, Bible Characters: Joseph and Mary To James The Lord’s Brother, pp. 89, 90.
2 Ibid., pp. 55, 59.
3 Ibid., p. 160.
4 Ibid., p. 168.
5 Ibid., p. 219.
He titled the sermon "A Study In The Swelling Of The Jordan" and Jesus, Stephen, Paul, Augustine, Luther, several Bunyan characters, Bishop Butler and Thomas Chalmers were the men whose fearless faith in death made the sermon telling. 1 Alexander Whyte preached his way through the entire Bible in a series of 159 sermons on Bible Characters. Such preaching justified the more liberal evangelical contention that he had fostered a return to biblical preaching. Such preaching re-enforced the liberal evangelical's conviction that the Bible was a human book to be appropriated in a human way.

c. A New Soteriological Emphasis

The character sermon of the late nineteenth century pulpit is also a clue to the new soteriological emphasis. Salvation was accentuated as a matter of character, not of status. It was man himself who was to be changed and this change was to be reflected in his common life. This new emphasis on moral character meant that righteousness was not something imputed to men from outside man. Right living was a way of life centered in man's moral character. The sermon based on the men and women of the Bible, the numerous references in the pulpit to man's moral character all reflected the new soteriological emphasis. Salvation was still a process but no longer was life viewed as a "state of probation" to determine man's final status with God. 2 The older evangelical emphasis on rewards and punishments was generally abandoned. As a process salvation was a way of life to be worked out and realized in this world. Such a soteriological emphasis was most compatible with the entire tenor of the more liberal evangelical pulpit. The continued prominence given to the incarnation, the demand that religion be

1 Alexander Whyte, With Mercy and With Judgment, pp. 263ff.
2 See pp. 230-232 of this thesis.
practical and personal, the conviction that preaching stir and shape man's spiritual instinct: all contributed to this view of salvation as centered in man's moral character.

The character sermons of Alexander Whyte are an incisive commentary on this emphasis in preaching. Whyte, whose liberalism was never radical, did not deny that salvation was concerned with man's status before God. However the practical and psychological aspects of preaching led him to stress salvation as it related to man's character. Whyte said that the character of man was the "essence" of man. Religion was first a spiritual, an inward concern, focusing on man's heart. Character was rooted in man's will and heart. Character, Whyte said, refers to "that temper, taste, disposition, whole frame of mind from whence we act in one way rather than another...those principles from which a man acts, when they become fixed and habitual in him we call his character." Now Whyte, whose vision of the Christian life was influenced by mystics such as St. Teresa, stressed personal spiritual discipline in his preaching. The acquisition of this holy life was to be the goal of every Christian. Yet the attainment of this objective was always strenuous and elusive and rooted in the moral character of man. Man's character was "formed and deformed" in the process of life whereby acts often repeated became habits and habits assiduously practiced hardened into character.

Whyte's emphasis on salvation as most closely related to man's character

1Alexander Whyte, Lord Teach Us To Pray, pp. 7, 8.
3Ibid., p. 2.  
4Ibid., p. 3.
5See Whyte's Thirteen Appreciations.
6Alexander Whyte, Bunyan Characters, First Series, pp. 4, 5.
reflected his emphasis on the incarnation. To him there was no other doctrine
"to compare" with the incarnation, "the word made flesh." He insisted that all
of the experiences of Christ were to be imitated by his present day disciples.
Since Jesus had pursued the human path of character development and then carried
his "moral character to His Father's House," his disciples were to follow his
example. Concluding the first sermon in his series on Bunyan Characters,
Whyte declared:

Moral character is well worth achieving here and then carrying there,
for it is nothing else and nothing less than the divine nature itself;
it is the divine nature incarnate, incorporate, and made manifest in
man. And it is, therefore, immortal with the immortality of God, and
blessed forever with the blessedness of God.

Beginning another series of sermons on The Walk, Conversation And Character Of
Jesus Christ Our Lord, Whyte said:

I invite you, then, to the study of our Lord's character and walk
and conversation; and, in that, to the parallel study and improve¬
ment of your own character and walk and conversation. For, first:
His character, and then your own, those are the two things that
most concern you and me in all this world....Come then, and let us
begin to study the character of Christ, in order to put it on.

Man's salvation and sanctification rested on his "mastery of his passions." Alexander Whyte's many character sermons were to enlighten and inspire man in

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1 Alexander Whyte, The Walk, Conversation And Character Of Jesus Christ
Our Lord, p. 181.
3 Alexander Whyte, Bunyan Characters, First Series, pp. 5ff.
4 Ibid., p. 9.
5 Alexander Whyte, The Walk, Conversation and Character Of Jesus Christ
Our Lord, pp. 16-18.
6 Alexander Whyte, Bunyan Characters, First Series, p. 97. See Bunyan
Characters, Third Series, p. 143, for here Whyte plainly equates sanctification
with salvation.
his quest for salvation.  

This new soteriological emphasis was not limited to Alexander Whyte. It was an emphasis shared by all of the more liberal evangelicals. R. H. Story declared:

"The righteousness of Christ is not a great fund...out of which sums may ever and anon be taken and "imputed" to his people. It is the pure and perfect character and life which we by knowledge of him see, which we by faith in him set before us as our only aim, as our only example, as our only stimulus and help to overcome self and the devil and the world."  

I cannot be satisfied with any doctrine of "imputation," or any talk about being "clothed with Christ's righteousness" and, as it were, under cover of this passed into the secret place of God's favour. What I want...is not to be accounted as righteous, but to be made righteous; not to be called righteous, but to be righteous.

Marcus Dods, who described salvation as making the "character" of Jesus Christ "our own," said:

"The object aimed at in our salvation is our real moral restoration from our condition as sinners, our real spiritual up-building in the image of God. It is we ourselves who are to be changed; it is not only that the lives led by us and the fruit produced by us should be better, but that we ourselves should be perfected—our evil affections deadened, our weak will strengthened, the whole nature renewed."

Just so does Christ save us. With an infinitely finer and more delicate application of His saving power does He excite, encourage

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1 Alexander Whyte, Bible Characters: Adam To Achan, p. 228. In this first volume of his sermons on biblical personalities Whyte writes "My intention and my aim is to try to find out how the foundations of their moral character were laid in those Bible men and women; how their respective lives and characters were built up, what the instruments were, and what the occasions and opportunities by means of which those men and women made themselves what they were and are....My method and my endeavour in these expositions is the study of those Bible men and women in their moral character alone."


3 Ibid., p. 395.

4 Marcus Dods, Christ and Man, p. 186.
and aid our efforts, but never so as to make them not our own.... And because He truly saves us, He inspires us to work out our own salvation.¹

John Caird often spoke of man's salvation as the restoration of his "true self," and this was essentially salvation related to man's inward moral character.²

In a university sermon entitled: "Can Righteousness Be Imputed?" Caird defined justification as getting to "the springs of human character" by revealing to man his imost "divine possibilities."³ John Tulloch preferred the phrase "The higher life" in speaking of the Christian life but again this was salvation contingent on character. Tulloch said: "The higher life...comes only from change of will and character and this change, again, only comes from contact with the spirit of Christ."⁴ George Adam Smith said that "The cross was no new thing but the putting of the love of God, of the Blood of Christ, into the fundamental pieties of the human heart."⁵ Personal piety, called by John Caird the "essence of religion," was an important aspect in the message of the liberal evangelicals for piety was related to, if not the same as character.⁶ To those who said "that character cannot be communicated from the outside to the soul of man," George Adam Smith said:

Yet such is the Christian religion. It is knowledge to begin with. It is a proclamation of truth: what God is in His Nature and Character. It is the publication of good tidings: what He wills, and what He has done, for us men. And our faith is not the intellectual conception of these things, as if we could shut off heart and conscience from them,

¹Ibid., p. 187.
²John Caird, Aspects of Life, pp. 18, 23, 24, 26, 27.
³John Caird, University Sermons, pp. 116, 129.
⁴John Tulloch, Sundays At Balmoral, p. 93.
⁵George Adam Smith, Four Psalms, p. 128.
but it is the opening of our whole nature to their moral influences. God is Himself the maker of that nature, and when His grace comes to us it is not by some unnatural or magical way, that avoids or over-bears the faculties with which He has Himself endowed us; but it uses these to persuade, inspire and save us from death.¹

Henry Drummond contrasting the new and old evangelism faulted the older evangelical's conception of salvation with characteristic declamation:

The characteristic to notice here is that religion was not so much a question of character as of status. Man's standing in the sight of God was the great thing. Was he sheltered judicially behind Christ, or was he standing on his own merits? This is a vital question to ask, but the way in which legal status was put sanctioned the most erroneous notions as to religion and life. Salvation was a thing that came into force at death. It was not a thing for life. Good works were permitted, and even demanded, but they were never very clearly reconcilable with grace. The prime end of religion was to get off; the plan of salvation was an elaborate scheme for getting off; and after a man had faced that scheme, understood it, acquiesced in it, the one thing needful was secured. When a preacher did speak of character, of the imitation of Christ, of self-denial, of righteousness, or truth and humility, the references theologically were not only not clear, but were generally introduced with an apology for enforcing them at all. Nine times out of ten, the preacher took them all back under the last head, where he spoke of man's inability and the necessity of the Holy Spirit.²

For Henry Drummond, indeed for all liberal evangelicals, to be a Christian was to pursue in this life "the character of Christ."³

This new soteriological emphasis caused the preacher to view salvation as a process; a process encompassing the whole of life. Man was to work out his own salvation and the world was his place of activity. There was a beginning to the Christian life and "renunciation...the new birth...believing in Jesus...coming to Christ...conversion" were some of the terms used to express this initial phase.⁴ Yet, the liberal evangelical emphasized the continued and progressive

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²Henry Drummond, The New Evangelism And Other Papers, pp. 18, 19.
side of salvation. George Adam Smith informed his youthful congregation at Queen's Cross Free Church, Aberdeen:

I would not say one word against that preaching, which claims our hearts for the grace of God in a single and perfect hour of appreciation, for by such sudden conversions the lives of many have immediately been changed and shall be to the end of time; but I do know that in the sense of forgiveness, which I have put before you, you will expand the sensations of an hour to the experience of a lifetime and make God's forgiveness of you as wide and as constant as His common Providence. 1

Salvation, for Alexander Whyte, was an experience embracing a lifetime:

That is not a thing done in an instant, but is a certain process, a gradual release from our captivity and disorder, consisting of several stages and degrees, both of life and death, which the soul must go through before it can have thoroughly put off the old man. It is well worth observing that our Saviour's greatest trials were near the end of His life. This might sufficiently show us that our first awakenings have carried us but a little way; that we should not then begin to be self-assured of our own salvation, but should remember that we stand at a great distance from, and are in great ignorance of, our severest trials. 2

John Caird, whose mysticism was the result of his Hegelian idealism, declared in a sermon on "The New Birth":

It is no little thing to respond to the call of duty, even when our human inclinations and passions war against its dictates. There is a certain dignity and nobleness in the life of duty and self-discipline, or repressed impulses and restrained passions and actions persistently regulated by reason and conscience. But the ideal of the Christian life, the life human yet divine which broke upon the world in all the glory of its perfection in him who is our pattern and example, is something far beyond this. It is that of a life in which not merely our reason, our conscience, our spiritual intelligence recognizes and responds to the law and will that is above us, but in which there is enkindled in our hearts a love, a sympathy, a passionate

1 George Adam Smith, The Forgiveness of Sins, pp. 23, 24.

aspiration after goodness akin to that which burns in the very heart of God. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." ¹

Henry Drummond portrayed life as the battlefield on which man worked out his salvation:

Everyone who comes into the world experiences less or more of the facts of Sin; and every one is allowed to live on in the world mainly that he may also experience the great facts of Salvation. God keeps the most of us alive from day to day with this one object. Sin has got hold of us, and He is giving us time...time to work out the three facts of Salvation in our lives with fear and trembling against the three facts of sin. Our being, therefore, lies between these two great sets of facts, the dark set and the bright: and life is just the battlefield on which they fight it out. If the bright side win, it is a bright life—saved. If the dark side, it is a dark life—lost.²

Marcus Dods said that while it was easy to become a Christian, there followed "the difficulty of continuing to be one."³ Concluding a sermon on the theme "Putting On Christ" Dods declared:

Set yourself resolutely to conform in every particular to the character of Christ. Not without self-control and self-knowledge, not without pain, not without striving and sacrifice can we make that character our own; but that character satisfies all the requirements of God and human life, and to be without it is to miss the chief end of our being.⁴

Salvation was a process. A process whereby righteousness and faith became a way of life. Salvation was not determined by what a man believed as much as by how he lived.

The strength of this soteriological emphasis was its ethical relevance

¹ John Caird, *University Sermons*, pp. 89, 90.
² Henry Drummond, *The Ideal Life*, pp. 165, 166. Drummond said that the three facts of sin were its "guilt, stain and power." The three facts of salvation were "forgiveness, healing, redemption."
⁴ Ibid., p. 84.
and its accent on individual and social responsibility. There was the continued
growth of a social awareness and while salvation was first personal it was at
the same time corporate. Christianity, it was increasingly believed, had a
"Programme for Society."¹ In part man's salvation was his "personal dedication"
to "Christ's Programme."² Certainly, man's salvation was contingent on the way
he lived. This, declared John Caird, is "the final standard by which here or
hereafter each of us is to be measured."³ This soteriological emphasis reflected
the practical concern of liberal evangelicalism. R. H. Story said:

Every truth, every system, every teacher must be judged according
to what it, or what he, produces, and is—according to the fruits,
according to the character. This is the judgment by which Christ
wishes to be judged. It matters little what a man calls himself...
the question is, What can he do? What can he teach? What is he
in himself? It matters little what men say against or for a new
form, or a new truth, or a new system—that it is not Scriptural;
that it is not according to the Fathers of the Church; that it is
not according to the common custom; or that it is in accordance
with Scripture and tradition, and the usage and order of the Universal
Church. The question is, Is it true? Is it better than what we
have hitherto believed or practised?⁴

Judged by this standard, the liberal evangelical pulpit succeeded in recapturing
the essence of Christianity; the fact that Christianity is a way of life.

The weakness of this soteriological emphasis was the result of its
strength. It was theologically ambiguous. In his continued reaction against
dogma the tolerance of the more liberal evangelical threatened to eradicate
Christian belief of some of its content. Christianity was simply a way of life
and the sermon the stimulus of the Spirit of Christ. In divorcing religion from

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² Ibid., p. 106.
³ John Caird, University Sermons, p. 258.
theology and identifying preaching with religion the sermon was becoming an umbrella of moral character concealing theological diversity. In the closing years of the century some liberal evangelicals grew wary of the diffusive nature of their theology. Certain important differences as to the person of Jesus Christ and the nature of sin and salvation were becoming visible. Yet, a more radical liberalism, in spite of the Scotch Sermons, does not appear to have been a potent force in the pulpit of the nineteenth century.

1880 to 1900 was the period in which preaching was most emphatically consigned to man's spiritual nature. The Bible was appropriated in a human way as a human book and salvation was designated as primarily a change of character. This was the period in which the preacher attempted to make Christianity fit the Zeitgeist. This was the period in which the pulpit of the nineteenth century was practically the most relevant and virile yet theologically the most impoverished.

1. James Orr, The Ritschlian Theology and The Evangelical Faith, pp. 231ff. In this book published in 1897, Orr, while appreciative of much of Ritschlian theology, faults Ritschli on three major counts: 1. His approach to religion is too subjective. 2. In his treatment of the incarnation he really denies the divinity of Jesus. 3. His doctrine of the atonement, of reconciliation, is deficient for he "denies propitiation." This makes for a faulty view of sin.

2. Alexander Whyte, Bunyan Characters, Fourth Series, p. 86. In this sermon Whyte says: "Your day and mine is the weakest in doctrine that the Church of Christ has ever had to come through." He defined doctrine as "a truth that is so sure that it can be taught and can be trusted." Whyte anticipated a needed return to doctrinal preaching although his preaching cannot be said to have pointed the way.

3. James Denney, On "Natural Law in The Spiritual World," p. 67. This is a critical evaluation of Henry Drummond's adaptation of the theory of evolution to theology. Denney concludes that this "is a book that no lover of men will call religious, and no student of theology scientific."

4. The British Weekly, June 4, 1891, p. 81. In this article on the theological debates of the Free Church of Scotland between the more liberal and the more conservative, it is said that the liberals must take care: "that they are in danger of preaching a Gospel, freed from corruptions, but bereft of power."
Its Major Themes

While the more liberal evangelical sermon assumed a kaleidoscopic pattern, preaching still rested on a solid foundation. The variegated sermon was usually anchored in one of three themes: The fatherhood of God, the personal experience of God, or the kingdom of God. These themes, while general, gave coherence to the more liberal evangelical sermon.

a. The Fatherhood of God

The fatherhood of God was the foundation of many liberal evangelical sermons. This concept was expressive of "the grand peculiarity of Christian thought—that God is first, man only second." The fatherhood of God was the complement of the love of God.

God's fatherhood rests not on creation and providence, but has its principle in the love which prompted creation and underlies providence. He has not merely made Himself to be our Father by creating and preserving us, but He has created and preserved us because of a Fatherly love to us which had no beginning... Out of that everlasting love of the Eternal Father's heart arose redemption; and only from a love of wondrous depth and tenderness could it have arisen.

God's love, declared Walter C. Smith, is "the one sufficing truth...and there-

1 John Tulloch, Sundays at Balmoral, pp. 104, 105. "This is the grand peculiarity of Hebrew thought and of Christian thought after it—that God is first, man only second; that the Eternal Being is the true Being, the present visible and transitory being only the derivative being....The whole Bible clings to this background of faith, and upon this all religion has hitherto been based. It is at least important for us to realise that it is the great object of what is called modern thought to overturn this fundamental conception—to make man first and God only second; to call man the reality and God the apparition—born of human dreams and imagination....Man is no longer the child, but the parent....It is impossible to imagine a deeper contrast or antagonism of thought than this. It is important to see it, and to realise on which side we are standing—on the old Biblical ground or the modern ground. Our whole life must take form and colour from our standpoint, and the contrast strikes deep into every phase of social, moral and national life." Tulloch sided with the "old Biblical ground."

2 Robert Flint, Sermons, p. 99.
fore this world is part of the Father's house—nursery and schoolroom for his children—where his love is shown no less than in its heavenliest places. 1

The conviction that God was a loving Father and that this was his world was the hope in which the preacher framed his message of life after death.

The rending of the veil which hides the secrets of the unseen world, the summons that calls you into regions unknown, need awaken in your breast no perturbation or dismay, for you cannot in God's universe go where love and truth and self-devotion are 2 things of naught, or where a soul...shall find itself forsaken.

The brotherhood of man was only a viable belief when buttressed by the fatherhood of God. 3 "Saving faith" was to believe and trust in "God the Father, whose Fatherhood is divine." 4

The fatherhood of God reflected the new understanding of divine sovereignty as it related to man's salvation. Sovereignty was the name for God's "freedom in action" but God's sovereignty was never to be separated from God's love. 5 God's freedom in action could only be understood in terms of love.

There was a time when the church largely substituted the mere absolute sovereignty of God for the love which Jesus and John exalted above all his other attributes. Then it was thought that the fountain, from which flowed all the streams of providence and grace, was simply the divine will. He had a right to do what he chose, and he did what he chose.

The same idea ruled also over the whole work of redemption. He chose to save some, it was said, and others he chose to pass by. Those who were saved owed it only to his grace, and those who perished suffered only for their sins; but the whole cause of the difference in their lot was that God willed to redeem the former, and to let the latter alone. There was no other reason. It was a

1 Walter C. Smith, Sermons, p. 2.
4 H. H. Story, Creed and Conduct, p. 172.
5 Robert Flint, Sermons, pp. 245ff.
matter of sovereign pleasure, and there was an end of it. Now, there is no dispute among us as to the sovereignty of God. Assuredly the creator of all is free to work out his own will, and cannot be controlled by anything but his own nature. "Of him and through him and for him are all things, to whom be glory for ever."

But then that divine will has lying under it, and prompting it, and guiding it, an infinite divine love; and if he chooses to do anything it is because his love so chooses, seeking to do good and to communicate itself to all. Hence the unspeakable worth of that word, "God is Love." His will, his sovereignty, all his attributes, have that as the basis on which they rest, and by which they are controlled.  

The New Testament was not a "plan of salvation." The New Testament was the story of a "Father seeking his children" and in love sparing no effort, not even himself. R. H. Story said that he could never believe in a God choosing some and abandoning others. The very purpose of the incarnation was to disclose a Father who "loved and redeemed man."  

Such an idea of God helps me to understand God's purpose in all his dealings with His children. It helps me to understand that while He sees us just as we are, yet He looks on us with a love that always desires and strives to make us, what we should be, like Himself, and which can never swerve from that desire and effort. If we understand this to be the purpose of God, then we can freely trust Him. The faith which rests on this understanding is a living and powerful faith. It is not shaken by any of His disciplines, however severe, because it knows that these are parts of a loving purpose and goodwill, of a goodwill which is righteous as well as loving, and which therefore seeks our righteousness.

The more liberal evangelical did not deny the sovereignty of God. He simply cast the concept of divine sovereignty into a new mold which he called the fatherhood of God. He proclaimed the old truths of the love of God, the freedom

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1 Walter C. Smith, Sermons, pp. 5, 6.
3 Ibid., pp. 160-162. Also see John Caird, Aspects of Life, p. 110.
4 Ibid., p. 164.
5 Ibid., p. 165.
6 Ibid.
of God, the grandeur of a redemption for all men in a new and winsome metaphor.

The belief in the fatherhood of God was contingent on a belief in the incarnation. Marcus Dodds declared: "If we do not acknowledge Christ in saying, 'Our Father,' this epithet is either profane, misty, or heathenish." The fatherhood of God was always proclaimed in a Christocentric setting. Christ was man's revelation of the Father. Robert Flint said: "Through Christ God is seen to be our Father, not made our Father. There was no need that Christ should die in order that God might have a Father's love to us, but Christ died to reveal to us that He had it." To John Tulloch, Christ revealed that "higher life" apart from which "Christianity had no meaning." When man accepted this higher life, the "Divine Fatherhood in Christ" became personal.

God must be to you and to me a reality, a true Father, else He will soon be nothing at all but a shadow, a dream, a broken image, vanishing from the range of intelligence and life.

Take away this Christocentric foundation from the divine fatherhood, and the notion of God was empty and impersonal. Thus John Caird said:

The mere abstract conception of the Spiritual God is not less foreign to our human sympathies and affections than remote from our finite apprehensions. The devout heart yearns after a personal God. It craves for something more than the works of God, however replete with proofs of His power and glory; it wants to get near Himself. Its instinctive desire is after a Father and a Friend.

Now that which is thus the deep-felt want of our natures, is most fully adequately met in the Person of Jesus Christ. For here

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1 Marcus Dodds, *The Prayer That Teaches To Pray*, p. 10.
4 John Tulloch, *Sundays At Balmoral*, p. 4.
6 John Tulloch, *Sundays At Balmoral*, p. 110.
is One whom, while we may reverence and adore as God, we can think
of as clearly, and love as simply, trustingly, tenderly, as the best
known and loved of our earthly friends.¹

How did Jesus reveal the fatherhood of God? "He does so" answered John Caird,
"by His person, by His life and character, and especially by His suffering and
death."² To the liberal evangelical Christ was man's knowledge of the divine
fatherhood and man's only way to the Father.³

The belief in the fatherhood of God gave a positive and optimistic
edge to the liberal evangelical sermon. John Tulloch whose sermons were lumin¬
ous with this theme stressed the objectivity of the divine fatherhood.

This idea here, and in all higher religious thought, comes down
from above to man. It is not the mere reflection of man's
longings, not the mere birth of his desires, not the mere upward
prayer of his heart. It is a fact—beyond him, above him, independ¬
ent of him—God is God, and God is a Father, whether man had ever
called Him so or not, or acknowledged Him in such a relation or not.
In other words, it is not our subjective feeling that makes God a
Father. It is no mere ideal image which we make of Him out of our
own affections and desires. He is a Father. The parental relation,
like all facts and relations, is original in Him. They are in us,
because they are in Him, as He has made us after His own image.⁴

Since God was the Father of all men, Tulloch was unequivocal in stating that
all men were to obey him, conscience being the universal reproach of disobedience.⁵
Since the fatherhood of God was objective, God's love was unchangeable, un¬
affected "with the varying pulses of our mortal thought and affection."⁶ The story
of the Prodigal Son was the perfect example of the divine fatherhood to John

¹ John Caird, Aspects Of Life, pp. 102, 103.
² Ibid., p. 101.
³ Marcus Dods, The Prayer That Teaches To Pray, pp. 10, 11. Robert Flint,
Sermons, pp. 179ff.
⁴ John Tulloch, Sundays at Balmoral, p. 107.
⁵ Ibid., p. 103.
⁶ Ibid.
Tulloch and his adaptation of it a compelling commentary on the spark this theme struck in his preaching.

The old story repeats itself in many lives. We grow weary of the great Father's house, with its righteous restraints, and we go into a far country in search of the indulgence of our own will and the gratification of our own desires until we are sated, and become more miserable than ever. Then a famine arises in the soul, at least, in every soul that does not abandon itself altogether, and we try to feed our hunger perhaps with the husks of an ungodly or pernicious appetite. It is a poor soul that can abide so. But the light of the higher life survives in the midst of all our debase-ment, and unless we utterly sink or perish, as alas! many do, we arise and go unto our Father. The thought of the Divine home from which we have wandered, and in which "there is bread enough and to spare," arises in the heart. The thought, perhaps, of our early religious youth still haunts us, and will not let us sleep the sleep of death so long as conscience stirs at all; and we go forth from our prison-house with this light before us, if only but a glimmer in the midst of darkness. All this while the Father is waiting for us. His love has never forsaken us, His arms are stretched out towards us; His heart is moved to us, even when our hearts are not turned to Him; and while we are yet a great way off He comes forth to greet us and give us a kiss of welcome, and put on our hands the ring of reconciliation and clothe us with the robe of righteousness: This is the teaching of the Bible; it is the good news of Christ.

We are objects not merely of Divine providence but of Divine love.

The sermons of R. H. Story were equally translucent with the theme of the divine fatherhood. Story boldly declared it "the right of every human soul to claim God as its Father."² The divine fatherhood reordered the priorities of the gospel.

It does not hide the evil; but it proclaims, first and above all else, the sovereign might of good. It sets the health before the disease, the blessing above all curse, the eternal Fatherhood of God above all eclipse of human disbelief and unworthiness; saying to each human being, in the very voice of Him who died upon the Cross, "You are a child of God. Live then as becomes His child. All your sin and failure is but a falling away from that place in your Father's family which you were born to fill."³

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¹Ibid., pp. 22, 23.
³Ibid., p. 117.
This was the theme molding the mission and message of the Church.

It is this knowledge, this consciousness, that the Church endeavours to instil. It is her office to hold up this motive to those who are sunk in ignorance and sin. "You are children of God. Be worthy of your father. You are living as though this world were all, and even as though it had nothing better than to eat and drink and be merry. There is a future world, a higher life, rise to the thought of it, to the hope of its glory. Your failure, your sin, your folly are griefs to the very heart of God, who loves you with an everlasting love. Try to make some return for that love, and to live in the light of it. You are not each living a separate life, with no interest attaching to it but your own. You are all brethren, children of one Father, heirs of one inheritance. Consider one another, bear with one another. Let each mind not his own only, but also his neighbour's good." 1

Those liberal evangelicals turning more frequently to the fatherhood of God as the backbone of their message were men convinced that life had a divine purpose. 2

b. The Personal Experience Of God

The more liberal evangelical pulpit emphasized the importance of the personal experience of God. Religion was personal. Preaching was concerned with man's spiritual nature. Man's knowledge of God was contingent on man's own experience of God. Indeed the term "mysticism" gained a new respectability in this period. 3 The two preachers whose sermons are most illustrative of this emphasis on personal religious experience are Alexander Whyte and John Caird. Alexander Whyte attempted to make the personal experience of God a continuous

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1 Ibid., pp. 285, 286.  
2 Ibid., p. 197.  
3 Robert Flint, On Theological, Biblical and Other Subjects, pp. 122-127. In an address on "Tendencies Of The Age," Flint notes "the Mystic movement or tendency." Whilecritical of mysticism he says: "I am inclined to think that there has been too much mysticism in the Catholic and too little in the Protestant Church," p. 125. From time to time in this section I will use the term "mysticism." I am using this much abused term in the very general sense in which the mystical element is common "in every religion and in every prayer," namely as the inner experience of God or "personal religious experience." See Paul Tillich, op. cit., p. 22. Also see "Mysticism," The Oxford Dictionary Of The Christian Church.
reality within the Christian man by stressing "the mysteriousness of the spiritual life." John Caird insisted that the potential for union with God already existed within every man and it was the recognition of this which was to be the basis of man's experience of God.

In accentuating man's experience of God, Alexander Whyte was influenced by the mystics. In the early 1890's he first turned to the study of the mystics. Whyte said in one sermon that "the most fascinating and enthralling of spiritual teaching in all the world" was to be found in linking the older Puritans with such mystics as Jacob Behmen, Thomas a Kempis, Francis Fenelon, Jeremy Taylor, Samuel Rutherford, Robert Leighton and William Law. The sermons of Alexander Whyte, particularly his many character sermons, were replete with illustrations drawn from the lives of the mystics. Whyte himself used the phrase "evangelical mysticism" to describe the religious experience he endorsed. Whyte was careful to show that such a mysticism was not marked by "dreaminess, cloudiness, unreality and unpracticalness," while he equated mysticism with mystery, he insisted that "vigour and efficacy" were the chief characteristics of an evangelical mysticism. He defined evangelical mysticism as:

4. Almost any book of sermons by Alexander Whyte, particularly one of his sermons on Bunyan Characters could be appealed to as evidence.
5. Alexander Whyte, Bible Characters, Stephen To Timothy, p. 230. "Evangelical Mysticism" was also the title of the Presidential Address by Alexander MacLaren to the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland delivered in Edinburgh in 1901. This view MacLaren commended.
6. Alexander Whyte, Bible Characters, Stephen To Timothy, p. 238.
7. Ibid.
the profound mysteriousness of the spiritual life, as that life was first created by the Holy Ghost in Jesus Christ, and will for ever be conveyed from Him down to all His mystical members.

To Alexander Whyte man's continual experience of God was the mystery of the Christian life. His accent was on spiritual growth and vitality. This emphasis on religious experience was accordant with his preaching to man's heart, his appeal to man's imagination and motives, his belief that salvation was progressive.

There were three major strands in Whyte's emphasis on personal religious experience. The first was what Whyte termed an "evangelical humility." By this Whyte meant an acute sense of sin.

Evangelical humiliation is the sense that a Christian man has of his own utter despicableness and odiousness, with an always answerable frame of heart. This humiliation is peculiar to the true saints, for it is always accompanied with a sight of the transcendent beauty of divine things. And then, God's true saints all see, more or less, their own odiousness on account of sin, and the exceedingly hateful nature of all sin. Evangelical humiliation consists in a mean esteem of ourselves, as in ourselves nothing, and altogether contemptible and odious.

Humility was the "grace of graces" of Christian character and only a deep and persistent awareness of sin could produce such humility. "The truly religious life [was] a secret life" but it was this pervading sense of sin which validated the reality of this life.

The best and most infallible evidence we can have of the truth of our religion in this life is in the steady increase of our secret sinfulness...Humility is the foundation of all our graces, and there is no humility so deep and so ever-deepening as that evangelical humility which in its turn rises out of and rests upon secret

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2 Alexander Whyte, *Bible Characters, Gideon To Absalom*, p. 133. Also see *Bunyan Characters, Second Series*, p. 135. In both of these instances Whyte is quoting Jonathan Edwards.

3 Alexander Whyte, *Bible Characters, Gideon To Absalom*, p. 130.

sinfulness. Not upon acts of secret sin...I speak of that secret, original, unexplored, and inexpugnable sinfulness out of which all a sinner's actual sins, both open sins and secret, spring; and out of which a like life of open and actual sins would spring in God's very best saints, if only both He and they did not watch night and day against them. Sensibility to sin is far and away the best evidence of sanctification that is possible to us in this life.  

Sin, or evangelical humility, was the scalpel in Alexander Whyte's sermons. He said: "If true preaching does not subdue us, it is sure to exasperate us."  

The second strand in Whyte's emphasis on religious experience was a rigorous spiritual asceticism. Positively, this was the discipline of "the Sacramental Principle" whereby the ordinary experiences of life became "a lesson in grace and a means of grace." Negatively, self-discipline reflected Whyte's acute sense of the demonic.  

Yes, my fellow-sinners, Lucifer and his infernal crew know us and despise us and entrap us at every little trouble, till He who travailed for us on the tree covers His face in heaven and weeps for us. As long as we remember our misery, all the mind, and all the malice, and all the sleeplessness in hell cannot touch a hair of our head. But when by any emissary and opportunity either from earth around us or from hell beneath us we for another night forget our misery, it is all over with us.  

Self-denial was the essence of Whyte's spiritual asceticism. Self-denial was the way of the cross:  

The only way to life is the way of the cross. There are two crosses, indeed, on the way to the Celestial City; there is, first, the Cross of Christ, once for you, and then there is your cross daily for Christ, and it takes both crosses to secure and to assure any man that he is on the right road and that he will come to the right end. Every man is only so far a Christian as he partakes of this same spirit of Christ—the same suffering spirit, the sacrifice of himself, the same remunciation of the world, the same humility and meekness, the same patient bearing of injuries, reproaches, and
contempts, the same dying to all the greatness, honours, and happiness of this world that Christ showed on the cross. We also are to suffer, to be crucified, to die, to rise with Christ, or else His crucifixion, His death, and His resurrection will profit us nothing.

Without self-denial true discipleship was an impossibility. The spiritual asceticism of Alexander Whyte focussed on the internal vices of the heart, not the external excesses of life. "Pride, vanity, self-love, covetousness, envy," these were the evils to be subdued. Such spiritual self-discipline was the only way to ultimate salvation. Alexander Whyte cannot be labeled a pietist for he did not systematize self-denial nor legislate lists of do's and don't's. Yet his emphasis on the personal experience of God, particularly in its more ascetic strain, created an austerity in his preaching reminiscent of the older evangelicals tending toward pietism. This was no accident. Concluding a sermon on the Bunyan Character, "Mr. Wet-Eyes," Whyte said:

"Spiritual preaching; real face to face, inward, verifiable, experimental, spiritual preaching; preaching to a heart in the agony of its sanctification; preaching to men whose whole life is given over to making them a new heart—that kind of preaching is scarcely ever heard in our day."

The third emphasis in Whyte's quest for personal religious experience was his utilization of what can best be described as the grace of contemplation.

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1. Alexander Whyte, Bunyan Characters, First Series, pp. 61, 62.
3. Ibid., pp. 168, 169.
4. Alexander Whyte, Bible Characters, Abithophel To Nehemiah, p. 112.
5. As a divinity student at New College, Whyte worshipped on alternate Sundays at Free St. George's West under R. S. Candlish and at Free St. Luke's under A. Moody-Stuart. He noted that these two men while of different schools "were simply the very best in their own kind." See K. Moody Stuart, A. Moody-Stuart, p. 258. Whyte retained a very deep respect for the pietism of A. Moody Stuart. See Bunyan Characters, First Series, p. 267.
Whyte's penetrating sense of sin coupled with his rigorous emphasis on self-denial was aimed at the effectuation of the spiritual life. But specifically how was this spiritual life to come about? This was the supreme mystery. At best the genuine realization of this life could only be contemplated and experienced by the miracle of grace.\(^1\) All Whyte could promise his parishioners possessed with this over-whelming sense of sin and bent on a life of self-mortification was that "God has a sensitiveness and a tenderness [to them] that he cannot have toward the common run of his people."\(^2\) He could only advise his parishioners to live life as though God were within them.\(^3\) Only then would the spiritual life, the continual experience of God, become a reality.

You become a mystical theologian and a spiritual man when you begin to believe with your whole heart that God is beside you, and within you, and is nowhere else for you but in your own heart.\(^4\)

Contemplation was dependent on the exercise of the imagination, for without imagination "faith is small and love is cold."\(^5\) The continual experience of God was the truly spiritual life. This life of righteousness was both given by Christ and contingent on man working for himself.\(^6\) It was the life of constant prayer.\(^7\) It was the way of "imagination."\(^8\) It was the "secret life" which was the essence

\(^1\) Alexander Whyte, Lord Teach Us To Pray, p. 81. In this sermon Whyte relates how one of his parishioners had experienced the mystery of this grace.

\(^2\) Ibid.

\(^3\) Alexander Whyte, Bible Characters, Adam To Achan, p. 56.

\(^4\) Ibid., p. 55.

\(^5\) Alexander Whyte, Bunyan Characters, Second Series, p. 22.

\(^6\) Alexander Whyte, Bunyan Characters, Third Series, p. 271.

\(^7\) Alexander Whyte, Lord Teach Us To Pray, pp. 185ff.

\(^8\) Ibid., p. 244.
of true religion. Mysticism, as Whyte once said, was akin to mystery. The personal experience of God was both internal and esoteric. He said: "The truth is you must all become mystics before you will admit all the strange truth" of the spiritual life.

John Caird's emphasis on the personal experience of God was cast in the idiom of Hegelian idealism. To comprehend this strain in Caird's sermons, one must first understand his view of man and religion. To Caird there was both a natural and a spiritual side to man. In his sermons and lectures he expressed this dichotomy in such terms as the "lower and higher life...outer life and inner hidden life...the actual and the ideal life...our selves and our true self." The great practical question for John Caird was this: "How can this division in man's nature be healed?" In his instinctive desire to unite the actual with the ideal and thereby attain union with God, man often followed the way of morality. To Caird this was futile for "morality [was] the never ending approximation to that ideal." Only religion could transform man's "aspiration into fruition, anticipation into realization."

John Caird embraced a radical notion of religion for religion itself

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1 Alexander Whyte, Bunyan Characters, Second Series, p. 68.
2 Alexander Whyte, Bible Characters, Stephen To Timothy, p. 230.
3 Alexander Whyte, Bunyan Characters, Third Series, p. 271.
5 Ibid., p. 247.
7 John Caird, Introduction To The Philosophy of Religion, p. 262.
8 Ibid., p. 277.
9 Ibid., p. 280.
was perfect union with God **de jure**. Religion was "the surrender of the finite will to the infinite...the absolute identification of my will with the will of God." Yet religion did not attain perfect union with God **de facto**. This tension, between what was in principle but not in experience man's perfect union with God, was the axis of Caird's preaching. First, Caird emphasized that within man himself there was the potential for perfect union with God. Secondly, the truth of this union could only be verified by experience which itself was secretive. Thirdly, life was to be devoted to the perfection of this union.

Preaching was first the proclamation of man's inherent potential for union with God. God was everywhere, permeating the whole of life. Yet God was supremely within the "common nature of man" and therefore Caird could say: "To become one with God, as I am, is not to transcend but to realise your true nature as men." Within each man there was conscience. Caird called conscience that innate sense of "what is good and right," that "imperative of duty." Awaken this built-in sense "of the higher life" and man would realize the extent to which he was chained to his lower nature. In preaching this meant that Caird

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3 *Ibid.*, pp. 285, 287. Caird says: "The whole future of the religious life is given in its beginning, but it is given implicitly, as a principle which has yet to unfold its hidden riches and its all-subduing power," p. 285. "Not only is there in the individual life much which has not yet been subjected to the transforming power of the principle of religion, but that principle can never, under the conditions of the outward and temporal life, fully and adequately realise itself....The satisfaction and blessedness of the divine life is thus, so far as our common experience goes, ever only a goal to be reached, the result of a process ever renewed and never consummated," p. 287.

6 John Caird, *University Sermons*, pp. 56, 93, 94.  
placed little emphasis on sin, for sin was negative and since the basis of union with God was already in man the preacher was to be positive. Religion he said, "is from beginning to end the work of the Spirit of God." This meant that in preaching, "in worship," union with God was to be proclaimed "as a thing realized and complete."

For John Caird the gospel was the supreme revelation of the divine potential innate in man. Caird declared to his West Park congregation in Glasgow:

In what way may we conceive of divine truth as commending itself to the consciousness of man? It does so by revealing to man the Lost Ideal of his Nature.

The Gospel is, in one view of it, the disclosure to man of the true ideal of humanity, the discovery of the perfect type of our being, lost by sin, and yet recoverable in Christ.

To the students of Glasgow University he set forth Jesus Christ as the "visible form and embodiment [of] the moral ideal." "Jesus Christ [was] the new idea of God, transcending all that the world has otherwise been able to attain to." Indeed it was because of Jesus Christ that Caird could proclaim man's union with God as complete and perfect.

What we are in God's sight...is determined not by what we do or have done, but by the presence in the soul of that inward spirit, principle, characteristic motive and aim—in one word, by that

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1 John Caird, University Sermons, p. 49. "To make a sinner righteous is an infinitely greater triumph of righteousness than to make a sinner wretched. In itself there is nothing valuable in pain or misery or torture as pain, misery, torture; God has and can have no pleasure in them; but in every holy act there is something that is inherently and essentially precious."

2 Ibid., p. 85.


4 John Caird, Aspects of Life, p. 11.

5 John Caird, University Sermons, p. 98.

6 Ibid., p. 229.
self-surrender, that identification with a divine ideal, which constitutes the Christian faith. Poor, imperfect, fluctuating, inadequate may be our attempts to realize that ideal in action, the very best which the best of men do can be only a gradual approximation to it; but all they fain would be, all the splendour of the spirit's future career is already and virtually contained in it. In the soul in which that divine principle dwells, in the soul in which devotion to Christ has become the one supreme, all-dominating motive and aim; it is that, and not the dim imperfect life, the blurred, confused medium through which it struggles into expression,—it is that which determines God's judgment of us, makes us what in his sight we are.¹

Undergirding Caird's mysticism and hidden in his untraditional language was the orthodox belief in salvation as first a matter of man's status before God.²

The reality of man's union with God could only be verified by experience and experience was itself innate and secretive. There was a beginning to the Christian life but it was an internal experience in man difficult to verbalize.

John Caird wrote:

In that act which constitutes the beginning of the religious life—call it faith, or trust, or self-surrender, or by whatever name you will—there is involved the identification of the finite with a life which is eternally realised. It is the elevation of the spirit into a region where hope passes into certitude, struggle into conquest, interminable effort and endeavour into peace and rest.³

"Repentance, conversion, regeneration, sanctification" were "pictorial or figurative" ideas turned into realities by experience.⁴ Justification and

¹Ibid., pp. 126, 127. Also see pp. 130, 131.
²Marcus Dods, Later Letters of Marcus Dods, 1895-1909, p. 35. Here Dods writes: "I have been reading Principal Caird's Gifford Lectures and am pleased to see how orthodox he is. The style is wonderful, in every clause classically pure."
⁴Ibid., pp. 171-173. In Caird's sermons these theological terms were recast into the language of human experience. Repentance was the rousing of the soul "to the revelation of eternal righteousness...the vision of an infinite purity and holiness in the light of which it sees its own misery and degradation," University Sermons, p. 38. Forgiveness, which was inseparable from repentance,
regeneration were actual although "beyond the reach of outward observation."  

The reality of the work of regeneration may be questioned, finally, because of its secret or imperceptible character; and it is this difficulty which the argument of the text seems specially intended to obviate (John 3:7, 8). Momentous though the change be, which, in regeneration, the soul is supposed to undergo, it is one of which we have no direct consciousness—no immediate evidence....We reach and pass the crisis of our spiritual history all unconscious; that an event so extraordinary is taking place within the breast.  

Only the experience of man himself could prove the reality of union with God, Caird declared:  

If you ask me where I find the evidence of this abiding contact of the human spirit with the Spirit of Christ....I answer that I find it in the experience of every soul that has ever loved and lived for Christ....In the living experience of every Christian heart, I find the irrefragable witness to the abiding, life-giving presence, the proof that that redeeming, forgiving, Hallowing, saving spirit, that once in human form visited the world, is not a thing of the past, but a living, operating spirit and power in the present life and experience of man.  

Dean Inge wrote just after the turn of the century:  

Thousands are craving for a basis of belief which shall rest, not on tradition or authority or historical evidence but on the ascertainable facts of human experience, and the mystics, it has been truly said, are the only thorough-going empiricists.  

John Caird made personal experience the cryptic basis of man's union with God.  

Finally, Caird insisted that man was to devote his life to the perfection of this union with God. It was only in the cultivation of the graces of life that man's union with God was recognized.  

was the "child-instinct within the soul to verify and welcome that revelation of the Fatherhood of God," University Sermons, pp. 89, 140. Reconciliation was the act in which "the soul regains its lost equilibrium," Aspects of Life, p. 161.

1 John Caird, University Sermons, p. 116.
2 John Caird, Aspects of Life, pp. 69, 70.
3 John Caird, University Sermons, pp. 109, 110.
Only by its effects,—by the fragrance and beauty of a saintly life, its truthfulness, gentleness, humility, self-denial; or, again, by evil passions rooted up, inveterate sinful habits bent and broken, obstacles to holiness swept away—by the sorrow, the self-abasement, the penitence, the prayers of a soul at the footstool of infinite Justice and Mercy,—only by these outward effects can the hidden presence and working of the Holy Spirit be recognised.¹

It was only as man attempted to live life in terms of this perfect union with God that the higher life became a viability.² Caird lamented the fact that "human nature seems to be a thing of boundless possibilities but of miserable performances."³ Yet he declared that there was a "nobleness" in the "imperfect life" for imperfection pointed to the infinity of perfection.⁴ Nothing less than that perfection seen in Christ was to be the objective of the spiritual life.⁵

Caird rhetorically inquired:

What does religion, what does spiritual growth and advancement mean? It means a fuller and richer sympathy with God's boundless love; the nearer a human soul comes to God so much the more does it yearn, —with a compassion which reflects the infinite pity and tenderness, —over the spiritually forlorn and wretched. And if it be so, so much the more does a happiness which is consistent with their ruin become a thing impossible.⁶

Perfection, "this exalted ideal of Christian goodness," was the goal to which "Christian men and women [were] bound to aspire."⁷

In his quest for a perfect union with God, man was to view life only from the perspective of his true self. When viewed from the level of the higher

¹ John Caird, Aspects Of Life, p. 75.
² Caird was here making use of Hegel's notion of negation. See An Introduction To The Philosophy Of Religion, pp. 249, 252, 273.
⁴ Ibid., p. 8.
⁵ John Caird, University Sermons, pp. 89, 90.
⁶ Ibid., p. 172.
⁷ Ibid., p. 91.
life, "selfishness" was an "absurdity and irrationality."  

Man was a split personality living in two different worlds. This was both his agony and his ecstasy. Caird observed: "That which makes man a spiritual being makes him a restless being...reason is the secret of divine discontent." For John Caird only religion could integrate the polarities of life and create in life "awe and reverence." 

The capacity of religion is the capacity to rise above ourselves and the world, to forget and cast behind us the soils and stains of guilt, to feel no longer the drag and bondage of earthly cares and troubles, to soar into a region where the interests and agitations of time are dwarfed into their inherent littleness, and, in the fulness and ecstasy of spiritual emotion, we can claim our birthright of communion with the things unseen and eternal.

"The touchstone of our being is," decreed John Caird, "Are we living for God?" Caird attempted to help man answer this question affirmatively by stressing the potential innate in man for his own experience of God. As a preacher, his message attracted an army of followers. His sermons were said to be "the most

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1 Ibid., pp. 166, 167.
3 John Caird, An Introduction To The Philosophy of Religion, p. 256.
4 John Caird, Christian Manliness, p. 25. Also see Essays For Sunday Reading, pp. 106, 107. "Religion is, or ought to be the regulating principle of man's being....A man's mind may be in a religious attitude, engaged in a spiritual, evangelical contemplation, when considering how to behave towards his wife, or treat his servants, or invest his money, or vote for a member of parliament. Piety may be brought into exercise in the endeavour to bring Christian principle to bear on the gains, losses, rivalries, competitions of business, on the cares and toils and sacrifices of domestic life, as really as in meditating on the doctrine of justification by faith....Principle elevates everything it touches." It should be observed that these examples would apply to only a portion of the social class of the community. An indication that Caird's influence was restricted to the middle class.

5 John Caird, University Sermons, pp. 63, 64.
6 John Caird, Essays For Sunday Reading, p. 203.
powerful defence of Christian Mysticism...since William Law."¹

c. The Kingdom of God

The kingdom of God was the third theme of prominence in the sermons of the more liberal evangelical. As proclaimed by the preacher the kingdom of God was primarily personal and spiritual. John Caird equated the kingdom with the "ideal life" for it was within man's nature.² Caird used such synonyms as "spiritual world...the divine order of things...the kingdom of truth" to describe the kingdom of God.³ Robert Flint said that "the kingdom of God begins within."⁴ He continued:

It is the kingdom of divine power and grace over man's will, its acts and results, of divine order and righteousness in man's life and all its relations. In the measure that human caprice is replaced by divine law, human perversity by divine holiness, this kingdom is advanced.⁵

Marcus Dods insisted that the kingdom of God was no mere "figure of speech...but most literal."⁶ This was so because the kingdom was essentially personal and spiritual.

The kingdom of heaven...is within you. It does not alter empires into republics, it does not abolish work and give us all demoralizing ease, it does not find fault with the universal frame of things, or refuse to fit itself into the world as it is, but accepting things as it finds them, it leavens all it touches. It does not demand that the family shall be broken up, that business shall cease, but only that all relations of life be purified. The outward forms of the world's work, its offices and dignities, its need of work and ways

¹William Ralph Inge, Christian Mysticism, p. 322.
²John Caird, University Sermons, pp. 355, 356.
³Ibid., p. 340.
⁴Robert Flint, Christ's Kingdom Upon Earth, p. 63.
⁵Ibid., p. 60.
⁶Marcus Dods, The Prayer That Teaches To Pray, pp. 50, 51.
of working, would be little altered if all men were suddenly to become truthful, sober and industrious; and similarly the change proposed by Christ is inward and on the individual, and is only influential in society through the individual. Our Lord, in establishing a kingdom on earth, did not intend to erect a vast organization over against the world, but He meant to introduce into the world itself a leaven which should rule and subdue all to His spirit. 1

Henry Drummond concurred that the first objective of the kingdom of God was "spiritual...to make men." 2 However, he interpreted the spiritual essence of the kingdom in sweeping terms, for the kingdom was nothing less than the "Society of Christ." 3

The Kingdom of God is a Society of the best men, working for the best ends, according to the best methods. Its membership is a multitude whom no man can number; its methods are as various as human nature; its field is the world. It is a Commonwealth, yet it honours a King; it is a Social Brotherhood, but it acknowledges the Fatherhood of God. Though not a Philosophy the world turns to it for light; though not Political it is the incubator of all great laws. It is more human than the State, for it deals with deeper needs; more Catholic than the Church, for it includes whom the Church rejects. It is a Propaganda, yet it works not by agitation but by ideals. It is a Religion, yet it holds the worship of God to be mainly the service of man. Though not a Scientific Society its watchword is Evolution; though not an Ethic it possesses the Sermon on the Mount. This mysterious Society owns no wealth but distributes fortunes. It has no minutes for history keeps them; no member's roll for no one could make it. Its entry-money is nothing; its subscription, all you have. The Society never meets and it never adjourns. Its one word—loyalty; its Gospel one message—love. 4

The kingdom of God was spiritual and personal; it was within man. Yet the very idea of a kingdom had social implications.

Without denying the personal and spiritual character of the kingdom of God the preacher orientated this phrase in a social direction. First, this

1 Marcus Droth, Christ and Man, p. 153.
2 Henry Drummond, The New Evangelism and Other Papers, pp. 95, 96.
4 Ibid., pp. 121, 122.
concept of the kingdom was the basis of the emerging secular emphasis in Christianity. Second, this phrase was another basis for the optimism which marked the more liberal evangelical sermon.

Confronted with the challenge of secularization, the pulpit countered with its own secular response. The Church was not to be equated with the kingdom. While the kingdom was personal and spiritual the Church was often institutional and organizational.

The Church itself may become too visible—has in many respects become too visible—and has thus unfortunately succeeded in at once separating itself from the world as a distinct and alien institution, and becoming entirely "of the world" by imitating the institutions, the ambitions, the power, the ostentation of the world. It has learned to measure its success very largely by the bulk it occupies in the eyes of men, by its buildings, its costly services, its creeds and laws and courts; and it has too much forgotten that its function is of quite another kind, namely to be hidden among the flour.

The Church often trusts to massive and wealthy organizations, to methods which are calculated to strike every one; but according to the Head of the Church His religion and spirit are to be propagated by an influence which operates like an infectious disease, invisible, without apparatus and pompous equipment, succeeding all the better where it is least observed.

"The Church," wrote Henry Drummond, "is paralyzed....It has something to show in the past....But for the present nothing stirs; it is all as frozen as Labrador." The distinction between the sacred and the secular was to be abandoned and any attempt to retain such a distinction was repudiated and negatively labeled "sacerdotalism." The relationship of the Church to the kingdom was

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1 See pp. 148ff.
2 Marcus Dodds, Christ and Man, p. 153.
3 Ibid., p. 154. Also see Robert Flint, Christ's Kingdom On Earth, p. 65
always tenuous. At best the Church was a means of the kingdom but never the end.

The Church may not lay its commands upon other institutions, as if it belonged to the kingdom of God, and they not, but has to teach them that, by right if not in fact, they belong to the kingdom of God as much as itself, that thus awakening them—art, literature, science, commerce, government—to a sense of their true dignity, of their high vocation, they may walk worthy of it. To bring men under the influence of that holy and blessed Word which "giveth life," and is "the power of God unto salvation," and to persuade them to act on it in every relationship bravely, faithfully—this is our work as members of the Church.

At worst, the Church was a barricade to progress, a hurdle to be either by-passed or demolished.

The secular emphasis of the kingdom of God turned on a comprehensive view of the kingdom. The kingdom was greater than the Church, the kingdom was life and the Christian was to work for the reign of God in life. Henry Drummond said that the kingdom of God "acts, not by commandment, but by contagion; not by fiat, but by friendship....The crowning wonder of His scheme is that He entrusted it to men." Marcus Dods insisted that Christian men were to "mix" in society for the improvement of society rested with man himself.

Who can improve society but the men who actually compose it? Who can bring bad custom to an end but those whose temptation it is to perpetuate them? Where is this purified society God promises to come from but out of actual human society? It is our society made better by ourselves. To wait till society regenerates itself, and till everybody will support you in righteous action and in carrying out your higher views, is unreasonable, you being the salt which is to purify society. If society is not regenerated it is because the individual is not. If we decline to use our influence on that part of society we touch, we, in so far, prevent the possibility of the very thing we profess to be hoping for, the regeneration of society.

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1. Robert Flint, Christ's Kingdom On Earth, pp. 80, 81. Also see p. 75, here Flint says that Church history can "only be adequately described as the history of the kingdom of God on earth."


John Caird declared that "religion is eminently social. It is essentially the deepest bond of union between man and man."  

Robert Flint accentuated the priesthood of all believers in emphasizing that it was each man doing his best in his own sphere of work which secured "the advancement of Christ's Kingdom."  

George Adam Smith grounded this enlarged vision of the kingdom in the incarnation: "The Kingdom has already come. In Jesus Christ we have understood it, we have owned its obligation, we have felt its full influence."  

In an era restricting the scope of the sermon the liberal evangelical launched a counter offensive and set out to make the secular holy. There was a general consensus that religion consisted "not so much in doing spiritual or sacred acts, as in doing secular acts from a sacred or secular motive." Indeed the secular was believed to be "intensely sacred."  

What did it mean to make the secular sacred? Robert Flint described it as Christianizing a nation. He continued:  

This is not to be done exclusively through the Church. The kingdom of God is not to be established among us in this country solely by the services of the sanctuary, or directly religious exercises and instruction. A legislator by obtaining good laws, a poet by writing ennobling verses, a country gentleman by an active interest in the well-being of those who are on his estates and in his own neighborhood, and every class of men by the faithful discharge of their special duties in commerce or trade, science or art, may help and hasten on the coming of the kingdom of God without entering into the ecclesiastical sphere of action. When Christians speak contemptuously about any kind of social reforms and moral improvements in a nation, when  

they fancy that as Christians these matters concern them not, they show great and lamentable blindness to the true nature of that kingdom which Christ died to set up on earth, and which He desires us to pray and labour for...

The kingdom of God in Britain is not merely the Church in Britain. Government, education, literature, art, science, and morality, these, sanctified and guided by the Word and Spirit of God, are all ways in which His kingdom ought to operate.\(^1\)

Marcus Bods suggested that in order to make the secular holy the Christian should "join freely in all the innocent ways of the world" for the simplest way to communicate the Christian spirit was to be Christian in the natural intercourse of life.\(^2\) George Adam Smith, said to be an example of a preacher with a "social policy," turned to the story of the good Samaritan as exemplary of the role of the Christian in the world.\(^3\) Henry Drummond was the most radical insisting that the task of making the secular holy necessitated vast social reform.

It comes from people living. Before ever the Broken-Hearted can be healed a hundred greater causes of suffering than death must be destroyed. Before the Captive can be free a vaster prison than his own sins must be demolished. There are hells on earth into which no breath of heaven can ever come; these must be swept away. There are social soils in which only unrighteousness can flourish; these must be broken up.

That is the work of the Day of Vengeance. When is that Day? It is now. Who is the Avenger? Law. What Law? Criminal Law, Sanitary Law, Social Law, Natural Law. Wherever the poor are trodden upon or tread upon one another; wherever the air is poison and the water foul; wherever want stares, and vice reigns, and rage rot—there the Avenger takes his stand. Whatever makes it most difficult for the drunkard to reform, for the children to be pure, for the widow to earn a wage, for any of the wheels of progress to revolve with these he deals. Delay him not. He is the messenger of Christ. Despair of him not, distrust him not. His Day dawns slowly, but his work is sure. Though evil stalks the world, it is on the way to execution; though wrong reigns, it must end in self-combustion. The very nature of things is God's Avenger; the very story of civilization is the history of Christ's Throne.\(^4\)

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\(^1\)&ldquo;Ibid., pp. 71, 72.
\(^2\)Marcus Bods, Christ and Man, p. 158.
\(^3\)George Adam Smith, The Forgiveness Of Sins, pp. 146ff. The British Weekly, June 10, 1897, p. 139.
\(^4\)Henry Drummond, The Greatest Thing In The World, pp. 110, 111.
To make the secular holy was to bring in the kingdom of God. This was the "summa bonum" of the Christian enterprise.

The concept of the kingdom of God was another basis of the optimism which so marked the sermon of many liberal evangelicals. This kingdom was an "ideal ...realizable on earth."¹ The certain attainment of this "golden age" was the one article of faith to which John Caird could positively attach the notion of predestination.

It is this last thought...which makes Christianity, above all things, the religion of aspiration, of hope, of progress, of unrelenting effort after a perfection that is yet to be. If there be views of life which lead to reaction or stagnation, to a false consecration of the past or despair of the future, it is not to Christ's teaching they can appeal. If there be those who are disposed to regard the misery and degradation, the sorrow and sin that crust down vast masses of mankind with a weight heavy as frost, as incurable evils, who turn away from the present life and transfer their ideal of goodness and happiness to a world of visionary bliss beyond the grave,—to none of these, to no form of the paralyzing creed of pessimism does Christ's conception of life afford the faintest sanction. For not only does Christ proclaim that there are no forms of evil, material or moral, poverty, disease, pain, sorrow, suffering, or even those darker, deeper ills that oftenest baffle human healing—guilt and sin, unholy passions, evil desires, impatience, remorse, and despair,—no forms of evil however deep-seated and inveterate, to the victims of which we may not address the invitation, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest"; but he goes far beyond this, and proclaims the coming of a kingdom of God, a universal reign of light and love, an era of perfect goodness and blessedness, as the predestined future of humanity.²

For Henry Drummond the kingdom of God was a phrase most expressive of his belief in the immanence of God and the theory of evolution.³ These were the factors producing his buoyant Christmas message of 1891: "A City Without A Church," in which he spoke of the certain renewal of the city:

---

¹ John Caird, University Sermons, p. 356.
² Ibid., pp. 354, 355.
Survey the Cities of the world today. Survey your own City—town, village, home—an prophecy. God's kingdom is surely to come in this world. God's will is surely to be done on earth as it is done in Heaven...With Christianity as the supreme actor in the world's drama, the future of its Cities is even now quite clear. Project the lines of Christian and social progress to their still far off goal and see even now that Heaven must come to earth.1

It has been said that progress is the one word best characterizing this period of the nineteenth century. Marcus Dods saw progress as the essence of the kingdom of God, as "God's law" in the world and this enlarged his vision of the mission of the Church in the world.3 He declared:

The Church must take into account that she is destined to be world-wide...She must be such a corporation as can admit Hindoos, Chinesemen, savages. She must not tie herself to any practice which cannot be adopted by all men everywhere. Most religions have made this mistake....To make certain forms of worship compulsory, to prohibit divergence from our own creed and from our own habits is simply to do what is here reprehended; it is to limit the expansion of Christianity, to shut ourselves up within walls of our own building and have little or no share in the extension of the true religion. Be comprehensive, be progressive, is the voice of this vision to the Church.4

Since this kingdom was certain to triumph, life took on an aura of sacredness.5 George Adam Smith said:

In the religious communities which lift their eyes above their own low hedges to the high hills of God—to the great simple outlines of His kingdom, to the ideals and destiny which God has set before mankind—in such churches faith in His nearness to the world...must always abound. To men who have an eye for the big things of earth, God will always seem to be afoot upon it.6

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1Henry Drummond, The Greatest Thing In The World, pp. 139, 140.
4Abid., pp. 13, 14.
5Robert Flint, Sermons, pp. 56ff.
The conviction that the kingdom of God was destined to triumph gave the more liberal evangelical sermon a compelling, but historically naive sense of optimism and confidence.

Diversity was the essence of the more liberal evangelical sermon. Whereas the older evangelical sermon oscillated between dogmatism and pietism, the more liberal evangelical sermon assumed a kaleidoscopic pattern. This was the period in which Walter C. Smith wrote:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{The world is losing faith in God,} \\
\text{and thereby losing faith in man,} \\
\text{For now the earthworm and the sod} \\
\text{wind up, they say, our little span;} \\
\text{But they that held by the Divine,} \\
\text{Clasp too the Human in their faith,} \\
\text{And with immortal hopes entwine} \\
\text{The silence and the gloom of death.}\end{align*}
\]

In his attempt to revive faith in God and man the preacher became both more apologetical and personal. Faith was individual but it was an individual faith with social implications. The God to be experienced was the God whose spirit was within every man. The new perspective in preaching, the new appropriation of the Bible, the new soteriological emphasis—all witnessed to the determination of the more liberal evangelical to speak to man in a period of increased secularization. The themes of the sermon were variable. John Tulloch and R. H. Story stressed the fatherhood of God. Alexander Whyte and John Caird accentuated personal religious experience. Henry Drummond, Marcus Dods and Robert Flint found new impetus in the kingdom of God.

In retrospect the more liberal evangelical sermon reflected the continuity and contrast in evangelical preaching. The academic perspicuity of the older evangelical sermon tending toward dogmatism remained, only appreciation of

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history, and psychology and ethics replaced the old devotion to scholastic Calvinism with its metaphysical emphasis. The demand of the older evangelical sermon tending toward pietism for a radical and experimental religion of the heart was retained and refined into a mysticism which attempted to make the God revealed in Christ the essence of the spirit of man. The soteriological emphasis of evangelicalism continued but it was the reformation of man's human character which was central. The pulpit was still aggressive in its proclamation of the Evangel but in deference to the age, evolution and higher criticism were accommodated as comrades of the good news. Preaching continued to be biblically orientated but the text of the sermon was less frequently analyzed by the index of the Confession of Faith. The sermon was supremely Christocentric but "preaching Christ" placed primary emphasis on the incarnation instead of the atonement. "Theology" it has been said "plays a role in the periphery of preaching, giving light and direction and correction."¹ Society and history are the stage on which the validity of the sermon is tested.

¹A. B. Gomé, An Introduction To Earth's Dogmatics for Preachers. P.
APPENDIX I

Ecclesiastical Statistics
APPENDIX I - A

Statistics Of The Church of Scotland

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of Divinity Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tr>
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<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>109 TOTAL...2,613</td>
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</tbody>
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Status of the Probationers List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>With Degrees</th>
<th>Added by License</th>
<th>Without Employment</th>
<th>Leaving*</th>
<th>For Charges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>108****</td>
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<td>67</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>69</td>
<td>67</td>
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<td>178</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTALS...4,877....2,604....852....1,025....748

* The statistics of the Church of Scotland do not become complete until 1886. These figures were taken from the "Report of the Committee of Probationers".

** This figure also includes those entering the service of the Church of Scotland abroad.

*** No returns available.

**** In 1891, the report of the Committee on Probationers said there were 108 probationers unemployed. In 1892, this same committee said that in the previous year (1891) there had been 123 unemployed probationers.
APPENDIX I - A

The Probationers List
1886 to 1899

Comparative Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>NO. OF DIVINITY STUDENTS</th>
<th>NO. OF MEN LICENSED</th>
<th>NO. OF MEN ORDAINED OR SETTLED IN THE CHURCH'S MINISTRY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1886 - 1899</td>
<td>838*</td>
<td>852**</td>
<td>748</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960 - 1966</td>
<td>403</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>452</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(These more recent figures are included only to serve as a basis of comparison with the past.)

* From 1886 to 1899 there were a total of 2,613 divinity students. The above figure of 838 was deduced by dividing the total number of students by the length of the divinity hall curriculum which was four years.

** This figure only includes those added to the probationers list each year by license. Here it should be observed that seven out of every eight men licensed were ordained.
APPENDIX I - B

Statistics Of The Free Church of Scotland

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. Of Divinity Students</th>
<th>Students Holding Degrees</th>
<th>Students Passing Final Exit Examination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>1878</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1879</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>104</td>
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</tr>
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<td>1880</td>
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<td>85</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
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<td>1881</td>
<td>209</td>
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<td>105</td>
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</tr>
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<td>126</td>
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<td>1887</td>
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<td>&quot;52</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1889</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
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<td>1890</td>
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<td>151</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
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<td>1894</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>1895</td>
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<td>102</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>183</td>
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<td>43</td>
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<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td>194</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>101</td>
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<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTALS: 5,219 2,681 1,224

* From 1864 - 1875 there were 2,430 divinity students in the Free Church. In this same period 563 passed the "Final exit examination". These statistics were compiled from the reports of the "Examination Board", the reports "Distribution and Employment of Probationers" and the various reports of the "Commission for Quinquennial Visitation".

Comparative Statistics 1876 - 1899

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. Of Divinity Students</th>
<th>Students Completing Divinity Hall</th>
<th>Probationers Admitted</th>
<th>Probationers Settled in the Church's Ministry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1,305*</td>
<td>1,224</td>
<td>960**</td>
<td>766**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* From 1876 to 1899 there were a total of 5,219 divinity students. The Free Church divinity hall was four years.

** Observe that one out of every five men admitted as a probationer failed to secure a Free Church pastoral charge.
APPENDIX I - B

Status Of The Probationers List
The Free Church of Scotland
1876 - 1899

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Probationers</th>
<th>Probationers Holding Degrees</th>
<th>Probationers Added by License</th>
<th>Probationers Leaving For Charges etc.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1876</td>
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<tr>
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<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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TOTALS 2,131          1,075          960            786

* Incomplete or partial returns.
**APPENDIX I - C**

**Statistics Of The United Presbyterian Church**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of Divinity Students</th>
<th>No. of Licensed Preachers</th>
<th>No. of Withdrawing Preachers</th>
<th>No. of Ordained Preachers</th>
<th>Preachers Ordained Holding Degrees</th>
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<tr>
<td>1866</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>30</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<td>1899</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
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</table>

TOTALS 5,974 1,314 257 1,062 336

* Incomplete returns. All statistics are taken from the annual "Proceedings" of the United Presbyterian Church.

** This is the number of men leaving the "Preachers List" either because of emigration, their time on the list has elapsed, or they "withdrew".
APPENDIX I - C

Number of Men Licensed and Ordained
The United Presbyterian Church
1676 to 1899

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of Divinity Students</th>
<th>No. of Licensed</th>
<th>No. of Withdrawing</th>
<th>No. of Ordained</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1850-1875</td>
<td>723</td>
<td>665</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>599</td>
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<tr>
<td>1876-1899</td>
<td>782</td>
<td>649</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>483</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Until 1876, the divinity hall of the U P Church was a five year curriculum. After 1876 it was a three year curriculum. The number of students was deduced by dividing the total enrollment of the divinity hall by the length of the curriculum.

** Of those withdrawing from 1850 to 1875, a total of 12 withdrew for emigration purposes, 69 for various reasons of their own request and 35 because their time on the "preachers list" had expired. From 1876 to 1899 a total of 8 emigrated, 109 withdrew for personal reasons and 24 were dropped as their allotted time had lapsed. The 178 who simply "withdrew" either changed their vocation or their denomination, but no further statistics are available on this. It should be noted that from 1876 to 1899 three out of every four men licensed to preach became ordained.
APPENDIX II

ACADEMIC AND THEOLOGICAL CURRICULUM
APPENDIX II-A

REPRESENTATIVE M.A. CURRICULA IN SCOTTISH UNIVERSITIES

* King's College, Aberdeen, 1826:
  First Year... Latin, Greek.
  Second Year.. Mathematics, Chemistry, Latin, Greek.
  Third Year... Natural Philosophy, Latin, Greek.
  Fourth Year.. Logic, Moral Philosophy, Rhetoric, Latin, Greek.

** Edinburgh University, 1859:
  1. "It is required that candidates for the Degree of Master of Arts shall have completed four years of academical study, and attended the following classes: Latin, Greek, Mathematics, Logic and Metaphysics, Moral Philosophy, Natural Philosophy, Rhetoric; of which Greek, Logic and Metaphysics, Moral Philosophy, and Natural Philosophy must have been attended during separate Sessions."
  2. "It is required that candidates for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts shall have completed three years of academic study, and attended the following Classes: Latin, Greek, Mathematics, Logic and Metaphysics, Moral Philosophy; of which Greek, Logic and Metaphysics, and Moral Philosophy must have been attended during separate Sessions."

*** General M.A. Honours Course, 1861:

  I. Classical Literature
  II. Mental Philosophy (Logic, Metaphysics, Moral Philosophy)
  III. Mathematics (Pure Mathematics, Natural Philosophy)
  IV. Natural Science (Geology, Zoology, Chemistry)

**** General M.A., 1892

  1. Language and Literature (ten subjects)
  2. Mental Philosophy (five subjects)
  3. Science (seven subjects)
  4. History and Law (five subjects)

***** Honours M.A., 1892

Honours in any one of the following departments: "Classics; Mental Philosophy; Mathematics and Natural Philosophy; Semitic Languages; Indian Languages; English (Language, Literature and British History); Modern Languages and Literature; History."

* Morgan, Alexander, Scottish University Studies, Oxford, 1933, p. 75.
** Edinburgh University Calendar, 1859, p. 31. Alexander Morgan, op. cit. p. 90.
*** Morgan, Alexander, op. cit., pp. 81, 82.
**** Ibid., p. 85.
### 1826 Divinity Curriculum
(As stated in the Report of the Universities Commission of 1826)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Year</td>
<td>First Class in Divinity</td>
<td>First Class in Oriental Languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Year</td>
<td>Second Class in Divinity</td>
<td>Second Class in Oriental Languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Year</td>
<td>Second Class in Divinity</td>
<td>First Class in Ecclesiastical History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Year</td>
<td>Second Class in Ecclesiastical History</td>
<td>Class in Biblical Criticism.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 1897 Divinity Curriculum
(As stated in the "Reports on the Schemes of the Church of Scotland," 1897, pp. 1210-1219)

**Class Schedule:**
- Divinity - three years
- Church History - two years
- Hebrew - three years
- Biblical Criticism - two years

**Curriculum Content:**

- **Biblical Criticism:** In Edinburgh and Aberdeen biblical criticism included Old Testament exegesis but in Glasgow and St. Andrews it was always confined to New Testament subjects.

- **Divinity:** In Glasgow, Professor Hastie taught the junior class Theological Introduction and Encyclopaedia Apologetics, the Philosophy of Religion. To the senior class he taught the Comparative History of Religions, Biblical Theology, Critical History of Christian Doctrines, Systematic Theology which was Dogmatics and Ethics.

  In St. Andrews, Principal Stewart taught the Nature and History of Religion, the Organisation of Theological Sciences, Christian Doctrine, Apologetics (with occasional lectures on Modern Thought) and lectures on the duties of the Pastoral Office.


  In Edinburgh, Professor Flint, lectured on the Biblical Doctrine of Man, the Biblical Doctrine of Sin, the Divine Fatherhood, the Person and Redemptive Word of Christ, the offices of Christ, Christian Ecclesiology.
APPENDIX II - C

CURRICULUM IN THE FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND DIVINITY HALL

1851 Curriculum For New College, Edinburgh (As found in the Proceedings Of The Free Church General Assembly, 1851, p. 184.)

First Year .... Hebrew
Natural Science
Theology - Primarily "Apologetical Theology" stressing "Natural Theology, and its relations to Revealed Religion. The Presumptive and Positive Proof for Christianity, including the Historical, Miraculous, Prophetic, Internal, and Experimental Evidences of Religion. The integrity and authority of the Records of Revelation."

Second Year ... Hebrew
Church History
Theology - Primarily "Systematic Theology" the "System of Doctrines Of The Dogmatic Theology of Scripture."...The Doctrine of God, his Being and Attributes: His works of Creation and Providence: The Doctrine of personal distinctions in the Godhead: The Trinity: The Doctrine of the Divine Covenants...The Doctrine of Original Sin..."

Third Year .... Church History
Exegetical Theology (Some attention is here given to the principles of Hermeneutics.)

Fourth Year ... Exegetics - Here some time was given to the illustration of Hermeneutical principles.
Theology - The Doctrine of the Church.
"The Church of Christ, in its general nature and design, and in its relations to Christianity, to the World, and to the State. The Power of the Church, in its source, use, and limits, and the exercise of that Power in reference to the Doctrine, to the Ordinances and to the Discipline of the Church, - embracing the nature and authority of the ordinance of Preaching, - Creeds and Confessions, - Public Worship, - The Sabbath, - the Ministry, - the Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, - and Church Censures. The Parties in whom the administration of Church Power is vested...the duties of such parties,"
1863 Curriculum for Free Church College, Glasgow, (Taken from Assembly
Proceedings, 1863,
Report No. XXX)

First Year .... Hebrew
Apologetical Theology

Second Year ... Hebrew
New Testament Exegetics
Systematic Theology - Of this class, Professor
Gibson says: "I delivered about twenty
oral lectures on selected portions of the
Confession of Faith." Beside this the
Professor says that he "delivered sixty
written lectures on the first course of
Systematic Theology, according to our
Standards, from the second to the ninth
chapter of the Confession of Faith."

Third Year .... Old Testament Exegetics
Ancient Church History
Pastoral Theology and Doctrine of the Church - This
class is taught by Principal Fairbairn and
includes: - "The relation of the Ministry
to the Church and the world; the distinctive
character and ends of the ministry; the na¬
ture and grounds of a proper call to it; the
personal and social life of the minister;
homiletics; the devotional services of the
sanctuary; the administration of discipline;
supplementary methods of instruction; sub¬
sidiary helps and agencies, which, though
not strictly belonging to the evangelical
work of the ministry, yet may have an im¬
portant incidental bearing on its labours."
Principal Fairbairn says that the above
topics were dealt with during "two days each
week" for part of the term. Otherwise the
time was spent in an exposition "of one of
the Pastoral Epistles."

It does not appear that the basic structure of the divinity hall
curriculum of the Free Church changed during the last quarter of the century.
What changes did take place were within the structure noted in the outline
of both the New College Curriculum of 1851 and Glasgow of 1865. Apologetics
tended to abandon somewhat of the emphasis on natural theology as attention
was focused on the defense of supernaturalism. There was also an increasing
emphasis on ethics and practical theology as more and more in Glasgow, Aberdeen
and Edinburgh these fell under the responsibility of one Professor: Professor
Blairke in Edinburgh, Professor Candlish in Glasgow and the "Professor of
Church History and Pastoral Theology" in Aberdeen.

Resources for Free Church Divinity Hall
See the "Quinquennial Visitation Reports" as they are found in the Assembly
Proceedings and Debates for: 1850, 1858, 1863, 1874, 1875, 1876, 1885,
1886, 1891.
APPENDIX II - C
SYLLABUS FOR PRESBYTERIAL EXAMINATION OF STUDENTS
1699

I. THE ENGLISH BIBLE

First Year - Genesis to Joshua; The Gospel of Matthew; The Epistles of James, Peter, and Jude.

Second Year - Judges to Second Kings; Job to Canticles; Gospel of Mark; Epistles To Thessalonians and Corinthians.


Fourth Year - Isaiah to Daniel; the Gospel of John; Epistles to Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, Philippians, Timothy, and Titus; the Epistles of John; the Apocalypse.

II. THE SHORTER CATECHISM AND THE CONFESSION OF FAITH

First Year - Shorter Catechism, questions 1 to 38, Repetition, and Analysis. Salmond's "Primer" or Whyte's "Bible Class Handbook" recommended.

Second Year - Shorter Catechism, the remaining questions.

Third Year - The Confession of Faith, chapters 1 to 13. Knowledge of its statements and of their relation to the History of Doctrine. Mcpherson's "Bible Class Handbook" recommended.

Fourth Year - The Confession of Faith, remaining chapters.

III. BOOKS ON PERSONAL RELIGION. One each year.

The following is a list of those ascertained to be in use in Presbyteries:

"The Pilgrim's Progress"
"Grace Abounding"
Hodge's "Way of Life"
Murray's "Spirit of Christ"
Goulburn's "Thoughts on Personal Religion"
Guthrie's "Trial of a Saving Interest in Christ"
Fraser, "On Sanctification"
Owen, "On The Holy Spirit"
" " On the Glory of Christ"
" " On Indwelling Sin"
" " On Spiritual Mindedness"
Baxter's "Reformed Pastor"
Scott's "Force of Truth"
Witherspoon "On Regeneration"
"The Life of Henry Martyn"
Doddridge's "Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul"
John Angell James' "Earnest Ministry"
Marshall, "On Sanctification"
Spencer's "Pastor's Sketches"

* This is taken verbatim from "Appendix A", "Report of College Committee"
The Free Church of Scotland, Proceedings and Debates, 1899
APPENDIX II - C

SUBJECTS OF EXAMINATION FOR SESSION 1899 - 1900

(Note: The minimum required is the following:
For a pass in Scripture: • • • 50 percent
For a pass in other subjects: • • • 33\% percent
Average over all the papers: • • • 50 percent)

I. Students intending to enter on the theological curriculum will be examined on the following, except in so far as they have already passed Degree examinations in any of these subjects:

1. **Scripture Knowledge**: The Pentateuch and Joshua; the Gospel of Matthew; the Epistles of James, Peter and Jude.
2. **Hebrew**: Dr. Davidson's Introductory Hebrew Grammar, Sections I-XXX...along with Genesis xv., xvi., for Translation.
3. **Classics**: Latin - Tacitus' Annals, Book I., Sections 1-52. Livy, Book VI; Passage from an author not prescribed. Translation into Latin.
4. **Classics**: Hebrew - Matthew's Gospel; Plutarch's Timoleon. Passage from an author not prescribed. Translation into Greek.
5. **Classics**: Classics - Jevons' Elementary Lessons; Fraser's Selections from Berkeley.
6. **Classics**: Latin - Huxley's Elementary Physiology, Lessons I-IX.
7. **Classics**: Mathematics - "Euclid" Books I, II, III, and VI; "Algebra" as far as the Binomial Theorem and the Progressions; Elements of "Plane Trigonometry" up to and including the Solution of Triangles; "Conic Sections" the Parabola.
8. **Classics**: Natural Philosophy - Huxley's Elementary Physiology, Lessons I-IX.

II. Students beginning their Second Session will be examined on the following subjects:

1. **Hebrew**: Deuteronomy xv. to end for translation into English. Translation into Hebrew. The Irregular Verbs. Syntax - The Article; the Pronouns; the Genitive, together with the Construct State.
2. **Scripture Knowledge (English Bible)**: Books of Judges - 2 Kings; Job - Canticles; Gospel of Mark; Epistles to the Thessalonians and Corinthians.
3. **Classics**: Tertulliani Apologeticus, Capp. 1-21; Augustini Confessionum, Libri IX-XI.
4. **Natural Science**: Huxley's Elementary Physiology, Lessons I-IX.

III. Students beginning their Third Session will be examined on the following:

1. **Scripture Knowledge (English Bible)**: Books of Chronicles - Esther; The Minor Prophets; Luke's Gospel, and acts of the Apostles; Epistles to the Romans, Galatians, and Hebrews.

IV. Students beginning their Fourth Session will be examined on the following subjects:

1. **Hebrew**: 1 Kings viii-xxii and Amos, for Translation; Amos, for Introduction; Amos, Chapters i. ii. v. vii. viii and ix. for Exegesis; Syntax...Translation into Hebrew.

* This is taken verbatim from the "Appendix" of the "Report of the Examination Board" of The Free Church of Scotland, Proceedings and Debates, 1899.
SUBJECTS FOR EXAMINATION CONTINUED


3. Apologetics: The Synoptic Gospels: Theories of their Origin, Composition and Mutual Relations; together with the value of their testimony to Miracle.


V. At the close of their Fourth Session, Students will be examined on the following subjects:

1. Scripture Knowledge (English Bible) Isaiah - Daniel; John's Gospel; Epistles to the Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, and Philippians; the Pastoral Epistles; the Epistles of John; the Apocalypse.

2. Early Church History: From A.D. 75 to 325.

3. Later Church History: The Doctrinal Controversies in the Churches of the Reformation, from 1564 to 1620.

4. Doctrine of the Church: The Authority of the Church with special reference to Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship; Free Church Principles.
APPENDIX II - D

CURRICULUM IN THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN DIVINITY HALL

1848 Theological Curriculum: (As found in the United Presbyterian Proceedings, 1848, pp. 138-142.

1. Schedule of Classes:

First Year: Professor of Sacred Languages and Biblical Criticism.  
Professor of Biblical Literature.

Second Year: Professor of Sacred Languages and Biblical Criticism.  
Professor of Biblical Literature.  
Professor of Hermeneutics and Evidences.

Third Year: Professors of Exegetical Theology.  
Professor of Systematic and Pastoral Theology.  
Professor of Ecclesiastical History.

Fourth Year: Same as the Third Year

Fifth Year: Same as the Third and Fourth Year.

2. Schedule of Examinations:

Examination Before Admission To The Hall:


4. Logic: Leechman's Logic.


7. Mathematics: Any two of the first six books of Euclid's Elements, and Algebra, as far as Equations.

8. English Composition: A short Exercise, to be written on the spot, on some easy Scriptural Topic.

Examinations and Exercises for Students in Theology.

First Year:

Latin: Calvin's Institutes, Book i., Chaps. 15-18.
Hebrew: Genesis, 40-42
Theology: Dick, Vol. i., Lect. 4-11, 14, 15.
Church History: Waddington's History, Chap. 1-8.
Homily.

Second Year

Latin: Calvin's Institutes, Book ii., Chaps. 12-14.
Greek: Same as First Year, with Epistle to Galatians.
Hebrew: Isaiah 52-60, inclusive.
Biblical Literature: Davidson's Hermen, Chaps. 2,3,4,7, 8-10.
Church History: Waddington's History, Chaps. 9-16, 19-28.
Semem and Exercise with addition.
1848 Theological Curriculum Continued

Third Year

**Latin:** Calvin's Institutes, Book iii., Chaps. 1, 2, 11, 21.
**Greek:** Same as Second Year, with Epistle to Galatians.
**Hebrew:** Same as Second Year, with Psalms 100-110.
**Theology:** Dick, Vol. iii., Lect. 65-72.
**Biblical Literature:** Davidson's Hermeneutics, Chap. 11.
**History of Doctrines:** Hagenbach's first half of Vol. i.
**Church History:** Reformation in Germany (D'Aubigne's History, Books i. to x.)

*Popular Sermon and Exegesis*

Fourth Year

**Latin:** Calvin's Institutes, Book iv., Chaps. 1-4, 14-17.
**Greek:** Same as for First Year, with Epistle to Hebrews.
**Hebrew:** Same as Third Year, with Daniel 10-12.
**Biblical Literature:** Davidson's Hermeneutics, Chaps. 12, 13.
**Hagenbach,** second half of Vol. i.
**Church History:** History of the Reformation in Scotland including the History of the Secession and Relief Churches.

Lecture and Sermon.

1876 Theological Curriculum: (As found in the United Presbyterian Proceedings, 1876, p. 635.)

**First Year:** New Testament Literature and Exegesis.
**Hebrew and Old Testament Literature and Exegesis.**
**Practical Training.**

**Second Year:** Hebrew and Old Testament Literature and Exegesis and New Testament Literature and Exegesis on alternate Days.
**Church History**
**Systematic Theology and Apologetics.**

**Third Year:** Hebrew and Old Testament Literature and Exegesis and New Testament Literature and Exegesis on alternate Days.
**Church History**
**Systematic Theology and Apologetics.**
**Practical Training.**

* Note that this is one class meeting on alternate days while each other class in the term meets one hour five days a week.

As in the Free Church, the structure of the United Presbyterian divinity hall remained the same throughout the last quarter of the century. Again the changes which took place were in terms of the content of the courses. In terms of theology there appears to have been more of a philosophical as opposed to a purely doctrinal emphasis. In terms of practical theology the subjects of "Society and the Church" and "Christian Ethics" emerged as items of consideration. For particular references note the annual "Report of the College Committee" in the United Presbyterian Proceedings. The reports of 1878 and 1900 are especially full.
APPENDIX III

STATISTICS ON CHURCH ATTENDANCE
APPENDIX III - A

Number of People Attending and Communicating
At The Church In Their Parish

Aberdeen

"Fifth Report Of The Commissioners Of Religious Instruction, Scotland,"

<table>
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<th>Parish</th>
<th>Total Communicants</th>
<th>No. of Communicants From Outside Parish</th>
<th>Total Attending Church</th>
<th>No. Attending From Outside Parish</th>
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<tr>
<td>East</td>
<td>1,600</td>
<td>1,356</td>
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<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>848</td>
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<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>800</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1,300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Old Machar</td>
<td>1,766</td>
<td>550</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gilcomston</td>
<td>2,008</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bon Accord</td>
<td>672</td>
<td>850</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodside</td>
<td>966</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Indicates the absence of further statistics

** By way of contrast there were 3 other churches in the Aberdeen which though not in Aberdeen proper, were part of the Presbytery. In these parishes: Belhelvie, Dyce, Skene there were a total of 1,630 communicants and only 75 resided outside the bounds of their respective parish. The Parish of Skene claimed that 1,008 were in the habit of attending the Parish Kirk and of these only 9 came from outside the parish bounds.
APPENDIX III - A

Edinburgh

"First Report Of The Commissioners Of Religious Instruction, Scotland,"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parish</th>
<th>Total Communicants</th>
<th>Communicants Outside Parish</th>
<th>Total Attending Church</th>
<th>Attending From Outside Parish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Church</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>721</td>
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<tr>
<td>Old Church</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>118</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolbooth</td>
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<td>Trinity College</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>189</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New North</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>879</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tron</td>
<td>384</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>400</td>
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<tr>
<td>Old Greyfriars</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>340</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaelic Church</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lady Yester</td>
<td>570</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Greyfriars</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>480</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Andrew</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. George</td>
<td>1,281</td>
<td>768</td>
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<td>St. Mary</td>
<td>883</td>
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<td>883</td>
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<tr>
<td>St. Stephen</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>600</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Canongate</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Street</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>590</td>
<td>443</td>
</tr>
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<td>Leith Wynd</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
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<td>St. Cuthbert</td>
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<td>2,400</td>
<td>600</td>
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<tr>
<td>Buccleuch</td>
<td>600</td>
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<td>800</td>
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<tr>
<td>Newington</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Bernard</td>
<td>900</td>
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<td>800</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Roxburgh</td>
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<td>1,000</td>
<td>808</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>12,056</td>
<td>6,880</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Indicates the absence of further statistics

** There were 6 other parishes in the Edinburgh Presbytery which were not within the city itself; South Leith, St. John, North Leith, Portobello, Liberton and Colinton. In these churches there were a total of 4,793 communicants of which 1,474 resided outside the bounds of the church in which they communicated. Two Churches, South Leith and Portobello indicated that 2,965 were in the habit of attending their respective churches. Of these 1,048 came from outside the parish bounds.

*** This survey is usually dated 1835, although the reports were published in 1837, 1838.
APPENDIX III - A

Glasgow

"Second Report Of The Commissioners Of Religious Instruction, Scotland,"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parish</th>
<th>Total Communicants</th>
<th>Communicants Outside Parish</th>
<th>Total Attending Church</th>
<th>Attending From Outside Parish</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inner High</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>1,750</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outer High</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>1,208</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackfriars</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>444</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duke Street</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tron</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>788</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>1,208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. David's</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albion</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>1,150</td>
<td>1,600</td>
<td>1,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gaelic Church</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>200</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>St. George's</td>
<td>980</td>
<td>800</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. George's Fields</td>
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<td>900</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>832</td>
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<tr>
<td>St. Andrews</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>1,003</td>
<td>1,258</td>
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<tr>
<td>St. Enoch's</td>
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<td>630</td>
<td>1,157</td>
<td>1,037</td>
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<tr>
<td>St. John's</td>
<td>1,080</td>
<td>860</td>
<td>1,503</td>
<td>1,258</td>
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<tr>
<td>St. Thomas's</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. James's</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Ann's</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>295</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridgegate</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barony</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>1,600</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anderston</td>
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<td>525</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Calton</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Gaelic</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Marks</td>
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<td>162</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Stephen's</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shettleston</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>620</td>
<td>50</td>
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<td>Maryhill</td>
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<td>50</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Gorbals</td>
<td>984</td>
<td>184</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kirkfield</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>837</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** TOTAL 15,680........ 10,870

* Indicates the absence of further statistics

** There were 8 other parishes in the Glasgow Presbytery which were not a part of Glasgow proper: Govan, Campsie, Cathcart, Chryston, Cumbernauld, Kilshane, Kirkintilloch, Rutherglen. These churches claimed a total of 5,035 communicants of which only 69 communicated in a church outside their parish. All of these churches, except Cumbernauld which gave no statistics, claimed that a total of 6,107 were in the habit of attending their churches of which only 102 attended a Church of Scotland outside their boundaries.
APPENDIX III - B

"Report Of The Commissioners Of Religious Instruction"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Synod of Galloway</th>
<th>Ch. of Scotland</th>
<th>Presbyterian Dissent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presbytery - Kirkcudbright</td>
<td>3,810</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wigtown</td>
<td>1,580</td>
<td>1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stranraer</td>
<td>3,265</td>
<td>2,240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>8,655</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,640</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Synod of Glasgow &amp; Ayr</th>
<th>Ch. of Scotland</th>
<th>Presbyterian Dissent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presbytery - Ayr</td>
<td>7,740</td>
<td>3,495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>28,374</td>
<td>27,006</td>
</tr>
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<td>Lanark</td>
<td>3,950</td>
<td>3,440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irvine</td>
<td>8,440</td>
<td>8,015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton</td>
<td>9,548</td>
<td>10,863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paisley</td>
<td>14,455</td>
<td>12,345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenock</td>
<td>9,245</td>
<td>8,671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dumbarton</td>
<td>4,390</td>
<td>2,720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>86,149</strong></td>
<td><strong>76,525</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Synod of Angus &amp; Nears</th>
<th>Ch. of Scotland</th>
<th>Presbyterian Dissent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presbytery - Forfar</td>
<td>3,230</td>
<td>2,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fordean</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brechin</td>
<td>5,200</td>
<td>2,555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meigle</td>
<td>2,720</td>
<td>1,858</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arbroath</td>
<td>6,024</td>
<td>2,265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dundee</td>
<td>9,480</td>
<td>7,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>27,754</strong></td>
<td><strong>16,778</strong></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Synod of Fife</th>
<th>Ch. of Scotland</th>
<th>Presbyterian Dissent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presbytery - Orwell</td>
<td>3,790</td>
<td>5,930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirkcaldy</td>
<td>8,360</td>
<td>5,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cupar</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>2,527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Andrews</td>
<td>2,750</td>
<td>1,120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>17,900</strong></td>
<td><strong>14,627</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Synod of Argyll</th>
<th>Ch. of Scotland</th>
<th>Presbyterian Dissent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presbytery - Abertarff</td>
<td>2,250</td>
<td>1,294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunoon</td>
<td>4,290</td>
<td>1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inverary</td>
<td>3,030</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kintyre</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>2,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>15,570</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,454</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Synod of Lothian & Tweedale

<table>
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<th>Presbytery</th>
<th>Ch. of Scotland</th>
<th>Presbyterian Dissent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bigger</td>
<td>130</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peebles</td>
<td>755</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haddington</td>
<td>3,280</td>
<td>1,920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linlithgow</td>
<td>2,700</td>
<td>4,515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalkeith</td>
<td>6,675</td>
<td>4,590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edinburgh</td>
<td>29,370</td>
<td>22,240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>44,410</strong></td>
<td><strong>34,115</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Synod of Nairn & Tviotdale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presbytery</th>
<th>Ch. of Scotland</th>
<th>Presbyterian Dissent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Duns</td>
<td>1,050</td>
<td>2,460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chirnside</td>
<td>2,195</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelso</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>1,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jedburgh</td>
<td>2,570</td>
<td>4,030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selkirk</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>1,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>7,915</strong></td>
<td><strong>11,190</strong></td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Synod of Dumfries

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Presbytery</th>
<th>Ch. of Scotland</th>
<th>Presbyterian Dissent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Langholm</td>
<td>1,080</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lochmaben</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>830</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annan</td>
<td>2,050</td>
<td>2,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dumfries</td>
<td>4,450</td>
<td>2,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penpoint</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>9,880</strong></td>
<td><strong>6,080</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Synod of Perth & Stirling

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Ch. of Scotland</th>
<th>Presbyterian Dissent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stirling</td>
<td>7,940</td>
<td>7,745</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>7,905</td>
<td>7,522</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunkeld</td>
<td>5,260</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weem</td>
<td>5,290</td>
<td>460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auchterarder</td>
<td>4,250</td>
<td>1,685</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunblane</td>
<td>4,600</td>
<td>1,525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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<td><strong>19,267</strong></td>
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### Synod of Orkney & Shetland

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Ch. of Scotland</th>
<th>Presbyterian Dissent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cairston</td>
<td>4,204</td>
<td>1,093</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kirkwall</td>
<td>2,206</td>
<td>1,580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. Isles</td>
<td>1,600</td>
<td>650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burraavoe</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lerwick</td>
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<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>12,640</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,961</strong></td>
</tr>
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</table>
## APPENDIX III - B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Synod of Aberdeen</th>
<th>Ch. of Scotland</th>
<th>Presbyterian</th>
<th>Dissent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presbytery - Fordyce</td>
<td>4,945</td>
<td></td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turriff</td>
<td>3,700</td>
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<td>445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deer</td>
<td>6,625</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellen</td>
<td>1,700</td>
<td></td>
<td>580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garioch</td>
<td>2,100</td>
<td></td>
<td>495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alford</td>
<td>1,450</td>
<td></td>
<td>535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kincardine</td>
<td>1,565</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aberdeen</td>
<td>15,828</td>
<td></td>
<td>4,370</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>38,213</strong></td>
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<td><strong>9,455</strong></td>
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<table>
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<th>Ch. of Scotland</th>
<th>Presbyterian</th>
<th>Dissent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>825</td>
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<td>Nairn</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td></td>
<td>956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forres</td>
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<td>860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elgin</td>
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<td></td>
<td>245</td>
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<td>Aberdour</td>
<td>1,602</td>
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<td>120</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strathbogie</td>
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<td>955</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abernathy</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>18,231</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>3,961</strong></td>
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### Church Attendance by Counties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>No. of Attendants On March 20, 1851**</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aberdeen</td>
<td>212,032</td>
<td>61,514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argyll</td>
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<td>13,101</td>
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<td>Ayr</td>
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<td>45,027</td>
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<td>Banff</td>
<td>54,171</td>
<td>16,786</td>
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<td>Berwick</td>
<td>36,297</td>
<td>13,922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bute</td>
<td>16,608</td>
<td>5,924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caithness</td>
<td>38,709</td>
<td>8,530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clackmannan</td>
<td>22,951</td>
<td>4,922</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dumbarton</td>
<td>45,103</td>
<td>12,572</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dumfries</td>
<td>70,123</td>
<td>16,325</td>
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<tr>
<td>Edinburgh</td>
<td>259,435</td>
<td>65,084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elgin (Moray)</td>
<td>38,999</td>
<td>13,451</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fife</td>
<td>153,546</td>
<td>50,622</td>
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<tr>
<td>Forfar (Angus)</td>
<td>191,264</td>
<td>53,931</td>
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<td>Haddington</td>
<td>36,366</td>
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<td>18,086</td>
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<td>Kirkoswald</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nairn</td>
<td>9,956</td>
<td>2,944</td>
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<tr>
<td>Orkney &amp; Shetland</td>
<td>62,533</td>
<td>20,563</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peebles</td>
<td>10,738</td>
<td>2,975</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perth</td>
<td>138,660</td>
<td>43,102</td>
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<tr>
<td>Renfrew</td>
<td>161,091</td>
<td>35,890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ross &amp; Cromarty</td>
<td>82,707</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roxburgh</td>
<td>51,642</td>
<td>12,963</td>
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<tr>
<td>Selkirk</td>
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<td>1,452</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stirling</td>
<td>86,237</td>
<td>22,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sutherland</td>
<td>25,793</td>
<td>6,978</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wigtown</td>
<td>43,383</td>
<td>8,899</td>
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</table>

---

* The source of these statistics is the Census of Great Britain, 1851.

** This survey gives the statistics of attendance at morning, afternoon and evening services. These figures are only for the morning attendance.

*** 481 or fourteen percent of the parishes in Scotland did not return census reports. Thus in seeking to ascertain the total attendance in Scotland the census takers attempted to estimate what the total church attendance in Scotland by taking the average of those churches responding and applying that figure to those which did not respond. This procedure was very advantageous to the Old Kirk. Thus it was estimated that of the 943,951 attending the morning services, 351,454 attended the Old Kirk, 292,308 the Free Kirk and 159,191 the United Presbyterian Church. It would seem that the figures based simply on those churches returning reports is more reliable than the rough estimate.
APPENDIX III - D
Presbyterian Church Attendance By Counties
1835 Report

- Ch. of Scotland Dominant
- Presbyterian Dissent Dominant
- Dissent Strong but not Dominant
Ch. of Scotland Dominant
U.P. Church Dominant
Free Church Dominant
Ch. of Scotland Dominant but Free Church Strong
Free Church Dominant but Ch. of Scotland Strong
U.P. Church & Ch. of Scotland of equal Strength
All three Churches strong
### Church Attendance in Major Cities: 1835, 1851, 1884

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Church</th>
<th>1835</th>
<th>1851</th>
<th>1884</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aberdeen</td>
<td>Old Kirk</td>
<td>18,078</td>
<td>3,215</td>
<td>8,764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Free Kirk</td>
<td>9,426</td>
<td>1,351</td>
<td>9,766</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U.P. Kirk</td>
<td>2,160</td>
<td>1,172</td>
<td>2,007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayr</td>
<td>Old Kirk</td>
<td>1,350</td>
<td>AM 1,117</td>
<td>1,801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM 1,417</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Free Kirk</td>
<td>1,518</td>
<td>AM 870</td>
<td>854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM 870</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U.P. Kirk</td>
<td>1,050</td>
<td>AM 1,401</td>
<td>703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM 1,516</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dundee</td>
<td>Old Kirk</td>
<td>7,625</td>
<td>AM 5,606</td>
<td>8,277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Free Kirk</td>
<td>6,455</td>
<td>AM 7,452</td>
<td>7,105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM 4,614</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U.P. Kirk</td>
<td>5,025</td>
<td>AM 3,492</td>
<td>4,014</td>
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<td>Edinburgh</td>
<td>Old Kirk</td>
<td>29,370</td>
<td>AM 8,675</td>
<td>13,808</td>
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<td>AM 15,922</td>
<td>14,279</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>PM 10,359</td>
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<td></td>
<td>U.P. Kirk</td>
<td>18,400</td>
<td>AM 12,792</td>
<td>10,367</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>PM 15,235</td>
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<td>Falkirk</td>
<td>Old Kirk</td>
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<td>AM 1,081</td>
<td>1,014</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM 860</td>
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<td>U.P. Kirk</td>
<td>2,890</td>
<td>AM 701</td>
<td>960</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM 835</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>Old Kirk</td>
<td>28,374</td>
<td>AM 13,953</td>
<td>29,716</td>
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<td>Free Kirk</td>
<td>15,651</td>
<td>AM 15,080</td>
<td>30,695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM 13,298</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U.P. Kirk</td>
<td>19,041</td>
<td>AM 15,080</td>
<td>29,961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PM 16,649</td>
<td></td>
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*The statistics for 1835 are taken from the report of the Religious Instruction Commission. The statistics for 1851 are from the national census. The statistics for 1884 are from Robert Howie, *The Churches And The Churchless In Scotland.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Church</th>
<th>1835</th>
<th>1854</th>
<th>1881</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GREENOCK</td>
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<td>5,195</td>
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<td>3,758</td>
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<td>Free Kirk</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4,517</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U.P. Kirk</td>
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<td>2,888</td>
<td>2,711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAMILTON</td>
<td>Old Kirk</td>
<td>2,025</td>
<td></td>
<td>998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Free Kirk</td>
<td></td>
<td>700</td>
<td>634</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U.P. Kirk</td>
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<td>1,211</td>
<td>1,172</td>
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<tr>
<td>INVERNESS</td>
<td>Old Kirk</td>
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<td>1,750</td>
<td>764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Free Kirk</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,747</td>
<td>2,594</td>
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<td></td>
<td>U.P. Kirk</td>
<td>760</td>
<td>794</td>
<td>263</td>
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<tr>
<td>PERTH</td>
<td>Old Kirk</td>
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<td>2,435</td>
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<td>U.P. Kirk</td>
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<td>3,141</td>
<td>1,677</td>
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<td>ST. ANDREWS</td>
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<td>2,085</td>
<td>924</td>
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<td></td>
<td>766</td>
<td>525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U.P. Kirk</td>
<td>570</td>
<td>300</td>
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<tr>
<td>STIRLING</td>
<td>Old Kirk</td>
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<td>1,033</td>
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<td>Free Kirk</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,512</td>
<td>1,262</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>U.P. Kirk</td>
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<td>986</td>
<td>776</td>
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</table>
APPENDIX IV - A

THE OLDER EVANGELICALS TEXTS

<table>
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<th>The Old Testament</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Genesis</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exodus</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leviticus</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numbers</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deuteronomy</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joshua</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judges</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruth</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 &amp; 2 Samuel</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 &amp; 2 Kings</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 &amp; 2 Chronicles</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ezra</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nehemiah</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esther</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psalms</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proverbs</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ecclesiastes</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Song of Solomon</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Matthew</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luke</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Acts</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romans</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Corinthians</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Corinthians</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galatians</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ephesians</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippians</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colossians</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>650</td>
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* The statistics of this chart include the sermons read of the following men: Andrew A. Bonar, Horatious Bonar, John Brown of Broughton Place Presbyterian Church, John Cairms, Robert S. Candlish, Thomas Chalmers, William Cunningham, John Duncan, Robert Gordon, John Kennedy of Dingwall, Robert M. M'Cheyne, A. Moody-Stuart, John Purves, Andrew Somerville, Andrew Thomson, James Veitch.
### APPENDIX IV - B

*The Liberal Evangelicals Texts*

#### The Old Testament

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<th>Book</th>
<th>Reading Count</th>
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<td>Genesis</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Exodus</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leviticus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Numbers</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deuteronomy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joshua</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judges</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruth</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 &amp; 2 Samuel</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 &amp; 2 Kings</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 &amp; 2 Chronicles</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ezra</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nehemiah</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esther</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psalms</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proverbs</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecclesiastes</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### The New Testament

<table>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Mark</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luke</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Acts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Romans</td>
<td>31</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Corinthians</td>
<td>34</td>
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<td>2 Corinthians</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galatians</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ephesians</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippians</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colossians</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Thessalonians</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Thessalonians</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Timothy</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Timothy</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Titus</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phililemon</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hebrews</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Peter</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Peter</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>1 John</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>2 John</td>
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<td>3 John</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jude</td>
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<td>Revelation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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*The statistics of this chart include the sermons read of the following men: A.K.H. Boyd, John Caird, Marcus Dods, Henry Drummond, John Eadie, Robert Flint, Thomas Guthrie, Edward Irving, John Ker, Norman MacLeod, Robert Rainy, John Robertson, George Adam Smith, Walter C. Smith, R.H. Story, John Tulloch, Alexander Whyte. I have also included the one volume of Scotch Sermons. While all of Alexander Whyte's sermons were read I have not included his sermons from either his series on Bunyan Characters or his series on Bible Characters.*
## APPENDIX IV - C

COMPARATIVE CHART OF OLDER AND LIBERAL EVANGELICAL TEXTS

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>OLDER EVANGELICAL 1800-1875</th>
<th>LIBERAL EVANGELICAL 1855-1900</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td><strong>THE LAW</strong></td>
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