ABSTRACT OF THESIS

Name of Candidate  
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Degree  
Doctor of Philosophy

Title of Thesis  
William Arnot: His Life, Work and Thought

This thesis concerns the life, work and thought of one of the most respected and beloved of the Disruption Fathers, William Arnot (1808-1875). It traces his rise from a humble beginning as a gardener on the banks of the River Earn to a place of great distinction as a preacher and writer, and follows him through twenty-four years of popular ministry in Free St. Peter's Church, Glasgow and twelve years in the Free High Church, Edinburgh. It discusses the general characteristics of his preaching, emphasizing the fact that he was primarily a pictorial preacher known for his ability to draw from the work-a-day world striking analogies of the spiritual life. As a pastor it shows him as a social reformer and an educationalist, and stresses his doctrine of kinship by which he identified himself with his people.

The discussion of his book, The Parables of Our Lord, which was the only one of his works attempting to give a complete exegetical treatment of a branch of Scripture, indicates his style and method of exposition, stressing his rigid adherence to the interpretations given by Jesus, his cautious approach to all allegorical symbolism, and his insistence upon analogies being explained consistently throughout and in keeping with nature and fact. Representative examples from his work on the Proverbs are also included.

The sixth chapter deals with his theological thought, his ecclesiastical emphasis, and his contributions to the Temperance Movement. It stresses the fundamental ideas on which his expository work is based, emphasizing the major trends of his preaching and revealing some of the strong and weak points of his thought. Arnot as an ecclesiastic is seen through an investigation, principally of his General Assembly speeches, which indicates in which areas of church life he was primarily interested; and the survey of his temperance labors shows, not only his convictions on the subject, but how successful he was in defending them.

Arnot was neither primarily a systematic theologian nor a churchman. He took no leading part in the disputes leading to the Disruption and, with the exception of his temperance stand, remained almost entirely apart from all
controversies. His great forte lay in his ability to apply the laws from heaven for life on earth, to present the old story of the Cross in such a way as to make it ever new, and to reach thereby the ears and hearts of thousands. While Arnott cannot be said to be a "lieutenant" of Chalmers, and cannot be classed with giants like Gregorius and Cunningham, still he was exceptional for his capacity to love his fellows, for his powerful influence for good especially among young men, and for his winning, genial manner which served to commend the gospel to all to whom he ministered. It was as a man - perennially sunny in disposition, joyfully dedicated to the work of the gospel, and ever sensitive to the needs and cares of others - that his memory was cherished most by those who knew him best.
WILLIAM ARNOT:
HIS LIFE, WORK AND THOUGHT

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of the Department of Divinity
University of Edinburgh

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

by
Stuart Hamilton Merriam

April 1956
TO MY FATHER AND MOTHER
AND CHARLES, JR.,
MY TWIN BROTHER
IN LOVING ADMIRATION
"The men who clustered around the colossal Chalmers were no pigmies whose memories we can easily afford to lose. They were picked men, the 'wale' of Scottish Christianity."¹ This thesis is a study of the life, work and thought of one of the most beloved of these Free Churchmen, William Arnot. He rose from a humble background to a place of great distinction as a preacher and writer until his name was as familiar as a Bible text to thousands on both sides of the Atlantic. He possessed in large measure a rare combination of independence and humility, and twice refused honorary degrees because he preferred the unassuming title of Mister. It was this unpretentious self effacement - this Mister quality about him - that contributed to his success in winning the over-flowing respect and devotion of all.

It is perhaps appropriate that a student of the two New World schools in which Arnot was particularly interested - Princeton Theological Seminary, New Jersey, and Knox College, Toronto, should have become engaged in writing this work. Upon James M'Cosh's induction as President of Princeton Seminary, Arnot wrote to him: "I hope and pray that you may be long spared to be one good tough strand of the cable, not submarine, that really binds the two nations together - the bond of Christian

brotherhood."1 Arnot himself, throughout his life, served as one of these "tough strands".

I am indebted to my two professorial advisors - The Very Reverend Hugh Watt, D.D., D.Litt., for introducing me to William Arnot and for patiently supervising the work throughout; and to The Reverend John A. Lamb, B.D., Ph.D., Librarian of New College, for his kindly suggestions and vigilant eye. Others who have been helpful in this work include: The Reverend Herbert S. Mekeel, D.D., D.Litt., who inspired me to enter the ministry; Miss Erna R. Leslie, M.A., B.Com., Assistant-Librarian, New College; Librarians and Staff of the National Library of Scotland, the University of Edinburgh, the Mitchell Library, Glasgow, and the British Museum. Miss Eunice Souter of the National Library of Scotland and Miss Jean Maxwell, Thornhill, Dumfriesshire, helped immensely; and The Reverend Charles Farah, Jr., B.D., M.A., constantly encouraged and offered valuable suggestions. William Arnot Fleming, M.A., LL.D., J.P., William Arnot's grandson, loaned me much of Arnot's unpublished correspondence; and The Reverend Niall Watson and The Reverend Ian MacGregor allowed me to peruse Arnot's Glasgow and Edinburgh Kirk Session records respectively. Mr. and Mrs. Alasdair C. Munro of Glasgow helped me to trace the footsteps of Arnot, and showed me Scottish hospitality at its best. The manuscript was typed by Miss Margaret Houston; and the final copy was meticulously proof-read by Miss Susan

Hawthorn who most cordially and generously gave of her time. To these I am deeply grateful. Special thanks should also go to Mrs. Hester Lawrie, my gracious Scottish house-mother, who proved by her devotion and constant acts of kindness to be both a Mary and a Martha throughout the writing of this thesis.

All spelling and punctuation, with the exception of direct quotations, which are true to the source, follow standard American usage.

Edinburgh

April 1956
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CHAPTER I

IN PREPARATION

Let the heart's aim be simple and righteous.


I love in a greater or less degree every person whom I know, and also all that I do not know, and this is one grand source of my happiness.

CHAPTER I

IN PREPARATION

A. Forgandenny, 1810 - 1828

Through the heart of the scenic Strathearn valley, Perthshire, from Loch Earn to the River Tay, flows one of the loveliest little rivers in Scotland, the River Earn. It is a quiet, meandering stream, strikingly different from the fierce, rapid torrents of the Ruchill and Lednock which join it at Comrie. It bubbles and splashes and tugs at its shores, but never turns furious and foaming. Essentially it is a river of peace.

On its southern bank, about one mile north of the old village of Forgandenny, stood the early home of William Arnot. Behind lay the Ochils - a wooded range of undulating hills, and across the valley rose the Friarton and Kirkton braes shadowing the ancient city of Perth hidden away on the other side. Here William was brought in the year 1810, when he was about two years of age, and here he remained for eighteen years until he bade farewell to his home and commenced his studies at the University of Glasgow.

To William Arnot, the River Earn was more than just another river; to him it was alive - a personal friend.

1. Forty-six and one-half miles in length.
It moved, and sparkled and twisted itself, like a dog fawning about your knees, and chattered, and seemed to invite caressing. It knew me well: for all the summer I was in it every day, and sometimes nearly all the day. . . . I cannot now look back on either the joys or sorrows of childhood without perceiving the sheen of the water under the setting sun, or hearing the purling of the eddies round the submerged root of an ancient tree. If the spring period of my life, as seen from the sere autumn of the present, seems to be a beautiful flower, spread out and dried, that river is the page of the herbarium to which the flower adheres - the background of the picture on which all the articulate figures stand out.

Arnot was born, on November 6th, 1808, in a farm-house near Scone, Perthshire, not far from the River Tay. His mother, Margaret, died two weeks after his birth, leaving his father, Robert, with a family of three girls and four boys. Margaret Arnot was a woman of great piety, "diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." When employed in spinning it was her custom to have her Testament lying open nearby where she could read a verse from time to time without interrupting her toil. "It has been very good for me," writes Arnot, "that I have grown up with the conception of my mother being a glorified saint. Her company has often awed me out of evil, and encouraged me to good."

Immediately following his wife's death, Robert Arnot, accompanied by his eldest daughter, Janet, took William over the Sidlaw hills to a kind woman, Bell Pitkeathly, married to a laborer, James Smith, in the Parish of Errol. She had just

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1. Arnot, This Present World (London, 1873), pp. 93-94.
2. In order of birth: Janet, John, George, Mary, Margaret, Robert, and William.
lost her own infant a few days before, and when her mother, who had attended her, brought in the Arnot baby, she cried pathetically: "Oh, mither, dinna keep it!" But the infant did remain, and for two years received all of the affectionate care of a mother; after which he was returned to his father and family now living at the Boat of Forgan on the River Earn.

Arnot was unable to trace the genealogy of his family far into the past. As far as they were known to him his ancestors had a good name, but none of them had a great name. His paternal grandfather, George Arnot, though not a very successful farmer, was an honored Christian patriarch. Arnot recounts a characteristic anecdote of him as told by his father. Early one Sabbath morning, he was standing inside the dyke of his kail-yard, when a woman from a neighboring clachan passed by, with her shoes in her hand and her petticoats tucked up, intent upon a lengthy journey. She accosted him as she passed, asking in a tone of surprise if he was not going to the Sawcrament at a certain place in a distant parish. "I'm ga'en to our ain kirk," he replied, quietly adding, "My religion does not lie in my heels." Arnot observes that, though this remark seems severe, especially as it was customary for good church people in those days to travel far in order to be present at the dispensation of the Lord's Supper, still, probably "old George" knew the person with whom he had to deal, and was not far

mistaken as to the nature of the honest woman's religion.

Arnot's father, Robert, the eldest son of his family, was born about the year 1763 on a farm at Ardargie. His education extended no further than the simplest elements of reading and writing. In 1809, after several years of agricultural occupation in the employment of his uncle, Mr. Cook of Scone, he rented a small farm from Lord Ruthven in the parish of Forgandenny on the banks of the River Earn. Here he remained till his death thirty-two years later. In addition to his farm work, he undertook charge of a ferry-boat to accommodate those who found thereby a shorter road to Perth. He never had a lease, and his rent of twenty pounds a year remained unchanged. Lord Ruthven, trusting him implicitly, was recorded as saying: "I believe whatever this man says." Robert Arnot's word was his bond.

Deprived of a mother at the very entrance into life, William Arnot needed and received more of his father's care than any of the rest of the family. Not only did his father set him right from all the wrongs of the day in the grand appeal court in the evening, but the knowledge that his protection was strong and sure deterred the older children from tyrannizing over him during the day while he was absent. Arnot writes:

"My father was my chief companion in those days, and I suppose I was his. I loved him because he was good to me; and he loved me, even when I did not deserve his love, because I was his own. . . . He afforded me the tenderness

1. The ferry service has long since been discontinued.
of a mother as well as the strength of a father's protecting arm. He was my confidant, and I was his.

Though young William was a great favorite with his father, he was never allowed to escape the strict discipline of his home. His father was the head of the family at all times; his word was law. He rarely resorted to the stick, but used a far more effective form of discipline as will be seen in the following story.

When William was about ten years of age he was sent by his father into a field to do some work. The young boy was unwilling, and merely pretended to execute the task. His father, observing the situation from a distance, called his rebellious son to his side and, looking down straight into his eyes, asked: "Do you know, Willie, or could you guess how much money you have cost me since you were born?"

Willie had never thought of this and could not venture a guess. Then his father informed him that he had paid in all on his account fully one hundred pounds. Some quiet suggestion followed to the effect that it would be becoming to endeavor to make some return to him for his outlay, and no further pressure was needed.²

Arnot never found pleasure in shooting or trapping,


2. Lessons From Life, pp. 94-96.
and reproached himself severely when he shot his first pigeon. "The eye of that gentle, pure, innocent dove, casting reproaches on me for my needless cruelty, glows in my imagination yet, although half a century has intervened."¹ He tried to trap rabbits, but confessed that the feeble creatures with their broken legs conquered him. When he approached the snare, he turned his face the other way unable to meet the prisoner's eye, walked backward, felt for the rabbit and then quickly strangled it. Two or three times on two or three days this process was repeated and then the operation ceased. "It was too much for me," he exclaimed, "the tender, pleading looks of the helpless victims were grinding my heart away. I gave in and gave up."² This deep love for living creatures never left him, and we find him in Ireland years later gently rescuing a caterpillar from the impending doom of an approaching cart wheel.³

William, at the age of five, began his formal education in the village of Forgandenny. Two years later he attended the parish school of Aberdalgie, and after several years removed to another school in Kintillo, in the parish of Dumbarney, about three miles from home.⁴ The following exploit connected with the Aberdalgie school-days gives us a vivid picture of the seven year old Arnot.

About half-way between his home and the school a bridge crossed a burn. The girls always made use of it, but the boys

¹. Ibid., p. 27.
². Ibid., p. 90.
³. Ibid., p. 152.
⁴. Memoir, p. 22.
disdained it, preferring to cross by leaping from boulder to boulder in the bed of the stream. One morning, after a heavy rain, the stream being swollen and angry, the boys hesitated to cross in their usual style. Then one of the older ones made the attempt successfully and encouraged the others to follow. All except William, the youngest, completed the hazardous journey without mishap. He, when half-way across, slipped and splashed into the foaming waters.

An immediate council was held, and it was decided to send him home. Back through the fields he sauntered knowing that, soaked as he was, he would receive a sympathetic welcome. But the sun and wind were against him and soon he was dry—distressingly dry. As his home loomed into view he grew apprehensive, realizing that all evidence of his fall was lacking. Would his father and elder sister ever believe him? Thoughtfully he looked at his clothes and then at the friendly murmuring river flowing beside him. The decision was made. Down to the river's bank he stepped and waded in up to his waist. There he performed a sort of solemn curtsy, dipping himself to the neck, and then climbed out triumphant. He was wet again - the lost evidence regained! The result was a warm sympathetic welcome awaiting him when he reached his door.¹

The nineteenth century country schools in Scotland were organized on the parish system, dating as far back as the twelfth century, when the parish emerged as the unit of ecclesiastical

¹. Lessons From Life, pp. 184-94.
and social organization. They were open to all, regardless of social class, and the poorest peasant was given an opportunity of being trained for the University. The Bible was taught regularly, and lessons were considered a sacred duty. Both teachers and parents firmly believed in the proverb, "Spare the rod and spoil the child." There were no University entrance examinations which accounts for the large number of students who entered the halls of higher learning - nearly six times what it was in England. In the University, the "lighter" subjects, English, Geology, Botany and Mathematics, while included in the fixed curriculum, received much less stress than Latin, Greek, Metaphysics, Logic, Natural and Moral Philosophy.

The school house was usually a low-roofed, ill-ventilated hovel, and sanitary arrangements were almost non-existent. There were few organized games and truancy was frequent. Arnott confessed that he often played truant, usually on a Saturday when attendance at school was little more than a matter of form. His thirst for learning, however, was so insistent that he would not absent himself wilfully from worthwhile instruction.

The notorious cock-fight was an annual occasion for most parish schools at this period in Scotland. It was preceded by

4. Ibid., pp. 154-55.
5. Memoir, p. 22.
a holiday of two and a half days during which the boys prepared their cocks for battle. For weeks after the "glorious" combat, the school floor retained its deeply stained blotches of blood, and the boys were full of exciting narratives of heroic birds which fought until both eyes were gouged out, or which, in the moment of victory, collapsed and died in the middle of the cockpit. Every pupil, without exception, was entered on the subscription list as a cock fighter, being obliged to pay two pence per head to the schoolmaster for the privilege of bringing his birds to the pit. There is no mention made in Arnot's autobiography of his witnessing these barbaric fights, but we may be sure that he took no part in them other than paying the demanded cock fee. With Hugh Miller he certainly could not have endured watching the bleeding birds wildly fighting to the death under the cruel young eyes of their owners.  

The history of Arnot's religious impressions reaches back to his early years. He cannot give us the date of his conversion, but writes that he remembers well the fact of the first prayer that he offered in his own words.


In Wales and parts of England cocking-mains took place in church yards and often inside the churches themselves. Church festivals, wakes and Sundays were favorite occasions for them. The custom of holding mains in school was common from the 12th to about the middle of the 19th century. Parents were expected to contribute to the expenses of the annual main on Shrove Tuesday, this money being called "cock-pence." 

In 1849 the wretched sport was prohibited by law in Great Britain.
I had previously used the Lord's prayer and hymns. I do not remember that I was taught how to do. It was in my bed in the morning that it came into my mind suddenly, and I felt it a great emancipation to be free from the trammels of a prayer learned by rote. I must have been very young.

A similar phenomenon occurred about the time that he had mastered the art of reading. Hitherto, he had read only because he was told to read certain lessons; then one day an old book fell into his hands and, of his own accord, he read about a Highland soldier who was taken prisoner by a tribe of savages. The story opened to him a whole new world and suddenly made him conscious that God had given him an entrance into it. "It did not assume distinctly a religious shape, it was rather intellectual. I never whispered it to a living creature - no, not till I was forty years of age." 2

Baxter's Saints' Everlasting Rest, The Pilgrim's Progress, Brydone's Tour Through Sicily and Malta, The Arabian Nights' Entertainment, and Don Quixote were among the books familiar to Arnot in his early days. The historical parts of the Bible fascinated him, and Watts' hymns for children were carefully committed to memory. Every book that came into his hands was read with great avidity.

When Arnot was nearly fourteen years old his father sent him to a private mercantile academy, kept by a Mr. Scott in Barossa Street, Perth. 3 Here his penmanship improved markedly,

1. Memoir, p. 17.
2. Ibid., p. 16.
3. Arnot boarded at home and walked the four miles to and from Perth.
having been almost wholly neglected in the country schools. ¹
No other acquisition, however, was to be obtained and after
six or seven weeks he was forced to give up his study because
of a serious attack of measles followed by an acute inflammation
of the chest. It was during the remainder of that summer, while
he was convalescing, that Baxter's Saints' Everlasting Rest
became familiar to him. This had a very great effect in "giving
reality and power and personal interest" to all that he had
previously known of divine things. ²

At that time I sought very earnestly to find the way of
salvation. I knew the truth of the Gospel - the free
grace through Christ; but when I long afterwards looked
back upon the period, I clearly saw that there was a
strong admixture of the legal spirit. I was woefully
wanting in the matter of liberty. The prevalent topics
were my own sin and danger, the necessity of conversion,
and the holiness of God. Not enough of the love of
Jesus was thrown in among my meditations. ³

In the autumn Arnot was sent to the farm of his father's
cousin, Mr. Thomson, at Leadketty, in the parish of Dunning, where
he soon regained his health and became very robust. Here he was
almost wholly in the society of ploughmen - the rudest class of
peasantry. He remarked, with thankfulness, that he was always
taken into the parlor on Sunday evenings to drink tea with the
family, which set him apart from the other servants, and helped
to keep him from being entirely vulgarized by the company with
which he worked.

1. Memoir, p. 72. No effort was made in the country schools
by teacher or pupil to improve penmanship after the rudiments
were obtained and the art of "counting" had been mastered.
2. Ibid., p. 74.
3. Ibid.
One of the notable instances of this period is recorded with Arnot's customary frankness. He tells of attending an annual fair in the neighboring village of Dunning in the company of the foreman and other men. As the evening wore on they led him into several public houses and persuaded him to drink whisky toddy. The effect was in the form of great exhilaration of spirits, much to the amusement of his companions. When he arrived home he became sick and giddy and, after passing a wretched night, rose at about three o'clock in the morning and went out into the fresh cool air.

I was in a deplorable condition; something that seemed to be thirst was gnawing within me. I went to a well at the bottom of the garden and drank of its clear cool stream; but it tasted like Epsom Salts in my mouth, and after I had drunk it I was as thirsty as before. I wandered about till the ordinary time of rising, and then resumed my employment.

Arnot had now had his first personal encounter with the evils of drink. Years were to pass before he could endure the taste of whisky in any form, or even remain in a house where toddy was emitting its fumes. "The illness that night," he confessed, "and the loathing of spirits which it produced, became a shield of defence to me. I sometimes think if people suffered as much agony as I did from their first act of inebriety, they would never rush into a second."²

The breaking off, however, of all participation in the convivial habits of the country was not an easy matter for Arnot. The strong public opinion of the day considered it mean and

1. Ibid., p. 36.
2. Ibid., p. 37.
unmanly not to join the crowd in the ale house, the glass of whisky being considered the recognized symbol of good-will and friendship. For any healthy young person to absent himself wilfully from these accepted social gatherings was to invite the opprobrium of the young men and women of the community, and to be counted as a prudish, low-spirited fellow. Among people of all ages drinking was a habit even in the most respectable circles, and drunkenness was scarcely regarded as a sin.  

"On the birth of a child, those in attendance must drink its health, and it was no uncommon thing to give the poor innocent babe itself a sort of spirit baptism by sponging it over with whisky directly after birth."  

At every public gathering, at christenings and birthday celebrations, on entering any business, at the signing of the indentures when a youth was about to be bound to a trade, at holidays, markets, bargain-making, marriages and funerals, whisky - the national beverage of Scotland - was imperative. Even the most sacred rites of the Church were often linked with the evils of intemperance. When the Lord's Supper was celebrated it was customary for large gatherings of people to assemble, many traveling long distances to attend. The services began at eleven in the forenoon and continued until six in the evening or later. While the ordinance was being celebrated inside the church, outside, in a tent constructed for the

purpose, crowds, waiting to partake of the communion, listened to sermon after sermon. Sometimes as many as five ministers were engaged to assist in this ministry. On these occasions the public-houses did a thriving business; and what was intended to be a spiritual blessing sometimes proved a curse. "Even at meetings of the Presbyteries, it was not uncommon to have drink fines levied on a minister who had taken a new charge, or had entered the bonds of wedlock." Drinking toasts at ordination dinners was universally practiced, a custom which Arnot in later years strongly decried. No effective abstinence or temperance societies existed to defend the non-drinker, and it was not until 1829, the year in which Arnot entered the University, that the first influential temperance society was established in Scotland.

It was, therefore, many months before Arnot gained sufficient courage to remain away from these drinking parties, though he had no relish for them, and strongly disliked spirits.

2. Infra, p. 245.
3. Fleming, A History of the Church in Scotland, p. 77. Fleming states that the first Temperance Society in Scotland was established at Maryhill, Glasgow, on October 1, 1829, the pledge excluding the use of wines and spirits only. F.T. Winskill, op. cit., pp. 16-18, shows that there were Temperance Societies in Scotland previous to this, e.g., ca. 1759 at Leadhills, near Greenock, and in 1818 at Cartsdyke in the eastern part of Greenock. The two societies formed at Cartsdyke were known as the "Regular Society", which advocated temperance principles, and the "Moderation Society" which, strangely enough, stood for total abstinence.
His father, a strict teetotaler, constantly pointed out that popularity did not depend upon visiting the ale house, and that wise men would not think less of him for refusing to follow the dictates of the crowd. It was only, however, after an all-night party,¹ which resulted the next morning in the humiliating experience of falling asleep at the breakfast table, that Arnot definitely determined to take a decisive step and break with the drinking customs of the day.

The occasion on which he ceased attending these convivial drinking assemblies, was the initiation of a junior apprentice, James Paton. The secret ceremony was conducted within the garden walls on Lord Ruthven's estate, by some young man from a neighboring parish; and Arnot was in charge of making all of the necessary arrangements.² It was understood, by a sort of unwritten agreement, that upon the completion of the ceremony, the members of the party would immediately adjourn, taking the shortest way over the wall, to the public house. Arnot, however, had secretly determined that he would not follow, and since his was the responsibility of locking the garden doors, used this as his opportunity for escape. When the last man of the group had disappeared over the wall, Arnot rapidly performed his duty, and then fled towards his father's house, never once halting. From that day

¹. On the occasion of Arnot's formal dedication to the craft of gardening.
². At this time Arnot was beginning to have scruples regarding the lawfulness, in a religious sense, of the whole proceeding, and later on condemned the affair "as an unnecessary and therefore profane use of sacred things." Memoir, p. 54.
forward he experienced no difficulty in avoiding the tavern. "I had broken the rules of their chivalry," he exclaimed. "I was no longer bothered with their solicitations. Before that period I had ceased to care for the tipplers, but then an additional advantage was achieved - the tipplers ceased to care for me."¹

The hard work on the farm rubbed off a good deal of Arnot's constitutional "bairnliness" and imparted to his character a "dash of manliness".² He became an expert horseman and, after many falls, learned to throw himself on the bare back of a horse while it was in motion. This "dash of manliness" characterized him all through his life and commanded the admiration and devotion, particularly of "red-blooded" young men.

After a year of working on the Leadketty farm, Arnot was suddenly called to take the place of his brother, Robert, who had become an apprentice to a gardener at Kilgraston and was temporarily incapacitated by illness. Three miserable months passed in this work under a debauched head gardener, an ex-slave driver from the West Indies, before Robert was able to resume his position. Arnot then returned home, determined to become an apprentice to the gardener of Lord Ruthven at Freeland estate where his father resided. At first, his father opposed such a decision, desiring to see his son a lawyer; but young Arnot had his heart set upon gardening regardless of the small remuneration which it afforded. He listed three reasons for his choice: a spice of the romantic in his nature which seemed more likely to

¹. Ibid., p. 55.
². Ibid., p. 38.
obtain its gratification in a garden than at a desk; a strong
desire to continue longer under his father's roof; and a
decided contempt for money-making. "Food and clothing, open
air and freedom to breathe it, absence from evil company, and
opportunity to read a book and enjoy a solitary walk," — these
were the things that he counted of prime importance.

After finally gaining his father's consent, the sixteen-
year-old boy began, on November 11th, 1824, what he believed would
be his life's work — gardening. He was immensely happy in his
new occupation. The master gardener, Peter Morrison, and the
senior apprentice, James Paton, both were men of good moral
character, and though the labor was often strenuous, Arnot
remained in excellent health and revelled in the hard work. He
began at six o'clock in the morning, and at nine o'clock went to
breakfast which consisted merely of oatmeal and part of a flagon
of milk which he brought with him each day. Dinner was much the
same with the addition of a bit of bread. The walk to and from
his home through secluded avenues gratified and fostered his love
of retirement and meditation. It helped to form the habit of
observing things as they lie in nature, and then of applying them

1. The garden where Arnot proposed to learn the craft was
less than a mile distant from his father's home.
3. Ibid., p. 43. Arnot, years later, succeeded in obtaining
a good position for James Paton as gardener to James Ewing
of Levenside, showing that Arnot did not forget the
companion of his youth.
4. Ibid., pp. 46-7.
5. The Freeland Estate is now the Strathalian School for
Boys, set in beautiful grounds with many exotic flowers
and plants.
immediately to the subject in hand.¹

Arnot was genuinely popular with the village folk of Forgandenny and mentions in his autobiography some of his numerous friends. There was George Bruce, the retired eighty-year-old carpenter whose system of cosmogony declared the earth to be "like an apple swimming in water - one half above the surface, the other half below." When young Arnot objected to such a false conception, the old man interrupted with a vehement interrogation: "Will ye contradict the Scriptures o' truth, laddie? Will ye contradict the Scriptures o' truth? Dinna ye read, 'Thou hast laid the foundation thereof in the waters'?"² Leezie Chalmers was another interesting person known for her ardent piety and bridled tongue. One evening in her company, William was expatiating on the beauty and peacefulness of the village and the happiness of its inhabitants. Believing he had over-stated the case, being herself more conversant with the village families, she thoughtfully remarked: "Deed, William, there's honest folk an' ither folk an' a in Forgan, as well as ither gates."³ "Honest folk" and "ither folk" was Leezie's cryptic way of classifying people!

Arnot and his only brother, Robert,⁴ were devoted to each other. Robert had acquired the best education that the country could afford, and possessed a considerable measure of mechanical genius. When the use of inflammable gas was known

¹. Memoir, p. 44.
². Ibid., p. 48.
³. Ibid., p. 50.
⁴. John and George died in childhood.
only by the scientific few, he successfully erected an apparatus out of very rude materials and produced a "magic jet". He was a consecrated, joyful Christian and was greatly admired and beloved by all.

While yet in his early twenties, a form of creeping paralysis began to manifest itself, steadily increasing until it forced him to give up gardening. The disease, which seemed to be in his spine, for a long time affected nothing but his legs and arms, leaving his mind clear and active. He was sent to the Royal Infirmary in Edinburgh and given the best of medical treatment, but every attempt to arrest the ailment proved insufficient. Slowly, the dreaded paralysis spread throughout his body, leaving him a helpless cripple.

For the next two years William was at his brother's side constantly. If wicker baskets were to be made, it was the younger brother who procured and brought the material home. If the impressions of rose leaves were to be transferred to paper by means of lamp smoke and oil, 1 it was William who examined and criticized the work in the evening. Together the brothers discussed every topic that occurred in their reading, and acquired the habit of forming a decisive opinion on every subject that came before them. In the summer, when Robert yearned to be taken to the river or to the woods, it was William who gladly volunteered to carry him. "I took him in my arms as a nurse takes a child, while he held by my neck, and away we went together to sail about

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1. Robert's imitation of lithography.
in a fishing boat, or lie on a grassy bank, basking in the
softened rays of an evening sun."1 "The weak and the strong
reciprocally clasped each other and coalesced into one, like
a vine and an elm growing together on the same soil."2

As the period of his departure drew near, Arnot's
affection deepened. He began to take less and less interest
in other company and other things, and hastened home in the
evening to be with his brother. As soon as dinner was over he
stretched himself crossways at Robert's feet, and together they
talked until time for retiring.

In those evenings a silent process was going on in my
heart, which, in a measure, broke the world's power
over me. It was while lying across the foot of my
brother's bed that I gradually drunk in the lesson
'This is not your rest.' The effects of that lesson
never departed.3

It was at night when the end finally came. The family
crowded into the little room of the dying brother, while William
sat close beside him with his arm around his throbbing brow.4
He was reluctant to say goodbye; desperately unwilling to part
with his beloved companion. Suddenly, the heavy painful
breathing stopped and the face grew white and still. Robert
was dead! Tears burst forth and the women sobbed aloud, but
Arnot sat still and staring. "I could not weep. Not a tear
moistened my eye on that night when my dearest earthly treasure

1. Memoir, pp. 60-61.
2. Arnot, Anchor of the Soul and Other Sermons (London, 1876),
p. 107.
3. Memoir, p. 64.
was torn away."

After the funeral the world seemed many shades dimmer than it had been before. Alone, Arnot tramped the woods and fields deep in thought, avoiding all conversation. The young people no longer expected him to join them for they knew he was wrapped in the mantle of mourning. A new desire was forming in his heart, a desire to enter the ministry. For years it had lain dormant in his carefree soul. He had often talked about it with his brother, but had never given it serious consideration. Only after death had deprived him of Robert, leaving him stunned and lonely, did he suddenly sense the strong compulsion of God's call into the ministry. This was the ruling event of his youth, the pivot on which his whole life and character turned.

Arnot's father at first disapproved of his son's decision to study for the ministry, and tried to persuade him to remain near home, offering to buy and stock a farm for him about a quarter of a mile from his own. Arnot, however, was not to be dissuaded, and when his father perceived that his son's mind was settled, he made no further effort to discourage him, but sought in every way to help him.

Now commenced an intensive study of Latin. Arnot left home at half past five in the morning so as to have a leisurely

1. Memoir, p. 65.
half hour of study before work began. Every spare moment during the day was used to good advantage. For example, when he was digging in succession with two or three others across a large plot of ground, he took with him his Greek or Latin grammar, and used the few minutes rest at the end of each furrow to run over a tense or portion of whatever might be at hand. Then while toiling back across the field, he kept conning and trying the part he had read, until he reached the next halting place where he could correct his errors. This proved a double benefit: it helped him to master the lessons well, and at the same time kept his mind employed which acted as a diversion, greatly lessening the weariness of the toil.

During the whole course of Arnot's private study, he derived valuable assistance from Mr. John Morton, a farmer at Gallowmoor, and his family. The Mortons were educated people with more refinement than any other to which Arnot had familiar access, and it was his custom to repair twice or three times a week to the Gallowmoor to seek their advice and encouragement.

On November 11th, 1828, after four years as an apprentice to the gardener at Freeland, Arnot's term of service expired. Now began the long road toward the ministry. His total savings from his weekly wages of nine shillings amounted to only twenty pounds. When asked how he expected to defray

2. His father charged him two shillings and sixpence for his board each week, but during the last year permitted him to stay at home gratis.
the expenses of his education for so long a period of years, he replied that he did not know, but that he intended to begin with what he had.

I had, through the Lord's dealing with me, reached at that time some considerable measure of elevation from worldly views, and it was proportionately easy to trust in Providence for the unseen future. I could not see before me, and yet I was not in the least troubled about the path.¹

From November 1823 to October of the following year, he devoted his entire time to study, preparing to enter college. He placed himself under Mr. Thomas Scott in Perth and began the serious study of Latin and Greek. He lived in Perth with his sister, Mary, and returned home for the weekends. Soon he showed marked proficiency in his work and, by the summer, had read the whole of the AEnid of Virgil, mastering it to such an extent that he could read it as he would English poetry. He also began to read the New Testament in Greek and selections from Sandford's "Extracts."

The choice of a University was decided when his uncle, residing in Glasgow, advised him to attend the University there, offering at the same time to give him lodging in his home, free of expense during the first session. Arnot accepted without question, though at the time he preferred Edinburgh or St. Andrews, both being nearer his home.

At ten o'clock on the night of October 9th, 1829, a little band of people gathered outside their white slated cottage and waved goodbye to the youngest of the family,

¹. Memoir, p. 72.
dressed in his long blue coat with bright brass buttons. He was leaving home for the first prolonged period in his life to live in the far-off city of Glasgow which he had never seen. The neighbor's cart, which was to carry him for the first fifteen miles, swayed and jolted down the wooded avenue, past the wide-spreading ash and venerable plane tree, away from the red-tiled barn and byre. In the distance, beneath the hawthorn trees, twined with verdant honeysuckle, lay the silent silver of the Barn. Its smooth polished surface caught the shimmer of the stars as it rounded the wide, grass-covered bend. The memories of childhood, those happy days of glorious freedom on the banks of that cherished stream, must have tugged at the heart of Arnot. Youth was over now - the day of boyhood past.

1. Ibid., pp. 10, 75-76.
2. Nothing remains of the Boat of Forgan home, and only one red-tiled byre still stands.
Glasgow University, 1829 - 1836

Glasgow, the smoke-smudged giant of Scotland, lay in exhausted silence. It was the end of the day and a heavy fog had enveloped the city. Every close and wynd was choked by the oppressive mist, and all life had moved indoors, leaving the streets dark, cold and wet. It was a horrid, fearful night to come to Glasgow - a forbidding night for the stranger, Arnot, to arrive at its gate. "As I descended the steep streets," he recalls, "and plunged for the first time into Glasgow, I saw nothing, but felt it to be a dreary place." He had traveled a whole day and night to reach the city, and had walked much of the way through deep mud and blinding rain. At lock sixteen, near Falkirk, he had gratefully boarded a slow-moving canal boat which took him the remainder of the journey.

Arnot's first home in Glasgow was with his uncle, Robert Fisher, residing in Norfolk Street, Gorbals. Here he was warmly welcomed and given a comfortable bedroom which he shared at night with Robert, the eldest son. On the tenth of October, he purchased a red gown, paid his matriculation fee at the library, procured his tickets for the Greek and Latin

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1. Memoir, p. 76.
2. Norfolk Street, at this time, was in a good residential section.
3. James Coutts, A History of the University of Glasgow (Glasgow, 1909), p. 577. Students were required to pay seven shillings to the library for the winter
classes, and was ready to commence the following day.

The regulations for graduation in Arts required candidates to attend classes extending over a period of four years of about seven months each, the classes meeting five days a week. During the first two years, the student was to take ten hours of Latin and Greek each week, and during the second session an additional hour a day of Mathematics. In the third year he continued to attend the daily Mathematics class, and began a ten-hour course in elementary Logic and Rhetoric, followed in the final year by ten hours of Natural and Moral Philosophy.¹

The curriculum for the theological student extended over a period of four sessions of six months each: Divinity in each of the first three years, along with junior Hebrew in the first, senior Hebrew in the second, and junior Ecclesiastical History in the third. The fourth session included the study of Biblical Criticism and senior Ecclesiastical History.² It is interesting to note that the University recognized the right of the General Assembly to regulate the course of students preparing for the ministry, but objected to the laxity of the Church. Often students, who merely enrolled their names in the books of the professors for six years without attending a lecture, or receiving any

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1. Ibid., p. 373.
2. Ibid., p. 375.
instruction in theology in any University, were still permitted to be licensed by Presbytery, if they delivered a certain number of discourses specified by the General Assembly.  

The classes were often large and inadequately staffed. Arnot describes one of these classes which met to study Latin at half past seven in the morning. The teacher was not in command. Bedlam resulted.

... when the noise grew fast and furious through the huge class-room, he [the teacher] was wont to shut both his eyes, and so make his remarks in the dark. His gentle pleadings, however, were not the sort of thing to quell a set of brainless fellows, who went there not to learn, but to laugh. I wanted to learn and was grieved at the loss of time and the loss of money. The whole scene was new to me. The boldness of boys who had been brought up in a large city, stood out in very strong relief against my bashfulness, and, indeed, against all my previous conceptions of what young men were or should be.  

The intellectual life of the University of Glasgow was in these days, as far as the public teaching was concerned, rather more conspicuous in the literary than in the theological department. Sir Daniel K. Sandford, professor of Greek, and designated by his eminent pupil, James Halley, "the light of Glasgow college" was unrivaled as a teacher. His students long years afterwards continued to extol his fascinating and eloquent instruction. "The very music of his voice as he read the sounding lines of Homer, apart even from the brilliant

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1. Ibid.
translation and the rich feast of illustrative commentary and apt quotation, was a thing to go and hear." The literary and philosophical courses were also highly interesting and stimulating, and, according to William Burns' biographer, here existed more of a true academic spirit than anywhere else in Scotland at the time.  

But how different the Divinity Hall! Here lay the dust of a staid and orthodox theology with no one on the faculty to resurrect it to new life. Patronage often filled a chair in accordance with some obscure private connections, in flagrant defiance alike of the public opinion and the public good; and no provision existed for retirement when age and infirmity had done their work. In some cases, as Arnot pointed out,

A person endued with a perennial childishness, not very many degrees above absolute imbecility, might, if he gained the patron's favour, be placed in a chair in which he should doze and vegetate for half a century, to the unspeakable injury of two generations. 

The Hebrew studies were superintended by a professor who, while admittedly erudite in other fields, knew almost nothing of Hebrew, and "opened his course rather significantly by an elaborate refutation of the vowel-points." The systematic study of theology suffered greatly from the want of direction and stimulus, and what was done in the way of special lines of

2. Ibid.  
reading, in connection with a class exercise or a University prize theme, was occasional and spasmodic rather than methodical and sustained. "The air in the church history class was indescribably slumbrous, and reminded one now of Spenser's Cave of Morpheus and now of Bunyan's Enchanted Ground." Arnot described the classroom in a letter to his father:

Dr. McTurk is droning away at his lecture, and I shall amuse myself in finishing my letter. Do not think I shall lose anything by this for he occupies himself the first half hour in reading over again what he gave us last day. . . . I am at this moment in the midst of a queer scene. In the pulpit a listless looking old man — droning away in the most lethargic, soporific strain that can be imagined in a voice scarcely audible throughout the room. A very large class of young men very variously employed — here you may see one resting his head upon his folded arms on the bench apparently asleep. There a knot of four or five heads close together engaged in conversation. Some reading magazines, and reviews — some novels. Some writing notes and handing them to each other, then laughing at their contents. Two or three are writing notes of the lecture — and lastly myself writing a letter to my father. Around us on the walls are hung the portraits of Luther and Knox and Hamilton and Boyd together with many other Reforming Divines — the illustrious Kings and Queens of former days and the most eminent of the Principals and Professors of the University from early times. These worthies of the olden times seem to be frowning upon us their degenerate sons.

But if they are angry with us at this hour, they must be well pleased with us when we meet in the same place under Dr. McGill when all is attention and activity.

The Doctor is now beginning to give us something new, therefore, I must attend to him. 2

1. Ibid., p. 35.
2. Unpublished letter, Church History Classroom, February 27, 1874. Hamilton speaks of McTurk as "droning and mauntering through a dreary abridgment of Mosheim" and giving the impression that life in the Divinity Hall was a rather "hum-drum" affair. See Arnot, Life of James Hamilton, p. 557.
The well-known Professor of Divinity, Dr. Stevenson MacGill, in the words of Arnot, was a man of an "eminently devotional spirit" often diffusing a hallowing influence over the Divinity Hall by the elevation and fervor of his daily prayers.

His lectures were not confined to speculative theology. He knew, that to make his students familiar with the science of theology, would be of no avail, if the power of the Gospel was not felt in their hearts. Acting on this view, his teaching often assumed a character too practical for mere speculators.¹

James Halley, who always regarded this professor with greatest respect, wrote, some years after leaving the University, of the "inexpressible advantage and blessing" of having been educated for the ministry under him.²

MacGill, however, cannot be said to have been a "popular" professor, though unquestionably a devout one; and when Arnot studied under him, according to William Burns' biographer, MacGill had fallen into the "sere and yellow leaf".³ Though he had never been considered an especially interesting lecturer, he had always been revered for his ability to criticize the discourses of the students. "In this department, he stood pre-eminent. Judiciousness of remark; accurate discrimination; and strict impartiality, with the most friendly feelings towards the students, were his prominent features."⁴

1. Memoir of the Late James Halley 2nd ed. p. 22.
2. Ibid., p. 161.
3. Islay Burns, op.cit., p. 25.
MacGill was a stern disciplinarian, easily offended and rigid in his professorial dignity. When he entertained his students at breakfast, it was always an ordeal for, although polite and accommodating, he was a failure as a host. "His manner was that of a 'watchful, though kind and polite censor'."\(^1\) That he had a certain sense of humor is indicated from the report of his speech at the opening of the Martyrs' Church, Glasgow, in 1839. Referring to the Lunatic Asylum, in which he was warmly interested, he remarked: "I was honoured by being classed among the lunatics themselves." The reporter noted "a laugh".\(^2\) On the whole, however, MacGill was intensely serious, and what little humor he had was generally stiff and dry.

James Hamilton speaks of Arnot as being "the favourite of MacGill"\(^3\) which is easy to understand when we consider Arnot's demeanor as a student. He was earnest and diligent in study, anxious to learn, though never a first-class scholar. His perseverance, however, earned him some prizes, which undoubtedly pleased his professor. Outside the class room Arnot was gay and free, enjoying a warm popularity among his fellow students. The sister of one of his most distinguished friends at the University, James Halley, described him as bringing "a breath of fresh country air and a blink of sunshine"\(^4\) into the dingy streets and close confined rooms of the town-bred students. Halley himself used to

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1. H.M.B. Reid, *The Divinity Professors in the University of Glasgow* (Glasgow, 1923), pp. 301-02.
say of Arnot that he had more divinity than all the rest put together, and to him he could open up his heart more freely than to any other person.1 "Honest, kind, warm-hearted and serio-comic"2 were the adjectives he used to describe his friend. It is, therefore, not surprising that MacGill classed Arnot among his favorites.

How much the professor influenced his student is difficult to decide. Clearly MacGill was not in his prime when Arnot attended the University. The year 1834 marked the completion of twenty years of teaching, and prior to this he had spent seventeen years as minister of the Tron Church, Glasgow. His influence as a minister, according to Thomas Chalmers, who succeeded him, was not impressive. Indeed, Chalmers felt that a very deep and universal ignorance on the high matters of faith and eternity existed throughout most of MacGill's parish.3 As a preacher MacGill was not outstanding; his biographer affirmed that he lacked a sense of urgency and did not preach as to 'dying men'.4 He failed to become a "leader" for lack of "force of character and masculine boldness"; he was too "meek and gentle".5 Reid, however, in his work on the divinity professors in the University of Glasgow, seriously questions the justice of this evaluation, pointing out that MacGill definitely did manifest an intrepid spirit by his constant protests both in the Church

4. Reid, op. cit., p. 304.
Courts and in the Senate of the University.¹

MacGill's writings and lectures suffered severely from the current besetting sin of too much diffuse explanation and over-scrupulous attention to details; and this was particularly true of his discussions of "Evidences".² His Letters to a Young Clergyman, though containing much practical wisdom, were extremely serious and negative in viewpoint, and it is improbable that Arnot derived much inspiration from reading them.

As a lover of music and as a philanthropist, however, MacGill may well have influenced Arnot. His zeal for the improvement of Scottish psalmody,³ and his inclusion of hymns in his volume, A Collection of Sacred Translations, Paraphrases and Hymns, 1813, would certainly have interested Arnot, and may even have helped to foster his own conviction that hymns ought to be used in public worship. MacGill's life-long interest in juvenile delinquents, destitute criminals, fallen women (Magdalene Asylum), aged men (Old Man's

1. Reid, op.cit., p. 305.
2. Ibid., p. 300. James Hamilton, who had studied under MacGill, exclaimed in 1837, after attending one of Dr. Welsh's stimulating lectures in the University of Edinburgh: "If I had heard Welsh's lectures three years sooner, I should have studied divinity after another fashion. This day he gave us in an hour a view of the evidences which would have been 'expatiated on in a fortnight's lectureship' had it entered any other noodle." Life of James Hamilton, p. 99. In the previous year, Hamilton stated: "Good Dr. MacGill has given me a system, and I am going to Dr. Chalmers to get some life put into it." Ibid., p. 86.
Friend Society), S.P.C.K. (Scotland), Church extension and mental institutions, would naturally have "flavored" much of his conversation and outlook, and may easily have stirred the social consciousness of his young student.

After having lived with his uncle during the first session, Arnot found it more convenient to take a room nearer the college, which he and another student shared. The greater part still remained of the twenty pounds which he had saved before leaving home, and so successful was he in his frugal living that he was able to write to his father: "If I had a bit of the pig to use at dinner time, I could keep my expenses of meat, lodging and light within five shillings a week."²

In 1832, on the recommendation of his Greek professor, Daniel K. Sandford, he was employed as tutor to two university students, teaching them from six o'clock to ten o'clock every evening. This demanded a great deal of preparation, and consequently his own work was left to be done late at night or very early in the morning. Fortunately he remained unscathed by the terrible epidemics of cholera and typhus fever which swept the city that year, resulting in upwards of 4,000 deaths - 1.4 per cent of the city's population.³

The news of the passing of the Reform Bill of 1832, which

2. Memoir, p. 94.
3. Andrew Wallace, History of Glasgow (Glasgow, 1882), p. 100. Cholera again ravaged the city in the years 1848-49 and 1853-54.
gave the right to vote for a member of Parliament to every owner of property to the value of ten pounds per annum, and every tenant paying a yearly rental of fifty pounds in a county or ten pounds in a burgh, was received with tremendous enthusiasm in Glasgow. After witnessing the demonstration held on the Glasgow Green, where between 120,000 and 150,000 jubilant people came together to express their approval, Arnot professed himself to be a Reformer.

"I wish the people to obtain their abstract rights. . . . They ought to be made aware of their own dignity, of their equality with the highest of their lordly superiors." This viewpoint is manifested in the following enthusiastic excerpt from a letter to his father concerning slavery.

I have just returned from a grand meeting of the friends of negro emancipation - immediate emancipation. It was truly a noble scene. Here are the advantages of living in Glasgow. We have not a "craw park" and serpentine river, and a peaceful hamlet, hiding itself from view in the shade of varied plantations; but, enthusiastic admirer of nature in her simplest garb as I always have been, I have seen and heard tonight what I value far above them - I have had an opportunity of raising my voice in unison with that of thousands of fellow Christians in one unanimous and loud demand that slavery, which we consider a foul blot upon our national character, be immediately abolished, that his birthright be restored to every one from whom it has been torn away; that the slave be made free - free to cherish and protect the wife of his bosom, to provide for his family, to instruct his children, to improve his mind, to worship his God.

As well as being active in the Theological and

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1. Ibid., p. 91.
2. Reported at that time to have been the largest mass meeting ever to be held in Glasgow.
4. Ibid., pp. 98-100.
Temperance Societies, Arnot was an ardent member of the Missionary Society which he considered the most valuable class in the college to him. "It was a blessed instrument in 'keeping the heart' while the mind was so much occupied with the wisdom of this world."¹ He was also among the first promoters of the Glasgow Sabbath School Union, and devoted four years to teaching an advanced Bible Class for young women at St. Rollox - a smoke-filled area of the city. Upon learning that a church was to be built in this area, he wrote: "I think I could be willing to spend the strong part of my life labouring among the coals and smoke of St. Rollox."²

St. Rollox was more than just an industrial part of Glasgow to Arnot. It was the home of his Sabbath School students - the home of men and women whom he had come to love.

During the final session, Arnot resided as tutor with an aristocratic, wealthy family in Milngavie (Kilmardinny) some seven miles from Glasgow. Unaccustomed to the decorum of such society, he writes:

As to making bows and other nick nacks I can get on quite well at present, but I am not sure how I shall do when they begin to invite company. It is to be a very formidable thing to appear in the drawing room before dinner on these occasions - at any thing that has to be done, standing or walking I feel very awkward, but let me be once set down at table and give me nothing to carve harder than potatoes or beat turnips, and I shall pass muster as well as the best of them.³

¹. Arnot, The Way of Salvation Not Discovered by Reason, but Revealed by Faith (Glasgow, 1843), p. 15.
When University life finally came to its close, Arnot exclaimed: "It has been a happy period of my life, my cup has been made to run over with 'worldly bliss.' . . . It is a fearful thing for one who has received so much to be an unprofitable servant." He had no immediate plans for the future, but was confident that something would be given him to do. He was willing to serve anywhere. Nothing annoyed him more than to see a self-seeking spirit in some of his fellow students. "I do not say that I am guiltless in this matter," he confessed, "but in the meantime I think I feel willing to labour in a very humble capacity in the vineyard of the Lord." 2

On October 4th, 1837, Arnot was licensed to preach the Gospel by the Presbytery of Glasgow, 3 and during the following month was called to assist the Reverend John A. Bonar, minister of the united parishes of Larbert and Dunipace—the famous training school for preachers. 4 Here began his long and fruitful ministry which was to last nearly forty years.

1. Unpublished letter to his father, March 22nd, 1837.
2. Unpublished letter to his father, June 13th, 1837.
3. MacGregor, "William Arnot," op. cit., p. 435. Arnot chose as his subject the doctrine of Justification by Faith. The Reverend Dr. John Smith of St. George's Parish Church, Glasgow, declared that he had never heard the subject handled so well.
CHAPTER II

IN THE MINISTRY

Go into every good work in company with every true worker, and hallow all by keeping company with Christ at every stage of the process.

CHAPTER II
IN THE MINISTRY

A. Larbert, 1837 - 1838

"It has always been my aim, and it is my prayer, to
have no plans with regard to myself, well assured as I am,
that the place where the Saviour sees meet to place me must
be the best place for me."¹ Thus wrote Robert Murray M'Cheyne
upon accepting the invitation to be the assistant of the
Reverend John Archibald Bonar, minister of the united parishes
of Larbert and Dunipace.² Two years later William Arnot was
called to this same assistantship and, after preaching with a
view to the vacancy, wrote in a similar spirit:

I was invited without any application. It lies with the
the people to pass a judgment on my fitness or unfitness.
If that judgment shall be favourable, then comes my re-
ponsibility to devote whatever talent God has given me
faithfully to His service in the Gospel of His Son.³

The parish to which he had come was a very large one of
about 710 families. Larbert was a noisy industrial community
surrounded by villages inhabited by coalminers and iron-moulders.
The great Carron Ironworks were nearby, employing a rough popu-
lation who were, for the most part, hardened and indifferent, if

1. Bonar, op. cit., p. 34.
2. M'Cheyne commenced his ministry in November 1835, serving
as Bonar's assistant for ten months, and then was succeeded
by A.N. Somerville.
not actively opposed, to the preaching of the Gospel. Dunipace, on the other hand, lay three miles away, nestled in pastoral scenery, the home of shepherds and small farmers.¹

Arnot at once threw himself into the work, preaching steadily each Sunday, and maintaining a heavy round of pastoral visitation.² He had only preached twice before coming to Larbert, and after twelve weeks wrote: "I think there is more singleness of aim and honesty of purpose; but none of the improved execution. I know somewhat better than I did what preaching should be; but I cannot preach yet."³ He worked in close co-operation with his senior colleague, and declared that, though Mr. Bonar may have had better assistants, he never had one "more thoroughly willing to do what he wished - to take his advice, and comply with it in everything."⁴

It is interesting to note what Bonar thought of his young assistant. A vacancy committee had visited him to ascertain his opinion of Arnot, and the verdict was: "a person of good common sense, but no preacher." Word of this interview reached Arnot, through friends of his in Glasgow, and prompted the following remarks to his friend Halley:

Abstractly the thing is true. I feel it to be true - I have often felt it - but in the sense in which it was understood it is not true. . . . I could not believe that he [Mr. Bonar] said it, without laying him under the charge of grievous inconsistency - and on the other hand it was unkind of a

1. Both the Larbert and the Dunipace churches are still in use for worship, though their interiors have been somewhat altered.
2. Arnot writes that he enjoyed most visiting the sick.
3. Memoir, p. 112.
4. Ibid., pp. 115-16.
Christian friend to be telling it in Glasgow without the most positive certainty of its truth. As to my own interest, I could easily afford to make light of it (alas pride very readily comes to my aid in a case like this!). I shall take the first opportunity of telling Mr. Bonar all about it – and so decide in where the evil lies.

No further letters making mention of this episode are extant. The incident is useful mainly in shedding light upon Arnot’s first year of preaching and his own reaction towards it. He was willing to acknowledge his weaknesses, admitting his failures in preaching, but rebelled when he felt justice had not been given. From the earliest years of his ministry he endeavored to be fair both in his criticism of himself and in his judgment of others.

Shortly after beginning his ministry, Arnot complained of profuse perspiration when preaching and a shortness of breath, forcing him to stop after each paragraph. Five months later he wrote that, after preaching, he was obliged to change literally everything, even his coat. Though his condition did not improve, he refused to lighten his load, and like his predecessor, Robert M’Cheyne, paid little attention to his health and personal comfort. He was heart and soul in his work which seemed to him all that mattered.

One full year at Larbert passed, a year of intensely practical training; then came the call to Glasgow where he was to spend the next twenty-four years of his ministry.

2. Unpublished letter to his father, Larbert, April 16, 1838.
3. At the insistence of Mr. Bonar, Arnot procured a pony which he named “Helper”.
B. St. Peter's Church, 1839 - 1863

Close beside the "Hielanman's Umbrella",¹ in Oswald Street which is between Argyle Street and Broomielaw, stands a brown brick building - the original St. Peter's Church of Glasgow. The church could seat one thousand people and was the first to be built under the Thomas Chalmers' Church Extension Scheme by the Glasgow Church Building Society in 1835.² Here Arnot began his Glasgow ministry on the first Sunday of January 1839; here, for over ten years, he filled the pews week by week with an eager, thriving congregation. In the basement of this building he held his week-day classes where many hundreds of children received their elementary education. Today the building is no longer used for public worship, but has been transformed into a sanctuary for animals - an ill-kept and foul-smelling zoo!

The first four weeks of Arnot's ministry at St. Peter's were attended with great success, each service being thronged with people, with many often standing in the aisles.³ On the fifth Sunday, however, while preaching in the afternoon, Arnot was suddenly stricken with a serious lung ailment which prevented

1. At the point where the railroad crosses Argyle Street. On rainy days and nights, highlanders domiciled in Glasgow used to enjoy assembling there for conversation, hence the name, "Hielanman's Umbrella".
3. Ibid., p. 12.
him from being active again for over three months.\(^1\) This enforced time of illness proved providential as it gave the young preacher, whose health already had been undermined, time to regain his strength and prepare for the heavy work ahead.\(^2\)

Glasgow, at the opening of the nineteenth century, had a population of 77,000. Ten years later it had increased to 101,000 and continued to grow until it reached, in 1841, a population of 283,000.\(^3\) It had become the second city of the British Empire, a city of whirling wheels, smoke and industry. The thousands of working-class people who poured into Glasgow created serious social problems. The city was not prepared to receive them, and living conditions became deplorable. After visiting the city in 1839, Lord Shaftesbury wrote:

> Walked through the 'dreadful' parts of this amazing city; It is a small square plot intersected by small alleys, like gutters, crammed with houses, dunghills, and human beings; hence arise . . . nine-tenths of the disease and nine-tenths of the crime in Glasgow.\(^4\)

Housing was slow to improve as seen from the Census Returns for 1861 which showed that in Glasgow alone, 100,000 people still lived in one-roomed houses, and sometimes as many as fifteen people shared one room, many of them sleeping on the floor.\(^5\)

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1. *Memoir*, p. 150. No further symptoms of the infection appeared until after thirty-five years, when it proved the immediate cause of his death.
2. The practice of bleeding and blistering patients was common in Arnot’s day. Arnot mentions these frightful blisters as being worse than the disease they sought to cure. Unpublished letter to his father, March 27, 1839.
5. Thomas Johnston, *The History of the Working Classes in Scotland* (Glasgow, 1921), p. 294. See also Haldane, *op.cit.*, p. 69. The hated window tax was not repealed until 1851.
Water was obtained in the slum areas from public wells hopelessly inadequate and insanitary, and not until 1855 did Parliament finally pass a Bill authorizing pure Loch Katrine water to be piped into the city. Even then it was not welcomed unanimously for it was reported that an old lady became most indignant when she was forbidden to draw water from a certain favorite well which had been condemned. The "gravitation water" did not satisfy her. "I just canna thole that new water," she complained, "it's got neither taste nor smell."  

In 1840, an Act was passed to prevent boys and girls from being sent up sooty chimneys and sometimes burning flues as brushers or cleaners. This was only partly enforced, and unbelievable accounts are on record of wanton cruelty to these chimney sweeps. One of the cases, tried before Cockburn, dealt with a ruthless master who had compelled an eight year old boy to go up or down thirty-eight new chimneys successively, without any interval for rest or food, until finally, excoriated and exhausted, he collapsed and died.  

At the mid-point of the nineteenth century an estimated 100,000 children were in Scotland, and these chiefly in cities, attending no school. In 1840, one house in every ten in Glasgow was an alcohol shop, and on every corner pawnshops thrived, making 400 per cent profits. As might be expected,

2. Ibid., p. 219.
theft, violence, and street-fighting were prevalent, and murders and suicides common. The number of arrests in 1837 for criminal offences alone was 2,176; in 1842 it had increased to 4,189.¹

Such is a glimpse of the frightful social conditions of Victorian Glasgow. What now of its religious and ecclesiastical setting?

In 1827, the year in which William Arnot entered the University of Glasgow, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland resolved to send out their first foreign missionary, Alexander Duff, to India.² Ten years later the first medical missionary, Dr. Lockhart, was sent to China under the London Missionary Society; and in 1840 David Livingstone set sail for South Africa to carry on the enterprise already begun by Robert Moffat. Adoniram Judson was now hard at work in Burma, translating the Bible into the native tongue and John Williams was just beginning his mission labors in Erromanga in the New Hebrides. The short, fervent years of missionary endeavor by the Cambridge scholar, Henry Martyn, among the Moslems of India and Persia, resulting in the translation of the New Testament into Hindustani and the greater part of it into Persian,³

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¹. Ibid.
². J.E. Fleming, The Burning Bush (Edinburgh, 1913), p. 200. It is interesting to note that Dr. Inglis, champion of the Moderate Party, in 1824 introduced the subject of foreign missions before the General Assembly, and in 1826, through his Pastoral Address to the People of Scotland, roused national enthusiasm for missionary enterprise. Thomas Thomson, A History of the Scottish People from the Earliest Times (London, n.d.), VI, 569.
promoted immense enthusiasm for the missionary enterprise. The Jews, neglected woefully for nearly eighteen hundred years, finally were given the New Testament in Hebrew, translated by the London Jews' Society in 1817; and Robert Murray M'Cheyne, Andrew Bonar, and others were sent to Palestine in 1839 as the Church of Scotland's first deputation to the Jews. The nineteenth century was indeed a century of Foreign Missions when the Church was stirred, as it had not been for centuries to take the Gospel to the ends of the world. "Christ for the World - The World For Christ" again became the motto of Christendom.

Not only was it a century of Foreign Missions, but also of Home Missions, the most striking feature of which was the work in the Wynds of Glasgow. In the seventeenth century, when Glasgow boasted only 8,000 inhabitants, this section, grouped near the Tron Kirk, was comprised of clean, though narrow, lanes between well-built mansions with gardens and orchards. These passage-ways opened from the Trongate into the Bridgegate and remained for many years a most respectable part of the city. On the Bridgegate near the main bridge, lived many of the wealthy lairds and merchants; and here stood

1. Ibid., p. 475.
4. Known also as the Laigh or Low Kirk or St. Mary's. Here Thomas Chalmers on Thursday afternoons preached his famous sermons to crowded congregations, breathless under his burning words.
the first Merchants' Hall beside the Guildry Court. Among the early churches founded in Glasgow, the Wynd Church, built originally in 1685, was one of the most popular—a large, well-attended place of worship where many of the most fashionable and well-to-do citizens liked to assemble.\(^1\)

Gradually, however, as the city extended, the wealthy people left the Wynds and moved to the suburbs, with the result that their mansions and gardens became the site of ugly overcrowded tenements. The Wynd Church was removed, its site being used for the Kail Market, and the present St. George's was built in Buchanan Street; "many of the people bewailing that it was removed so far into the country!"\(^2\)

The Wynds now degenerated into one of the very worst sections of Glasgow in which were crowded 12,000 people from the lowest classes, 8,000 of whom were Roman Catholics. Dugald MacColl described the area as "long narrow, filthy, airless lanes in the heart of the city, with every available inch of ground on each side occupied with buildings, many of them gone, yet packed from cellar to garret with human life."\(^3\) "It is the wretchedest, foulest, immoralest corner of Scotland, nay, of Great Britain," declared James Macgregor,\(^4\) minister of the adjoining parish.

This was manifestly a region which challenged the Church to most strenuous activity, becoming known as a kind of "classic

\(^1\) Dugald MacColl, Among the Masses; or, work in the Wynds (London, 1861), pp. 278-89.
\(^2\) Ibid., p. 25.
\(^3\) Ibid., p. 23.
battleground against the forces of home heathenism." On January 8, 1851, Robert Buchanan, in a burning address, appealed to the Free Church Presbytery of Glasgow for help in alleviating the atrocious social and religious conditions of the Wynds, and proposed that the subject should be brought formally under the notice of the General Assembly. Let us not think, he declared, that we can retire, each man within his own flock, and enjoy our own privileges in quiet and comfort, without caring for the desolations of thousands lying all around us.

If the Christianity of our congregations do not make head upon the surrounding ungodliness, that surrounding ungodliness will make head upon our Christianity. . . . Spiritual religion cannot thrive in an atmosphere foul with corruption. . . . The widow of Sarepta shared her last meal with one whom she saw ready to die, and her little store grew into a life-long supply. Let us be assured it will not fare the worse with the Free Church of Scotland that, in the midst of all her straits, she is found willing to share her scanty resources - her five loaves and few small fishes - with the multitudes who are fainting and perishing around us from a famine of the bread of life.²

Both Presbytery and General Assembly responded enthusiastically to the appeal, and immediately a Committee was appointed to consider the situation. On December 29th of that year a new Building Society was instituted with a capital already subscribed of £10,000. The old site of the Wynd Church was bought and a plain, but comely house of worship built. Well-organized missions were begun and large numbers of people were converted through open-air services in summer and gatherings in the music-halls and circuses during the winter.³ The new movement was

1. Ibid., p. 143.
fostered not only by the indefatigable exertions of Robert Buchanan and the succession of singularly able ministers of the Wynd Church, such as Dugald MacColl, Robert Howie and James Wells, but also by the aroused interest in spiritual things resulting from the revival of 1858 onwards. The Church was eager to seize the opportunity. William Arnot, unlike some of the ministers of his day, did not hesitate to help personally in the work. As we shall see in our study of his pastoral ministry, he was active not only in the work of the slums of his own parish, but also among that "mass of moral and physical filth" - that "seething sea of sin" known as the Wynds.

Orthodoxy, stiff and rigid, was in absolute possession in Arnot's day, and the slightest diversion from the Westminster Standards was frowned upon. Edward Irving and M'Leod Campbell with their mysticism, Wright of Borthwick and Thomas Erskine with their daring, liberal pens were all branded as heretics and expelled from the Church. It was a day in which Kirk Sessions enjoyed enormous power and tolerated no disobedience. All fames brought against any member or adherent of the congregation were carefully investigated, and the offenders summoned to compear before the Session. The following case of fornication, one of many recorded in the Session Records of Free St. Peter's Church, Glasgow, during Arnot's ministry, exemplifies this. The

3. Intra, p. 142.
transgressor, who had confessed his sin to the minister, was summoned three times to appear before the Session, but adamantly refused. Finally, the Session, charging him with the guilt of "obstinate contumacy," debarred him from all Communion and privileges of the Church, and instructed the minister to intimate the same from his morning pulpit.

Sabbath observance was strictly maintained. Many homes had their blinds drawn all Sunday, and no work but the most urgent was allowed to be done. Sometimes this was carried to an absurd degree as seen in the following story told by Peter Mackenzie. It was a January Sabbath night in Glasgow in the year 1847, when the streets were thick with snow and "a bitter, scowling east wind was mingled at intervals with gusts of sleet and rain." Outside the House of Refuge was found an Irish family—seven children, all under ten, the mother dying of tuberculosis, and the father standing beside them mute and dejected. When the police were summoned and the family taken to the police station, the youngest child, upon arrival, was dead and the mother expired shortly afterwards. This tragedy, one of many at that time, was caused by starvation. The soup kitchens for the destitute were closed—not allowed to be opened because it was the Sabbath.1

1. Oakley, op. cit., p. 111.
2. Ibid. A ludicrous example of Sabbath observance is told of Dr. Buckland, the scientist, who one Sunday, with his slim hammer in hand, was accosted by a woman. "What are you doing?" she demanded. "Only breaking a stone," he replied. "Na, na," she retorted, "you're doin' waur than that; you're breakin' the Sawbath." Haldane, op. cit., p. 149.
The inevitable recoil from the entrenched order of ideas was delayed largely by the ardent, evangelistic preaching, on approved orthodox lines, of such men as William C. Burns, afterwards distinguished pioneer missionary to China, Robert Murray M'Cheyne, Andrew and Horatius Bonar\(^1\) and William Arnot. These evangelical preachers and others brought a note of fresh vitality and meaning to the solemn creed of Calvinism on which the Church in Scotland had long been nourished. They were the leaven in the dough of nineteenth century orthodoxy, the yeast that gave the preaching ministry life.

By 1830 the Voluntary controversy had fairly begun and the place of Patronage in the Church's constitution proved a very sore point. The two major opposing groups within the Church of Scotland at this time - the Moderates and the Evangelicals - were distinguished by their respective attitudes to the exercise of patronage. The Moderates stood in favor of Patronage, maintaining that the Presbyterian Church government must be conducted on an orderly basis, the subordinate courts in all respects obeying the higher.\(^2\) They reasoned that a series of righteous judgments in the Church's judicatories could restore to the people the voice they once had in the election of their ministers, with the result that a bridle would be put in the mouth of patrons. The Evangelicals, however, pointed out that only after long years of litigation and strife could such a

change be effected, and that in the meantime the Church would be exposed to assaults by the Voluntaries and the Anti-patronage party. They urged, therefore, that measures should be taken immediately to re-establish the rights of the people and save the Church.

The year 1834 marked the passing of the Veto Act which gave the majority of any congregation the authority to reject any minister presented to them whom they did not favor. This drastic law proved a source of strife and bitterness in the Church for the next nine years and led to the thorny cases of Lethendy, Auchterarder, Marnoch and Culsalmond, and ultimately to the Disruption of 1843.

The years preceding the Disruption were busy ones for Arnot who had gathered a large and very thriving congregation about him. In one of his letters he mentions a typical day:

Thursday - Morning up at 7; breakfast; jumped into the train at 8; home at 10 ½; wrote half of an address to ministers, and down to St. George's at 12; preached (text Luke 1, 16) and presided at ordination of a Mr. Brown. . . . Came home and groaned awhile; went out and walked to cool my temples; down to meet my maiden class at 6½; taught very happily; lesson John iii.; then got 10 minutes' stretch on a form with a three-legged stool for a pillow, and then assembled the teachers and weans, and I acted dominus dominorum till 10 minutes past 9. Home; got parritch, and at this moment am sitting writing with my two feet most happily plunged into a large tub of warm water; and all well.

Thus fully occupied with his city charge, Arnot took no prominent part in the proceedings which led to the Disruption. He sympathized fully, however, with the non-intrusion advocates, and was one of the signatories of the Deed of Demission. In defiance

of the interdict obtained from the Court of Session by the Presbytery of Strathbogie, he was sent, along with others, to preach and dispense ordinances in that district. He writes of conducting the Communion service there in the open air and being pressed by the throng about him. "So close were they that I could only see the nearest; wherefore I mounted the chair they had given me to sit on and so commanded them. Oh it was grand!"  

In the year before the Disruption, Arnot was offered a presentation to the comfortable country parish of Ratho near Edinburgh, with a larger stipend than he was receiving in St. Peter's. Before the congregation had signed the call, however, the Presbytery of Edinburgh decided to suspend proceedings in the case until their next meeting, with a view of sending this and all other calls and presentations to the Assembly. Arnot, believing that this was an indication that he should not accept, immediately withdrew his name.  

In the same year he published his first literary work - a memoir of James Halley who died in 1841. The first edition was published anonymously, but the second and third bore the author's name. Arnot mentioned in his diary that he had been reticent about having his name appear on the title page lest it would be indicative of "wicked pride."  

Arnot manifested no concern over the future of

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1. Ibid., p. 146.  
2. Ibid., p. 150.  
3. Ibid., p. 157.
St. Peter's Church, believing that whichever way the question of patronage went it would not be wrongly settled. "If we get a good law, and be all left free, then we will go on thankfully and cheerfully in our work. If, on the other hand, we be all scattered, we will just be cast more on the hand of God."¹ When the crisis came, Arnot, with all except one elder of his congregation, left the Establishment. They continued to worship in the Oswald Street building until February 1849,² after which they were forced to leave by the decision of the House of Lords which declared that all the fourteen or fifteen new churches in Glasgow and its vicinity, which the Free Church congregations continued to possess, should become the exclusive property of the Establishment.

Soon after the Disruption, Arnot and the Reverend Jonathan Anderson were sent to Orkney and Shetland to encourage and assist the ministers and congregations of the Free Church there. Doubtless this visit instigated the call given Arnot in 1846 from the Free Church in Lerwick, Shetland. He carefully debated the advisability of leaving his affectionate congregation, and only after much earnest thought and prayer declined. It was his habit in all such matters to look carefully for indications of God's guiding hand.

On July 30th, 1844,³ Arnot married Miss Jane Fleming of Clairmont, Glasgow; one of a family of eleven. His diary

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1. Ibid., p. 132.
2. Ibid., p. 247. A yearly rent of £100 was paid to the Church Building Society which owned the property.
3. This was the year in which Arnot was sent by the Glasgow Presbytery as the first deputy to the Welsh Presbyterian
shows that he was intent on knowing and obeying the will of God in this important matter, and on the night before he proposed to her he writes:

My grand want in this matter now is grace — the grace of a strong faith to keep this earthly thing in its own place. It is swelling in my heart all this day, as if it were the greatest thing. My Lord, my Redeemer, let me not dishonour Thee. . . . If on the morrow our hearts are drawn together, and no obstacle intervene, the whole course will be most conclusive evidence to me that the Lord hears and answers prayer.

In the spring of 1845, Mr. and Mrs. Arnot left for Montreal, at the request of the Colonial Committee of the Church, to supply for some months there the newly-organized Free Church congregation. Both were impressed with the great cities, the wide open spaces and the brilliant skies of Canada. Arnot mentioned particularly the magnificent streets of Toronto terminating in a primeval forest. "Just suppose," he wrote his Glasgow congregation, "that you left the bustle of Trongate and before you reached the head of Hope Street you stepped into a thick native forest that the hand of man had never touched."² While in Canada the Arnotts traveled extensively, conducting many services and encouraging the Free Church ministers. At one point, Arnot preached from one to three times on each of six successive days and traveled some long, rough journeys in between.³ Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Philadelphia, and

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1. Memoir, p. 164.
2. Ibid., p. 161.
3. Ibid., p. 185.

Church. See Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland (Edinburgh, 1869), p. 185.
New York were all visited in rapid succession before the
Arnots left Boston for home. Arnot was enthusiastic about
the New World and wrote his St. Peter's congregation: "I am
pressed with conflicting emotions - sadness at leaving a most
interesting people, whom I have learned to love, and gladness
at the near prospect of meeting with you."¹

Almost a year later Arnot received an invitation to
return to Toronto as Professor in the Theological College there.
He was sorely tempted to accept, believing that his talents lay
in this direction, but after weighing all considerations, he
decided to remain with St. Peter's. He was warmly attached to
his own congregation, and wrote: "Of the three elements -
(1) going to Toronto, (2) leaving Scotland, (3) separation from
the congregation - I think I could do the first easily, the
second with difficulty, the third not at all."²

In the spring of the following year, once again Arnot
was faced with a call. This time it was to a Professorship
in the Presbyterian College in London. Immense pressure was
placed upon him to take the Chair of Systematic and Pastoral
Theology, and his close friend, Dr. James Hamilton of Regent
Square Church, London, strenuously urged him to accept.
Hamilton pointed out that a vitalized Presbyterianism in
England, sound doctrine in warm English hearts and from fluent
English lips, guided by Scottish sense, and systematically
propagated by Presbyterian organization, could have profound

¹. Ibid., p. 189.
². Ibid., p. 199.
influence through the power of the Holy Spirit in promoting the evangelical piety of England. He assured Arnot:

I know that you will not found a new school of theology; but I believe that you will put new life in the old one. And I firmly believe, if you come here in high heart and hope, and with a two years' stock of patience, that you will be blessed by God to render a most signal service to the Christianity of this empire.

Being strongly inclined to accept, but shrinking from taking the responsibility of deciding, Arnot left the whole matter to the discretion of the Presbytery. The result was a unanimous refusal to put the call into his hands, much to Arnot's disappointment. "I thought my connection with St. Peter's had ended," he told one of his elders, "they should have let me go, as they know my every thought, and I have nothing new to give them." It was, however, after this that his sermons and lectures, which now form The Race for Riches, Laws from Heaven for Life on Earth, The Parables of Our Lord, and Roots and Fruits of the Christian Life, were delivered in the ordinary course of his ministry.

On August, 1847, Arnot was appointed by the Committee of the Commission to go to Ireland to inquire into the conditions of the people there. This was during the serious potato blight which commenced in 1846 and continued for two years, causing great suffering throughout Ireland and Scotland. Ireland was largely reduced to a state of famine, and as a consequence, Irish immigration to Scotland reached an alarming height in the "Hungry

Forties" when tens of thousands of illiterate, starving Irishmen paid the four pence fare and crossed the channel in search of employment. In the first three months of 1848 nearly 43,000 Irish arrived in Glasgow; during the next five years the population of Ireland fell by two millions - a third of the whole nation.\(^1\) This overwhelming increase of Scotland's population provoked serious housing, educational and religious problems. The Irish, the majority of whom came penniless and on the brink of starvation, were blamed for increasing the slum problem which was already atrocious. Religious disputes of the orange and the green were waged in bitter earnestness. The memories of the Resurrectionists importing human corpses from Ireland, the ghastly tales of the beadle of the Ramshorn Church and the two notorious murderers, Burke and Hare - both Irish-born - promoted suspicion and hatred of the incoming Irish.\(^2\) By 1850 the population of the industrial areas of Scotland was about one-fourth Irish who worked for ten pence a day and constituted the bulk of "the reserve margin of labour", crushing many Scotsmen out of a livelihood.\(^3\)

Arnot wrote of some of the misery he had witnessed while in Ireland, and of how he had bought, for a half crown, three stones of potatoes for some of the poor, which nearly caused a riot among the starving multitude clamoring for food. In one

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1. Oakley, *op.cit.*, p. 70. Thousands of Irish immigrated to America at this time, and by 1880 there were 1,000,000 native-born Irishmen in the United States. England and Scotland took the poorest of the immigrants.
2. Ibid., p. 72.
letter he told of a Christian lady (evidently of considerable means) who, often standing from morning till night, had distributed meal, to the value of more than £1,600, to the starving.

They came fifteen to twenty miles to her for a plate full of meal. . . . The appearance of the people she described as horrible — often they could not speak at all. They just staggered forward and looked. They would sometimes hold out their arms and take the loose skin and roll it round their arms like the sleeve of a gown.

While in Ireland, Arnot spoke to enthusiastic crowds of persecuted Protestants. At one meeting, while he was preaching in a house to a crowded and attentive audience, a priest suddenly burst in on them. The Protestant owner of the house ordered him to leave, but he refused, "and cracked his whip over the poor cowering creatures, and raged just as a Turkish pasha would over his slaves, whom he could order to be strangled with the bow-string." Arnot reasoned with him for nearly one half hour and finally persuaded him to leave. "It was a most solemn scene. My heart was full — oppressed with the thought of the bondage in which the wicked one holds this land."2

On the 26th of May 1850, the Free St. Peter's congregation, after having worshipped for nearly fifteen months in the City Hall, moved into their spacious new church in Main Street.4 Arnot watched the erection with much satisfaction,

3. Ibid., p. 230.
4. Now known as Blythswood Street. The church had the tallest spire of any church in the city at that time.
and when the spire was nearly finished, daringly went to the top in the steam hoist - a feat which none of the Building Committee attempted.\footnote{Goodwin, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 18.} The high pulpit, however, was a disappointment to Arnot, since he had requested a low one. Even the architects in these days, it appears, were insistent upon elevating the position of the ministers as far as possible above their people!

The opening service was preached by Arnot's warm friend and classmate, James Hamilton of Regent Square Church, London. The closing sentences of his sermon show the high esteem in which he held his colleague.

\ldots it is a gladness to recognize, still fraught with youthful energy, and radiant with the light of departed days, the congenial pupil of Mylne and Sandford, the favourite of Macgill, the bosom friend, and alas! the biographer of Halley; and it is a comfort to think that amidst the early crush of youthful energy and ardour, there still remains to bless the Church and adorn his foster city, one representative of our Alma Mater in her palmiest growth. And still more cheering is it, knowing that his genial vigour, his ripe scholarship, his fresh and exhaustless fancy, his warm affection and manly prowess, have all been laid at the feet of Jesus, and to know that his theology, so massive and mature, his presentations of truth, so vivid and original, and his piety, so genuine and so wholesome, have gathered round him a congregation so large, so influential, so receptive of his ministry, so ready to second his labours of love.\footnote{Memoir, p. 267.}

Less than one hundred years later Free St. Peter's Church was burned, having served as the Highland Memorial Church for many years. Today nothing remains of the structure but the hollow shell clothed with weeds. Its doors are filled with brick, and the base of its once lofty spire stands shorn of its
dignity. Glasgow seems to have forgotten St. Peter's of the past, and turns the busy corner heedless of the site where once stood the pride and admiration of William Arnot.

In 1851 six of Arnot's sermons appeared in print under the title, The Race for Riches, and Some of the Pits Into Which the Runners Fall: Six Lectures Applying the Word of God to the Traffic of Men. These met with an eager reading public, and within the first two months the entire first edition of a thousand copies was sold. This was followed by the publication of an address to the Young Men's Christian Association in London entitled, The Foe and the Fight; or The Dangers and Defences of Youth, and was Arnot's first close connection with the Association which was to become one of his life-long interests.

The long years of Arnot's Glasgow ministry are marked by few striking events, few great changes. His daily schedule was filled to over-flowing with demands for Bible teaching, writing of tracts and lecturing to youth and temperance organizations. His ministry was similar to that of James Hamilton which he described as being like a smooth-flowing stream seldom ruffled by any extraordinary event.

Where there are no battles, the history of a country is brief and dull; but great is the happiness and the progress of the people. It is the same with the work and sphere of a Christian minister, when he is faithful and his flock affectionate.

The first volume of his book on the Proverbs entitled, Laws From Heaven For Life On Earth, was published in the autumn

1. Life of James Hamilton, p. 349.
of 1856, followed a year later by the second volume. These were a collection of his Sunday morning sermons preached in Free St. Peter's Church. During their delivery every seat was occupied, and forms were placed in the aisles and on the pulpit platform to accommodate the large congregations. The books enjoyed an immense circulation and immediately placed William Arnot among the foremost Bible expositors of his day.

Arnot's first experience of Continental travel came in September 1857 when he attended the Evangelical Alliance Conference at Berlin. His letters recording his European experiences, are filled with interesting observations which are often told with a dash of humor. He was never enamored of sophisticated society, always preferring plain-spoken people. "English drawing rooms," he confessed, "are not the arena best fitted for showing off my beauties." Once in Brussels he was dining alone in what evidently was a rather aristocratic restaurant. The waiter was inexcusably slow in bringing the dessert, and after waiting for one complete hour, Arnot left in disgust. Had the unsuspecting waiter arrived at that moment, the irate minister would have greeted him in fuming French: "J'ai dîné à table d'hôte aujourd'hui pour la première fois, et pour la dernière fois!"

On visiting a Lutheran Church in Frankfurt-am-Main, Arnot expressed his delight in the music and noted particularly

that the organ did not prevent the people from singing.  

He could see no reason why the Free Church should not have hymns added to the psalter and the paraphrases, and on three occasions, in the General Assembly, argued for their inclusion.  

Arnot's main contention in each of these three speeches in 1866, 1869 and 1872, was that the psalter is a book of prayer as well as a book of praise. If people are prohibited from using their own words in praise because a manual of praise has been founded in Scripture, then it should follow that they are also prohibited from using their own words in prayer because a manual of prayer has been founded in Scripture.  

"Is it innocent to speak praise in human words and sinful to sing it?" asked Arnot. "Is it lawful to frame your own language in praise as long as your tone is in G flat, but wrong whenever it raises to D sharp?" How unreasonable such an argument! We have waited too long, he declared. We can very well afford to cherish those very good but very narrow brethren in the Church, giving them their own way in all brotherly charity; "but we cannot afford to allow those very good people to impose their narrow views as a rule to our conscience or a law in our Church. We allow them their liberty

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1. Memoir, p. 326.
2. In the Free Church the desire for an addition to the praise first took the form, in 1865, of an effort to provide new psalm versions and revised paraphrases. In 1869 the General Assembly was forced to face the question of hymns, to which strong resistance was offered, by James Begg and his followers Fleming, A History of the Church In Scotland, 1843-1874, p. 207.
to the full, but we shall not permit them to take away ours."  

In 1872, the Supreme Court was asked to allow the public use of twenty-one new psalm versions and 123 paraphrases and hymns. The vote in favor was 213 to 61. The book, however, proved too meager to satisfy the hymn lovers and was almost contemptuously regarded by the adherents of the old ways. After five years, steps had to be taken to prepare a more worthy collection.

In June, 1858, Arnot and his family, which now consisted of four girls and two boys, moved into a new home on Hamilton Park Terrace. The furniture was moved by four leading carriers of Glasgow voluntarily and completely without charge. This was in appreciation of an address Arnot had given at one of their soirees, and indicates how greatly beloved he was by the working man.

The volume of sermons entitled *Roots and Fruits of the Christian Life* was sent to press along with numerous temperance and youth tracts towards the close of the next year. One of the most popular and influential of these small booklets, *The Voyage of Life*, which was written in the shadow of bereavement after the death of his devoted sister, Mary, was reprinted in America and translated into Welsh. In this year also Arnot contemplated a three month visit to Palestine, but the plan did not materialize. Twice again his hopes for Eastern travel were thwarted, and when the opportunity finally came for distant

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travel, it was towards the West and not the East that he went.

In September, 1859, Arnot attended the Evangelical Alliance Conference in Belfast, Ireland, three months after a great revival had begun in that city. This was an important part of the Ulster Awakening which seemed to spring from the school-house prayer meetings near Kells where four laymen, James McQuilkin, John Wallace, Robert Carlisle and Jeremiah Meneely, met every Friday to pray especially for an out-pouring of the Holy Spirit in Britain. The revival which ensued (1859-65) was similar to that of the extraordinary religious awakening of 1858 in the United States of America, and spread throughout the whole of the United Kingdom affecting every county in Ulster, Scotland, Wales and England, adding a million accessions to the evangelical churches and stimulating great interest in home and foreign missions. "What differentiated this from all previous revivals in Scotland was the prominent part taken by lay evangelists." These were of two classes: (1) Gentlemen, often of wealth and social prestige, lawyers, landed proprietors, English University graduates and leading merchants who appealed mainly to the educated audiences; (2) laborers, including some converted from low and even criminal

3. Orr, op.cit., p. 5.
courses, whose message was most effective with the uninstructed masses. Conspicuous among the former were: Reginald Radcliffe, a Liverpool solicitor, known as a "ball of love"; Brownlow North, son of a prebendary and grandson of a bishop, and spoken of as "the brimstone preacher", and Hay Macdowall Grant of Arndilly, the landed proprietor and logical speaker. Richard Weaver, a collier from the English Midlands; Robert Cunningham, the "Briggate Butcher" and former prize fighter; Robert Annan, a runaway soldier; and James Turner, a fishcouner, were representative of the latter class.¹

The influence of the 1859 revival in Belfast was such that the Roman Catholic priests cautioned their people to avoid contact with the Protestants as far as possible, and distributed holy water and consecrated medals² to preserve their people from "the thing that's going." The month before Arnot arrived in Belfast, 20,000 people had gathered for a prayer-meeting in the Botanic Gardens. Arnot found the churches of every denomination crowded to excess, and after conversing with converts in five families, testified enthusiastically to the great work of God among the people.³

Two years later in the autumn, Arnot again visited the Evangelical Alliance Conference, this time meeting in Geneva. This was the year in which the revival, begun in 1859, particularly influenced the districts of Dumfries and Glasgow, and was

³ Memoir, p. 356.
largely spread through the fervent preaching of the young American evangelist, Edward Payson Hammond. Enormous mass meetings were held throughout the whole of Annandale, Gretna, Brydekirk, and Ecclefechan.¹ So great was the enthusiasm in Glasgow that 4,000 people crowded into the City Hall for a thanksgiving meeting, while twice that number was turned away.² The principal result of Hammond's preaching was a new interest in Child Conversion, and special meetings for children were held nightly for many weeks.³ Arnot, from the first, co-operated heartily with the leaders of the movement and wrote in his diary, on April 7, 1861, that the quickening spirit was at work both in his family and in his congregation and that arrangements had been made for holding congregational meetings nightly for a week.⁴ "I hope," he declared, "that I am on the eve of an outpouring of the Spirit in large measure on my own dear people."⁵ A fortnight later, after observing several hopeful cases he remarked: "Decided revival has been and is within the borders of the congregation. The meetings have been very refreshing to many."⁶

It should be noted that while Arnot was genuinely interested in the success of this revival and doubtless did much to further the work of the Holy Spirit in his own congregation,

². Ibid.  
⁴. Ibid., p. 373.  
⁵. Ibid.  
⁶. Ibid., p. 374.
he was only one of the many Pastoral Evangelists of the day.
J. Edwin Orr's carefully documented volume, *The Second Evangelical Awakening in Britain*, which is the only attempt ever made to record the history of the entire movement, does not mention Arnot by name, only alluding to the fact that there were many other Pastoral Evangelists in both State Church and Nonconformity, such as William Haslam, John Venn, Newman Hall, C.H. Spurgeon and Andrew and Horatio Bonar. From the very little evidence extant, it would appear that Arnot was not as active in this awakening as in that of the Moody campaign thirteen years later.

The degree of Doctor of Divinity was twice offered Arnot, first in 1860 from his own Glasgow University, and second in 1872, from the University of the City of New York. On both occasions, Arnot declined to accept the honor. He wrote the following to a representative of the University of Glasgow:

I don't value - *sit venia verbo* - these D.D.s; certainly not from want of respect to the Doctors or the makers of doctors, but partly because, in my judgment, a want of discrimination has sometimes been manifested, chiefly, though not exclusively, in the Transatlantic articles; and perhaps also because of a certain constitutional tendency to simplicities in my own personal tastes. I would not do a rude thing in any case, but I would contrive some means by which I would escape the necessity of wearing the decoration. Consequently, as prevention is better than cure, it will be more agreeable for all parties if nothing more is done.

The letter addressed: "Rev. William Arnot, D.D." from William R. Martin, Secretary of the University of the City of

2. Ibid., p. 238.
New York, announcing that the Doctorate of Divinity had been conferred upon him, received a similar reply. We quote it in full to show, in his own words, how Arnot felt about the matter.

New York, 54 W. 36th Street
18th October 1873

Dear Sir, - Your letter regarding diploma was waiting me here on my return from Washington yesterday. I am on wing for Europe. Must sail to-day at three o'clock, and my answer must be brief.

I must endeavour to make two things clear and sure, though it may seem difficult to reconcile them. First, I shall entertain an high esteem for the University of New York and its members. I value very highly their favourable judgment; with my whole heart I reciprocate their kind regard. Nothing that I shall say or do will tend to depreciate the worth of their certificate. But, second, I do not consent to have my ordinary designation at home changed, and my precedence among my equals affected by their action in this country. I shall continue to assume, and expect from others, my own simple designation.

A hurried note now of partial explanation. Several special circumstances forbid my assumption of the title.

First. - The University of Glasgow, about fifteen years ago, sounded me on the subject, through an eminent personage, and received such a discouraging response, that the matter was carried no further. Many of my friends in Scotland know the circumstances, and believe that I declined the honour when offered by my own university.

Second. - I am minister of Free High Church in Edinburgh. A Dr. Arnot is minister of the High Church there, connected with the Establishment. As it is, my letters often go to him. The inconvenience would be increased if both were designated doctor.

Third. - The resolution of your council, as you intimate, was taken in May, while your letter of 13 curt., is the only intimation of the fact that I have received. Don't suppose that I mention the circumstance in order to blame you. Far from it; I have enough to do with my own faults. My aim is to justify in your sight my own acts. Immediately before leaving home in August this year, I observed in one of our monthly religious journals an announcement that your university had conferred the degree on me. I believed that there was some mistake. The editor told me he had seen it long before in an American paper. As a considerable period had intervened, and I had never heard of it, and had never seen an American paper that contained the notice - although I have many kind correspondents here, who send me papers when anything interesting occurs - I suspected it was a blunder. I said nothing, however; but within a week after the notice was printed in Scotland, letters began to pour in decorated
with D.D. Here I was placed in a difficulty. If this goes on unchecked for a few weeks, the name will be fixed, fixed on a false information, and I must walk through the world decked in plumes that are not my own.

On the eve of sailing for America, I sent a letter to the Scotch newspapers intimating that I had good grounds for believing that the rumour was unfounded, and requesting that my friends would continue to address me as before, and that whether the news should prove false or true. This resolution cannot now be changed. I think the best method is, let the diploma never issue, let the whole matter drop into silence.

I have written in haste, but I should have proved untrue to my judgment and my affections alike, if I have said anything that seems to undervalue the honour which your university meant to confer, or to indicate any lack of sympathy on my part with the great work which it and kindred institutions are carrying on in this great country, which I see, and rejoice to see, will soon take the lead among the nations of the world. - Yours, in esteem and love, William Arnot.

This interesting letter indicates the independent character of William Arnot. Had he wished, he could conscientiously have accepted the degree in spite of the three reasons cited for refusing it.

First - While his own university had never been allowed officially to confer the degree upon him, the New York University had done so without his consent. Hence Arnot could justifiably have pleaded that since the matter had been taken out of his hands, he had accepted the honor rather than cause misunderstanding and ill feeling.

Second - The fact that another minister with the same name in the High Church, Edinburgh, bore the title D.D., was no substantial reason for turning down the degree. Arnot admitted that mail addressed to him had often been sent to Dr. Arnot,

1. Ibid, pp. 369-72.
which in itself indicated that it was not the wrong title - Dr. or Mr. - which precipitated the error, but the wrong address - High or Free High Church. The admission that letters had poured into him "decorated with D.D." showed that Mr. Arnot could easily be reached with or without his honorary degree.

Third - Arnot plainly stated through the Scottish newspapers that he felt the D.D. rumor was unfounded and that he wished his friends to continue to address him as before "whether the news should prove false or true." This was only to say that whether the degree was conferred upon him or not, he wished to remain "Mr." He did not declare that he would not accept the degree. In view of this, Arnot could easily have taken his doctorate and still have remained on record as requesting that his title be unchanged.

It is obvious, therefore, that Arnot sincerely did not wish to become a Doctor. He was never comfortable when he felt himself too far above the average "Mr.", and shrank from anything which might cause him to lose contact with the common man.¹

In 1862, another call was presented to him from the Kelvinside Church, only two miles from St. Peter's. Arnot's congregation strongly objected to the invitation, believing

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¹ In America Arnot was always known as "Doctor Arnot." He writes: "It comes in a rush, and there is no resisting it. . . . Here there is no such thing as a man approaching my age and position that is not D.D., and so the good people cannot call me anything else. . . . I think from the preponderance of the title here it will, within a generation, come to be given to every minister at ordination, which would be a good solution." [Ibid., pp. 442-43.]
that Arnot's presence at Kelvinside would draw away many from his former congregation. Arnot, aware of his people's concern, declined the call.¹

Shortly after this, however, he accepted the invitation to be pastor of the important Free High Church in Edinburgh which had always been known as an aristocratic church. Its congregation was composed of some of the leading and most wealthy families of the city, and all its ministers preceding Arnot, namely Robert Gordon (1843-1853), James Buchanan (1843-1845) and Robert Rainy (1854-1862), were Doctors of Divinity.

The call to this congregation brought Arnot much heartache and doubt. He faced two strong oppositions: the first, - his own people of Free St. Peter's, all of whom persistently wanted him to remain in Glasgow; and the second, - a substantial minority of the Free High Church, none of whom wanted him to come to Edinburgh. Nothing remains to indicate the thought behind the minority's feeling. Arnot may have been unwelcome because he was not of their social standing, or perhaps because he did not have a Doctor's degree. Whatever the reason, he was definitely not wanted by an obstinate few, and the records show that two deacons and one elder resigned when he came to Edinburgh.

Arnot's Glasgow congregation did all in their power to retain their pastor, sending a vigorous deputation to Presbytery to plead their case. Four men from the Free High Church, and

¹. Ibid., p. 384.
ten men from Free St. Peter's Church represented the respective congregations. The Presbytery met at two o'clock in the Presbytery House, Free Tron Session House, Glasgow, but adjourned to the church in view of the large number of people who attended.  

The following four reasons why Arnot should not leave Glasgow were presented by three delegates from St. Peter's:

1. St. Peter's Church is near the center of the most important city of Scotland. It demands a minister of great talent and experience — one who has a broad understanding of the toiling thousands of a modern commercial society and one who can reach the growing masses. Arnot has proved himself unquestionably capable for the task.

2. St. Peter's Church is largely attended by young people, especially young men many of whom migrate to all parts of the world. Arnot is noted for his contact with youth— for his ability to inspire and influence the coming generation. Why should the right man in the right place be removed?

3. St. Peter's Church has 900 members all of whom are heartily in favor of retaining Mr. Arnot. The High Church, Edinburgh, can claim only 238 members who have signed the call to Mr. Arnot. Is it just that a minority should rule a majority — that the larger and wider field should succumb to the smaller?

1. For a full report of the proceedings, see The Daily Review (Glasgow), August 21, 1863.

2. The congregation was actually larger than this. An estimate of its size can be gained from The Communion Rolls. On April 6, 1863, 364 people partook of the Communion.
4. Arnot will have less labor in Glasgow than in Edinburgh. St. Peter's Church is a thriving institution with its Sabbath Schools and other missionary agencies all in smooth working order. The pioneer work has been accomplished. The Free High Church, Edinburgh, on the other hand, is in great need of up-building and would consequently demand much more labor on the part of its pastor.

Arnot's reply shows how he persuaded himself into making the move to Edinburgh. His one and only reason for leaving Glasgow was that he considered the change beneficial for the Church's work and the minister's life and health. He felt that his work was finished in St. Peter's, and that, in a new sphere and with a smaller congregation, he might prove more effective. "It is not a mark of Apostolic succession," he affirmed, "to be always all our days in one place. I think if there was more circulation there would be less stagnation." He fervently denied the malicious rumor which declared that he and his session and congregation had had a disagreement, and that disharmony existed among them.

The Searcher of Hearts knows that it is not our weak point — the want of personal affection. We are strong in that, but we must make this give way when duty calls; and in as much as there is not great éclat, not a mighty congregation, not even unanimity — that takes a great deal of the éclat and glory away — but when my judgment is satisfied, I am the less suspicious of my own judgment when I find there is no great glory to me in connection with it.  

1. Arnot's stipend in Edinburgh was £100 a year less. See Glasgow News, June 4, 1875.
2. The Daily Review (Glasgow), August 21, 1863.
3. Ibid.
The decision to sever his connection with his devoted Glasgow congregation naturally caused Arnot a great deal of pain. He knew he was leaving the warmth of intense personal affection and was moving into the chilled atmosphere of strife and hostility. This was evident from a letter written to a friend in Edinburgh in which he confessed that in the bitterness of his heart he cried to God to stop the move.

When you dig down with the intention of removing a tree - an old one - you generally find the roots are stronger and deeper than you expected. . . . Your city is thought to be beautiful; oh! if you knew what a dark repellent shadow it throws across my heart at this hour.

On Sunday, August 22, 1863, Arnot bade farewell to his congregation. Heart-broken over the termination of his long ministry at St. Peter's he recorded in his diary: "I have preached to my people all day for the last time as their minister. I am quite crushed."² The "tree" was now uprooted, lifted from the soil which had made it great. Never was Arnot to be forgotten. He stands unexcelled among the leaders of Free St. Peter's Church - a man who commanded the overwhelming love and respect of a people who knew him as their brother.

2. Ibid., p. 390.
C. Free High Church, Edinburgh (1863 - 1875)

Arnot's new church home was located in one of the most picturesque places imaginable, high above the Mound on castle rock. It was joined to the Free Church Divinity College and commanded a panoramic view of the Princes Street gardens, northern Edinburgh, the Firth of Forth and, in clear weather, the Ochils and the nearer Grampians. In 1936, after nearly eighty-six years of worshipping on the Mound, the Free High congregation moved out to the Reid Memorial Church near Blackfordhill, and their former edifice then became the New College library. It was altogether fitting that such a change should take place as both church and college were a distinct unit and harmonized in architecture.¹

Arnot began his Edinburgh ministry on October 11, 1663 and for about three years rented the beautiful home which had been built for Thomas Chalmers on Churchhill, Morningside.² Here he prepared for publication his lectures on the Parables, and in 1865 finished The Lesser Parables of Our Lord.

The Free High Church congregation, which had been considerably thinned during the long vacancy, soon revived under his ardent preaching until the church was completely filled. Once again Arnot became absorbed in the work of the

¹ W.H. Playfair was the architect.
² The house still stands though divided into two dwellings.
ministry, keeping a busy schedule of writing, preaching, teaching and lecturing, and soon came to feel as much at home in Edinburgh as he did in Glasgow.

Many holidays were spent on the Continent: in Germany, France, Switzerland, Italy, Saxony and Bohemia. Always Arnot sought out those to whom he might minister. On one occasion, we find him in Brieg, sitting down with his German Testament in earnest conversation with a humble Roman Catholic. Another time, while visiting the popular resort center of Baden as a complete stranger, he went to infinite trouble in gaining permission to hold two services at a local church — one on Sunday and one on Monday. The effort having been made and all arrangements put in order, he exclaimed:

I am now as happy as the day is long. Nor does my peace depend on the magnitude of the forthcoming congregations. If three come, I shall not be disturbed; if none come, I shall still be easy. I have done what I could; and as soon as I could see my way to that, all difficulty was at an end.

The fruits of this labor were not spectacular crowds, only very small congregations; but though they were small they were full of interest. "I do not know," he remarked, "that ever any work of mine was valued more." This was a typical example of Arnot as a minister. He preached outside as well as inside his pulpit. The ministry to him was much more than a profession. To him it was a confession to the world of the living Christ whom he loved.

1. Memoir, pp. 375-76.
2. Ibid., p. 420.
3. Ibid., p. 421.
In June, 1866, Arnot began the building of his own home on Merchiston Avenue, which was completed the following year. It was a spacious, comfortable dwelling with a long glass-covered greenhouse attached to one side. The interior, Arnot designed himself, with large windows reaching down to the floor in almost every room. Here, surrounded by beautifully kept gardens, Arnot lived with his family in great contentment for the remainder of his life. The present owner of the house, Mrs. Aline Burn-Murdoch, has interestingly stated that visitors often comment on the peaceful atmosphere of the house, almost as if it were pervaded by a spirit of goodness. As a possible explanation of this, she points out that only two families - the Arnots and the Burn-Murdoch - have lived in it, both families having been devoted Christians and known for their happiness.

It was in the same year in which Arnot built his home that his esteemed friend, James Hamilton, died. Shortly before his demise, when it was obvious that he would not recover, a committee from Regent Square Church, London, consisting of seventy members - thirty-five office bearers and thirty-five from the congregation - unanimously requested Mr. Arnot to undertake the work of their pastor. After earnestly considering the matter for eight days, Arnot finally

1. The building recently has been remodeled into two dwellings. The greenhouse no longer exists.
2. Surprisingly enough the kitchen had only one small window.
3. Three years later, Arnot published his Life of James Hamilton, a substantial and carefully written volume.
decided against it, believing that at his age, such a move would be unwise.

The year 1870 witnessed the first reunion of the Old School and the New School Branch of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. Arnot and Professor William Blaikie of New College were sent to represent the Free Church of Scotland, and while on the American continent also visited the Union General Assembly in Toronto. They enjoyed three months of exhilarating travel and overwhelming hospitality. Arnot was well-known as an author, and was immediately taken to the hearts of the American and Canadian public. Large congregations assembled to hear him in Washington, D.C., Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, New York, Brooklyn, Baltimore, Chicago, Toronto and Montreal. He was welcomed into the pulpits of many of the leading clergymen of the day including William Adams, Henry Ward Beecher, John Hall, E.P. Rogers and Richard S. Storrs. Everywhere he met with enthusiastic admirers who crowded around his pulpit, after he had preached, to shake hands and tell of their connections with Scotland and what they knew of him through his books or his preaching. The great amount of private conversation, however, which he was forced to carry on in the United States proved a fatiguing experience. Americans were, in his words, "great

2. Arnot left Scotland in April in the company of his daughter, Jeannie, and Professor and Mrs. Blaikie. They traveled through a large portion of the eastern and mid-western states.
3. This was formed by the union of the two churches representing the Free and the United Presbyterian Churches in Scotland.
introducers, handshakers and questioners. This was evident from a witty letter to his wife in which he described his experience at a large reception in Chicago.

We did not go till eight. From that hour till ten I stood in a crowd, and talked like a steam-engine to group after group. . . . I thought once or twice, what would you have said or done had you been here? What could you have done, but sail with the stream? You may not like to be lionessized; but here they would not consult your liking, but, incontinent, would make you a lioness. You must needs have shaken your mane, and roared once or twice for the pleasure of the company.

Among the many highlights of Arnot's stay in America were: visits to both houses of Congress, where he met many of the senators; a day at Princeton, when he addressed three hundred students at a prayer meeting; and a tour of the historic battlefield of Gettysburg. Of this last experience he writes of the contrast between the beautiful cemeteries of the Federal soldiers and those of the Confederates in which the dead were merely laid in heaps where they fell. The weeds and grass were rank over the pits, and in some the bones were protruding.

At the first General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America held at Philadelphia, Arnot gave in brief the origin of the Free Church. It was an original and graphic description of the cold facts of history. He compared the spiritual revival in the Church of Scotland, which began in the early part of the century, to the slow

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1. Memoir, p. 442.
2. Ibid., p. 446.
3. Ibid., p. 440.
swelling tide which is sometimes employed to remove obstructing roots from the English channel. A chain from a ship is made fast to the obstruction, and, if the root is not firmly fixed it will be torn out with the rising tide, but if it proves too strong, the ship is in danger. "In short, either the obstruction will be lifted up or the ship will be drawn down." The ship stood for the revived church and the ugly root for Patronage with all of its secularizing and deadening effects. The root held fast and threatened to draw the ship under. Hence the chain was cut and the ship – the Free Church – floated off free.

Arnot enjoyed immensely the informal atmosphere of the American Church and was thoroughly in favor of hymns being sung along with psalms and paraphrases. According to Professor Blaikie he seemed to take more pleasure in American society where form and ceremony were so little studied, than in similar company at home. The call for speeches, which was frequent, did not seem to embarrass him, but was always responded to heartily and pleasantly. Generally he appeared to be more happy in his off-hand little addresses than in some that were prepared more elaborately. The editorship of The Family Treasury, a monthly periodical, was offered to Mr. Arnot at the close of 1869,

1. "In the American Assembly," The Free Church of Scotland Monthly Record (Edinburgh, August 1, 1870), p. 165.
4. Founded by Andrew Cameron in 1859.
which position he willingly accepted and maintained for the remainder of his life. The magazine was one of the best in the religious field, and for a while rivaled even the popular *Good Words* begun by Norman Macleod. It covered a wide range of topics, of interest to both old and young, and was known for its literary excellence and sound evangelical doctrine. Arnot contributed numerous articles dealing with a great variety of subjects, including discussions on the American Civil War, the present aspects of the papacy, the educational institutions of the United States, science and theology. He was particularly interested in reaching the younger members of the "Family" and always included appropriate subject matter for them.

The sixth General Conference of the Evangelical Alliance was held in New York City in October 1873 for ten consecutive days and attended by about one hundred men from various parts of the world—eminent for "learning, ability, and worth, holding high rank in theology, philosophy, science and literature"—who came together for the defense and advancement of evangelical truth. The Conference covered almost every important theological, religious and moral question of the age, and was attended by thousands of sympathizing hearers from morning until night.

3. The Conference was divided into eight major divisions: I Reports on the State of Religion in Various Christian Countries; II Christian Union; III Christianity and its
On this occasion, Arnot was the only representative of Scotland. Upon being invited, at first he felt he could not break away from his work in Edinburgh, although he looked forward to visiting his two eldest sons now engaged in business in the United States. Strong pressure, however, was brought to bear upon him in a personal interview by Dr. John Hall of New York and The Honorable George H. Stuart of Philadelphia on behalf of the Alliance. When he learned from them that the Scottish ministers who had been invited had without exception declined to come, and that Scotland would thus be virtually unrepresented at the Conference, he reversed his decision and wrote: "... I am so much ashamed of my country, that I have concluded to cut the knots I cannot loose, and come."¹

He left home in the middle of August so as to have time to travel by rail to San Francisco and back before the meetings of the Alliance began. This extensive trip was a great undertaking for him at his age, and especially as he was traveling alone much of the way. At best it could only afford him a superficial glance at the giant nation in the making, but it was sufficient at least to let him feel the "pulse" of American life.

Attending the Evangelical Alliance Conference were many of the most distinguished theologians and churchmen of the day. Of the forty colleges, universities and theological seminaries

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¹. Memoir, p. 458.
represented, twelve of them had as their delegates their presidents, among whom were: Noah Porter, Yale College; James McCosh, Princeton University; Eliphalet Nott Potter, Union College, Schenectady; William F. Warren, Boston University; M.B. Anderson, University of Rochester; Alvah Hovey, Newton Theological Institution; J.W. Dawson, McGill College, Montreal; and Joseph Angus, Regent's Park College, London. Others present included Charles Hodge, Princeton Seminary; R. Payne Smith, Dean of Canterbury; John Cairns, Berwick, England; Joseph Parker, London; Henry Ward Beecher, Brooklyn, New York; Richard S. Storrs, Brooklyn, New York; Mark Hopkins, late President of Williams College; and Philip Schaff, Union Theological Seminary, New York. 1

Arnot's official part in the Conference was that of reading a paper on The Relation Between Doctrine and Life. This was the first of seven addresses given under Division IV - Christian Life. 2 It was in a very real sense the key-stone address of the Conference, a fact which Arnot admitted in his opening remarks:

The theme of conference yesterday was Christian doctrine, and the theme today is the Christian life. . . . If I cannot make a contribution either to the apologetics of yesterday or the energetics of today, I may, at least, become the pivot on which the conference shall swing round from the one sphere

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1. A full list of those who took an active part in the Conference may be found in the Table of Contents of the documents of the Evangelical Alliance Conference, 1873, ov. cit.

His address sparkles with a great variety of illustrations and is eminently practical throughout, stressing a balanced doctrine of faith and works. It attacks the secularists' view which lauds charity at the expense of doctrinal truth and points out that a living relationship with Jesus Christ furnishes the greatest incentive for loving one's neighbor. "The apostle John got his charity from the bosom of the Master whereon he lay. Where do the modern apostles obtain theirs? How can you move the world if you have nothing but the world to lean your lever on?" 

The reception that Arnot received during his second visit was no less impressive than that of his first. Everywhere he was welcomed with great enthusiasm and was kept on a constant round of preaching engagements. The Sunday on which the Conference closed was one of the busiest of all. In the morning Arnot preached in E.P. Roger's church (Dutch Reformed) at the Communion service, and in the afternoon took part with Robert Hall and the Bishop of Kentucky in another Communion

1. Evangelical Alliance Conference, 1873, op.cit., p. 327. Arnot writes that he was only allowed a half hour to read this address and after twenty-five minutes the chairman touched him, warning him that he had only five minutes more. "The audience cried out to go on," Arnot writes. "I had the naps in my own hand: that is I could have floated out on the audience, who were quite alert, and neglected the chairman: but I would not. I closed at once... I was much tossed and tormented afterwards by people expressing regret that my paper was curtailed. ... I read small sections: but spoke the most free." Unpublished letter, October 7, 1873.

2. Evangelical Alliance Conference, 1873, op.cit., p. 329.
service. At 6.30 p.m. he addressed a large gathering in the Steinway Hall, one of five places open that evening for the close of the Alliance Conference, and following this, spoke at the Academy of Music — the largest meeting place of all. "I was determined," he writes, "to introduce no small talk about Scotland and America."¹

Though Arnot appreciated the lavish plaudits poured upon him in America, he writes repeatedly that he discounted much of the praise, attributing it mainly to the exaggerated way of American expression.² An example of this American bombast occurred when he was introduced to the President of the United States, Ulysses S. Grant. The room was filled with dignitaries and foreign delegates, and a long queue formed to shake hands with the Chief Executive and his secretaries. Slowly and quietly the procession moved down the receiving line until finally Arnot stood before the President. Suddenly the booming voice of the Honorable George H. Stuart,³ Arnot's admiring friend, announced: "Dr. Arnot of Edinburgh — the greatest preacher in Scotland — successor of Dr. Chalmers!"⁴ The President smiled benignly and shook his hand, while the modest Scot burned with embarrassment.

I was literally thunder-struck. I do not know whether I uttered a scream or not; but I know that after shaking hands with one or two of the secretaries I was not able to

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3. The Honorable George H. Stuart, a member of the United States Board of Indian Commissions, was president of the Philadelphia Branch of the Evangelical Alliance.
4. Unpublished letter, to his wife, October 1873.
hold on through the row: but bolted like a startled horse through between two of them and made my escape to the door.

Arnot grew to love the American scene, stating that he felt like a gentleman who had two residences, one in the United States and one in Scotland. Scotland, however, was his first and greatest love. Never once did he waver in his loyalty to his home-land. From San Francisco, in the Fall he wrote:

"Nothing green appears at this season except the trees. The land is a land of ashes. Oh, how sweet is the green of dear dripping Scotland. 'Scotland for ever' say I after having traversed the whole breadth of this Continent."

American life with its rush and bustle, its flair for the practical and progressive and its vast undercurrent of restless expansion left a lasting impression upon Arnot. He saw the United States as a nation whose spiritual life lacked solidity and poise. "The grand want of America," he submitted, "is repose. The government schools should endow a lion's den in every village, and make it incumbent on Young America to stand half-an-hour every day in front of the royal brute to learn repose and dignity."

Toward the close of the year 1873, a great revival stirred the British Isles under the powerful preaching of the American evangelist, Dwight L. Moody, and the "singing of the

1. Ibid.
3. Unpublished letter, to his wife, September 13, 1873.
Gospel" by his colleague, Ira D. Sankey. Not since the Cambuslang and Kilsyth revival of the mid-eighteenth century had there been such a spiritual awakening. Neither Moody nor Sankey was highly trained. Moody had received only the barest essentials in education and often "slaughtered the Queen's English" and Sankey confessed that he was not a musician and had never been taught to sing. In spite of their deficiencies, however, they proved an ideal combination and made a tremendous impression upon nearly all classes and denominations - from the Oxford undergraduate to the London charwoman. Even the Scots, accustomed to their grave psalmody, were deeply moved, and the immemorial Presbyterian prejudice against organs was largely overcome through the sweet-singing Sankey with his portable harmonium.

Arnot took a great interest and active part in the revival, and worked in close harmony with the evangelists, along with other leading clergymen including William Blaikie, Robert Rainy, Andrew Thomson, Robert Candlish, Alexander Whyte, Andrew and Horatius Bonar, and Alexander Duff. Many of the mass meetings were held in the Free Assembly Hall which was capable of seating about two thousand people, and Arnot was often on the platform. A sample of the informal, personal style of Moody's preaching can be seen from the following excerpt taken from his closing address during the Watch Night.

service of December 31st of that year. The Free Assembly Hall was thronged with an immense congregation.

It is now on the stroke of the last hour. A year hence a good many here will be in their graves. Thank God for the great day coming when we will be gathered round the Master. Perhaps that day is a good deal nearer than we think it...

Mr. Sankey: "What a grand all-day meeting we'll have one day! All will come up. We from our country; you from yours. We must soon part; but, brethren, 'tis true that we'll meet some day 'just across the river.'"

Captain M'Kenzie: "When I come in from work tired, I lie down for a short sleep, and rise refreshed and ready for new work. If we are laid to sleep by Jesus, we shall wake up refreshed. We will be engaged in God's work throughout eternity, without being tired or weary."

Mr. Arnot: "Grander still! Come up higher. I, even I, an atom, will take part in the up-bringing of the Saviour's joy.'"

One of the outstanding evening meetings during the Edinburgh revival took place in the Corn Exchange in the Grassmarket. Only men were admitted by ticket and nearly five thousand assembled to hear Moody and Sankey. So great was the response among the enquirers after the meeting that it was said that Moody had brought the whole Grassmarket with him. Dr. Charles Brown, one of the oldest and most revered ministers of Edinburgh, wrote enthusiastically: "I have watched all the religious movements of the last forty years, and I have never seen anything that, in extent and depth of interest, approached the present movement." Many other esteemed men of the day, known for their sound judgment, wrote in unrestrained

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3. Ibid.
praise of this work of God. Dr. Andrew Thomson stated that he felt Moody spoke with most impressive directness, not as a man partly convinced, "who seems always to feel that a skeptic is looking over his shoulder, but with a deep conviction of the truth of what he says ... as if he felt that 'if he did not speak, the very stones would cry out.'" Horatius Bonar commented gratefully on the lack of sensationalism which he noted in the Moody revival and spoke of the peaceful solemnity pervading the immense gatherings of two or three thousand people day by day. Arnot wrote:

It is on the close personal dealing that the blessing seems mainly to have fallen. Sinners are lovingly, yet forcibly, brought face to face with a beseeching Saviour, so that they cannot escape, as they have been wont, to the right or to the left. . . . I have here and there seen methods adopted which jarred against my sense of what is due to the sovereignty of the quickening Spirit on the one side, and to the right of a human soul to abide self-contained and secret, amenable to God alone, on the other; yet I never dared to object in word, or even thought, to the methods of men who were in earnest about their work, and much more successfully than I had ever been. . . . It is possible for a church to die of dignity. Right glad are we to see and hear a great commotion among the dry bones of the valley, even though we should not approve of every tone and gesture adopted by the man whose "prophesying" availed to disturb the silence and stillness in which they previously lay. 

The months that followed the campaign were busy ones for Arnot, filled with speaking engagements in London, Liverpool, Ireland, Glasgow, Stirling, Perth and Aberdeen. There seemed to

1. Ibid., p. 43.
2. Ibid., pp. 57-58.
be a new fervor and enthusiasm in his preaching. In August 1874, he visited Forgandenny for the last time, and in the autumn made a final trip to the Continent. The months thereafter were months of decline in physical strength and energy, and finally the General Assembly was petitioned for a colleague to assist him, as he was no longer able to carry on alone the work of the pastorate. The day of heavy labor was over.

His head began to droop on his breast like an ear of corn fully ripe, and his clothes began to hang loosely on his broad and hitherto sturdy frame; but though the outward man was perishing, the inward man was being renewed day by day.

His last public address was on the 4th of May 1875, at the noon-day prayer meeting held in the Free Assembly Hall. Taking his text, as he so often did, from nature, he told how that morning, on going into his vineyard, he had observed a drooping branch, and upon discovering that it had been bound too tightly, severed the band immediately. He then spoke of the ties which hinder the Christian's growth and of the means by which the great Husbandman loosens them. "Sometimes He takes the knife and cuts them through; sometimes He sends a rush of life through the soul that it bursts every bond." 2

The earthly ties were now soon to be broken. There was no fear of death, no drawing back from the great departure. Arnot was ready to answer the summons of God.

A few days before the end, in May, accompanied by his wife, he visited the picturesque highland village of Pitlochry.

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1. Memoir, p. 484.
2. Ibid., pp. 483-87.
to see if the change of altitude might prove beneficial. In
the evening he made his way down to the river's side, and
seating himself on a projecting rock, watched with delight the
rapid flowing stream. How the memories of his boyhood days
by the River Earn must have revived, and how close his brother
Robert must have seemed in that twilight hour!

The end came a few days later on the third of June in
his Edinburgh home. About three o'clock in the morning he
awoke in profuse perspiration, and hearing a glad chorus of
birds whispered, "These sweet birds they are singing for me."2
A little afterwards his wife, hearing him speak, asked if he
wished anything. "No dear," he answered, "I was not speaking
to you."5 In less than two hours she was awakened again by
the sound of coughing, and on running to his side saw blood
flowing from his mouth. "The silver cord was being loosed,
and the golden bowl was being broken at the fountain."4 He
sank back on his pillow as if in a deep sleep, and "without a
sigh, without a quiver, his spirit escaped away from its
tabernacle of clay."5 There was no "moaning of the bar," no
"sadness of farewell." Arnot had walked with God and now, he
was not, for God took him.6

1. Ibid., p. 490.
2. Ibid., p. 492.
3. Ibid.
4. Canon Bell, Biographical Notice of William Arnot in
Arnot, The Lesser Parables of Our Lord (London, 1884),
p. xxviii.
5. Memoir, p. 492.
6. Arnot was survived by his wife, four sons and five
daughters.
Funeral sermons were preached on the following Sunday, in the Free High Church, Edinburgh, by Principal Robert Rainy, and Professor William G. Bleikie; and in the Free St. Peter's Church, Glasgow, by Dr. Hugh MacMillan and Dr. Thomas Main of Free St. Mary's, Edinburgh.

A large company of Christian friends accompanied his remains to the Grange Cemetery, Edinburgh, where he was buried beside his eldest sister and his infant child. The grave is marked by an imposing Peterhead granite monument erected jointly by members of his congregations among whom he lived and served for so many years. It bears the following inscription:

WILLIAM ARNOT

Born at Scone, 6th November 1808
Died at Edinburgh, 3rd June 1875

He walked with God,
and he was not, for God took him

And on the pedestal:

This Stone Is Erected
BY MEMBERS OF
Free St. Peter's, Glasgow; and of the Free High Church, Edinburgh.

In Affectionate Remembrance
How like the River Earn was the life of William Arnot! There was nothing in it momentous, no spectacular upheavals, no fierce rapids to thrill or plunging waterfalls to impress. Like the River Earn it was gentle, but steady, flowing always on its winding course, never forcing its way, never forging its path. Like that river it moved with melody bringing blessing to every valley and peace to all who dwelt therein.

No more appropriate conclusion to such a life could be found than, in his own words, inscribed at the close of his

Life of James Hamilton:

All is not lost to the world when a good man dies: his character remains behind to enrich the community, as certainly as the rich man's wealth remains behind to increase the estate of his heir. We watch with expectant interest the swelling of a rosebud in spring; we luxuriate in the possession of the full blown flower while it lasts, and we sigh in sadness when its glory departs. But, moved by a prophet instinct, we gravely gather the shed leaves from the ground, and deposit them in a place of safety; and soon we make the glad discovery that in these leaves, even when withered, we retain for enjoyment the fragrance of the rose in the dull winter days that follow, when we can no longer look upon the living flower, fresh and dewy on its living stem.

1. Life of James Hamilton, p. 600. "Mr. Arnot possessed in combination a variety of powers, which gave him a foremost place among preachers of the gospel. A man of undoubted genius, of vigorous mind, of fine imagination, of large sympathies and noble purpose, he was at the same time so gentle and winning, so simple in his piety and so loyal to the truth, that the Church mourns in his death the departure of one of her ablest sons and most gifted ministers." Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, May 30, 1876. Obituary notice, p. 263.
CHAPTER III
ARNOT AS PREACHER

It is your office as preachers to take so much of the truth of Christ Jesus as has become digested into your own spiritual life, and with that, strike! with that, flash! with that, burn men!

CHAPTER III

ARNOT AS PREACHER

Preaching, as Phillips Brooks has well said, is more than merely speaking the truth; it is the communication of truth through personality.¹ The whole man as a moral, intellectual and physical being must speak; the man and his message must not be divorced. In order, therefore, to appreciate William Arnot as a preacher it is essential first to have a clear picture of him as a person. What kind of man was he? What were the outstanding traits of his character?

Arnot was first and foremost a Scotsman, a zealous patriot throughout his life. "I am so Scotch," he declared, "that even in what I write there is a fitness for the north, and unfitness for the soft, sunny south."² Nothing could induce him to leave Scotland. "Thank God," he wrote his children, "that among the nations you are British, and of the British, Scotch."³

Coming as he did from a strong agrarian background, he was in a very real sense a product of Scottish soil. Essentially he was a man of the field, a rough "chunk" of Scotland embodying all of the eminent characteristics of his race. He was a rugged

². Memoir, p. 295.
individualist, pertinacious, canny and poetic. His broad dialect instantly marked him as a countryman of Burns, and his rich, pawky sense of humor and naive, boyish enthusiasm won him a cherished place in the hearts of thousands. He was a rough diamond, but still a diamond. Like Henry Ward Beecher, outward appearance meant little to him. He had none of the sophistication of a city-bred person, none of the ballroom aesthetic. He was awkward and he knew it; still there was a striking amount of Herculean grace about him. He stood rather above the average height, with shoulders strong and massive; his frame, supported on well-set limbs, was of corresponding strength. His face was a chiseled study of kindness — strength mingled with gentleness. His strong bearded jaw, high broad forehead, and wild white hair, made him an impressive figure. There was nothing fierce or forbidding about him. Wit and mirth played on his full lips, while his dark, thoughtful eyes glistened with laughter. His whole

1. The Scotsman, June 21, 1877, in reviewing the memoir of Arnot's life states: "A sturdy independence is perhaps his most striking characteristic."
4. Cuyler, "Arnot of Scotland," op. cit. "The only piece of fastidiousness I ever detected in my old friend Arnot was when he insisted that I should not preach in his Edinburgh pulpit without doffing my black neck-tie and putting on his white cravat. His reason for the suggestion was that his congregation's attention might be attracted by anything singular in the preacher's dress."
personality was one of warmth and friendship, and no one could long be in his presence without sensing the dynamic of his love.

As a preacher and an orator Arnot ranked among the giants of his day. "After Guthrie, he was perhaps one of the most effective pulpit and platform orators that the Free Church possessed." ¹ He was fundamentally a pictorial preacher and possessed a marked genius for graphic illustration. His method of delivery was similar to that of Thomas Chalmers. He entered the pulpit with a slow and pensive step, ² and began his sermon with a monotonous and thoroughly unaffected tone, "the words lazily following each other at equal distances without any visible motion of the frame, except the lips and a convulsive movement of the hand." ³ This sorely tried the patience of his listeners but, like the congregations of Chalmers, they were content to wait till he slowly caught fire. "Then he fascinated, mastered, awed them." ⁴ John Smith, the keen and shrewd observer of the clergy, writes after hearing Arnot:

As the preacher warms the words flow with increased rapidity - the massive frame labours with ill-suppressed emotion - the tones are pitched in a higher key, and ideas startling and powerful are every moment presented. He is remarkable by the absence of much that other preachers possess, more remarkable by the possession of much they lack. In masculine understanding, in unmistakable earnestness - a heart in his work - Mr. Arnot has no superior." ²⁰

¹ Obituary of William Arnot, The Scotsman, June 5, 1875.
⁵ John Smith, op. cit., p. 115.
"Masculine understanding" best typifies Arnot as a preacher. He was all man—virile and forthright in his presentation of the truth. He hated "twists" in other people and searched diligently for them in himself. His manner was frank and candid and yet seasoned with tact. "My great object," he declared, "should be to have truth held, and useful truth proclaimed with the least possible offence, consistent with duty."\(^1\) Robert Rainy recognized this when he wrote: "He was never afraid to take up a side because it was unpopular... At the same time... he brought into the discussion his own cordial and cheerful spirit, and did much to assuage bitterness by showing none himself."\(^2\)

Arnot's keen sense of humor was one of the outstanding traits of his character. "He was naturally so happy and easily pleased, and he so rapidly caught any point of incongruity that his eye twinkled and the smile gleamed over his features, ere others could see the cause of laughter."\(^3\) In one of his last books, written in the year 1873, he related the following story of his boyhood, which shows how well he remembered and appreciated a quick and ready wit.

On the slopes of the Ochils, near the old coach-road between Kinross and Perth, there had once been a large boulder spoken of as "the rockin' stane o' Balvaird". "It was so nicely poised on a point, that it moved to and fro at a push by

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2. Ibid., p. 505.
One man's hands.\textsuperscript{1} One time, perplexed by a problem, Arnot went to a wise neighbor to seek his advice. Before stating the particulars of the case, he explained to him a general weakness that he believed adhered to his character: "When I hear one side, I lean to it; when I hear the other side, I lean to the other side. In short, I am like the rocking-stone of Balvaird; a touch of the finger turns me from side to side."\textsuperscript{2} Lifting his spectacles to his brow, and revealing a queer twinkle of grave humor, the sage then announced: "You must be a man of a well-balanced mind."\textsuperscript{2}

Arnot used his gift of humor cautiously, well aware of the boundaries beyond which humor becomes the frivolous froth of a vulgar desire to cajole and please. He agreed with James Black that where humor is rightly understood as a point of view and a way of looking at things it may be used effectively, but that it must be presented with the delicate touch and the kindly feeling of an "artist".\textsuperscript{4} He could laugh with people but never at them. Humor to him was a holy thing, the natural expression of a loving heart.

Arnot's daughter gives us an example of how her father employed the use of humor in his public speaking. During his last visit to America, at a large public meeting assembled to bid him and others farewell, he introduced to the congregation

\begin{enumerate}
\item This Present World, p. 33.
\item Ibid., p. 26.
\item Ibid.
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his faithful pony, Helper, of Larbert days. Announcing that
he did not feel inclined to speak that night, but preferred
just to look them in the face and express his feelings through
his eyes, he told how once he had given his pony to a servant
girl to take to the stable for the night. She remained
longer than he thought necessary, and when she returned he
asked: "Where have you been, Jenny?" "In the stable with the
pony, sir." "And what were you doing all this time?" "Oh,
sir," she replied, "I just lookeat hit, and hit lookeat
me." 1

As we might expect, young people were devoted to Arnot.
They admired his youthful, straightforward approach and looked
upon him as a brother and leader among them. Arnot never lost
their respect because he lived the advice which Phillips Brooks
gave to the Yale Divinity students — he counted his "manliness
the soul of his ministry." 2

He was never more at home than when preaching to young men,
or delivering a lecture to the Young Men's Literary
Institute of his own congregation. To see Arnot preaching
to an army of young men in the City Hall of Glasgow, was a
sight worth going far to see. How he spell-bound them!
How they hung on his lips: how they quoted his sparkling
illustrations, and alternately laughed and wept over his
stories: how they imitated him: how they bought photographs
of him! When he went up to lecture in Exeter Hall no
lecturer was so welcome to the young Londoners as he. 3

1. Memoir, p. 120. When preaching in the Music Academy of
Philadelphia in 1870 at the United Assembly of Presbyterian
Churches in America, Arnot convulsed with laughter an
enormous congregation by a description, taken from his early
experience, of feeding a calf. Cuyler, "Arnot of Scotland,"
op. cit.


The year 1833 marked a decided change in the method of Arnot's preaching. He began to read his sermons at the request of the elders of St. Peter's. Previous to this date he had preached only from brief notes consisting of headings and chief points; and the change must indeed have been hard for him after eighteen years of free style delivery. He felt, however, that the practice of reading his sermons had a beneficial effect on their preparation, assuring him of a more full and exact treatment of his subjects.¹

Eighteen more years passed before Arnot again preached without a manuscript. He explained that the change did not come in the form of a resolution but rather as a result of a visit in 1873 to the United States. While there he enjoyed many opportunities of preaching, and began to speak without notes. "I experienced," he recalls, "... an emancipation, and was not inclined to go back into bondage... I am convinced it is more profitable... the Saturday is more like a Sabbath... a hearty study of the Scriptures... and not the mechanical work of composition."²

The advocates of "no-note" preaching, such as Richard S. Storrs, Henry Ward Beecher and other distinguished American clergymen, in whose pulpits Arnot preached, doubtless played a significant part in bringing about this decision. Storrs himself was strongly in favor of "emancipated"

¹ Memoir, p. 300.
² Ibid., p. 473.
preaching,\textsuperscript{1} and though, like Arnot, he had preached for years with a manuscript, and knew well the power of the pen, eventually came to the place where he found preaching without a "crutch" the most satisfying and effective way. Whether Storrs and Arnot ever discussed the subject remains unknown, but certainly Arnot returned to Scotland enthused over this direct, unfettered way of speaking.

It is somewhat surprising that Arnot was not more influenced by his distinguished predecessor in the Free High Church, Robert Rainy,\textsuperscript{2} who himself strongly espoused the "no-note" technique. Rainy, however, with or without notes, never equaled his successor in the pulpit, and probably Arnot was not impressed with the effect of Rainy's preaching.\textsuperscript{3} Arnot came to Edinburgh thoroughly seasoned. He had preached for twenty-six years and had enjoyed continuous popularity. Only the most drastic change of intellectual atmosphere could have succeeded in wooing him away from his carefully prepared manuscript.

America supplied this new "breath". Here Arnot found

\begin{enumerate}
\item Richard S. Storrs, \textit{Conditions of Success in Preaching Without Notes} (London, 1675), p. 51. Storrs advocated preaching without notes only if it did not do violence to the preacher's nature.
\item Rainy was appointed in 1662 to the Chair of Church History in New College.
\item A.T. Innes, "Robert Rainy," \textit{Disruption Worthies}, ed. James Wylie, Vol. 3 (London, n.d.), p. 444. Rainy was never so popular a preacher as to attract Edinburgh people generally to his High Church congregation. Gossip, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 163-86. Arthur John Gossip, one of the most effective preachers of the early twentieth century, owed much to Principal Rainy for his encouragement in "free-pulpit" preaching. Still it must be remembered that Gossip was influenced as a young man. Arnot was fifty-five years of age when he came to Edinburgh.
\end{enumerate}
congregations unbound by long traditions, amazingly susceptible to the man-to-man approach, eager for contact with the personality of the preacher. He saw what drew the crowds - the up-to-the-minute topical preaching, the dramatizing biblical expositions, the arresting advertisements, the pulpit brought down and linked with the pew, and, above all, the personality of the preacher. The American Church had almost deified the pulpit at the close of the Civil War.\textsuperscript{1} "Oratory was one of the few outlets permitted by dominant Puritanism for the expression of the dramatizing instinct."\textsuperscript{2} The pulpit had become a stage - the preacher an actor. The great cities were illuminated by "stars" among whom were T. de Witt Talmage,\textsuperscript{3} Henry Ward Beecher, Theodore Cuyler, John Hall and Richard Storrs.

Plymouth Church could easily be found by simply following the crowds that streamed off the Fulton Street Ferry from New York twice every Sunday. The church was essentially an auditorium, acoustically perfect, built with the one aim of accommodating a maximum number of hearers.\textsuperscript{4} Henry Ward Beecher was the great attraction. He was practically worshipped.\textsuperscript{5} Thoroughly in

\textsuperscript{1} 1865.
\textsuperscript{2} Drummond, op.cit., p. 358.
\textsuperscript{3} Ibid. Following the Civil War, Talmage was at the height of his career, being able to count on a congregation of 5,000 each Sunday. He was with Beecher and Cuyler the third great luminary of Brooklyn.
\textsuperscript{4} Ibid., pp. 299-66. See Beecher, op.cit., pp. 61-62.
\textsuperscript{5} Drummond, op.cit., p. 372. "When Thomas K. Beecher preached on one occasion at Plymouth Church there was an unseemly rush for the doors, on the part of sight-seers, as he entered the pulpit instead of the popular idol. Raising his hand he announced: "All those who came here to worship Henry Ward Beecher may now withdraw - all who came to worship God may remain!"
touch with his hearers, he spoke "straight from the shoulder" what he dug from his experience - what he found from his heart. People loved him not only as a preacher but as a brother who spoke their language and appealed to them in the vernacular.

Arnot was too keen an observer of human nature not to notice the manner and effect of such preaching. "The idea is dawning upon us," he wrote, "that America is rising as a country of great preachers, and that our home Churches will require to be looking out if they are not to lose their laurels." Though he felt that it had some weaknesses, he liked the "free and easy" style of the American pulpit. He must have sensed with Beecher that the latter half of the nineteenth century was pre-eminently a "talking age", and that the preacher must be a "good talker" and have something worth saying if he would influence

1. "Outlook," The Family Treasury (London, 1875), p. 246. In speaking of the American church services Arnot wrote: "The only thing that really grated on my sense of propriety, or my habits and associations, was an occasional solo or duet at the commencement, artistically performed, in which the congregation fulfilled only the part of listeners. I would have disliked it less if anybody had told me what were the words or sentiments that served as the animating spirit within that body of sweet sound; but although, I suppose, the ordinary worshippers knew that it was all about, I was left in every case in utter ignorance, for I could not detect articulation in the distant and swelling music." "Sketches in the United States, III. - The Churches, And Their Work," The Family Treasury (London, 1871), p. 197.

2. "Outlook," op. cit., pp. 245-46. After discussing Dr. Storrs' method of extemporaneous preaching, Arnot wrote: "I am not going to take a side upon this question, but I may refer to one result of this abandonment to the impulses of the moment in the American pulpit. It is that the preachers sometimes indulge themselves in forms of speech which may certainly be trusted to keep a congregation awake, but which when remembered afterwards or read must make sober people shake their heads a little." Arnot then gave some excerpts from
men. He saw from his own experience in America the powerful effect of extemporaneous delivery, and was thoroughly impressed with the need of "solid" rapport between pulpit and pew. That inborn desire which he had realized in his early ministry — to preach without a manuscript — must have revived in redoubled power.

It is, therefore, not surprising that he ceased using a

De Witt Talmage's philippic "The Shears of Delilah", one of which follows: "As far as I can understand the doctrine of free-loveism, it is this — that every man ought to have somebody else's wife, and every wife somebody else's husband. They do not like our Christian organization of society; and I wish they would all elope, the wretches of one sex taking the wretches of the other, and start tomorrow morning for the great Sahara Desert, until the simoon shall sweep seven feet of sand over all of them, and not one passing caravan for the next five hundred years bring back one miserable bone of their carcasses. Free-loveism! It is the double-distilled extract of nux vomica, ratsbane, and adder's tongue. Free-loveism has raised in this city of Brooklyn a stench that has gone all over the world, and I think they will have to shut up the windows and gates of heaven to keep out the insufferable mal-odour. Never until society goes back to the old Bible, and hears its eulogy of purity and its anathema of uncleanness — never until then will the fatal shears be unrivetted." Arnot remarked: "The vigour of this language cannot be disputed, and delivered to four or five thousand people by a man walking up and down a platform like a caged lion, it must have told tremendously. But the style would scarcely do to be universally imitated."

2. Unpublished letter, to his wife, October 6, 1873. Arnot wrote of preaching in the morning in Dr. E.P. Rogers' church, reported to be the grandest church in New York City, and in the evening in Dr. Theodore Cuyler's church. "I preached on both occasions without reading. It was well. The evening would have bruised all the bones of my body if I had read. As it was, my chest was not even wearied. It gives also this great comfort. I am entirely freed from the burdensome dread lest the people be wearying for the end. . . withal it was very joyful all through."
manuscript after completing a second tour of preaching in the United States.¹ America had challenged and stirred him. It had convinced him that the most direct method of preaching was the best method. Arnot had experimented in America with both means of delivery - from a manuscript in 1870, without a manuscript in 1873 - and had come to the definite conclusion that with his temperament, his personality and his innate speaking ability, notes and manuscripts before him were only hindrances - "stumbling-blocks" in his way.

Certainly we cannot help but wonder whether Arnot would not have been a more effective preacher had he dispensed with reading his sermons long before he did. On the other hand the manuscript never seems to have marred his message, and like F.W. Robertson, Chalmers, Candlish, Guthrie, Alexander Whyte, William Taylor, Phillips Brooks, and Peter Marshall² - all of whom read their discourses - Arnot was eminently successful in conveying the meaning of truth across the printed page. "A sermon that has the true sermon quality in it, when it is made," wrote Brooks, "preserves that quality even under the constraints of manuscript or print."³ Thus it proved true of the preaching of William Arnot.

1. Arnot visited the United States only briefly in 1845 on his way to and from Montreal. Supra, pp. 56-57.
2. Catherine Marshall, A Man Called Peter (Toronto, 1951), pp. 45, 231. Peter Marshall, one time Chaplain of the United States Senate, always read his sermons. His popularity was immense - long queues forming to hear him preach.
In some ways Arnot and Beecher may be said to be similar. Both were able orators, universally recognized for their ability to present truth in a vivid, striking manner; both were intent on reaching the "common man". Neither took any delight in ecclesiastical controversy; neither was in sympathy with "high church" liturgy. Both preachers were rugged individualists, keen observers of nature and lovers of the out-of-doors. But here the similarity ends.

Beecher had a flair for the spectacular. He glowed in bold, slashing statements, threw aside all convention, when it suited him, and swung-out with daring bravado. Arnot, on the other hand, shrank from ostentatious show. He was never crude, never "sensational". He had none of the smashing force of Beecher because he preferred to move slowly. He was content to push rather than tear down. Beecher used the sling with deadly accuracy. He pierced and splintered the enemy. Arnot chose the wedge. He conquered by breaking. He dealt much more in quarrying than in polishing.

... soon as he gets a stone detached from the rock he places it in the building, and the rougher it is it serves his purpose the better. He builds strongly rather than finely, and erects an edifice massive and endurable. . . . He industriously collects facts from the book of creation

1. The writer's grandfather, Charles E. Merriam, heard Henry Ward Beecher preach a powerful sermon one hot Sunday morning in his Brooklyn pulpit, and related the following: Before beginning his sermon, Beecher whipped out his handkerchief and mopped his brow. Then in slow measured tones he said, "It's a damn hot day!" A horrified pause ensued; then Beecher continued, "That's what I heard a man say this morning on his way to the house of the Lord. My subject is profanity."
and the book of revelation - from men and from things - they are all cast into his own mould, and are laid before his audience, bearing distinctly the image and superscription of the speaker. The mould into which he throws them is marked rather than refined. The polished ideas which he picks up are thrown forth in a much less elegant, but more imposing form. While many rub down the strong thoughts of a powerful writer, they receive from his additional force.

Preaching, Arnot felt, ought always to sound the note of urgency - "We need not ministers that may or that will, but ministers that must preach the gospel." 2 It ought to show a broad, hearty sympathy with the mass of the community and yet must not flatter their prejudices or palliate their sins. 3 "To preach a healing gospel where there is no wound on the conscience, is like pressing draughts of cold water on those who experience no thirst." 4 To proclaim Christ is to proclaim a practical message. Preaching must not be "so heavenly minded that it is of no earthly good." "It is not merely a meditation on glorious truths about the being and character of God ... it touches ... always the wants and waywardness of sinful men. . . . Religion comes from heaven, but literally and emphatically it comes to the earth." 5 The pith and marrow of all true preaching, therefore, regardless of its length or style of delivery, is "that one man, hoping in Christ and loving his neighbour, speaks to that neighbour about Christ's redeeming love." 6

To preach is to proclaim - to proclaim, as a herald from the

2. Anchor of the Soul, p. 163.
3. The Church in the House, p. 91.
4. Ibid., p. 91.
6. The Church in the House, p. 103.
great King, the terms on which the rebels will be received into favour. This is the real bone and marrow of preaching. . . . The true minister preaches, not law, not morality, not doctrine — preaches not philosophy, not religion, but Christ — not the Scriptures, not the true doctrine, but Christ. Proclaims, offers, presses Christ upon men.

Thus far we have seen Arnot as the preacher — a personality. We have discussed some of the traits of his character, and the techniques of his delivery; we have learned something of how he felt the gospel ought to be preached. Now we are ready to examine his preaching with a view to discovering its major characteristics.

All preaching, in order to be effective, must accomplish three things: it must interest, instruct and inspire. These are the three "ins" of all true oratory as given by Cicero — placero, docere, movere.2 Interest is first and foremost.3 It is the sine qua non of successful preaching. No speaker can possibly hope to move an audience whose attention has not been aroused. "A yawn is nature's intimation that the nerve of interest has been cut;"4 it is the preacher's unfailing sign that his message is not taking hold. As C.H. Spurgeon has

1. Ibid., pp. 173-74.
quaintly said:

If men's minds are wandering far away they cannot receive the truth. Sin cannot be taken out of men, as Eve was taken out of the side of Adam, while they are fast asleep. They must be awake, understanding what we are saying, and feeling its force, or else we may as well go to sleep too.

How did Arnot's preaching measure up to the test of interest? Did it command the rapt attention of his hearers, and if so, why?

There can be no disputing the fact that Arnot, as a preacher, consistently and effectively touched the nerve of interest not only of young people, as we have seen, but of adults as well. People remembered his sermons because they were interesting sermons. "His epigrammatic sentences," declared Theodore Cuyler, "stick to the memory like rows of pins." Hodge was able to repeat almost word for word the opening thoughts and sentences of a sermon which he had heard Arnot preach twenty-four years before! For nearly a quarter

4. D.S. Salmond writing in the year 1905 repeated one of Arnot's illustrations which he had heard him give in the East Free Church of Brechin about fifty years before. The text was "How is the accepted time, etc." and Arnot illustrated the first word "How" by saying it was like a mathematical line. If you viewed it from one angle it was very long — reaching from Adam to the last man on earth. "Now" meant time as distinguished from eternity. But if
of a century St. Peter's congregation thrived under his continuous preaching, never tiring of his ministry. This, in itself, proved Arnot's ability to hold the interest of his hearers. No more severe test need be found. It is one thing to "spell-bind" a congregation for an evening, and a vastly different thing to "grip" a congregation for years. "To tell the now old, old story, and to tell it so as to make it ever new - this is the highest style of a gospel ministry."¹

Arnot held the interest of his people for two distinct reasons. First, he instructed; then he inspired them.

¹ The Lesser Parables of Our Lord, p. 300.
A. Arnot's Preaching - Instructive

Essentially, William Arnot was a teacher. There was always "content" in his sermons, something vital and useful which people could take away and incorporate in their own lives. He was a master story-teller, easy to follow and systematic in thought. Whenever he preached in Regent Square Church, London, not only did Scotsmen, who "wept when they remembered Zion", flock to hear him, but London artisans and mechanics, sailors from Wapping, and ship-carpenters from Rotherhithe came whenever they knew that Mr. "Harnot" was to preach. His forceful language, with its broad Scots accent, compelled attention, and the vividness of his imagery charmed his hearers to admiration.

"He was not one of those platform orators whose lessons play hide and seek in the labyrinth of their diction. Having something to say, he knew also how to select the fittest words to give it expression."\(^2\)

Arnot taught in pictures and wove his discourses on the luminous loom of simile.\(^3\) Theodore Cuyler wrote:

No preacher of our day, not Spurgeon, or Hamilton, or Beecher, or even Guthrie - has equalled him in fresh, pertinent, chaste and exquisitely perfect illustrations of spiritual truth, drawn from nature and from every-day life. . . . If any young preacher wishes to know how to teach by

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3. Taylor, op.cit., p. 263. Neither Guthrie nor Arnot was master of that use of the metaphor which was so characteristic of Bushnell, and which packed an illustration into a single word.
the use of simile and parable, let him study William Arnot.¹

A good illustration, as has been said, is "the John the Baptist preparing the way for the truth, saying evermore, 'I am not that light but am sent to bear witness of that light.'"² Arnot's illustrations were of this type—clear, open windows used for the purpose of admitting light in order to educate and enlarge the hearer's mind. They were not stained windows attracting attention to themselves. Unlike the illustrations of his friend Thomas Guthrie, they were never over-drawn. "That which Guthrie would have spread over an entire page, elaborating every particular with pre-Raphael-like minuteness, Arnot would have given in a sentence."³ "Arnot flashed his simile for but a brief moment before his hearer, but the effect was to light up the whole subject, and that was all of which the audience was conscious."⁴

For example, when Arnot wishes to stress the shortness and uncertainty of life, he shows a tree with myriads of leaves fluttering in the sunshine, pointing out, however, that all those leaves will be strewn on the ground before the year is out. When and how they will fall is unknown; that they will fall is absolutely certain. He then considers four leaves among them and prophesies the cause of each one's fall—one by mildew soon

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3. Ibid., p. 134.
after the bud has burst in spring, another by a worm at the root in early summer, another by a boisterous gust of wind; and the last by frost in autumn. Such is a mirror reflecting our own frailty. Those alive today within a few fleeting years will lie beneath the dust; but the time of each one's departure is as uncertain as the falling of the leaves. "Some drop in childhood's spring, some in the bloom of youth, some in the maturity of manhood, and some hang on till the winter of age arrives."¹

This illustration, as we can see, does not draw attention to itself — does not point to the withered leaves on the ground, but rather to the sober truth which they convey: "the time is short to all, and the short time is uncertain to each."²

Most of Arnot's illustrations did not deal in wide generalities, but usually concerned specific objects. For instance, in illustrating the influence that a child can have in mediating between unfriendly adults, Arnot described two drops of dew lying close to each other, but haughtily separated on a cabbage leaf. "A child touches their edges with a straw, and forthwith they roll into one."³ Instead of showing a cabbage leaf covered with many dew drops, any two of which would have reacted in the same way, given the same circumstances, Arnot centered our attention on just two dew drops, thus heightening the illustration and making it unforgettable.

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1. Laws From Heaven For Life On Earth, p. 532.
2. Ibid.
In a similar way, the Biblical concept of the final resurrection, when the dead in Christ shall rise, whether they be buried in the earth or in the sea, is illustrated by showing at the bottom of an ocean a sunken vessel in which is imprisoned an atom of air. For a thousand years the ship lies, and then gives way and breaks up. Immediately, the tiny globule of atmosphere, although long in exile, starts on its journey home. It rises in a sheer straight line - "rises like a little air-bell, nor halts in its course, until, emerging from the sea with a gentle joyful bursting sound, it reaches its own, - the heaven, the home which it left many ages before."

Nature and the "work-a-day world" furnished Arnot with an inexhaustible field of treasure from which to select his analogies. Rarely, unlike Spurgeon, did he resort to books for illustrations, but like Beecher drew them continually from original sources. Let anyone, he declared, with an observing eye, a suggestive mind and a loving heart, walk through nature among his fellow beings, and analogies will spring spontaneously around him, "as manifold and as beautiful as the flowers that by daylight look up from the earth, or the stars that in the evening reciprocate from heaven the gentle salutation." The smallest incidents in every-day life were transformed by the power of his imagination into spiritual analogies. Once it was the soft rays of the morning sun streaming across his face as he

1. The Church in the House, p. 97
knelt in prayer, which moved him to preach on the text: "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Another time it was while watching a ragged boy spontaneously carry his bare-footed brother across a stretch of sharp gravel that the commandment: "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." flashed into his mind. Not a word passed between the two boys, he noted. "Words were not needed.... off went the emotion of brotherly love... the good deed was done." This was the meaning of Christian love - love which does not think of self, but instantly responds to the need of a brother.

Arnot's thorough knowledge of Greek aided him greatly in his work as an expositor. He was at his best when "breaking open" the Scriptures and bringing out their exact meaning. When he was preparing his sermons from the New Testament, he always transferred the text in the Greek to his manuscript. "The accuracy of his exegesis was as remarkable as the beauty of

3. Ibid., pp. 157-58.
his illustrations . . . he often threw a flood of light upon
texts which proved refractory in less skilful hands." ¹ For
example, in preaching on "And in that day ye shall ask me
nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall
ask the Father in my name, he will give it you," ² he pointed out
that though the two clauses — "Ye shall ask me nothing" and
"Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father" — seem as they stand, to
be contradictory, yet in the original there is ἐπωταω (to
interrogate, to ask questions from curiosity), meaning: in that
day your difficulties will be solved; you will not need to ask
questions. While, in the second clause, ἄτεω (to supplicate,
to pray for) is used, meaning: whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer.
Thus there is no contradiction. ³

Although Arnot refused, with Krummacher and Stier, ⁴ to be
catalogued as a "three-point" preacher or otherwise, his
preaching, nevertheless, manifested form and sequence of thought.
Sometimes he developed his text from its beginning ⁵ — sometimes
from its end; ⁶ once he commenced at its center and then built
the rest of his message round it. ⁷ A favorite method was that

of the Soul, Sermon XXIII.
4. John Ker, Lectures on the History of Preaching (2nd ed.;
   Cf. Anchor of the Soul, Sermons II, XV, XX.
   of the Soul, Sermon VI. Cf. The Lesser Parables of Our
   Lord, Sermon VI.
7. Cf. Roots and Fruits, Sermon XIV.
of dividing his text into reverse parts. For example, in his sermon on "And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them," he chose as his first statement: "Christ's thoughts about his disciples"; and as his second: "The disciples' thoughts about Christ." Again, in preaching on "And Moses spake so unto the children of Israel; but they hearkened not unto Moses for anguish of spirit and for cruel bondage," he phrased his two divisions; "The Fact which embodies the principle" and "the Principle which is embodied in the fact." Sometimes his text was expounded literally word for word; "God is known in her palaces for a refuge" was thus broken down into six headings: "God; God is; God is known; God is known in her; God is known in her palaces; God is known in her palaces for a refuge." Similarly, "Honour (value) all men" was divided into: "Value; value men; value all men."

In many of his sermons Arnot concluded by laying emphasis on the practical lessons of his text. These were the "nails" which fastened down the "planks" of his thought and gave his preaching relevance and strength. His people thereby were aided in making the transition from the theoretical to the practical - from the "balcony of observation" to the "road of

2. Roots and Fruits, Sermon XVIII.
4. Roots and Fruits, Sermon XXII. Cf. Ibid., Sermon XX.
5. Psalm 48:3.
6. Anchor of the Soul, Sermon X.
7. 1 Peter 2:17.
8. Roots and Fruits, Sermon XI.
Two of the finest examples of this are found in his sermons: Anchor of the Soul, and The First Promise. Both sermons leave the reader unmistakably aware of the practical import of the texts.

The introductions to Arnot's sermons are as varied in style as his methods of exposition. His sermons never begin in the same way. Sometimes the introductory paragraphs are exceedingly short — a few cryptic sentences and we are at the marrow of his thought; at other times he takes us on a wide tour of the context before leading us directly to its center.

A sample of Arnot's short-method introductions can be seen in his treatment of the text: "I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise." He begins his exposition almost immediately by opening his sermon as follows:

This text raises a question on each of three points which, in mercantile phraseology, would be designated — The Business, the Debt, and the Composition.

I The Business: the nature, sphere, and extent of the trade in which his talents were laid out and his capital invested.

II The debt: how, with whom, and to what extent he had become involved.

III The Composition: in what manner and to what amount the insolvent proposed to pay.

Arnot then proceeds immediately to develop each of these three

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2. Anchor of the Soul, Sermon I.
3. Ibid., Sermon V. Cf. Roots and Fruits, Sermon XIV.
4. Sometimes Arnot omits an introduction and plunges straight into the meaning of his text. Cf. Roots and Fruits, Sermons XIV, XXIII, XXIV and Anchor of the Soul, Sermon VII.
5. Romans 1:14.
Among his long introduction sermons, He stood and Cried, based on the text: "In that last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried saying, 'If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink,'" best illustrates his method of dealing with the context and general background. Arnot begins by explaining the meaning of the feast of booths or tabernacles as it was instituted in Leviticus 23:39-43. He then takes us back to the time of Christ and shows us the manner in which the last day of the feast was celebrated, pointing out the symbolic connection between the water being poured out from the Temple and the impressive picture of waters issuing from the Temple in Ezekiel's vision. The sordid social conditions of Christ's day and its relevance to Ezekiel's prophecy are next discussed, after which our attention is turned to the immediate scene in Jerusalem. Jesus has arrived about the middle of the feast and is there teaching. The procession of priests, having returned to the Temple, from the pool of Siloam, pour the water from the golden vessel, and a rivulet makes its way from the hallowed courts towards the city. "The beams of the setting sun strike the water . . . and golden glory flashes for a moment from the spot that had been dull dry earth before. The multitude gaze in ignorant superstition." Jesus looks on the crowd as they meditate on the meaning of the symbolic water.

1. Anchor of the Soul, Sermon II.
3. Anchor of the Soul, p. 25.
His heart yearns for them. He sees them drinking that which cannot quench the thirst of the soul.¹

Arnot now digresses for a moment and shows us a familiar, touching scene of ragged, hungry, bare-footed children standing on the pavement on a cold, winter's night, gazing through the glass of a baker's window at bread which they cannot reach. "You pitied them"; he reminds us, "perhaps you paused and gave the needy ones some of the bread for which they longed; you remembered, as you resumed your journey, the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"² The picture now fades, and we are brought back to Jerusalem, where we see the Jews similarly hungering for spiritual food, which, although it is near them, they cannot reach. The waters are indeed a symbol of spiritual life in the Lord; but the Jews cannot penetrate the glass which both veils and reveals the salvation of Christ. Jesus bids them turn away from that trickling symbolic water to Himself, the Saviour from sin. "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, 'If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.'" Our attention now is focused on the text and we are ready for its exposition.

While this introduction is long, it is all relevant and useful. In the hands of a less skilful artist, it could easily have proved an enormous porch shadowing the text, rather than a vestibule admitting light.

1. Ibid., p. 26.
2. Ibid.
Arnott held the interest of his congregation not merely because his instruction was full and "meaty", but also because that instruction was presented in an enthusiastic and vital way. People went away from his "theological table" inspired as well as nourished and fed. They sensed the passion in his preaching and the urgency of his message, and this was why there was a constant flow-back to his pulpit. No congregation thrives on erudition alone; no preaching succeeds where there is no flame.

This brings us to the third essential "in" of effective preaching - Inspiration.
B. Arnot’s Preaching – Inspiring

After being in the ministry for more than twenty years, J.H. Jowett, in his lectures to the Yale divinity students, stated what he believed to be the chief goal of preaching. We are not in the pulpit, he declared, to please the fancy or to arouse the emotions. We are not there even to instruct the mind or to sway the judgment. These are only preparatives for what is to follow. "Our ultimate object is to move the will, to set it in another course, to increase its pace and to make it sing in 'the ways of God's commandments.'"¹

To move the will, to increase its pace, to make it sing – these are the end-points of preaching. But how to accomplish them? Logic, with all of its plausible, patterned force, cannot raise one beat of the human heart. Judgment rolled from a tongue of fire may burst the will and shake the foundation, but in its wake it leaves only a shattered shell – a smoking ruin. Preaching must be something more than systematic learning, thundering indictments and fine-fitted phrases. A congregation may thrill to the spectacular – may squirm deliciously in the sweeping glare of the pulpit spotlight; but unless that congregation leaves with Christ's song in its heart and Christ's challenge in its soul, it has gathered in vain. What then is the secret of inspiration?

James Black searches for the solution and finds it. "Passion" is his answer. "A true passion redeems everything on the stage or in the pulpit. It alone gives creative speech reality and power."¹ This was eminently true of Arnot's preaching. Always in it there was a sense of urgency and a burning concern for his people. "He who speaks the gospel coldly," he declared, "has not himself felt its power. When the preacher's heart is kindled, his words will burn."² If I were to have the opportunity of addressing a thousand ministers, he exclaimed, I would urge them to be wise in winning souls.

I would especially endeavour to open the fountain of redeeming love on high, and permit it so to stream upon their hearts, that its mighty volume might carry all their life before it, and compel them to lay out their energies in the service of the Lord that bought them. To them and to myself I would preach the gospel as one that must give an account.³

When Arnot preached he gave himself completely to his message. This was clearly evident in the early part of his ministry when one time he was lecturing to three or four hundred people in one of his fortnightly week-day evening meetings. Before the lecture began, he recognized in the congregation his distinguished friend of university days, James Hamilton.⁴ His presence there, however, did not disturb him, and soon he became so absorbed in his teaching that he completely forgot that

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2. The Church in the House, p. 36.
4. In a little over a year and a half, Hamilton was called to Regent Square Church, London. Life of James Hamilton, pp. 180-88.
Hamilton had entered the church. On another occasion, in the year 1873, while preaching in Theodore Cuyler's church in Brooklyn, he became so engrossed in his subject that he declared he was like a creature in a bottle, hermetically sealed to all the world without. "No thought that there is a world without ever once gleamed through. It was 'up guards and at them' prolonged all the length of the sermon."²

Arnot's warm, sensitive nature instantly drew his congregation to him. He understood the thoughts and feelings of his fellow-men and so fully sympathized with them that he could make them sympathize with him.³ The London Weekly Review records how during one of his last public appearances in London at the Opera House, thousands listened in breathless silence "as he rolled out his wise and well-chosen words, now sparkling with happy and perhaps homely illustration, now weighty with genial but far-seeing sagacity and always brimful of loving sympathy and unfeigned charity."⁴ This genuine overflowing sympathy winged the gospel from his lips into the deepest corners of the heart. It touched the latch strings of emotion, and tears often broke all bounds when he preached.

William Blaikie, who accompanied him on his second visit to America, told of the effect of his preaching on board ship to

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2. Unpublished letter, to his wife, October 6, 1873.
a crowded congregation of cabin passengers, emigrants, ship's officers, and crew. Shortly before they reached the United States they encountered a severe thunder-storm and for half an hour were compassed with wind and rain, thunder and lightning. When they emerged from the fearful cloudburst, the setting sun had cast a dazzling path of glory before them, leaving the ominous clouds behind in golden splendour. The following Sunday Arnot referred to this experience in his sermon. They had been living together for twelve days, he said, and now were about to separate, never to meet again in this world. But if they were Christians, how different life would be even with all of its storms and sorrows. Life appeared sometimes dark and frightening, like the thunder-cloud through which they had recently passed, but when it lay behind them, they should see it bright with glory, while the same sun that illumined it would make a shining way for them stretching to their Father's door.

The words were spoken with great tenderness and when he had finished even "the brawny hand of the sailor was raised to brush away the tear." One tall English major remained after the service, sobbing like a child. "I did not think," he confided in Arnot, "that I was such a baby." The Dundee Advertiser spoke of Arnot's preaching as combining in a rare degree "robust masculine intellectuality with an almost womanly warmth and tenderness of emotion."

1. Memoir, p. 511.
2. Unpublished portion of a letter, to his wife, April 24, 1870.
His heart was as big and active as his head, and his own rich emotional nature enabled him to strike a chord in the bosoms of some of his audience which might otherwise have remained for ever motionless and mute.

This was strikingly illustrated in one of his last sermons preached in St. Peter’s Church, Dundee on the text, Luke 19: 41-42. Duncan MacGregor, who was in the congregation at the time, described part of it:

When he came to speak of the awful words, 'But now they are hid from thine eyes,' he described a sunset. It was an exquisite picture. He spoke of masses of golden clouds, bars of crimson, every tint of glory, from saffron to the rosiest red - inimitable touches of loveliness - and the great sun sinking out of sight. Then, lowering his voice, he said, with a tenderness which it is impossible to describe - 'Brother, would not that be a sad sight if you were never to see the sun again? Oh, think of the glorious Sun of Righteousness passing away from your sight for ever more!' I shall never forget the long, deep-drawn, painful sigh from the solemnized audience which followed that thrilling appeal.

What was it about Arnot's preaching that moved and melted men? Certainly there were many of his contemporaries who were just as passionate and earnest as he - just as erudite and versed in the Scriptures; yet few of them could equal his skill in swaying the hearts of men. How can we explain his popularity in preaching? Indeed, how can we account for the success of any of the great preachers of the world - Savonarola, Ambrose Shepherd, Alexander Whyte, Thomas Guthrie, Thomas Chalmers, and

1. The Dundee Advertiser, July 18, 1877.
2. The church of which Robert Murray M’Cheyne had been minister.
a host of others? It seems to depend on that old indefinable thing called personality, which one has or has not, and yet it is difficult to lay down rules for what in essence is an unaccountable, capricious thing. "Apparently in the last resort," suggests Gossip, "it is not what one says, or even how one says it, it is what one is that gives the power."  

A vivid example of this is the story of Guthrie of Fenwick, the silver-tongued evangelist, to whose moorland kirk people flocked from all directions, from incredible distances. The Spirit of God was manifestly in their midst. Then came the day when Guthrie was ousted from his congregation and in his place substituted a dull Episcopalian curate with no food for the soul, no sympathy for the people. Unsoured, Guthrie continued to worship among them.

One day, as trailing home discontentedly from the service, the people complained bitterly of the poverty of the curate's preaching. Guthrie dissented, insisting that it was an excellent sermon, and sitting down on the heather preached it again to them, "but now with what a difference, to hearts touched, troubled, comforted, moved, set on fire - the same, and yet a thousand miles away from it, because of that queer indescribable something that unconsciously he added."  

So it was with William Arnot. That ingredient in his preaching, that peculiar quality of his personality, which raised him to a place of great usefulness and distinction, defies all

2. Ibid., p. 72.
sifting-out and isolation. His writings convey only selected strands of his thought, only show us a few flashing facets of his personality. "They give no idea of the richness and variety and depth of his mental attainments, nor of the loving, living heart which guided them in daily employment."¹ As one of his critics has said: "he was greater than his works."²

Arnot preached enthusiastically the gospel of Christ because he loved enthusiastically the Christ of the gospel. The supreme aim of all his preaching, as his Free High Kirk Session recognized, was to "magnify the love of Christ."³ To preach Christ in all of His beauty and power, to preach Him as the Saviour and friend of man was the one great ambition of his ministry. It was this Christocentric emphasis that gave his preaching its dynamic, and it was this dynamic in his preaching that brought men and women to the feet of Christ.

2. Ibid.
3. Free High Church, Edinburgh, Session Records, June 23, 1875.
CHAPTER IV

ARNOT AS PASTOR

In a company of church officers it is the minister who is supremely the creator of atmosphere . . . if he is large and liberal, and patient, and self-controlled, he creates a genial air and temper in which all big things breathe easily, and generous purposes find congenial hospitality and support.

At the close of twenty-four years of pastoral ministry in Glasgow, Arnot exclaimed: "My congregation is large, loving and united. There never has been a jar in our courts or congregation." Two principal reasons accounted for this rather remarkable statement: first, Arnot, as a pastor, identified himself with his people, becoming interested in what interested them; second, he never moved with small majorities. "He was the best family minister we have ever known," was the opinion of many of his hearers. The Glasgow Daily Review recorded that he possessed, perhaps more than any other minister or any other Scotsman of his day, the personal affection of the people.

His power in the pulpit and his popularity on the platform, great as these were, did not equal the regard which he earned in the home. By his tracts, his pamphlets, and his reported speeches he commanded in a rare degree the ability to move at will to mirth or tears the quiet fireside student. The secret of his success was his thorough adoption of the doctrine of kinship.

The London Quarterly Review spoke of him as being a shrewd and homely Scotsman "with something of the honest country farmer always hanging about him to the last" which made him beloved especially among the country folk who knew that he had been and

was one of themselves. He was the brother and helper of all who needed him whether it be the poor Shetland crofter, of whom he tells, whose pony had been "whommeled" in a roadside ditch, or the Irish peasant, famine stricken, hungering for a potato. "In living practice he showed the consistency of a broad, genial, Catholic charity which knew no limits, with the strict adoption and maintenance of a definite creed." Like his neighbor in Edinburgh, The Reverend and very genial James Hood Wilson, he was most unwilling to say "No" to any one who asked an interview. One day the Arnot children, who were teaching their infant brother to speak, met their father at the gate and shouted, "O, Father, Willy can say 'No'." "Can he?" replied Arnot; "well, it's more than his father can do yet."

Arnot labored indefatigably as a pastor, giving much attention to his large correspondence and to the congregational and mission schools connected with St. Peter's. He insisted on having sufficient time for his pastoral calling, and often felt compelled to decline numerous outside invitations. On one occasion he refused to participate in a summer evangelistic mission, not because he was not interested in the work, but because he felt his full schedule would not permit it. He listed the following five reasons for his refusal: he had more than an average share of miscellaneous public work, not

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2. The Daily Review (Glasgow), May 24, 1877.
connected with the Free Church; and more than an average share of public (not committee or ecclesiastic) work within the Free Church. The work of the mission church connected with St. Peter's occupied much of his time; and his own congregation was larger and more important in proportion to any other sphere to which he might be transferred. At least four weeks of rest each year, he felt, were essential for his own health, though interestingly enough this did not necessarily mean rest from Sunday preaching. Often during his holidays he would return to Glasgow at the weekends in order to be in his pulpit.  

Arnot endeavored to visit every home of his congregation at least once a year, believing that a "house-going minister makes a church-going people". He maintained that every family should be a small church, and every church should be a large family, and that the most effective pastors are those who make themselves at home in everybody's home and take an interest in every member of the family. "I love in a greater or less degree," he declared, "every person whom I know, and also all that I do not know, and this is one grand source of my happiness." This spontaneous love for people acted as a magnet, and many were quick to confide in him, knowing that they would find a sympathetic listener. All types of people

1. Ibid., pp. 271, 315-16.
2. Ibid., p. 299. Usually it took over a year to visit the whole congregation.
5. Memoir, p. 46.
consulted him from young business men to common laborers.\(^1\) Once it was a widow in desperate plight — another time a disconsolate mother whose boy had run off to sea. Naively he assured her:

> But you see Mrs. — we must have sailors. Our merchant navy is a noble institution. A Christian sailor may be a missionary, and carry the gospel to the ends of the earth. It was merchants\(^2\) from the Continent who first crossed the sea to Britain, and brought us the gospel.\(^3\)

In Glasgow it was often his custom on Friday evenings, during the winter season, to invite students to his home. These proved happy and memorable occasions and afforded both pastor and the young people an opportunity of knowing one another. The following description of one of these social gatherings is taken from an enthusiastic letter written by one of his young guests.

After tea the Arnot children were brought in and allowed to join the group so that the students might feel more at home — a part of the family. There was much laughing over Arnot's numerous anecdotes, and all found their host affable. One of the young men brought a letter from his minister showing evident concern for his welfare. After reading it, Arnot told how he and his school-mates used to ford a river on their way to school. They did not go into the deep water alone, but took each other's hands and then crossed safely together. Had they let go, in all probability they would have been carried down the stream. The obvious analogy was that this young man too was in a mighty

\(^1\) Ibid., pp. 347-48.
\(^2\) Mercatores saepe ad eos commetant — Caesar.
stream of evil, and alone he could easily be swept into temptation. He needed, therefore, the fellowship and guidance of other Christians. After more than an hour's conversation and looking at books and pictures, family worship began. The servants came in and then a Psalm was sung, led by Mrs. Arnot, after which the Scripture was read. Arnot closed with prayer, praying that though of different families on earth, they might all be of the family of God. Each student was then presented with a copy of Arnot's *Poetry and the Fight*, and all left happily having enjoyed a pleasant and profitable evening together.¹

Both Arnot's Glasgow church buildings, first on Oswald Street and later on Main Street,² were surrounded by slums. Many of the wealthier people in the West End had no better understanding of sanitary arrangements and hygiene than the poorer classes living in the wynds and vennels. James Pagan, in 1849, wrote of the filthy state of the mews lanes about Blythswood Hill, surrounded on all sides by the dwellings of the rich and with masses of decaying vegetable matter within a few yards of their houses.³ Within three minutes' walk from St. Peter's Church were some of the worst living conditions in Glasgow. There, families were always approaching starvation and were seldom free from fever. Arnot mentions one of the wynds off Broomielaw, housing 6½ families - 322 individuals - and only 15 families claiming connection with any church. Of the

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1. Memoir, pp. 239-41.
2. Now known as Blytheswood Street.
3. Oakley, op.cit., pp. 74-75.
80 children there, not more than three or four, it was estimated, attended any school. Most of the children were so naked and filthy that it was not fitting that they be asked to attend St. Peter's school. Arnot reports one case where a visitor from his church had given a poor girl a dress to wear so that she could come to school. On the very next visit, however, she found the girl in bed at mid-day, the garment having been pawned.1 Realizing that the parish church and school were helpless to aid these people, Arnot's congregation rented a house in the mouth of the close and established evening classes expressly for the poor, admitting only those who attended no school during the day. Here many received their elementary education.

Arnot was conscious of the deplorable lack of sanitation in Glasgow, and tried in some measure to correct it. He lived for five years on the banks of the Kelvin near a deserted quarry into which was emptied much of the city's sewage, where it lay for years—a perfect breeding ground for disease. Three cases of fever, known to Arnot, occurred in one year within a hundred yards of the place, and one of them proved fatal to the head of a family. Arnot endeavored to have the situation corrected, but after being driven aimlessly from one authority to another, finally gave up in despair. The quarry, it seemed, lay beyond

the jurisdiction of the city police, and the county had no machinery for dealing with the case. 1 This was a shocking example of nineteenth century indifference to basic matters of sanitation. Little wonder that there were epidemics of cholera and typhoid in the very midst of wealth and comfort. We might wish that Arnot had not given up so readily his effort to clear the quarry, but, considering the day in which he lived, it is easily understandable.

Interested as he was in all forms of social welfare, Arnot used his pen gladly for the betterment of society. He was a member of the Glasgow committee of The Society for the Education of Imbecile Children in Scotland, and wrote a fervent appeal in behalf of its work. 2 His small volume, Race for Riches, written in 1851, containing six lectures applying the Word of God to the traffic of men, indicated his genuine interest in the moral and ethical problems of his day. This he considered his finest work. 3 No one who had not been conversant with the complexities of a mercantile society could have written these sermons. They showed years of experience in mixing with business men, and were remarkable in that they were preached when many ministers, following the example of Leighton, shunned the responsibility of such preaching under the "morbid plea of preaching for eternity." 4

1. This Present World, pp. 222-23.
2. Arnot, An Appeal on Behalf of the Imbecile Youth of Scotland (Glasgow, 1852).
Arnot's aim was "to restore the conscience to commercial transactions and so put the dealings of men under the law of Christ." He did not propose to his business friends that they should set aside their ledgers and commence a debate on systematic theology—everything in its own time and place—but he did point out that there is such a thing as laboring in the Lord, though laboring in common materials. "There is such a thing as walking about on earth like one who is going home to heaven." Religion, he emphasized, was not meant to be shut up in churches and prayer-meetings or even in households.

Religion is intended for the world. The world has need of it. Your weary, weary, clanking machinery,—ever going, never resting...the hard edges of that huge, complex money-making machine are sawing into your very flesh and bones. If the name and spirit of Christ were poured upon your business, your business would not rack you so sore, nor waste you so soon.

One of Arnot's earliest accomplishments was the organization of St. Peter's Home Missionary Society which prospered and grew into one of the most effective organizations in his church. Mr. A. Wark, one of its first members, told how the work began and how Arnot had influenced his own life.

About two years after Wark had become a member of St. Peter's congregation, Arnot announced from the pulpit that he would like those young men in the congregation who earnestly wanted to do something for the cause of Christ to attend the prayer meeting in the following week. Wark's conscience would

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1. Ibid.
not let him stay away. The text was Jeremiah 31:34, "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' etc." Arnot argued that until the prophecy be fulfilled, it would be the duty of every Christian to be saying to his neighbor, "Know the Lord". He then urged each young man to do something, even though it be a little. A missionary society was immediately agreed upon, and Arnot assisted in mapping out districts for those who were to visit. One was allotted to Wark who by now began to feel afraid and pleaded that he did not know how to visit. Arnot, however, spoke encouragingly and, when the meeting had concluded, took him by the hand and led him down Oswald Street, along Broomielaw to Robertson Street and up a long, dark court, where behind the houses fronting the street they found a second row. The bells were ringing out ten o'clock, and the moon shone mysteriously from behind a dark cloud. Standing there in that eerie light, Arnot pointed out a great mountain of houses towering high above them. "Now, A.," he said, "this will be your district." Such was Wark's first introduction to missionary work.

Arnot's primary interest all through his ministry was in the spiritual welfare of his congregation and its neighbors. He was not content merely to preach from his own pulpit and wait for people to come to him; he must go to them. One evening he went down alone to Buchanan Court, Broomielaw, opposite the steamboat wharf, where lived some of the roughest people in

Glasgow. At first, he thought of preaching in it from an outside stair but, after seeing the number of fierce-looking men and women at windows and doors, decided against it. Seeing some children playing on a barrow, he went forward and began to talk to them. Some of the older people drew near to hear what he was saying, and soon there was a considerable crowd around him, to whom he spoke of the one thing needful.1

Arnot's missionary labors among the very poor, while naturally concerned mainly with those of his own parish, cannot be said to have ended there. Arnot was willing to serve anywhere, whether in the filthy closes off Robertson Street, not far from St. Peter's, or in the very heart of the notorious Wynds off the Trongate. Once he preached out-of-doors in one of the Free Church Mission stations using an outside stair for his pulpit.2 On another occasion he conducted the evening service in a large private court lying close to the Old Wynd, and described the scene vividly in one of his General Assembly speeches.3 The court was thronged with people, every window of the high tenements being filled with eager listeners. He emphasized in his speech that it was not enough for people to sit indolently in their comfortable homes or comfortable pews—"the minister preaching to his full congregation, and the congregation pretty well pleased with their minister, and

1. Ibid., pp. 231-32.
3. Ibid.
throwing each his guinea or his shilling into the plate for a missionary to go down to the closes. " Only by the personal contact of Christian people and Christian ministers with the neglected population could the Church expect to prosper. Like Elisha, who restored life to the Shunamite's child by stretching himself upon him, so should ministers, elders and members go down to the spiritually dead and lay themselves along in personal contact, mouth to mouth, hand to hand, eyes to eyes. 

"We must enter into sympathetic communion with the neglected members of the human family - our joys to their joys, our sorrows to their sorrows. We must enter into their feeling, and mingle our tears and smiles with theirs." Consider one another, he urged elsewhere, and follow the footsteps of your Master. "He always drew near to the neediest, and neediest, by a reciprocal attraction, 'drew near' to him." Consider the drunkard and his miserable home and fix your eyes upon the scene until your heart burns in love towards him. "That flame will spread; it cannot be confined; it will embody itself in some earnest works to reclaim and save." Consider the hungry, destitute orphans and you will not be able to enjoy your plenty until you have taken

1. Ibid., p. 314.
2. Arnot urged that congregations ought to part with their minister half of a Sabbath from time to time so that he might preach in the Wynds. They should part with him, not just on an evening when he is tired but during part of the day when he is at his best. Ibid., p. 315.
3. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
measures to help them. Consider the young lad whose steps are sliding on slippery places. "He is somebody's son. Don't be content with the remark that he is becoming prodigal. Visit him. Speak tenderly to him when you have him alone. Invite him to your house. Encourage him to arise and go to the Father."  

About the same time as the missionary society was formed, Arnot wrote a letter entitled: *An Affectionate Address From St. Peter's Congregation To Those Residing In Its Neighbourhood*, this was in way of preparation for the visiting that was to follow, and showed Arnot's deep concern for his neighbors. He addressed them in a friendly but straight-forward manner, warning them of the peril of not believing in Christ. He declared that he and his congregation often thought with concern about them, and came to visit in the spirit of friendship and love.  

Arnot's deep interest in Home Missions never abated, as is seen in his General Assembly speech of 1872 where he described some of his work in Edinburgh. Here he gave, in much the same words, his conviction stated twenty years before - that the life of the Church depended upon its missionary vigor, and that unless the Church exerted a quickening influence on the dead mass of evil, ignorance and vice surrounding it, the dead mass would exert a deadening influence on the life of the Church.  

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1. Ibid.
2. A full report of this address may be found in Appendix I.
Not only for the sake of the destitute, must the Church evangelise, but for its own life's sake. It would be as presumptuous and dangerous for the Church to suppose that it could escape the overwhelming evil resulting from neglect of the underprivileged masses, as it would have been for the fleeing Israelites to suppose that they could remain complacently in the dry bed of the Red Sea without tempting the restraining hand of God. Arnot told of going down among the neediest people of Edinburgh, helping ex-convicts overcome the stigma of prison life and ministering particularly to elderly, poverty-stricken women. One of the most rewarding experiences for Christians, he felt, was to become, as it were, the hand and instrument of the Lord in reaching down into these low places, and finding there wretched souls who needed love and healing. So many of God's hidden ones could be found among the poor; indeed, Arnot spoke of them as gold dust, in the midst of a great heap of rubbish, discovered only when a magnet, with many prongs, was pushed in. ¹ Oh that God would use his brethren and himself, exclaimed Arnot, as the instruments of His love in reaching down into this treasure field!

Arnot conducted his church courts in an orderly, thoroughly democratic manner, and agreed with Jowett that it was unwise to move with small majorities.² He always formed and

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¹. Though Arnot here carelessly mixed his metaphors, undoubtedly he realized that gold is not attracted to a magnet.
stated his own judgment on the business at hand, but never insisted on his opinion being adopted. An instance of this occurred when he proposed that the lower school rooms of the Oswald Street church be divided into two. He was very anxious that the proposal be accepted, but, on its being objected to by some of the members, at once withdrew his suggestion. Some years afterwards, a similar plan was introduced by one of the members and, after some conversation, adopted. One of the elders sitting beside Arnot at the time whispered, "Didn't you make that proposal long ago?"

"'Whisht! whisht!' replied Arnot, "not a word about that." 1

Shortly after coming to Edinburgh, Arnot and his session proposed that a window be pierced through to the quadrangle of New College in order to admit more light under the gallery. With one voice the authorities of the College opposed the alteration, believing that it would destroy the appearance of the quadrangle. Arnot and his office bearers, while having the power in their hands, tactfully did not insist immediately, but quietly determined to take their own way. Eventually the window was completed, harmonizing perfectly with the rest of the College. "The first time I met Dr. Candlish," 2 wrote Arnot, "after the window was opened, he ran up to me, clapped me on the shoulder, and said, 'I have come to read my recantation. The window does you much good

2. Acting as Principal at the time.
and does us no harm." Here again was an example of the diplomatic way in which Arnot dealt with people.

As we have observed, Arnot was a man of peace. Controversy of any kind was always painful to him; and only when he believed that duty demanded it, would he take any part in unfriendly debates. At such times he spoke his mind clearly and unhesitatingly without thought of the consequences. This was evident in his General Assembly speeches concerning the use of hymns in public worship. In one of them he stated frankly that he would not refrain from discussing the controversial subject because of fear of possible strife. He felt that the children of the family of God ought to be able to agree to disagree and be frank with one another, though he confessed elsewhere that it was difficult to know wherein he should faithfully denounce and wherein he should "wrap the mantle of charity round the failing of a brother." On the one hand, he was afraid of "peevish fault-finding" and on the other of "indolent, unworthy, cowardly silence."

On November 9, 1853, James M'Clelland, the president of two organizations - the Sunday School Movement and the Secular School Society - wrote an indignant letter to Arnot in which he accused him of misrepresenting and ridiculing the work of his societies, in a public address on education. He prophesied that

2. Ibid., p. 408.
5. Ibid.
because of the existing state of public opinion among the more independent thinkers of the day, the clergy would eventually be forbidden to exercise an active influence on education and no longer would be allowed to press upon the laity "dogmas in Confessions put forth three hundred years ago by men as erring as we are." He requested Arnot to answer his accusation in a written statement and to publish it in the Glasgow Scottish Guardian.

Arnot in his reply gave a stinging vindication of all that he had said, and denied that in his speech he had misrepresented or ridiculed the work of the secular educationists. Vigorously he defended the Free Church's educational system and in particular the work of his own congregation which educated above six hundred children steadily every day. He emphasized that he was not opposed to a national system of education, only to the kind proposed by Victorian "secularists" which gave no place in the curriculum for religious instruction. National education, he declared, must come eventually, but in the meantime the Church of Scotland parish schools and the Free Kirk day schools must carry on the work. In answer to M'Clelland's insinuation that the clergy were interfering with the freedom of the laity, he asked indignantly:

What do you make me? Do you take me for a popish priest? I am one of the people, Sir. I mingle with them more than you do. . . . I lectured the other evening to 1500 of the

1. See Appendix No. II.
mercantile youth of Glasgow by their own invitation on fair play in buying and selling. I do not pretend that they learned much from me; but I aver that I felt a thrill of intense and entire sympathy flowing and reflowing between myself and my audience. On the very next evening I lectured on savings banks to a crowded meeting of working people ... and established a branch of the National Security which in one week numbered 257 depositors. I am of the people.

It is interesting to note that Robert Candlish sided with Arnot in this controversy and advised him to have the whole correspondence printed and made into a pamphlet. 2

Before concluding this study of Arnot as a pastor, more should be said concerning his views on teaching. As we have noted in our study of his preaching, he was eminently successful in instructing young people, attracting large crowds of students wherever he lectured. Indeed, so drawn was he to the teaching profession, that twice he was sorely tempted to accept full-time professorships. His views on how to teach were as fresh and practical as was the substance of what he taught. He realized that stories and illustrations, while an important part of teaching, were not all that was required to "put across" truth. The approach to the bridge of instruction was as essential as the main span of information. For example, if a teacher came to his subject without a deep personal conviction of its truth, much of what he proposed to teach would fail to "reach across" to his pupils.

You can never rightly do the work of servants until you

1. Since Arnot's reply to this letter is so characteristic of him when once aroused, it has been thought wise to give the full report of the correspondence in Appendix No. II.
2. Unpublished letter from Robert Candlish to Arnot, November 22, 1853.
attain the station of sons; but, when you have attained the station of sons, you cannot refrain from doing the work of servants. Privilege possessed supplies the impulse to duty prescribed.

Imagine, supposes Arnot, that someone finds himself with a number of children in a place of great danger. He points to an opening difficult of access and forbidding in appearance and says to the children: "Go on in and you will be safe," while he himself remains unmoved in the place of danger. The children will naturally hesitate and be very little affected by the man's entreaties. But let the man go in himself first, and then call to the children: "Come, for I am safe here," and they will immediately respond. "They will feel the force of his invitation. 'Come to my Saviour', if it can be employed with truth, is a much more effective style of invitation, than 'Go to one Jesus.'"

In his racy little pamphlet entitled Suggestions On Sabbath School Teaching In Its Principles and Practice, Arnot discusses pertinently the following methods of teaching. While these are specifically addressed to Sunday School teachers they nevertheless give some idea of Arnot's general teaching technique. Instruction, he affirms, should be as much as possible in stories and pictures embued with the gospel, and nature should be made "the handmaid of grace". Teaching should be dignified, but not pedantic, and when speaking to children

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1. Arnot, Suggestions On Sabbath School Teaching In Its Principles And Practice (Glasgow, 1847), p. 3.
2. Ibid., p. 30.
the teacher should remember that he is not a child. "There is a great difference between childlike and childish. The one is sublime - the other ridiculous." Strive to be completely natural, using the language of the eye, the expression of the face and the motions of the body to convey the lesson. Teach whenever possible by asking questions; but let the questions be put in such a form as really to exercise the minds of the students. Do not communicate the answers in the questions asked. For example, in teaching the lesson in II Chronicles 33, the questions and answers should not be:

- Was Manasseh the king of Judah? Yes.
- Was he a good king? No.
- Did he worship idols? Yes.
- Did God speak to Manasseh and his people? Yes.
- Did God punish Manasseh? Yes.
- Did the king of Assyria come to fight against Judah? Yes.

This "feeble jingling sound of words" will promote drowsiness and carelessness because there is no real incentive to think.

Let the questions rather be:

- Who was Manasseh?
- What was his character?
- How did he show this?

and the scholars will immediately search their minds for the answers.

Seek for the pupils their highest good. Ask for them nothing less than life from the dead. Beware of substituting the means for the end. Teaching is nothing except as a means.

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1. Ibid., p. 13.
2. Ibid., p. 17.
3. Ibid., p. 18.
of setting before them the word of God; "and even that word is but a dead letter - it is of no avail, except in so far as it is the Spirit's instrument to enlighten the mind and convert the soul." Call upon the Spirit's power while the teaching progresses, and when it is over continue to look up. It is to the sky that the husbandman looks when returning from the field at night. The seed which he has sown among the broken clods and parched soil will bear no fruit except the rain descends. A teacher sows in a "hard-parched land" and must depend upon the Spirit "poured out as floods upon the dry ground" in order to bring forth the harvest.

Arnot's lecture, *The Earth, Framed and Furnished as a Habitation for Men*, addressed to the Young Men's Christian Association in the Exeter Hall, London, in the year 1859, gives a splendid example of his teaching method. His subject is the kind that might easily have lulled his students into a soporific state, had he not known how to seize and hold their attention. No one, however, could drowse through this lecture. It is too interesting - too alive. An amazing series of pictures are presented in quaint, unforgettable language, and the cold facts of geography are transformed into poetic prose. The atmosphere becomes a giant ocean and human beings the molluscs at its bottom. The tide comes twice each day up "every creek and estuary, quietly tapping on the shore" and begging to know if

there is anything to be carried away. 1

The Gulf of Mexico, the most circular of seas, is the "great tea-kettle of Great Britain". Its rotundity causes the hot stream of water which flows into it with great force from the coast of Africa, to spill over its north-eastern brim in the direction of the British Isles. 2

The atmosphere is the mediator between the land and the water: "the three links are formed into a circle, and the stream, not of electric fire, but of pure water, runs round the endless ring in a true perpetual motion." 3

The air not only draws fresh water from the salt seas, but distills for its own use pure liquid from stagnant pools, slimy, fetid rivers and briny deeps. So the Sun of Righteousness bends down towards a polluted world, and draws up to heaven a multitude whom no man can number; but in the spiritual as well as in the physical updrawing 'nothing shall enter that defileth.' 4

The clouds - "those great water-carriers of the world . . . how softly they lie; how quickly they move; how gently they fall, where they are needed, and when:" 5

You are awakened by a rumbling in your chimney and a rattling in the casement. You rise and peer out on the moonlit sky: the cause of the nocturnal commotion is immediately apparent. "An interminable line of laden clouds, like a huge luggage-train, is spinning eastward through the sky from the Atlantic to the dry table-

1. Ibid., p. 14.
2. Ibid., p. 24.
3. Ibid., p. 18.
4. Ibid., p. 18.
5. Ibid., p. 19.
lands on the confines of Europe and Asia."1 It moves with frightening speed and an infinity of imposing sound. Its business requires haste for it brings life to a desiccated land. "You perceive it is rushing on the main line; the axle trees are well greased, and the switches all right: you tumble into bed again, by way of shunting yourself off into a siding, and sleep soundly till the morning, confident that no collision will take place."2 Unlike man's best machinery, Nature produces no waste: "not so much as a dewdrop goes a-missing in a thousand years." As the morning sun grows hot, a molecule of water disappears into the fathomless ocean of air; but it is not lost:

it is in the book, and in by double entry; it must and will cast up at the balance in the proper place. It dissipates from a daisy in your garden in June: if stock were taken at Christmas, it might be found frozen in near Petersburg on the Neva; or sparkling in the summer sun from the paddle of Dr. Livingstone's little steamer on the Zambesi; it might be found on a pinnacle of the fantastic icicles that adorn Niagara; or springing in the unknown fountains that feed the mysterious Nile; it might be found adhering to a feather with which a mother at midnight is wetting the lips of her dying child; or constituting a tenth part of a great tear, standing on the black cheek of an African youth, while the white slaver is counting out the price and stowing away the cargo.3

one thing is certain, that dewdrop cannot be lost. So it is with the body of the redeemed when it returns to dust. "It does not go out of God's sight, and he is able to gather it into a glorious one again."4

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
With these graphic examples of Arnot's teaching before us, it is not difficult to understand why students were so attracted to him as a lecturer. He possessed in large measure the three essential "musts" of a popular speaker: a golden gift of expression, a lively, vivid imagination, and a magnetic personality. He was completely at ease with young people and was whole-heartedly in sympathy with their problems. Short of leaping five-barred gates, he declared, there was scarcely any recreation in which he could not join them.

Steer clear of all that hurts this body and pollutes this soul, and I shall take part with you in the merriest expedition you can contrive. I would heartily participate in your sport and ask for God's blessing on it when it was over for the day.

Had he accepted the professorships offered him in London and Toronto, unquestionably he would have been among the favorite teachers of the faculty. No one could have said of Arnot as one said of his professor, Stevenson MacGill, "He was not an interesting lecturer."  

As we have seen, Arnot's work as a pastor included numerous fields of activity—pastoral calling, counseling, youth work, missions to the very poor, lecturing and literary endeavors. There were no tabu areas in his ministry—no places he refused to serve. "If he had chosen an epitaph for himself he might have wished to be remembered especially as

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2. C.P. Safford, Mar. 31. 65.
'A Faithful Minister', though he would only have ventured to say that he had tried to prove himself faithful."¹ He considered his pastoral work as important as that of his preaching, realizing that as a man increases in wisdom as a pastor, so will he increase in skill as a preacher. He believed with Henry Ward Beecher that the business of a minister is not "to grind a church, not to turn a wheel or to cuff about the controversies of theology, but to build men"² and to bring them into a living fellowship with Christ. It was to this high purpose that he dedicated his life as a preacher and as a pastor; and it was this consecrated spirit which people recognized when they said, "He was the best family minister we have ever known."³

² Beecher, op. cit., p. 21.
Beware of resting in a hard dry dissection of doctrines; after all our museum knowledge of the structure of the seed, we shall die in the midst of plenty, unless the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ become the daily bread of our souls.

William Arnot, Roots and Fruits of the Christian Life, p. 413.
CHAPTER V
ARNOT AS EXPOSITOR

The three volumes which Arnot published on specific branches of Scriptural exegesis were Laws from Heaven for Life on Earth—studies from the book of Proverbs; The Church in the House—expositions from the book of Acts; and The Parables of Our Lord. The first was a series of brief and practical comments written from the viewpoint of laying "the Christian system along the surface of common life, without removing it from its foundations in the doctrines of Grace"; and the second was a "simple elucidation and enforcement" of the lessons of the text. In neither of these did the author pretend to write a critical or exhaustive exposition. It was only in the third volume, The Parables of Our Lord, that he attempted to give a comprehensive exegesis of the subject; and it is therefore mainly to this volume that our attention will now be directed.

A. The Parables

There were four general qualifications which Arnot felt every expositor of the parables ought to possess. First, he must be a man of faith, accepting the Bible as the Word of God,

2. The Church in the House, prefatory note.
and seeing the human race, as Christ saw it, in its fallen, needy state. In order to have faith, he must understand the Scriptures, and in order to understand the Scriptures, he must have faith. This obvious circle, Arnot insisted, was not a "vicious circle."

As you approach from without you may perceive that the Bible is the word of God, and that the Christ whom it reveals is the Saviour of sinners; standing now on your new position, and recognizing your instructor as also your Redeemer, you will discover in his word a length, and breadth, and height, and depth, which were formerly concealed. In our day, as well as when the parables were first spoken, it is to his own disciples that their true meaning is made known.2

In the second place, an expositor ought to have a faculty for perceiving and appreciating analogies balanced by a stern logical acumen. It is not necessary for an expositor to be a poet, but it is essential that he possess in some measure that eye for parallels which constitutes the basis of the poetic faculty. "The pictorial theology of the New Testament is not safe in the hands of a teacher who is signally defective in the faculty to which it specially appeals."3 A stern logic, on the other hand, is as important as a lively imagination. "From the pages of those commentators, whose imaginations have broken loose, you may cull fancies as manifold, as beautiful, and as useless as the gyrations of a helmsless ship in a stormy sea."4

The third requirement was a competent acquaintance not

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1. The Parables of Our Lord, p. 33.
2. Ibid. Cf. Ibid., p. 419.
3. Ibid., p. 34.
4. Ibid.
only with the Scriptures, but also with their system of doctrine. This was necessary as a safeguard in the interpretation of the parables. "Although a correct exegesis of Scripture supplies us with our only true dogmatics, the knowledge of dogmatics, scientifically arranged, contributes in turn to a correct exegesis."¹

Finally, an expositor of the parables ought to be conversant with the relative history, topography and customs of biblical times, the knowledge of which would often prove useful in "lighting up" the parables. This knowledge, however, must be kept strictly in its place and not used for pedantic display.

It is one thing to place some ancient eastern custom in such a position that a ray of light from its surface shall pleasantly illumine a feature of the parable that was lying in the shade, and all another thing to make the parable a convenience for the exhibition of a scholar's lore.²

Arnot, as we have noted, possessed these particular qualifications. The Bible he accepted unquestionably as the Word of God and acknowledged Christ as his supreme Instructor. Completely at ease in the field of analogy, he found no difficulty in constructing the "bridge" from the realm of the physical to the realm of the spiritual. He had a genuine love for theology, and admired Calvin, the great Puritans, and Hodge, ex animo. "Strangers who went to hear him, expecting parables and illustrations, etc., were sometimes surprised when he gave a strong, masterly discussion of some difficult and

¹. Ibid., p. 35.
². Ibid., p. 36.
knotty passage; as for example, his lecture upon James ii: 14-26.\(^1\) His balanced teaching and chaste illustrations revealed a strong, logical mind at work; and his wide knowledge of New Testament Greek and of the contemporary history and general background of the Bible fitted him well for the work of exposition.

Having reviewed his book on the Parables, Spurgeon wrote:

Mr. Arnot is the fittest man living to expound the Parables, for he is himself a great master of metaphorical teaching. Happy are the people who stately listen to his highly pictorial, and yet solid instruction; and here they who read will share the blessing. Bells of golden music, and pomegranates of richest sweetness, are the true emblems of a sanctified teacher, and these in equal proportions enliven and adorn Mr. Arnot's discourses. In the valuable work before us there is, as is usual with the author, much striking originality, and much unparodied learning. The first will make it popular, the second will commend it to the thoughtful. Many writers have done well upon this subject, but in some respects, as far as space would permit him, our friend excels them all. 'The Parables' will be a fit companion to 'The Proverbs, and both books will be immortal.\(^2\)

At the outset of his work on the Parables, Arnot acknowledges his debt to the Reformers and the Puritans for their contribution to sacred literature, but points out that the literature of one century, whether sacred or common, will not satisfy the craving and sustain the life of another. The

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2. The Free Church of Scotland Monthly Record (Edinburgh, March 1, 1865), advertisement sheet. It is interesting to note that Spurgeon, writing elsewhere, did not think that this work measured up to Arnot's usual high mark of excellence, though he still maintained that it was of great value. C.H. Spurgeon, *Commenting and Commentaries* (London, 1876), p. 155.
nineteenth century must produce its own literature as it raises its own crops and fabricates its own garments. While it is wise to preserve and reverence the intellectual and spiritual treasures of the past, it is foolish to depend upon them as food for the present. They should be used as seed. "We should cast them into the ground, and get the product fresh every season—old, and yet ever new."¹ A servile imitation of the ancient masters is not sufficient. Truth "must be cast in the moulds of modern thought, and tinged with the hues of modern experience."²

In emphasizing this he compares his work as an expositor to a railway which necessarily follows the curvature of the earth. "If it were produced in an absolutely straight line, it would in the course of a few miles, be high and dry above the surface of the earth, and entirely useless for practical purposes of life."³ Similarly, an expositor, if he would be of use to his generation, "must bend his speculation to the time."⁴

Arnot agreed with Lisco that it was the duty of the practical expositor to treat each parable just as it stood in the gospels.⁵ He would never have said with Unger that the parables of the Talents and Pounds were the same story, originally recorded by Matthew and later on, by a sort of incongruous

1. The Parables of Our Lord, p. 12.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p. 13.
mixture, joined to another, spoken at another time, and for another purpose.¹ Nor would he have affirmed with Jeremias that The Talents and The Pounds were identical, differing only in their embellishments. To say that Luke had deliberately increased the number of servants and that Matthew had purposely magnified the amounts involved, because of an inherent tendency in the oriental story-teller to over-statement; or to conclude that, because Luke mentioned only three out of the ten servants and Matthew gave no more than three in all, therefore, Matthew’s account must be original² — to reason in this way would have met with Arnot’s immediate disapproval. "The man," he exclaimed, "who cannot perceive, or will not own that these [The Talents and The Pounds] are two distinct cases, charged with different, though cognate, lessons, is not fit to be an expositor of any writing, either sacred or profane."³

Though Arnot followed Richard Trench in his selection and arrangement of the thirty parables as they occur chronologically in the evangelic record, he did not agree with him that these alone possess the qualities which make up a parable. In support of this he published a series of papers entitled, The Lesser Parables of Our Lord, which included discussions of such texts as: Matthew 9: 37-38; 12: 33; Mark 9: 50; John 4: 34 and 35. His judgment as to what constituted a

¹ A.F. Unger, De Parabolarum Jesu Natura, Interpretatione, Usu Scholae Exegeticae Rhetoricae (Lipsig, 1828), p. 129.
parable of Christ lay between two extremes—between the
decision of some German philosophical expositors who were too
critical, and the decision of some English practical preachers
who were not critical enough. He sought to avoid "the
laborious trifling by which it is proved that the parable of
the Sower is not a parable; and, on the other hand, the
unfortunate facility which admits into the number almost all
similitudes indiscriminately."

No definition, he felt, could be suggested broad enough to distinguish sharply between parable
and other types of analogy such as metaphor, simile, illustration,
and allegory; and the meticulous efforts often made to isolate
parables from myths and fables, he maintained were only fences
built between flocks which "in their nature manifest no
tendency to intermingle."

In his expositions of each parable, Arnot usually
endeavored to answer in order the following four questions:
What is the relationship of the parable to the other parables?
What is its natural and historical setting? What are its
primary and secondary teachings?; and How can it be practically
applied? A careful discussion of these answers is now necessary
in order to form an accurate estimate of Arnot as an expositor.
This does not involve an exhaustive critical and exegetical
analysis of his work, which would be entirely outside the scope

1. Ibid., p. 22. Cf. C.H. Dodd, The Parables of the Kingdom
   (London, 1935), pp. 18, 21. See also Joachim Jeremias,
   op. cit., pp. 17-18. Jeremias points out that the Hebrew
   masal and the Aramaic mathla embrace all these categories
   and many more without distinction.
of this study, but rather in the presentation of some of the salient points in his interpretation in comparison with other leading expositors, emphasizing thereby the logic and originality of his thought, and leading to the discovery of the essential method and manner of that interpretation.

The Relationship of the Parables

Arnot made no hard and fast rules concerning the division of the parables. He felt that most of them were complete in themselves and that a minute attention to their sequences and mutual relations was not essential. He recognized, however, among the parables as they occur in the gospels, four obvious groups, and believed that each of these ought to be studied as a whole. These he listed as follows:


Furthermore, he acknowledged relationships between The Wicked Husbandmen and The Good Samaritan; The Entrusted Talents and The Pounds; The Royal Marriage Feast and The Excuses; The Prudent Steward and The Rich Man and Lazarus; The Seed Growing

1. Ibid., p. 40. He considered the Sower and the Prodigal Son the greatest of the parables. Cf. Ibid., p. 428.
Secretly and The Leaven; The Pharisee and Publican and The Two Sons; The Friend At Midnight and The Importunate Widow; and accepted in their chronological order the seven parables in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew.¹ He divided the first six into three successive pairs, and regarded the seventh as an appropriate conclusion. The following chart indicates his classification.

I RELATIONS
1. The Sower - the relation of the kingdom to different classes of men.

2. The Tares - the relation of the kingdom to the wicked one.

II PROGRESS
1. The Mustard Seed - the progress of the kingdom under the idea of a living growth.

2. The Leaven - the progress of the kingdom under the idea of a contagious outspread.

III PRECIOUSNESS
1. The Hidden Treasure - the preciousness of the kingdom under the idea of discovering what was hid.

2. The Goodly Pearl - the preciousness of the kingdom under the idea of closing with what is offered.

IV SEPARATION
The Draw-Net - the separation between good and evil in the great day.²

Arnot's work on the parables, like his preaching, abounded with comparisons. He delighted in contrasting those stories which showed opposite sides of the same subject. For example, in his treatment of the fifteenth chapter of Luke, he saw the

1. Ibid., p. 38.
2. Ibid., p. 39.
three parables as teaching essentially the same doctrine - the fall and redemption of man. The first two, The Lost Sheep and The Lost Coin, represented one side of the subject: "the sovereign self-moving love of God"; while The Prodigal Son revealed the other side: "the beginning, the progress and the result of repentance in a sinner's heart".1 The Lost Sheep and The Lost Coin similarly indicated two sides of one truth. The sheep was an animated being with appetites, habits and locomotive powers, and was lost as a result of its own wilful activity; while the silver was a piece of inanimate matter, lost through its own gravity and inertia. The one strayed in the exercise of its own will, and the other sank in obedience to the laws of matter. This was not to say that one sinner departed from God by an exercise of his corrupt will, and another was drawn away by the operation of an irresistible law; it was one transaction represented successively on two sides. "In the fallen, sin is both active and passive. The sinful select their own course and go astray in the exercise of a self-determining power; they gravitate to evil in virtue of an inborn corruption."2 Thus two doctrines were illustrated, opposite and yet not contrary: the sovereignty of God and the responsibility of man. "To the disease of sin in both its phases, - as an active choice and an innate tendency, - the divine physician has prepared an antidote; He brings the wandered home, and lifts the fallen up."3

1. Ibid., pp. 396-99.
2. Ibid., p. 425.
Again, the parables of The Ten Virgins and The Entrusted Talents constituted the right and left sides of one lesson. Both concerned the character and condition of the Church and its members, while they waited for the coming of the Lord, but one searched the heart and the other examined the life. The first detected "the want of secret faith"; the second, "the want of active obedience."¹ The parables of The Mustard Seed and of The Leaven also exhibited contrasting views of one lesson: the kingdom of God progressed from a small beginning to a glorious consummation because of its own unquenchable life. The parable of The Mustard Seed showed the kingdom "in its own independent existence, inherent life, and irresistible power"; while the parable of The Leaven showed the kingdom "in contact with the world, gradually overcoming and assimilating and absorbing that world into itself."²

From these examples it is obvious that Arnot was keenly aware of the relationship existing between the parables, and of the practical implications involved in balancing one story against another. He would never have agreed with Bruce, however, in dividing the parables into three groups, such as those of a theoretic nature, of grace, and of judgment,³ for to do so would have been to go against his conviction that the parables, both separately and corporately, revealed an immense variety of overlapping truth. The parables, he maintained,

¹. Ibid., pp. 280-81.
². Ibid., p. 100. Cf. pp. 128, 185, 521.
were spontaneous illustrations of numerous aspects of the kingdom of God, often revealing the same truth, though clothed in different analogies; and to collect them under stereotyped and artificial classifications, was not only impracticable, but inconsistent with their primary purpose.

Though he felt that the parables could not be classified accurately according to their subject matter, he nevertheless recognized four structural types. There were the interpreted parables such as The Sower and The Tares which Jesus Himself expounded; the transparent parables such as The Good Samaritan and The Rich Man and Lazarus, whose obvious moral lessons were to be imitated; the veiled parables represented by The Draw-Net, The Wicked Husbandmen, and The Ten Virgins, whose metaphors required translation; and finally, the shadow parables illustrated by The Hidden Treasure, The Unrighteous Judge, The Prudent Steward and The Unmerciful Servant, whose morals were found not by looking at the story directly, but by looking at the shadow which the material objects in the parable cast on the spiritual sphere.¹ More will be said further on concerning these.

The Setting of the Parables

1. Natural.

Arnott would have emphasized, with C.H. Dodd, that the parables of the Gospel are always true to nature and to life, and that "each similitude or story is a perfect picture of something that can be observed in the world of our experience."²

1. Cf. Ibid., pp. 132, 162.
2. Dodd, op.cit., p. 20.
For example, it was completely true to nature and fact that a miser such as the rich fool would lack a high appreciation of the worth of his soul. Covetousness had eaten out the pith of his understanding.\(^1\) The various reactions, of the man who found the treasure buried in the field,\(^2\) of the farmer who anxiously watched for his crop to appear,\(^3\) of the man disturbed at midnight,\(^4\) or of the beleaguered judge,\(^5\) were consistently in character.\(^6\)

2. **Historical**

Arnot did not regard the parables as having both an historical setting, originating in time and place with Jesus, and a later primitive Church setting modifying, often by expansion and allegorization, the original form.\(^7\) The parables, he affirmed, were accurately recorded in their context as they had been spoken by Jesus; and it was, therefore, inconceivable to think of an "original" setting behind what already was an historical account. In every case, thus, he attempted to discover the original meaning, not by going behind the Scriptures, but by going to the Scriptures.

In most cases he was able to trace the reason for the parable to some feature of the preceding events or discourses.\(^8\)

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This was true of the story of The Vineyard Laborers which was a direct answer to Peter's question in Matthew 19:27: "We have forsaken all and followed thee: what good thing shall we have therefore?" But Peter's query was prompted by the young man's question at verse sixteen: "Good master, what good thing shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" Here lay the seed bed of the parable. Again, the stories of The Two Debtors, The Good Samaritan, The Friend At Midnight, The Rich Fool, The Barren Fig-Tree, The Rich Man and Lazarus, The Unprofitable Servants, and The Servants and The Pounds were all best understood by first examining their Scriptural contexts.

The Exposition of the Parables

1. Primary Teaching

Most of the parables, Arnot maintained, presented one central lesson. For example, that of The Leaven indicated the contagiousness of the Gospel, penetrating, assimilating and changing the world in which it lay into its own nature; that of The Ten Virgins sounded the warning that sinners should come to Christ before it was too late; the parable of The Good Samaritan exemplified the commandment to love one another; and

1. Ibid., p. 207.
2. Ibid., p. 327.
3. Ibid., p. 342.
4. Ibid., p. 357.
5. Ibid., p. 372.
6. Ibid., p. 378.
7. Ibid., p. 465.
8. Ibid., p. 491.
10. Ibid., p. 111.
11. Ibid., p. 296.
12. Ibid., p. 355.
and the story of The Importunate Widow urged the need for perseverance in prayer.¹ This was not to say, however, with Jülicher, that the meaning of the various parts of the parable was to be ignored, and that only one broad lesson was to be extracted from each story;² for that, as both Arnot and Dodd would have said, would involve the loss of much of the depth and significance of the parables.³

2. Secondary Teaching

The three cardinal rules which Arnot followed in his exposition of the parables, and which did much to establish his reputation as a sane and reliable expositor were: a rigid adherence to the interpretations given by Jesus; a cautious approach to all allegorical symbolism; and an insistence upon analogies being explained consistently throughout and in keeping with nature and fact. His study of the parable of The Tares will best illustrate the first of these three rules.

a. Jesus' Interpretation. Here Arnot radically disagreed with the general assumption of both ancient⁴ and modern expositors that the field stood for the Church, which he pointed out was obviously to go against the explanation which Jesus had given, that the field represented the world. To say with

1. Ibid., p. 501.
3. Dodd, op. cit., p. 25.
4. The Parables of Our Lord, p. 84. Keach held that the field was the world, but held it hesitantly. Cf. Benjamin Keach, Exposition of All the Parables (London, 1701), p. 201.
Trench that the field must stand for the kingdom of heaven because the parable concerned that kingdom,¹ was to ignore the actual statement of Jesus, that the kingdom of heaven was not like a field, but like a man who sowed seed. This man, as Jesus Himself explained, represented the Son of man; the good seed, the children of the kingdom; and the field, the world in which they sojourned in time.

A.B. Bruce criticized Arnot for saying that Trench's application of this parable to the subject of discipline showed an Erastian bias, and claimed that Arnot himself manifested a strong bias in the opposite direction. He assumed that the ecclesiastical practice of his own Church in such matters is unquestionably right: the possibility of the contrary does not seem to have entered into his mind. This is the secret of his partiality for the Donatist interpretation of the word, 'the field is the world.'²

Arnot's discussion, however, did not warrant such a conclusion. The parable, he declared, had nothing to say about Church discipline;³ and whatever his personal view concerning the ecclesiastical practice of his own Church, this did not influence his interpretation. "The field was the

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1. Richard C. Trench, *Notes on the Parables of Our Lord* (London, 1857), p. 57. Trench's remark that the world was the world and, therefore, was rightly called so, till the seed was sown in it, after which it was no longer the world, Arnot saw only to mean that the world yesterday must become the Church today, when some seed is sown, when some children of the kingdom are in it. The hopelessness of this interpretation became apparent when he asked: Does the whole world become the Church when one country or portion of that country is christianized? "If so, how many Christians must be in a given portion of the world, to constitute that portion?" *The Parables of Our Lord*, p. 95.

world," not because he was a Free Churchman and spoke from that bias, but because he adhered literally to our Lord's explanation.

b. Allegorical Interpretation. Adolf Jülicher in his history of the Interpretation of the Parables, pointed out that the parables for centuries, down to the time of Archbishop Trench, had been distorted and ill-used through allegorical interpretations each term having been treated as a cryptogram standing for an idea. For example, The Good Samaritan was decoded term by term: the wounded man representing the human race ruined by sin; the robbers, the spiritual enemies; the priest and Levite, the various legal and ineffectual methods by which human wisdom endeavors to cure sin; and the Samaritan, the Redeemer in His rôle as Saviour. Arnot, however, long before Jülicher's work appeared, warned against the fallacy of such allegorization, and consistently refused to fall into this error. He was one of the first pioneers among English speaking expositors to uphold a logical and sensible view of the parables. For example, in his study of The Lost Coin he could see nothing but studied parallelism between this and the preceding parable of The Lost Sheep as far as their owners with their misfortune, their success and their joy were concerned. It was only in the nature of the property that was lost and found that he saw a major distinction. He could not

4. The German expositor, Frederick Lisco, well-known to Arnot, writing in the year 1840, also decried the practice of over-allegorizing the parables. Quite probably, at this point, he influenced Arnot.
accept the common interpretation which assumed that the house represented the Church; the woman the indwelling Spirit; the drachma, man with the image of God stamped upon him, but lying in the dust of sin and corruption; the candle, the Word of God held forth by the Church, and the sweeping the disturbance caused by the Holy Spirit in the individual society. Nor could he follow Trench’s view that the woman stood for the invisible Church, and the house which she swept for the visible Church. This, he felt, led to hopeless confusion. If the Church (invisible), he asked, searched for sinners in the Church (visible), then to what Church will the sinners be restored? The elaborate symbolism often attached to the three measures of meal in the parable of The Leaven, and the three successive years in the parable of The Barren Fig-Tree he denounced as palpably incongruous with the inherent meaning of the text. The number three he saw as indicating nothing more than a true-to-life statement of fact - the three measures comprising an ordinary ephah of flour, and the three years representing a reasonable time for the owner to wait before removing the tree. Again, in the parable of The Pearl, he

2. Trench, op. cit., pp. 381, 384. Arnott also could see no force in Trench’s unbelievably minute reasoning whereby he endeavored to point out that, because the shepherd and the woman respectively, had said: “I have found my sheep which was lost” and “I have found the piece which I had lost,” therefore the sheep did belong to the shepherd, but the money did not belong to the woman. The Parables of Our Lord, p. 424.
3. The Parables of Our Lord, p. 423.
4. Ibid., p. 113.
5. Ibid., p. 383.
radically disagreed with interpretations which made the pearl, with its whiteness, purity and luster, stand for Christ, and the merchant for the Church; or even more ingeniously, the pearl for the kingdom of heaven, and the merchant for Christ. The pearl, he maintained, was presented in only one of its aspects — that of its "great price"; and to read into it, therefore, elaborate symbolic meanings, he felt with Lisco, was to ignore and go contrary to the design of the similitude.

Analogy, Arnot affirmed, was not identity; and therefore he was careful to avoid making the common mistake of taking a single feature of a natural scene in a parable and using it as the defence of some specific and controverted dogma. The parables, he held, were generally intended "to expand, illustrate, and enforce" what was elsewhere clearly taught in the Scriptures and "not themselves to constitute the ground or evidences of the doctrines." Thus, to claim from the parable of The Unmerciful Servant, that a man who had been freely forgiven by God may yet fall from grace and thus be made to bear again the guilt of all his sins, was to draw from it a spurious doctrine. The parable, Arnot declared, principally showed that a man should set no limit to the forgiveness of injuries; and in order to show this, laid down the law that the act or habit of extending forgiveness to a brother is a necessary effect of receiving forgiveness from God. "If you get pardon from God, you will give it to your brother;
if you withhold it from your brother, you thereby make it manifest that you have not gotten it from God." Thus it was clear that the servant was not released from his debt, simply because he had refused to accept the proffered forgiveness in the true spirit.

Such stories as The Hidden Treasure, The Importunate Widow, The Prudent Steward and The Unmerciful Servant, were also carefully expounded. Arnot classed them as shadow parables, in which the moral lessons lay not in the actions of their unholy characters, but in the shadows which those actions cast on the spiritual sphere. To illustrate this, Arnot pointed out that printers make their types of any material that may be most suitable for the purpose, and most readily obtained. "They use a cheap mixture of lead and tin; and this base alloy serves their purpose better than more precious metals. Their only question in determining the choice of material is, will it print our meaning clearly?" Thus our Lord dealt with habits and events as He found them in society, employing them with a regard "not to their own intrinsic moral worth but to their fitness for expressing the idea which He meant to convey. No matter whether it be lead or gold; what He wanted was material suitable for types."

c. Consistency of Interpretation. Every parable,

1. Ibid., p. 193.
2. Ibid., p. 132.
3. Ibid., p. 524, footnote.
4. Ibid.
Arnot insisted, should be interpreted consistently with itself and with nature and fact. This he illustrated in his exposition of The Tares where he radically disagreed with the general assumption that the servants represented the ministers of the visible Church. He maintained, rather, that the servants and reapers stood for the same class of people - the angels - and gave two reasons for his supposition. First, it was true to fact. The servants in a Galilean household, in Christ's day, were used in more than one way, often the worker in the field performing household duties as well. Jesus defined the reapers as the angels and accordingly the servants must be the same, or at least of the same class, proposing to accomplish the work at an earlier date. Second, this interpretation was consistent with the events of the story. The separation which the reapers ultimately effected was essentially the same as that which the servants at an earlier period proposed. It was an actual, material, final separation of the tares from the wheat. Thus, there was no basis for the assumption that the two classes of workers were different or that the separation which the Lord prohibited was only a spiritual sentence, while the separation which He permitted was local, complete and final.

One of Arnot's most interesting expositions concerned that of The Draw-Net in which he seriously endeavored to maintain a consistent interpretation throughout in keeping

with nature and fact. In view of its striking originality, and the light that it throws upon Arnot’s expository work, we will consider it somewhat fully.

The view commonly adopted was that the net stood for the Church or, as some expressed it, the Bible and ordinances of religion; and the fishermen, who spread and drew it, for the apostles, in the first instance, and afterwards, for the ministers of the Word. Arnot agreed with those who opposed the view that this parable, like that of The Tares, had to do with Church discipline. The only argument which could be drawn from this parable in regard to discipline was an absolute repudiation of all effort by a human ministry to keep any person or class of persons outside the visible Church on account of their opinions or their conduct. Very few, however, he recognized, would venture to take this stand, choosing rather to contend for some measure of Church order— for the right and duty of excluding some of the worst—and use this parable as an argument in favor of lax administration. This obviously would be to trample all logical and critical laws under foot. "This scripture manifestly either forbids all effort to discriminate in this world, or says nothing at all on the subject."  

Arnot discusses the following four inconsistencies which belonged to the common interpretation of the net and its drawers.

1. Ibid., p. 164.
2. Ibid., p. 165.
1. It makes those who draw the net and those who separate its contents, not the same, but different persons—the one representing men ministering to the Church in time, the other angels executing judgment in eternity. There is, however, no such thing in reality as one set of men throwing the net into the water, and then retiring, while another set of men draw it out. It is certain, both from the terms of the narrative and the ordinary practice of fishermen, that the persons who draw the net to shore are the same persons who divide between the good and the bad of its contents. The German expositor, Hermann Olshausen, while agreeing that the drawers of the net and the dividers of the fish are the same, strangely interprets the ministers of the gospel in time under the general designation of angels who will separate the good and the evil in the world to come.¹ This bizarre idea Arnot dismisses as "not readily commending itself to British students of the Scripture."²

2. It equates the visible Church with the net, which in the parable is let down at a certain spot to sweep indiscriminately all within its circle to the shore. There is certainly no likeness between this and the efforts of the ministry in the visible Church.

3. It proposes, because the captured fish—the good and bad—do not leap over or break through the net, that

therefore the disciples of Christ are not justified in leaving an organized Church with which they are connected on the ground that unworthy members are tolerated within its communion.\footnote{Cf. Trench, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 133.}

This is completely irrelevant, first, to the question of the Established Episcopal Church of England and the early Nonconformists ("the Puritans did not spontaneously retire, they were ejected by the hand of power because they refused to comply with new ordinances imposed upon the Church of Christ by human authority"\footnote{\textit{The Parables of Our Lord}, p. 168.}), and, second, to the actual facts of the parable. "The fishes when they are once enclosed within the net cannot break out; and even if they could they would break out not because they were confined in low company, but because they were confined." All wish to be free - the good and the bad; the net to all is a dreaded prison. There is, therefore, no resemblance between this parable and the doctrine regarding Church discipline which Trench and others deduce from it.

4. Finally, the common interpretation of this parable, which represents the sea as the world and the net as the Church, leads to inextricable confusion. Assuming the "land" to stand for eternity, does it mean then that only the members of the visible Church are drawn out of this life into another; and if so, are we to infer that the business of ministers of the gospel is to drag their brethren out of this world?

Having thus commented on the above inconsistencies, Arnot proceeds to set forth his own view, recognizing, however,
that other interpretations may be just as valid. ¹

The net is not the visible Church in the world, nor are the fish within it the true and false members of the Church. The sea is the world.

The net, almost or altogether invisible at first to those whom it surrounds, is that unseen bond which, by an invisible ministry, is stretched over the living, drawing them gradually, secretly, surely, towards the boundary of this life, and over it into another. As each portion, or generation of the human race, are drawn from their element in this world, ministering spirits, on the lip of eternity that lies nearest time, receive them and separate the good from the evil.²

He lists the following four reasons which commend this view.

1. It assumes, according to the facts of the case and the express terms of the scripture, that those who draw the net and separate its contents are the same persons.

2. It defines those who separate the good from the evil at the end of the world, as angels, and not, as Olshausen explains them, the human ministry of the Gospel.

3. It is entirely consistent with the habits of fishermen and the character of the instruments which they employ. As fishermen drop the net over a certain space, and, without discrimination drag all within that space to shore;

so the invisible agents whom God employs in his universal administration, whether laws or angelic spirits or both combined, make no distinction between good and bad, when by successive castings of the net, as it were, they enclose section after section, generation after generation of human kind, and draw them slowly, silently, but inevitably to the

1. Arnot states that he would not dare to plant his foot on his exposition as the ground of any doctrine or duty.
edge of this life, and over it into the unseen world. ¹

4. It graphically refutes the view which states that the good fish struggle to be free because of being shut up with the bad, and points to the fact that all indifferently seek freedom because they are imprisoned.

The two principal objections which might be raised to his interpretation, Arnot discussed as follows:

1. In Matthew 4:19, Jesus said "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." Many expositors, applying that analogy to this parable, assumed that the drawers of the net must represent the servants of Christ. ² This, of course, was fallacious reasoning. It does not follow because Jesus once compared the capturing of fish to the benevolent labors of the Gospel ministry, that any allusion elsewhere made to fishing must be construed in the same manner. When the apostles were called fishers of men, not one feature in the process of fishing was specified. Nothing more was given than the general conception of fishermen catching fish. The method of fishing by line and baited hooks, Arnot felt, was analogous to the work of an evangelist, but fishing by the draw-net was totally dissimilar. He could not accept the idea of the Church being like the net, enclosing all without a desire or effort to discriminate;

¹ Ibid., p. 171.
² A similar misrepresentation has often resulted regarding the parable of The Leaven, Matthew 13:33, when expositors have concluded that because Jesus, in Matthew 16:6, had represented the doctrines of the Pharisees and the Sadducees as leaven, therefore, the leaven in this parable must also mean the spread of error.
and the ministers like the fishermen, dragging their brothers unwillingly out of the world to the judgment-seat.

2. The words, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea", were interpreted by many expositors as meaning that the Church was represented by the net, and the labor of the apostles by the spreading and drawing of it. Arnot pointed out that the formula, "The kingdom of heaven is like" refers to the parable as a whole, and not specifically to that feature which lies next to it in the record. In support of this he selected two parables - The Hidden Treasure and The Pearl - showing that in one the kingdom of heaven was compared to a treasure and in the other to a merchant. If it be insisted that the kingdom or the Church was specifically compared to a net, then logically it must follow that the Church, in the other two parables, was compared to a treasure and to a man, respectively.

A.B. Bruce and William M. Taylor criticize Arnot's interpretation and ask, What has this to do specifically with the kingdom of heaven? Both feel that the process described - the drawing of human beings out of the sea of Time to the shore of Eternity - has gone on since the beginning of man, and that the doctrine of Eternal Judgment, which the parable teaches according to Arnot's view, is not a specific truth of the

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1. The Parables of Our Lord, p. 175.
kingdom of God, but rather a doctrine of natural religion. 1 Arnot, almost as if he had anticipated such an argument, carefully lays down the relationship of this parable to the kingdom of heaven. He shows that Christ, in the six preceding parables, had already taught concerning the kingdom, its relation to different classes of men (The Sower) and to the wicked one (The Tares); its inherent power (The Mustard-Seed) and its contagious, all-pervading influence (The Leaven); its value in the estimate of those who know it (The Hidden Treasure) and how much they willingly part with in order to obtain it (The Pearl). Now in the seventh and last parable of the group the lesson concerns "the closing scene of the kingdom - the separation of the wicked from the good on the great day." 2 Thus the parable of The Draw-Net does speak

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1. Bruce, op.cit., p. 64. William M. Taylor, The Parables of Our Saviour (London, 1848), pp. 42-43. Bruce else-where, following Bushnell's reasoning, accused Arnot and other like-minded expositors of treating the three stages of growth in the parable of The Seed Growing Secretly as a parentesis or as an irrelevance "all because they have not the courage to grasp and boldly proclaim the truth, that in the kingdom of God, as it reveals itself in the individual soul, growth is slow not less than in the sphere of nature; nay, not only not less, but . . . more; it being a law that the higher the thing which grows in the scale of being, the slower its growth."

Obviously the first part of this remark was absurd. It was not a question of having sufficient boldness to proclaim a truth, but rather sufficient honesty to state a conviction. Arnot's conviction was that, though the kingdom of God sometimes does grow slowly within the individual soul, it does not always do so. Cf. Roots and Fruits, p. 161. The part of the parable dealing with growth, he felt, was not of great importance and, therefore, did not stress it. To accuse him of being pusillanimous, however, because of this emphasis is to do him grave injustice. See Bruce, op.cit., pp. 129-30. Cf. Horace Bushnell, The New Life (London, 1891), p. 161.

2. The Parables of Our Lord, p. 176.
specifically concerning the kingdom of heaven.

The Application of the Parables

Arnott's primary aim in his work on the parables was to make his expositions practical, to "bend" his speculations to the needs of everyday life. Though some of his applications showed more insight than others, all manifested a fresh, down-to-earth approach, often expressed in the quaint, pictorial language so characteristic of his work on the Proverbs. The following examples from three of his studies will suffice to show this phase of his work.

1. The Sower

The thorns are indigenous and spring up of their own accord, while the good seed must be sown and nurtured; "so, vain thoughts lodged in our hearts from the dawn of our being, have the advantage in the race for supremacy." Begin to crucify the flesh early and persevere in that work to the end. Thorns spread as long as they live. "If it be painful to pull out the root of bitterness from your heart today, it will be more painful tomorrow. . . . Avarice chastises its slave in middle life with whips; but if he abide its slave it will chastise him when he is old with scorpions." Thorns tear the husbandman's flesh as well as destroy the fruit of his field. Similarly the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches lacerate the man who permits them to grow rank in his heart.

1. Ibid., p. 13.
2. Ibid., p. 69.
3. Ibid.
"Around the most coveted pleasures are set sharp thorns, which wound the hand that tries to pluck the rose." Thorns that grow outside and around the field may constitute a useful hedge of defence. There is a place for cares and riches when kept in their own sphere. "Permit not the thorns to occupy the position which is due to the good seed. Not as rivals within the field, but as guards around it, earthly affairs are innocent and safe."  

2. The Seed Growing Secretly  

In the kingdom of God, unlike that of the world, there is no period of the year when we must not sow, or may not reap. These two processes become alternately and reciprocally cause and effect: if we are never allowed to reap a little, the incentive to sow will weaken or altogether die; on the other hand, if we fail to sow, we shall not long continue to reap. "If there is no sowing, there will be no reaping; but the converse does not hold good; you cannot say, wherever there has been sowing, it will be followed by a reaping." The seed may have been devoured by the birds, or withered on the stony ground, or have been choked by the thorns. "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation." Be careful not to assume that everything is prospering that is out of sight. "The growing of a worm at the root of one plant is for a time as secret as the healthful growth of another... Though the

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1. Ibid., p. 70.  
2. Ibid.  
3. Ibid., p. 324.
sower is helpless after he has cast the seed into the ground, he should not be hopeless." The Word of God is a living thing and will grow except where it is impeded by extraneous obstacles.

3. The Vineyard Laborers

Peter, when he saw the young man refuse to make a sacrifice for Christ, complacently remembered his own sacrifices, and reasoned that he had done remarkably well. He had left all, he said, to follow Jesus. "And how much was that? a share in a boat and some nets, both probably the worse for wear. Ah, Peter, if you had been as rich as this young man, I am not sure whether you would not have done as he did." Disciples of Christ who are poor, should beware of judging the disciples who are rich.

You were enabled to break the ties that bound you to the earth; and you see a neighbour struggling with the yoke still on his neck. Be not high-minded but fear. The line that bound you was a slender cord; the line that binds that brother is a cart rope. He, if he is set free at a later day, may be first in the day of reward, and you last.

All who respond to the Lord’s call, work for Him from the moment they meet Him to the evening of life’s labor-day. "They not only labour for the Lord, they labour ’in the Lord’. Thus it is not a pain but a pleasure; it is their meat and their drink." God does not need our work, but we, for our own sakes need work in His kingdom. "He can find other

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid., p. 218.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
servants; but if we refuse his call we shall never find a 'good Master'."¹

Two opposite attitudes may be found in a servant of Christ: a humble, broken-hearted spirit which asks for nothing; or a self-righteous conceit which demands large rewards for every service. If this latter spirit is the mainspring of the laborer's activity, then it shows that he is altogether outside the circle of true believers; if it acts mainly as a temptation and "tinges with self-righteous blemishes a substantial faith in Christ, then it reduces him from the highest to the lowest rank of disciples."²

Though the lesson tells of serving the Lord at the eleventh hour, care should be taken not "to turn the grace of God into lasciviousness". Great danger lies in thinking that the door for service will always be open. Jesus says to come "although you are late"; but this is not to be construed as an encouragement, "to be late" in coming.³

¹. Ibid.
². Ibid., pp. 218-19.
³. Ibid., p. 219.
B. The Proverbs

In view of the fact that the first two chapters of Arnot's commentary on the Book of Proverbs deal with the subject of authorship and the definition of a proverb, we would naturally expect the whole work to be a critical exposition. This, however, as we have intimated, is not Arnot's intention. He states plainly that his aim is rather "to apply the obvious than to elucidate the obscure," to be doctrinal without losing hold of earth, and practical without losing hold of heaven. The work, while it cannot be said to be exegetical in nature, nevertheless is a legitimate form of Scriptural exposition, a legitimate method of interpretation, and therefore is included in this chapter. The following brief discussion of the book consists of showing, mainly in Arnot's words, examples of his illustrative style and method of interpretation.

While Laws From Heaven For Life On Earth was only a partial treatment of the Book of Proverbs, no chapter having been expounded in full and chapters seven and twenty-one having been omitted altogether, still it enjoyed an immense circulation and was one of the most popular of Arnot's works. The Family Treasury placed it among the finest commentaries ever written

1. Supra, p. 158.
2. The Proverbs, p. iv.
3. Ibid.
on the Proverbs,¹ and the United Presbyterian Magazine lauded it as a masterpiece having a living nineteenth century air about it.² It was hailed by the Congregational Pulpit, the Christian Treasury and the Literary Spectator respectively as a noble book; as one for all engaged in the active business of life; and as a surprisingly fine example of a minister's acquaintance with questions supposed to be unintelligible beyond the threshold of the counting-house.³ Spurgeon spoke of the clarity and beauty of its passages and of its author's ability to blend his illustrative faculty with "practical, sound sense and spirituality."⁴ Theodore Cuyler, in a moment of soaring enthusiasm, declared its author "as ripe and as full of precious juices as a cluster of black, Hamburg grapes."⁵

All reviews of the book, however, were not as favorable. One of the Edinburgh newspapers criticized Arnot for treating the Proverbs from the point of view of a Christian rather than that of a Hebrew. In reply to this, Arnot wrote "an epistle of condolence" to his publisher, T.Nelson, in the following harlequinade vein:

Ah! degenerate Mr. Arnot, why wast thou not a Hebrew, beard and all? Think of the enormity to look on a book of Scripture from the viewpoint of a Christian. Please, sir

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3. Ibid.
critic, is not the Christian viewpoint a real viewpoint? And is not the view thence a view to the point in these days? And if Hebrew views be good, may not Christian views be tolerated also? I mount the Christian hill, and sketch the out-spread landscape. Let another limner stand on the Hebrew hill, and transfer to his canvas another aspect of the many-sided scene. I show you a picture of Edinburgh from Mons Meg on the castle: you say, oh, it appears quite a different thing when seen from Arthur Seat. Does it, indeed? And does that throw any discredit on my picture?

Arnot's commentary, like the Book of Proverbs, ranges over a wide variety of topics, suggesting principles to guide the practical man in his daily walk, and discussing often such difficult and obscure questions as, "Raising the Market," "The Money-power," "Debts and Sureties," "Piety and Patriotism" and "Secularism." It is an eminently readable book filled with sound, sapient philosophy often expressed in piquant aphorisms. We can see how Arnot's long and loving study of the Book of Proverbs had much to do in forming his own style, making it compact, pointed and pithy.

Stolen Waters Are Sweet (Proverbs 9:17)

Yes, Arnot agrees. If sin were not pleasant, it might be easier to keep from sinning. "Satan might fish in vain, even in this sea of time, if he had no bait on his hook that is pleasant to nature. Beware of the bait, for the barb is beneath it."2

The Mouth of the Righteous Man is a Well of Life (Proverbs 10:11)

In a hot summer day Arnot and a friend sail on a miniature lake in the Scottish hills. A brown, sun-burned mountain

1. Memoir, p. 335.
reaches to the water's edge, and on its arid shoulder is a well
with "a crystal stream trickling over its lip" and making its
way down to the shore. Around the well's mouth and along the
course of the rivulet is a belt of green in strong contrast
with the iron surface of the rock all around. "What do you
make of that?" asks Arnot's friend. Soon the reply is given:

Let your heart take in by its secret veins what comes pure
from heaven in showers of blessings; so shall itself be
full, and so shall its issues, as far as your influence
extends, contribute to fertilize the wilderness. The Lord
looks down, and men look up, expecting to see a fringe of
living green around the lip of a Christian's life-course.
If we be good, we shall be good: if we be good, we shall
do good.  

Hope Deferred Maketh the Heart Sick; but when the Desire
Cometh it is a Tree of Life (Proverbs 13:12)

The cloy of disappointed possession is a more nauseous
sickness than the aching of disappointed desire. . . . You
stand on the shore and gaze on the restless waters. A
wave is hastening on, struggling, and panting, and making
with all its might for the shore: it seems as if all it
wanted were to reach the land. It reaches the land, and
disappears in a hiss of discontent. Gathering its strength
at a distance, it tries again, and again, with the same
result. It is never satisfied: it never rests . . . when
a soul's desire is set on unworthy objects, the accomplish-
ment of the desire does not satisfy the soul. In the case
here supposed, however, the desire must be pure, for the
attainment of it is found to be a tree of life: it is
living, satisfying, enduring. It has a living root, in
the ground, and satisfying fruit upon its branches.  

The Wicked is Driven Away in His Wickedness: but the Righteous
Hath Hope In His Death (Proverbs 14:32)

A ship is slowly frozen in a river. There is no shaking,
no creaking, no strain. "Even when the pines of the neighbouring

1. Ibid., pp. 172-73.
2. The Proverbs, pp. 243-44.
forest are bending to the blast, she sits unmoved in her solid bed. That bed she has made for herself, and therefore it fits her." But when the spring comes and the water swells, the trembling mass gives way. "Reeling icebergs and foaming yellow waves tumble downward in tumultuous heaps, and the ship is swept away like a feather on a flood." So is it with the wicked - driven away in his wickedness.

But the righteous hath hope in his death. Sometimes the approach to the eternal shore is like a ship moving toward an island circled by a ring of fearful breakers. The waves are higher and angrier than any in the open sea. The sailors quake with fear; but forward they must go. Partly through the surf, partly over it, they are borne at a bound; strained and giddy, and almost senseless, they find themselves within that sentinel ridge of crested waves that guard the shore, and the portion of sea that still lies between them and the land is calm and clear like glass. It seems a lake of paradise, and not an earthly thing at all. It is inexpressibly sweet to lie on its bosom, after the long voyage and the wild tossing of the barrier ridge. All the heavens are mirrored in the water, and along its edge lies a flowery land. Across the belt of sea the ship glides gently, and gently touches soon that lovely shore.

It is thus that when the righteous have passed through the tumult of the barrier ridge they experience a peace, "deeper, stiller, sweeter" than they have ever known before; and when at last the spirit passes from a peaceful sea to a peaceful land, the change seems slight. The righteous hath hope in His death. 'Blessed hope!'"

1. Ibid., pp. 295-98.
Idolaters prefer to have an image that looks like life, provided always that it be not living. "A mimic omniscience pleases the fancy, and rocks the conscience into a sounder sleep." It is easier to deal with Nature in her majestic movements than with a living, personal God. "Nature heaves in the sea, and sighs in the wind, and blossoms in the flowers, and bleats on the pastures" but stoops not to notice the thoughts and words of a human being; man may live as he pleases, although Nature is there. Since "philosophy compels him to reject the paltry, tangible, local gods of all the superstitions," and "reason constrains him to own the universality of the Creator's presence," then how can he conceive of the Lord's eyes being in every place, and yet indifferent to sin? "In order to accomplish this, the personal, with its pungency, must be discharged from the idea of God."

The eyes of the Lord are in every place. The proposition is absolutely universal, but sinful man treats universal truths that come from heaven as the eye treats the visible heaven itself. At a distance from the observer, the blue canopy all around seems to touch the earth and other men, but yet where he stands, it remains far and above out of reach. "Heavenly truth, like heaven, seems to touch all the world around, but not his own immediate sphere, or himself, its centre."

The eyes of the Lord are in the home, the street, the counting-house, and the factory. "God does not forget and forsake a man when he rises from his knees and plunges into
business; the man, therefore, should not then and there forget and forsake God." The eyes of the Lord are in the tavern, "when its doors are shut and its table spread - when the light is brilliant and the laugh loud, - when the cup circulates and the head swims, - in that place are the eyes of the Lord, and they are like a flame of fire." The eyes of the Lord are in the house of prayer. A great congregation assembles and the solemn service begins. Every thought and secret of the human heart is visible to the Holy One. A man sits among the worshippers, "still, and upright, and steady, as a bee-hive upon its pedestal." Within his heart is a "swarm of winged thoughts" which flow in ceaseless circulation with all the world. Bold like robbers in the dark, "they over leap the fences of holiness, suck at will every flower that they reckon sweet, and return to deposit their gatherings in the owner's cup. The eyes of the Lord are there, beholding the evil."  

The North Wind Drives Away Rain: So Doth an Angry Countenance a Backbiting Tongue (Proverbs 25:23)  

A person with a genuine, gentle disposition is much to be admired; yet if he has not another side he will not leave his mark on the world.

If he has not the faculty of frowning, I would not give much for his smile. . . . Let us have a man who loves good and hates evil. . . . The frown of anger is the shade that lies under love and brings out its beauty. . . . The gentleness which will have peace on any terms, is neither pleasing to the Lord nor beneficial to men; if there is no pungency there will be no purifying. . . . Knit your brows at the

1. Ibid., pp. 306-09.
backbiter's approach, and he will soon sneak away; if you do not take the venom in, he will not long continue to give it out . . . he who listens to lies will always have plenty of lies to listen to. . . . A man who has not a frown in reserve cannot turn his smiles to any good account. . . . Many grain-fields have rotted after they were ripe, for want of a sharp north wind to drive the clouds away; and many social blessings have been blighted in the bud, for want of a frown at the proper time upon the ruler's face.

The Wicked Flee When No Man Pursueth: But the Righteous Are Bold As a Lion (Proverbs 28:1)

A swift pace does not avail the man who is fleeing from himself. "When Cain shed his brother's blood, no man pursued the murderer; yet he was pursued. . . . Every bush that waved in the wind became the avenger of Abel, and made the life-blood curdle in Cain's heart. A man commits murder and successfully conceals his crime. Yet the sentinels of his conscience—those "shadow-pursuers"—will not let him rest, and in some cases will drag him in by force and hand him over to justice, and in other cases, "they hold him in their own thin arms, and glare on him with their own fiery eyeballs, exacting, all his life long, a severer punishment than any that lies within the province of a human judge." Conscience is a mirror, fixed in the human constitution, revealing the frown or the smile of God. "You may dim the surface of the glass so that it will no longer be painfully bright . . . but your puny operation does not extinguish the great light that glows in heaven."

Thus to trample conscience in the mire, so that it shall no longer reflect God's holiness, does not discharge holiness from the character of God. He will come to judge the world,
although the world madly silence the witness who tells of his coming.

C. The Anchor of the Soul - A Sermon

A fitting conclusion to this study of Arnot as an expositor will be a brief consideration of one of his most popular and original sermons, The Anchor of the Soul, preached from the text, "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." It was this kind of theme that suited him best - "a Bible emblem, true to nature, many-sided, prismatic . . . capable of fresh, familiar, home-coming application, and bright in its illustration of saving gospel truth." 

The sermon begins by picturing a ship riding at anchor near a lee shore in an angry sea. She has drifted too near the rocky coast, and the wind, blowing directly on the shore, makes it impossible to tack. Her only choice is to anchor where she is until the wind changes. The ship is dancing on the waves and appears to be in their power.

This moment she is tossed aloft . . . and the next she sinks heavily into the hollow. Now her prow goes down beneath an advancing breaker, and she is lost to view in the spray; but anon she emerges, like a sea-fowl shaking the water from her wings and rejoicing in the tumult . . .

Let the storm do its worst. That ship will hold her head to the blast and maintain her place in the tempest, for she is held

1. Ibid., pp. 537-39.
4. The Anchor of the Soul, p. 10.
secure by the anchor.

The anchor must not be cast on anything that floats, however large and solid it appears. An iceberg is the largest thing that floats, but even though it seems to receive the waves and permit them to break on its sides, as they break on the shore, it would be ruin to anchor a ship to it.

The larger and the less would drift the same way and perish together. Ah! this stately Church - this high-seeming and high-sounding ecclesiastical organization, woe to the human spirit that is tempted in the tossing to make fast to that great imposing mass! It is not sure and steadfast. It is floating; it moves with the current of the world: it moves to an awful shore! Not there, not there!

Nor will it suffice to fix the anchor to itself - as foolish as the effort of frightened men on a drifting boat, who grasp the gunwale and pull with all their might in an attempt to bring their vessel to shore.

In the concerns of the soul such childishness is even more common. Faith in one's own faith or charity is a common exercise among men. Beware! Hope must go out for a hold; even as the ship's anchor must be flung away from the ship. . . . Away from all in ourselves, and out through all that floats like ourselves on . . . the shifting waters into Him who holds them in the hollow of his hand.

The ship that is held by the anchor, although safe, is not at ease. "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you."

Those who have entered the harbour do not need an anchor; and those who are drifting with the stream do not cast one out. The hope which holds is neither for the world without nor glorified within, but for Christ's people as they pass through life - rejoicing with trembling; faint, yet pursuing.

1. Ibid., pp. 13-14.
2. Arnot actually had witnessed such an effort. Ibid., p. 14.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p. 18.
The ship that rides at anchor experiences rackings and heavings that ships which drift with the tide do not know.

So, souls who have no hold of Christ seem to lie softer on the surface of a heaving world than souls that are anchored on his power and love. The drifting ship, before she strikes, is more smooth and more comfortable than the anchored one . . . The pleasures of sin are sweet to those who taste them, but the sweetness is only for a season.¹

The heavier the strain that comes on the anchor that has been cast into good ground, the deeper and firmer grows its hold. So it is with a Christian. The greater the trials and temptations, the firmer becomes his grasp on the Saviour.

The ship that is anchored is sensitive to every change of wind and tide, and as soon as the anchor reaches the ground, her prow is turned to the waves.

As with ships, so with souls; those that are anchored feel sensitively the direction and strength of the temptation, and instantly turn to meet and to overcome it . . . When the ship is anchored, and the sea is running high, there is great commotion at her bows. The waves in rapid succession come on and strike. When they strike they are broken, and leap, white and angry, high up on the vessel's sides. This tumult is by no means agreeable in itself; but the mariner on board would not like to want it, for it is the sign of safety. If, while wind and waves continue to rage, he should observe that this commotion had suddenly ceased, he would not rejoice. He would look eagerly over the bulwarks, and seeing the water blue on her bows, instead of hissing, roaring spray, he would utter a scream of terror. The smoothness at her bows indicates to him that her anchor is dragging.² The ship is drifting with wind and water to the shore.

Do not be surprised that the impetuous tide of worldliness

¹ Ibid., pp. 18-19.
² Ibid., pp. 20-22.
dashes disagreeably against you from time to time. "The friendship of the world is enmity with God." Do not be too anxious to see that all is smooth. Peace may be bought too costly.

When the mighty stream of vanity on which you float produces no ruffling at the point of contact, - when it is not disagreeable to you, and you not disagreeable to it, - suspect that your anchor is dragging, that it has lost its hold, and that you are drifting into danger.

As we have seen, Arnott's contribution to the field of Christian literature was predominantly practical rather than critical. He was more interested in the application of Christian theology than in the theology of Christian application - more interested in setting the machine in operation than in demonstrating its construction. He had the preacher's eye for preaching points, rather than the expositor's eye for expanding truth. His genius lay in his ability to take the Christian religion out of its Palestinian cradle and transform its swaddling clothes into nineteenth century dress. As an expositor he believed with J.H. Jowett that a man must respect his own individuality and consecrate it in the power of the Holy Spirit; that he must believe in his own angle without being angular; and that he must be himself and slavishly imitate nobody.2

1. Ibid., p. 22.
CHAPTER VI

ARNOT IN OTHER RELATIONS

The Christian life goes best which goes between a deep, contemplative, spiritual knowledge of God, and hearty practical work, as far as opportunity offers, for every interest of every brother man. These two God hath joined; let no man dare to put them asunder.

CHAPTER VI

ARNOT IN OTHER RELATIONS

This chapter will deal with three aspects of Arnot which have not yet been carefully considered: his theological thought, his ecclesiastical emphasis, and his contributions to the Temperance Movement. The first discussion does not pretend to give a complete, critical and systematic treatment of his theology, for to do so would result in a mere partial reproduction of the Westminster Confession of Faith, to which he subscribed, and would serve no valuable purpose. Instead it deals with the fundamental ideas on which his expository work is based, emphasizing the major trends of his preaching and discussing the strong and weak points of his thought. The important thing here is not so much to discover the tenets of his doctrine, but to show, largely in his own words, how he expressed that doctrine. Second, we see Arnot as an ecclesiastic through an investigation, principally of his General Assembly speeches, which indicates in which areas of church-life he was primarily interested. Finally, the survey of his temperance labors shows, not only his convictions on the subject, but how successful he was in defending them.
A. Arnot's Theological Thought

Arnot's theology, as we have stated, did not differ substantially from that of the orthodox evangelical Free Churchmen of his day. His originality lay not in the skeleton of his thought, but in its clothing - the flesh of his interpretation. Though he had a high regard for systematic theology and admired Calvin, the great Puritans, and the modern writers, Fairbairn and Hodge, he himself was not primarily a systematic theologian. At times, his logic was shallow and unconvincing, and in philosophical debate and ecclesiastical controversy he was not qualified to shine. The Nonconformist, The Edinburgh Courant, and The Glasgow Herald, all wrote respectively:

The Rev. William Arnot . . . was not distinguished as a close thinker or as a Church leader, though vigorous in character, and with a strong vein of Scottish good sense. A certain imaginative and emotional force caused him to secure influence. He may be said to have exhibited, under special modifications, some of those elements in Chalmers, of which Buchanan was deficient.

He was weak in logical acumen and in philosophical firmness of grasp, but he was shrewd as an observer and great in descriptive and illustrative power. He was a telling speech maker and his discourses if not specimens of scholarly exegesis or refined rhetoric, were robust, original, effective, interesting and useful.

Mr. Arnot was, from the viewpoint of a healthy, rounded human-ness, first among the Free Church leaders. He had not certainly the burning genius of Chalmers, or the intellectual acumen of Candlish or the oratorical power of

2. The Inverness Courier, May 31, 1877.
3. The Nonconformist, June 6, 1877.
4. The Edinburgh Courant, June 12, 1877.
Guthrie or the suave astuteness of Buchanan, but there was a genial intensity about him that entitles him to be placed in the front rank, side by side with men whose names perhaps may be more widely known, but whose influence will not surpass his in the line of whatsoever is noble and true.  

Arnot based his preaching and teaching on both the Old and New Testaments which he regarded as the only infallible rule of faith and doctrine. He believed that the entire Bible was divinely inspired, that all its writers were chosen by God as well as every word, and that every jot and tittle of the Scriptures was significant. The Old Testament was as important as the New, and those who "eat out, by acid drops of criticism," its authority are victims of delusion. "Faith cannot grow upon Kant and Hegel, when God has departed from Moses and the Psalms!" The writers of the Bible were not automatons, but normal human beings through whom God chose to declare His message to the world, "not by their tongues only, but their understandings, memories, tastes; in short, all that constituted the men."

Although the books are written by Moses, David, Solomon, they are all alike the word of God: therefore they exhibit a complete separation from all other writings, and a perfect consistency among themselves. Again, although they are all one as being the word of God, they are as much the genuine product of different human minds as the ordinary writings of men are the work of their authors: therefore there is in matter and manner an unconstrained, natural, life-like diversity.

The use of the Scriptures was to reveal Christ the

1. The Glasgow Herald, June 21, 1877.
2. The Church in the House, p. 77.
5. The Church in the House, p. 78.
7. Ibid., p. 9.
"living seed"; the Bible was the "husk" that held it. "The husk that holds the seed is the most precious thing in the world, next after the seed that it holds."¹ The Bible thus was not to be deified, but thought of only as the vehicle by which God communicated the Gospel to the world.²

As we have noted, Arnot was essentially a doctrinal preacher; and "Rabbi" Duncan might well have said of him as he did of Jonathan Edwards, "his doctrine was all application and his application all doctrine."³ He did not stress, however, the sacraments in his preaching, though undoubtedly he considered them important. Hardly any reference is made to Baptism,⁴ and only very little is written concerning Communion. Since he accepted the teaching of the Westminster Confession of Faith on the Lord's Supper, we may infer from this that he adhered also to its teaching on Baptism. The ruin by the Fall, the substitutionary atonement, the regeneration by the Holy Spirit, the simplicity of faith and the new life in Christ beginning at conversion were prominent topics unreservedly expounded. "He did not veil the plain realities of that Gospel in aesthetic or in philosophic vapour," wrote Principal Rainy. "His statements of it were ever clear, simple, and consistent,

¹. The Parables, p. 49. Cf. The Anchor of the Soul, p. 315; Roots and Fruits, p. 400.
and his pleading for it direct and earnest."  

Arnot never tired of discussing man's salvation which was at the very heart of his preaching. He thought of it usually from two points of view - God's gift to man and man's response to God. Again and again he compared the work of salvation to circuits in the world of nature - the electric current flowing back to the earth to complete its circle, or the ocean drawing from the clouds and returning to them of its abundance. "The Son, in heaven, pleads with God for us: the Spirit, on earth, pleads with us for God." God by his cords of love draws the man: the man, obeying the impulse of a renewed nature, freely runs after God. "There is a giving in heaven and a giving on earth. God the Father gives you to Christ, and you give yourselves."

A Saviour who stands in heaven pledged to receive me after I can say, 'Lord, I believe,' is not enough for me. I need a Saviour who will rend the heavens and come down when I cry from the depths, 'Lord, help my unbelief.'  

The question: How can man be responsible if God is sovereign on both sides of salvation? Arnot dismissed as being "a subtle speculation of a human brain" and outside the realm of theology. "Let us leave with God the things that are God's," he declared, "and evidently require omniscience for

2. Cf. The Anchor of the Soul, p. 49.
3. The Anchor of the Soul, pp. 89-90.
4. The Parables of Our Lord, p. 49.
5. The Anchor of the Soul, p. 221.
8. Ibid., p. 49.
their solution, and let us mind our own business."  The Scriptures, he believed, were abundantly plain in emphasizing both the sovereignty of God and the free will of man.

To illustrate this, he described two large rocks, at some distance from each other, rising from the sea, and believed to be united far beneath the surface. On either rock it was safe to stand; but to attempt to go beneath the surface and trace their connection would result in disaster.

It is thus that faith accepts both the truths revealed, - the sovereign act of God when he breathes new life into the dead, and the freedom of a human being when the alternative 'Repent or perish' is placed before him. Do your part although God does his; do yours hopefully, because you are not left alone to do it.

Having thus stated his belief in the "circuit of grace" - that man is saved by grace through faith and not alone by himself - it is surprising indeed to find Arnot, in his commentary on the Proverbs, declaring that man is responsible for his belief, that his opinions are as much under his own control as his actions, and that his errors of judgment are ruinous both for time and eternity. He argues: "Your opinion that the path is right does not make it right; your sincerity in that erroneous opinion does not exempt you from its consequences, whether these affect more directly the body or the soul."

For example, if the captain and officers of a ship, sailing toward a rocky shore, make the wrong calculations whether by their own

ignorance or a false figure in their tables, certainly their good intentions and sincere convictions will not save their ship from destruction.

In denying the supposition that a man is not responsible for his belief, on the ground that his opinion is not under his own control, Arnot argues:

There is precisely the same ground for affirming that a man cannot help his actions. His opinions do no doubt influence his actions, but his actions also influence his opinions. A bad life deranges the judgment, and a deranged judgment deteriorates still more the life. . . . He is responsible for his erroneous opinion as certainly as he is responsible for his unrighteous act. 2

Joseph Gowan in his volume, Preaching and Preachers, Criticisms and Suggestions, lauds Arnot as an illustrator, 3 but criticizes him here for his categorical imperatives and the logic of his reasoning. He refutes his statement that man is responsible for his belief; and points out that no man is responsible for what he cannot help, and no man can help the conditions into which he is born and which so largely influence his thought. "He is only responsible for his beliefs in so far as he can alter or modify them." 4 Man's opinions, he feels, are not as much under his control as his actions. He asks:

Can I believe that if I put my finger in the fire it won't burn; or that there is no such a place as Constantinople . . . ? I cannot help believing certain things which I have been taught, or which I have tested and know to be facts. I can will to do an act, and it is done, but I cannot alter my opinion directly by an act of will. . . .

1. Ibid., pp. 268-70.
2. Ibid., pp. 270-71.
4. Ibid., p. 304.
A man is responsible for a right state of mind, in which he desires to know the truth, and to carry it out in his life; and if he takes reasonable precautions to find the truth, I cannot see that he is any further responsible. 1

Arnot declares that because this world manifests a direct connection between cause and effect, between the decisions of man and his earthly destiny, therefore, in the world to come and in the moral realm there must be a corresponding relationship. Cowan, however, demonstrates convincingly the fallacy of this argument, by pointing out that Arnot is trying to draw an analogy between two totally different worlds - the moral and physical - worlds which cannot be compared. The physical world draws no distinctions and never discriminates. The wind blows on everything that is in its way. The force of gravity is exerted upon all matter. "Water drowns everything that is capable of being drowned . . . it asks no questions, it has no qualms, it has no feeling." 2

Errors of judgment in relation to either the physical or the intellectual world prove ruinous, but they do not in the moral world, for morals are placed on a different footing. Neither the intellectual world nor the physical is affected by mere intentions. In the moral world intentions may be regarded as everything. 3

Though Cowan here has over-stated his argument by insisting, contrary to Scripture, 4 that intentions be regarded

1. Ibid., pp. 304-05.
2. Ibid., p. 308.
3. Ibid., p. 309.
4. Intentions cannot be regarded as everything in the moral world. "For the good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do" (Romans 7:19). Paul's intentions are good, but that is not enough. Cf. Matthew 25:41-45. Faith without works is dead (James 2:26). Every work whether it be good or evil shall be
as *everything* in the moral world, a statement which he himself refutes further on, still he does convincingly show that Arnot has confused the moral and physical realms. A ship driven on the rocks will meet its destruction regardless of the good intentions of the captain. Rocks never discriminate; the physical world makes no reservations. But this is not true of the moral realm. Here and only here are there any discriminations. "Every human being is liable to err, and human courts take such contingencies into consideration, and are prepared to make allowances." A ship is suddenly caught in a dense fog. The captain slows down the engines and doubles the watch. His instruments tell him he is in no danger. Suddenly, a cliff looms into view and the ship meets disaster. Certainly no tribunal would condemn the captain for an error of judgment, assuming that he did all in his power to assure the ship's safety. He would be judged rather on his right intentions and whether he put them into practice.

Gowan rightly states, if Arnot had said that in the moral world ruin follows from *moral errors* in the same way that ruin follows from *errors of judgment* in the physical world, then he would have been on safe ground. Man as a moral being cannot be blamable and punishable for errors of opinion. He is only accountable for acts of a moral nature or

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brought into judgment (Ecclesiastes 12:14). Indeed, the road to hell is paved with good intentions. God judges us not solely on our intentions, but by the fruit of our intentions.

for that state of mind that leads to those acts.¹

Arnot, as we have seen, is prone to confuse the moral and the physical worlds; and his illustrations, while often vivid and striking, are not always analogous to that which they propose to illustrate. For example, he endeavors to demonstrate the folly of "worshipping" money by picturing a man who has fallen into deep water. The man can easily keep from drowning if his whole body remains beneath the surface of the water with the exception of his mouth and nostrils. Instinctively, however, in an attempt to save himself, and with a convulsive effort, he raises part of his body above the water with the result that the weight of this portion, unnecessarily raised, presses him down and he drowns.

In a similar way, Arnot points out, greed destroys the life of the soul. The possession of money in any quantity is legitimate if it is properly used and is kept beneath the surface so to speak.

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¹. Ibid., p. 306. Gowan felt that Arnot, in his illustration of the ship and the rocks, had represented God as a hard unfeeling rock (ibid., p. 321). This, of course, was to miss the major thrust of the illustration. Arnot had used the ship and the rocks to demonstrate a principle and not to point out the attributes of God. He stated explicitly, elsewhere, that the gospel was nothing to him unless he was permitted to attribute a will to his God. "I can have no communion," he wrote, "with a merely mechanical omnipotence, a sort of infinite ocean that heaves eternally by laws to which it is subject; saving me if I continue to make myself sufficiently buoyant before I am cast on its cold, uncaring bosom; and swallowing me up with the same relentless regularity if I make the leap before I be light enough. This omnipotent principle is not my Saviour." The Anchor of the Soul, p. 47.
But when some portion is raised above the line — when it is taken from a servant's place, and raised to that of a master — when a surplus is sought, not for use but for its own sake — when the love of money begins — when it is set up by the man above himself, as an object of affection, then that surplus, whether great or small presses down the soul, and the man sinks in spiritual death.¹

Here, Arnot has failed to make a convincing transition from the physical to the moral realm. In propositional form he is saying: Any man who makes money his master will perish as surely as any drowning man who insists upon thrashing about in order to save himself. He might just as well have said: Any man who makes money his master will perish as surely as any man who swallows poison or steps into a blast furnace. The fact that the man in the water instinctively raises part of his body above the surface has absolutely nothing in common with the man on the shore who hoards money. If Arnot had imputed to the drowning man an avaricious motive, such as refusing to part with treasure (heavy bars of gold, for example) and as a result of this being forced under the surface, he then would have had some basis of comparison with the man on the shore. The proposition then would have read: Any man who clings only to money will perish as surely as any drowning man who clings only to gold.

A similar weakness in logical reasoning is evident in the following discussion of Arnot's view of religion and science. Though fully aware of the existing conflict between the Biblical doctrine of creation and the evolutionary hypothesis, Arnot was not in the least perturbed by the findings and conjectures of science. The startling discovery of the Neanderthal skull in 1857, merely prompted him to declare that his faith was just as

¹ The Race for Riches, p.50.
strong as ever and that he was willing to have all the facts collected and all the conclusions freely stated. "Let time try all. The truth is great and it will prevail."\(^1\) Science and religion, he maintained, had been brought into hostile collision, not by a mutual antipathy inherent in their natures, but by the ignorance and pride of men who willingly perverted them. "It was Thomas Paine, not astronomy, that pronounced the Christian Revelation ridiculous."\(^2\) A Christian loves truth, and welcomes contributions to truth from all quarters.\(^3\) "An aversion of heart from the discovery of anything that really is in the world, is not only a deviation from the principles of science, it is also an impiety against God."\(^4\) The only right and happy state of mind is "to receive every fact observed and every law demonstrated, from any source, and on any subject."\(^5\)

Arnot accepted both the Scriptures and the world as the work of God, and felt that each was perfectly adapted to its own purpose. He urged, however, that there could be no peace or profitable co-operation between religion and science until they conceded to each other "a coordinate jurisdiction, supreme and independent in its own sphere, and for the exercise of its

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4. This Present World, p. 9.
5. Ibid.
own functions. . . . Both must proceed on parallel and independent lines."¹ This meant not that science could not suggest a re-examination of some portion of Scripture or vice versa, but that there could be no authoritative decisions achieved in this way.

Arnot attempted to illustrate this by pointing out that illuminating gas and water are both useful, each in its own sphere and for its own purpose, but that to mix them would result in the spoiling of both. In the same way, "physical science, dominated by Scripture through a priest-hood, would be worthless as science: religion, dominated by science through the ministry of the philosophers would be worthless as religion."²

Here, though doubtless unintentionally, Arnot has avoided the issue at hand, and has confused again the moral and the physical worlds. His illustration of the incompatibility of the gas and the water to mix is totally irrelevant to the question of religion and science. There is no comparison. The gas and the water exist only in the realm of the material while science and religion represent two realms - one the material and the other the spiritual. They cannot be rigidly separated, any more than we can divorce the mind from the body or the thought from the deed. Though it may be conceded that science has nothing to say on certain spiritual questions, still there are many points on which both science and religion are entitled to give an opinion.

1. Ibid., pp. 6-7.
2. Ibid., p. 8.
They must work together.\(^1\) The crucial question, therefore, of how they work together, Arnot has failed to answer.

Death - the putting off of the mortal flesh - was a subject which Arnot did not pretend to understand. He made no attempt to give a metaphysical explanation of it, but accepted it willingly as a part of God's plan.\(^2\) After the first member of his family had died, he wrote, "The whole matter of the soul's entrance into its tabernacle is a mystery, and I am content to let it lie a mystery in our Father's hands."\(^3\) He was frank to admit that he loved this warm, earthly life and thought it not a sin to shrink from death. "God is not displeased with me for loving that which he has bestowed. If by faith in his Son, and through the ministry of his Spirit, he make me willing to give it up when he recalls it, enough."\(^4\)

One of Arnot's most effective tracts tells of his experience in a dense Glasgow fog, waiting for an omnibus that he knew to be due at that time. Soon, a large, lofty vehicle began to loom through the mist, nodding heavily and jolting on its springs as the wheels rumbled over the irregularities of the causeway. By force of habit he buttoned his greatcoat, and made ready to leap on. Suddenly he drew back, startled, on discovering that the dim bulk coming into view was not an omnibus, but a hearse! His first reaction, as he watched the

\(^2\) *Roots and Fruits*, p. 259.
\(^3\) *Memoir*, p. 270.
\(^4\) *The Anchor of the Soul*, p. 295.
black wagon disappear in the fog, was a feeling of horror. To think that he had almost stepped on the wagon of death! But then, after a moment's reflection, he exclaimed, "This, and this alone is the carriage for all. Willing or unwilling, ready or unready, every one of us must take a place in this carriage. In some such conveyance the dust must be borne to the dust."¹

Though Arnot consistently reminded man that this world is not their resting place, and warned them to be prepared for the inevitable approach of death and afterwards the judgment, he did not stress the morbid fears of a Christless grave. Terror alone, he maintained, even the terror of the Lord will not turn men from sin. "The weight of apprehended judgment lying on the guilt will only compress the soul into a harder, intenser atheism, unless redeeming love burst through."² Arnot made no attempt to drag men into the Kingdom of God, but like Dwight L. Moody,³ stressed the positive, redemptive message of the gospel.⁴ Trying to drag a ship which has run aground, he reasoned, would only wrench it asunder. The tide must be allowed to rise and then the ship will rise with it and sail forth under its own power. "A soul cleaving to the dust is like a ship aground, - it cannot go forward until it be lifted up; but when it is lifted up, it will go forward without

¹. Lessons From Life, pp. 103-94.  
any violent drawing."¹ In his last public discourse he exclaimed:

I do not come here to preach a gloomy gospel: I proclaim glad tidings of great joy. I do not wield a spiritual terror to wrench human beings away from their only joys, and compel them to accept Christ lest they should drop into hell. I come to bid you retain and enjoy all the gifts of providence, and to enjoy them a thousand-fold more by enjoying them in the light of your Redeemer's countenance, as you enjoy a thousand-fold more the landscape when the sun is up.²

Arnot emphasized in all his preaching and writing the practical aspects of living the Christian life. He was fully aware of the two natures existing within the Christian - one depraved through the first Adam, the other sinless through the Second Adam. How these opposing natures could reign together, he illustrated by describing the grafting of a corrupt fruit-tree. The new branch bears fruit, but draws its life-sap from the old root. "Although the good head ingrafted always brings forth good fruit, the old evil root is continually putting forth shoots and buds and blossoms of its own, that are evil, and that waste the strength which should go to the good."³ Similarly, in a Christian's life the lower parts remain - the physical frame and the intellectual faculties, but the higher or spiritual nature is radically changed.

The old spirit has been taken away, and a new spirit inserted. The seed of Christ in the higher part has been inserted in the seed of Adam in the lower part; and, alas! the fruit that grows even on a Christian tastes of the old corrupt root on which it still stands and grows.⁴

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¹. The Lesser Parables, p. 73.
³. The Lesser Parables, p. 251.
⁴. Ibid., p. 158.
This lower nature, therefore, ought to be subdued constantly by the believer. The Scripture, "the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly" means that God will subdue the adversary, but that He will subdue him under the Christian's feet. The power to overcome evil is with God, but the appropriating of that power is with man. "You must yield yourselves as his instruments to crush with your own will all the old serpent's folds." 1

The two important parts of a Christian's life which Arnot particularly stressed were prayer and works. Prayer, he felt, ought to be as natural as quenching one's thirst from a well-spring. 2 Where there is an abundant life in the soul there is no such thing as forgetting to pray or failing to read the Word. 3 Everything that lodges in the Christian's heart, whether joyous or grievous, should be "talked over" with God. "He is not a man of little faith who puts little things into his prayer." 4 "It is not to hide your sins that you run into your closet and shut the door; it is to pour them all out, and get them all forgiven. When you come out again, you come out serene and strong." 5

Arnot believed that Jesus taught in both of his parables, The Friend at Midnight and The Importunate Widow, that God

1. The Anchor of the Soul, p. 81.
2. Ibid., p. 91.
4. The Anchor of the Soul, p. 91.
delights in persevering prayer - loves the wrestler at Peniel the more because of his grasp. A Christian who earnestly desires anything, should ask God for it repeatedly until he obtains it, "or until he die with the request upon his lips; and in that case he will get his desire, and more." A sense of need; a desire to get; a belief that God has it in store; a belief that though He withholds a while, He loves to be asked; and a belief that asking will obtain; - these were the five prerequisites of prayer. "Give me these links," Arnot declared, "and the chain will reach from earth to heaven, bringing heaven all down to me, or bearing me up into heaven."  

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Arnot had little patience with long drawn-out public prayers and felt that to keep a congregation standing in prayer for twenty minutes or half-an-hour, which was sometimes done, was to turn prayer into penance. This attitude towards prayer never changed, and near the end of Arnot's life he recorded in his diary: "I sometimes feel as if there were a change to fewer words, shorter, assuming the child's place and acting on it. . . . I suppose there are really two kinds of brevity in prayer: one because you are far off, and one because you are far in." Theodore Cuyler has well remarked that only a profoundly experienced Christian could have made such a statement.  

1. The Parables of Our Lord, pp. 505-06. See also ibid., p. 361.
2. Ibid., p. 506.
3. Ibid., p. 542.
Arnot's following observations on prayer are eminently practical.

The prayerless cannot work well, and the idle do not pray much. The law is - Both or neither. On the one hand, do not permit your desire for spiritual communion with God to withdraw you from any kind or measure of work which a fellow-creature needs; and on the other, do not permit your constant immersion in active duty to restrain or curtail your communion with God.

To fall asleep while you are praying; To pray while you are falling asleep. The first is, according to circumstances, a weakness of the flesh when the spirit is willing, or the slothfulness of a worldly mind; but the second is very sweet; the privilege of a dear child sinking into the softness of the everlasting arms. 2

He who works most would also need to pray most. Hard task this, do you think? Yes, if it be a task, it is a hard one; but if work and prayer be both alike a privilege, the more you have of both the happier will you be. 3

Having noted thus far a consistent "circuit" stress in Arnot's teaching on man's salvation and the place of sin and prayer in his life, we are not surprised to find a similar emphasis in his teaching on the Christian's attitude toward "works". He pictures Paul and James, not face to face fighting against each other, but on the same side, back to back, fighting opposite foes - Paul in conflict with the heresy of legalism, and James doing battle with the heresy of Antinomianism. 4

Faith without works is dead. Works without faith are dead. Arnot stresses both with equal force. It is not enough to look well to the helm of our ship and neglect the stars as we

traverse the ocean of life; nor is it sufficient to look to the stars and neglect the helm. Alone, neither will bring us safe to land.

Both, and each in its own place: the stars, to show us the path in which we ought to go; and the helm, to keep us in the path which the stars have shown to be right. Not turn to the contemplation of dogma, instead of labouring in the works of charity; but looking to the truth as the light which shows us the way of life, and walking in that way with all diligence.¹

Faith and works, like the right and left swing of the pendulum, must be kept in balance if the Christian's life is to be effective. To do good makes him know God better, and the knowledge of God sends him back with a new impulse to his work in the world. "So the Christian life goes best which goes between a deep, contemplative, spiritual knowledge of God, and hearty practical work, as far as opportunity offers, for every interest of every brother man."² This does not mean, however, that the Christian is to go around the world and meddle with everything in it, but that he should neglect no opportunity for doing good that comes his way. "The rule is not to overtake all, but to refuse none that overtake you."³ Every work that the Christian does should be good, not just the work for which he has a natural aptitude.

When an elephant picks a pin from the dust with his huge trunk, men wonder more than when they see him break a tree. So when a man of might - some intellectual and moral hero,

² Ibid., p. 309. See also Roots and Fruits, pp. 48-49; 379.
³ The Anchor of the Soul, p. 302.
who dares every danger, and delights in having danger to
dare—condescends to bear with the infirmities of the
weakest... the testimony of the fact is resistless, and
observers confess that the grace of God is there. ¹

Practical Christ-centered religion does not consist in
denying the Christian the use of this world, but rather in
enabling him to enjoy it to the full. "A Christian with a clear
mind and a good conscience tastes more sweetness in this world
than he who has no other portion."² "Christians love life with
a deeper, and more intelligent love than other creatures, because
the gifts which are in their own nature sweet, are sweeter when
they are received from a Father’s hand."³

Arnot insisted that, in order to bear an effective
Christian witness, we must be in contact with the everyday life
of men, manifestly and thoroughly counting ourselves, but for the
grace of God, no better than they.⁴ True Christian philanthropy
embraces the whole man—spiritually as well as physically. "You
cannot permanently do good to a brother, if you ignore the
immortal spirit and treat him only as a body with life in it.⁵

The Gospel is "redemption from all evil, — redemption of the

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1. Ibid., p. 303.
4. Arnot, "My Brother's Keeper: Papers Bearing on the
Condition of the People. IV, Trades' Unions; or How
the Fear of God and Regard for Man Flourish or Fade
5. Arnot, "My Brother's Keeper: Papers Bearing on the
Condition of the People. I, Philanthropy," The Sunday
Parables, p. 365.
whole man, soul and body."¹

Following are some of Arnot's balanced, pungent statements regarding the practical working-out of the Christian faith in the believer's life.

The root and life of true religion is personal devotion to a personal Redeemer; thereafter and thereon grows active service in his cause.

The first care of the spiritual shepherd is for himself; the next for his flock. . . . The more that the teacher absorbs for himself of Christ's love, the more benefit will others obtain from him.²

The distinguishing features of the New Testament sacrifice are, that it is the offerer's own body, not the body of a substitute; and that it is presented not dead but living. It is not a carcass laid on the altar to be burned; it is a life devoted to God. Love is the fire that consumes the sacrifice.³

Before you can love the brotherhood, you must be a brother.⁴

Whatsoever the hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; but do not waste time and effort in trying to do all at once. The rule is not to overtake all, but to refuse none that overtake you.⁵

Anger, malice, envy, - seize these vipers, that twist and hiss in your bosom; strangle them outright there. Your religion is nothing better than a cheat, if you are not busy with the work of ceasing to do evil.⁶

Be gentle to all without sacrificing any truth; be faithful to truth without giving needless offence to any brother.⁷

Active philanthropy must be a law operating from within, and

³. The Church in the House, p. 444.
⁴. The Lesser Parables, p. 456.
⁵. Ibid., p. 379.
⁷. The Proverbs, p. 56.
not a system adopted from without.  

Philanthropy should be made to wear, not to sell.  

The post mortem philanthropy is not genuine: love should circulate through a man's life like the blood in his veins and not be relegated to the future with a provision to make it spring from a dead man's grave.  

It is the life-work of a Christian to forget past attainments in practical duty, and to strain ever forward, ever upward. Not, indeed, What shall I do in order to commend myself to God's favour? but, How shall I most effectively glorify God and do good?  

Devotion without work degenerates into monkery; work without devotion sinks into shallow, fitful secularism.  

Go to high heaven for your doctrines, but do not abide always soaring there; touch the earth and man with those mighty motives which you draw from the depths of God's eternal counsel.  

It is when you look from the bottom of a well that you descry the stars in daylight; on the surface, with the glare all round, although they are there, you cannot discern them. It is thus that faith's eye cannot pierce the heaven so well from the bright surface of prosperity as from the low low place of some great sorrow.  

It is better to have a faith you cannot explain, than to be able to explain a faith which you do not enjoy.  

Concerning Eschatology  

The major emphasis in Arnot's preaching centered upon  

2. Ibid.  
3. Ibid.  
7. The Church in the House, p. 341.  
8. Ibid., p. 424.
the practical application of the Gospel - "first things first" and "last things last". He spent relatively very little time in discussing eschatological doctrines, and only mentioned the Second Coming of Christ in connection with the Christian Life which he believed was best sustained by looking backward to Christ having come in the flesh and forward to His coming in power. "Actual holiness in a human life cannot stand unless it have both to lean upon." ¹

The reason why he preached so little on eschatological themes was not because he considered the subject unimportant. On the contrary, behind all his preaching there was the eschatological factor - the coming judgment and the final destiny of man. He did not minimize the wrath of God, but kept it in the background as a painter does with a shadow in order to bring out his subject. "If there were not righteous wrath in the background," he declared, "treasured up and sure to fall on the impenitent, even mercy, deprived of the beauty of holiness, would be beautiful no more." ²

Arnot accepted the doctrine of hell, but was reticent to pronounce any opinion upon it. "I suppose it is as completely impossible for a human heart to conceive what God hath prepared for them that hate him, as to conceive what he hath prepared for them that love him." ³ ⁹ In commenting on the conclusion of the parable of the Entrusted Talents, he stated:

1. The Anchor of the Soul, p. 226. See also The Church in the House, p. 10.
3. The Parable of Our Lord, p. 182
Fearing lest I should darken counsel by words without knowledge, I leave the positive penal infliction, which takes effect beyond the precincts of this life, without one word of comment, in the short and solemn words of the Scripture, 'Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

While he recognized a personal devil as the enemy of the soul, he recognized the dilemma in trying to reconcile the presence of evil with an all-powerful and all-loving God. He did not, however, attempt to rationalize it, but simply accepted the fact of moral evil and the power of Christ to overcome it.

Harsh "hell-fire and brim-stone" preaching, he felt, was the wrong approach to the hearts of men. "Even the terrors of the Lord rattled forth hard and dry from an unmoved human heart, lose their divinity when they lose their tenderness, and degenerate into a scold." The preacher should always be loving and humble when he talks of the wrath of God - "as far towards tenderness as truth will permit . . . as far towards faithfulness as the line of love will allow."

Arnot believed in the doctrine of heaven as sincerely as he did in the doctrine of hell, but felt that in this realm also it was not his place to pry into the secret things of God. "Nothing can be more repulsive to the refined and Christianised sense than long particular stories of what the saints in glory

1. Ibid., p. 310.
2. See Memoir, p. 229.
3. The Anchor of the Soul, pp. 70-71.
4. The Lesser Parables, p. 84.
say and do."

"The real business in hand for Christians is not heaven but holiness." It is altogether too narrow and inadequate a view to think of hell as the danger and heaven as the deliverance. The danger is sin, and the deliverance is pardon.

Arnot divided the angelic world into two parts: the fallen and the righteous. He believed that the angels who had rebelled against God in primeval times were consigned to an eternal, flaming pit, and those who had remained loyal to Him were made His helpers. The latter concept we have seen illustrated in his interpretation of the parables of The Tares and The Draw-Bet.

We have now indicated some of the main doctrinal thrusts of Arnot's preaching - the foundation stones on which he based his evangel - and have shown how he expressed his message. Arnot was essentially a pictorial preacher, his clear practical thinking, his nervous Saxon style, and the appropriate beauty of his illustrations, along with his all-pervading "sanctified common sense", combining to make him a general favorite as a speaker and an author. He was not an original thinker in the sense of developing new theological insights, but original in devising new ways of conveying old truths. Alexander Symington perhaps best epitomized him.

2. Ibid., p. 80.
3. Ibid., p. 237.
4. Supra, pp. 178, 182.
5. The Dundee Advertiser, June 18, 1877.
when he wrote:

His big head took in the system of the Confession of Faith, and was satisfied with it; but he must both receive it and give it out in his own way. He held that system of truth as Augustine and St. Paul held it, with the heart much more than with the head. It was true of him (as it ought to be true of us all) rather that he held his confession than that his confession held him; and one of the principal attractions by which he drew large, interested audiences about him in every place, keeping his own church full from week to week, and filling any church or hall in which it was known he was to speak in London or New York or anywhere, was the entire freshness of conception and of feeling with which he developed truth from the Word of God — truth, of course old, else it would not be truth — but having for him, and therefore for all his hearers, all the charm and power of newness.

B. Arnot's Ecclesiastical Activities

What Arnot wrote of his friend, James Hamilton, could be said unequivocally of himself: "The habit of his mind was Christian rather than ecclesiastic, and cosmopolitan rather than denominational." He was not a controversialist; his whole mind and character was cast in another mould. Usually he left controversy to others, and plied his own departments, "of unfolding positively Divine truth, and enforcing practical holiness."

Though, admittedly, Arnot was not primarily an ecclesiastic, some attention, however, should be paid to this side of his life, if nothing more than to indicate the areas of church activity in which he was mainly interested. Since there is no evidence that he took any outstanding part in the work of his Presbytery, we will proceed immediately to examining his General Assembly speeches.

They number fifteen in all, and principally advocate

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2. Ibid., pp. 390-91.
3. On May 18, 1859, in Presbytery, Arnot gave his views concerning the Sustentation Fund, but admits that he stated them "feeblely and confusedly" and "entirely clear of anything offensive to anyone." Unfortunately the volume among the Glasgow Free Church Presbytery Records covering this year is missing, though it is most improbable that it contains anything of significance concerning Arnot. See Memoir, p. 306.
Home Missions, the use of hymns in public worship, a right use of the Sustentation Fund, Sabbath Schools, Temperance, and the union of the Free and the United Presbyterian Churches.

The addresses, while not significant from an ecclesiastical standpoint, nevertheless are valuable in showing how Arnot conducted himself in the General Assembly. He delivered his speeches in an amiable, forthright spirit, with characteristic illustrations and humor interpersed, and often brought the attention of the Assembly back to the main issues under discussion. Generally, his remarks received much laughter and applause, indicating his wide popularity. He delighted in grasping every opportunity to "play on words", which was evident in his address on the Sustentation Fund in the year 1861.

Referring particularly to the Free Churchmen, he pointed out that there was a tendency in human nature to become narrow unless there was a constant attempt made to avoid it. He said he did not like a broad Church, but he liked broad Christians. If Christians were more broad perhaps it would lead to an increase of the Sustentation Fund, and might also increase the Christians' breadth in another sense. He assured his brethren, however,

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that he was not pleading for **himself**.\(^1\) This provoked an immediate volley of laughter, as Arnot by this time had grown rather portly.

Again, in 1858, during the heated discussion on the Sustentation Fund, Arnot came into the Assembly as James Begg, known for his pugnacious and unco-operative nature, was vehemently objecting to Rainy's scheme and all others which proposed to alter the original plan of the equal dividend.\(^2\) Arnot, in his speech, jocularly remarked that as he had entered the Assembly he had heard Dr. Begg say something about being done with scheming; but did not hear whether it was the Church or Dr. Begg that was to be done with **scheming**. Unless he [Arnot] was mistaken, Dr. Begg was not through with scheming yet, nor was he nor the House through with scheming. None of them could afford to rest on past accomplishments, but must always be contriving new undertakings for good, amending those which had served their purpose. "They must not condemn a scheme because it was a scheme to make a thing better than before."\(^3\)

The question was how could the Church agree on some measure that should be best upon the whole.

Arnot's **popularity** was never dependent upon the sacrifice of his personal convictions. Principal Rainy commented particularly on his intrepid spirit in defending any issue which he felt was urgent, regardless of the opprobrium which might be

\(^1\) *Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church in Scotland*, 1861, p. 123.
\(^2\) Cf. *Ibid.*., 1858, pp. 93-96.
\(^3\) *Ibid.*., pp. 100-10.
attached to it. In such cases, he expressed his own genial spirit, and did much to assuage bitterness, by showing none himself.

But though never bitter, he could add great force to the clearing of truth by debate. Claptrap of all kinds was in danger from him. And when voluble and pretentious persons took very high ground, it was something to see how with equal ease and dexterity he could pierce the windbag, and exhibit the collapse that followed.2

Though a loyal Free Churchman all his life, Arnot was too big a man to be confined within one denomination. This was apparent from his interest in world Presbyterianism,3 and from his frequent visits to the Evangelical Alliance Conferences in Britain, on the Continent, and in the United States. Towards the end of his ministry, he was a constant advocate of Church union, and would have agreed with Alexander Maclaren that if denominational walls must be built, they should always be built without glass on top. Like Norman Macleod and Thomas Guthrie,4 he was far from hide-bound by ecclesiastical convention, and could not have acted the rôle of a narrow Churchman.

Perhaps it is significant that in the books covering the lives of some of Arnot's contemporaries, Robert Buchanan, James Begg, Robert Candlish, James Hood Wilson, William Blaikie and Andrew Bonar, no important reference is made to Arnot. In P. Carnegie Simpson's life of Robert Rainy, Arnot is mentioned only once, and that in a private letter from Dr. Rainy to

1. Memoir, p. 505.
2. Ibid.
Dr. Buchanan. The correspondence refers to a vote taken during the bitter union controversy of 1871. The only man to vote incorrectly, according to Rainy, was a Free High Church elder; and the man responsible for sending him to the Assembly was William Arnot. In blunt terms, Rainy declares: "Arnot bungled the business." ¹

In view of what has been said, therefore, it is not surprising that Arnot was never chosen as Moderator of the Church. He was not among those most qualified for that position, and certainly would not have looked forward to the heavy ecclesiastical duties incumbent upon that high office. His real power lay in preaching and teaching within the pastoral office, rather than in politics and polemics within the ecclesiastical arena.

G. Arnot's Temperance Work

No study of Arnot would be complete without a discussion of his temperance work which was one of the most important phases of his ministry. His convictions on the subject were formed at an early age and remained unchanged throughout his life. He believed that intemperance was "the mightiest evil that sin had introduced among the family of Adam," and nothing he might write or say against it could be too severe.

He was not, however, a teetotaler in the strictest sense of the word - not another John Gough. His principle was always temperance; and as a means, one means of supporting that principle, he practiced abstinence. Not realizing this, many abstainers, as well as drinkers, often criticized and misrepresented him. The relation of drink to the Church and its families being what it was, Arnot considered it unwise to try to discriminate between the place where it is safe to partake of intoxicants and the place where it is dangerous. If he withheld spirits from young men invited to his home, would he be justified in serving them to adults on other occasions?

2. Arnot's last recorded speech in the General Assembly concerned the advocacy of temperance. Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, 1874, p. 41.
4. Cuyler, "Arnot of Scotland," op.cit.; John Gough, the zealous advocate of abstinence principles, told Cuyler that the most beautiful sentence he had ever heard was from the lips of Arnot.
might be a pleasant and perfectly harmless drink to one, might prove a deadly draught to another. "I cannot tread my way through these shoals and quicksands," he explained, "I do not try. I hoist my sail . . . with the flag of Nephalism flying at the mast head that all concerned may know what to expect."

As a temperance advocate, Arnot was a "perfect enthusiast." At Lanark, on one occasion, he was so stirred on seeing the town given to whisky, that he summoned a meeting by the bellman at the Cross on Saturday night, and then, standing on the steps of the Town Hall, within earshot of a magistrate's tippling shop, addressed a vast and attentive gathering. "I am deeply convinced that the cause of religion is held down very low in Lanark," he declared, "by the multitude of spirit shops and quantity of drinking." The ministers there, he felt, would serve the Lord better if they would be more courageous and pointed in their denunciation of drunkenness.

From June 9th to 11th in the year 1857, a notable ministerial conference was held in Manchester, under the auspices and at the expense of the United Kingdom Alliance [Temperance]. Arnot was one of the three hundred and fifty-eight ministers in attendance, representing England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland. In addition to being one of the two to preach an inaugural sermon, Arnot drafted and read the following declaration, which,

1. Arnot, "Temperance in Relation to the Church," The Free Church of Scotland Monthly Record (Edinburgh, October 1, 1864).
within fifteen months, was signed by 1,683, and within three years by 2,390 ministers of religion in the United Kingdom.¹

We the undersigned, ministers of the gospel, are convinced by personal observation within our own sphere, and authentic testimony from beyond it, that the traffic of intoxicating liquors, as drink for man, is the immediate cause of most of the crime and pauperism, and much of the disease and insanity, that afflict the land; that everywhere, and in proportion to its prevalence, it deteriorates the moral character of the people, and is the chief outward obstruction to the progress of the gospel; that these are not its accidental attendants, but its natural fruits; that the benefit, if any, is very small in comparison with the bane; that all schemes of regulation and restriction, however good as far as they go, fall short of the nation's need and the nation's duty; and that, therefore, on the obvious principle of destroying the evil which cannot be controlled, the wisest course for those who fear God and regard man, is to encourage every legitimate effort for the entire suppression of the trade, by the power of the national will, and through the form of a legislative enactment.²

This, in succinct terms, shows how much stress Arnot placed on the evils of drink.

Though Arnot advocated temperance principles, he was very sensitive about the use of his name in this connection. On October 1, 1864, on the back of The Free Church of Scotland Monthly Record, there appeared in the form of a temperance advertisement an extract from one of his addresses delivered in the City Hall, Glasgow, on January 25, 1862. Arnot had not given permission for the use of this lecture, and after three months of receiving severe and unjust criticism for advertising in this manner, in self defence wrote a letter to the editor, explaining his position. This was published in the February

² Ibid.
issue.

I was startled by seeing my own name staring in my face, over an address which I had spoken at a meeting in Glasgow several years ago. . . . Be it known . . . in order to prevent loss of temper and other good things, that . . . the plan of thrusting it by advertisement in the Record, under unwilling eyes, was conceived and executed without my knowledge, and that I instantly reclaimed against it as unfair towards myself and unwise in regard to the object in view.]

Not only was Arnot indignant over having his name used without his consent, but he bitterly resented also having his name linked with those who professed to be abstainers and yet continued to drink freely in private. He considered such a practice hypocritical and dishonest, and in 1871 withdrew his name altogether from public profession with those who proclaimed themselves total abstainers. Teetotalers, he held, had no monopoly in protesting against the vice of drunkenness. Other ministers, not identified with abstinence or temperance societies, ought to be asked to preach against the evil. "It is a weakness when the people are left to think that only persons of extreme views meddle with the subject."^2

When the Free Church Total Abstinence Society was formed in 1849, Arnot, though not favoring the name, gave it his hearty support. He believed that among those engaged in the war against drunkenness, zealous abstainers generally had proved most successful. He himself, however, did not feel obliged to sign their pledge, and freely admitted that he had joined the

1. The Free Church of Scotland Monthly Record (Edinburgh, February 1, 1865).
abstinence society only as a matter of expediency because he knew of no other organization better equipped to uphold the cause of temperance. In writing to the secretary of the Free Church Abstinence Society, he urged that everything be done decently and in order, so that the society might be unassailable and irreproachable at every point. Appropriate tracts—"brief, pungent, solemn, kind"—should be addressed to various branches of the Church, as well as abstinence sermons being preached from some of the large city pulpits. "Such a thing," he affirmed, "would be new to the most respectable of our people who seem to put temperance sermons in the category of Chartist meetings."  

Twenty-two years later, Arnot still proclaimed the cause of temperance; and the following discussion of part of his Christmas sermon, preached in the Free High Church, Edinburgh, shows how he presented this unpopular subject to the most respectable. It is interesting to note that he consented to preach this message on Christmas day—a day which would doubtless be celebrated with intoxicating beverages in many of the well-to-do homes of his parishioners. His approach to the subject was cautious, but nevertheless faithful, and he text

1. Arnot, Temperance and Total Abstinence in their Relation to the Bible and the Church: with Special Reference to the Late Discussion in the Free Church Presbytery of Glasgow (Glasgow, 1855), p. 33.
3. The General Assembly of the Free Church had requested its ministers to deliver warnings against the vice of intemperance at the end of this year. Arnot, "The Use and Abuse of This World," The Family Treasury (London, 1871), p. 83.
was Acts 2:46, "They did eat their meat with gladness."

The sermon began by pointing out that the early Christians' happiness sprang from their faith which made their daily bread sweeter and enabled them to enjoy more completely all the common bounties of Providence. There is a right use and a wrong use of this world. "Christians should use this world, but not abuse it."¹ After listing some of the lawful pleasures and blessings of life, Arnot proceeded to discuss one of the abuses — namely excessive drinking. He declared that he felt it was his sacred duty to warn his congregation regarding the slippery places for souls, and were he to remain silent concerning the temperance question, he would be unfaithful to his trust — guilty of turning his back in the day of battle. The fact that drunkenness was rampant in the community slaying its ten thousand — sparing no age, no rank, neither sex — no one denied; but unfortunately many of the out-spoken assailants of drunkenness were more outstanding as orators than as men of learning and refinement. Thus by one link of bad logic, people often concluded that any earnest warning against the dangers of intoxicating drink was crude and vulgar, although it might be conceded to be well meant. Arnot admitted having consciously yielded to some extent to this widespread opinion, explaining that of late years he had purposely not given frequent and earnest warnings on drunkenness in proportion to the need, because he felt compelled to recognize

1. Ibid.
not only the great need for temperance reform, but the existing prejudice against temperance reformers. "I have been obliged to take into account not only what the community need to get, but also what the community are able to bear." He declared that if the great amount of prejudice against the temperance advocates was removed, it would be the surest way to promote the temperance cause.

Following this he made an earnest appeal to his well-dressed, comfortable congregation to consider the wretched drunkards who swarmed around them, and to pity the thousands of children without shoes and warm clothing whose parents were slaves to strong drink. "It is a cruel as well as an unclean spirit that casts in the wages to feed the Moloch flame, and leaves these pinched little ones naked." Yield yourselves first to Christ, yield yourselves, young and old alike to the Saviour, and then, knowing the freedom of new life in Him, grasp with one hand the Redeemer for strength and steadiness and with the other hand some brother ready to perish.

There is no joy like the joy of saving. It is Christ's own joy. . . . To save the lost - the lowest - to save with persevering love those who at first revile us for our pains, is to partake here in the desert, not of angel's food, but of his food whom the angels adore.

While this sermon was not as vehement as were many of Arnot's temperance tracts, it perhaps was just as effective. It was not intended to shock and horrify, but rather to win and move into loving action.

1. Arnot, "The Use and Abuse of This World," op.cit., p. 85.
2. Ibid., p. 86.
3. Ibid., p. 87.
The following excerpts taken from his temperance tract, *The Workers and Their Work*, illustrate Arnot's more vehement style. This tract contains startling and striking imagery. It begins by asking us if we would not hate with a perfect hatred any place where we knew that hundreds of human beings were being sacrificed on the gory altars of a cruel god. We would not be human if our hearts did not burn within us as we passed such a place. The dramshops of Scotland are such slaughter-houses — as hateful to God and as murderous to man!

Men, our own flesh and blood, are lured, drugged, and burned to death in these dens, that other men may make money by the process. I sometimes stand on the pavement and look in at the open door. I see naked, haggard parents, men and women, standing at the counter. . . . They are frequenters of the place. . . . It is known that what they buy and drink there is eating out their body's life, and bringing wrath upon their souls — is breaking the hearts of their parents, or casting children, diseased, ignorant, and profligate, upon society. Inside the counter, the dealer stands. He has stripped his coat, and is working in his shirt sleeves. He is dealing out the means and material of ruin to his brother, and taking his money in. I cannot be cool. My head burns and my heart throbs. That man, stripped, and labouring and sweating there, appears to me Moloch's high priest, slaughtering the sacrifices. I confess it, I never pass the place with coolness. I hate — God is my witness — I hate the burnished counter, and glittering brass, and glaring light, and painted signboard, all the accessories of the crime — the garments of the idol, I hate them, for they are spotted with the blood of men. In compassion alike for the seller and the buyer, alike for the publican and the drunkard, I plead that an arrestment be laid, by the mighty hand of the nation, on this murderous process.

In the year 1854, Arnot was drawn into controversy with James Stirling who attacked the Public Houses (Scotland) Act,

commonly known as the Forbes Mackenzie Act, which forbade the sale of intoxicating drinks after eleven o'clock at night and on Sunday, except to bona fide travelers. At the request of the directors of the Scottish Temperance League, Arnot published a reply in which he demolished the arguments of his opponent. Stirling accused the advocates of the Forbes Mackenzie Act of trying to enforce morality, and of entering into conflict with what he nebulously termed "the inclinations" and "natural energies" of men, and "the dynamic laws of volition." He maintained that the end of the law is to repress wrong, not to create virtue, and that crime, not sin, is the true object of legislative repression. "The law has to do with the overt act, not with the secret desire. . . . It is no good answer that drunkenness leads to crime. So does every base passion." Furthermore he insisted that the closing of public-houses after eleven o'clock at night and on Sunday resulted in drunkards being driven to their homes, thus contaminating their families.

Arnot ruthlessly exposed the error of such puerile and dangerous reasoning. He demonstrated convincingly that drunkenness is a crime as well as a sin, and that legislation should and does attempt to prevent, as well as to punish, evil.

3. James Stirling, Failure of the Forbes Mackenzie Act (Glasgow, 1858), pp. 4, 5.
4. Ibid., p. 17.
5. Arnot, A Lecture in Reply to Mr. Stirling's "Failure" in the Matter of the Forbes Mackenzie Act, pp. 6-7.
action of the law is to repress wrong; but the end of the law is to prevent it. Referring especially to "the dynamic laws of volition," he related visiting a mechanic, "sleeping off", on Wednesday forenoon, the previous Sabbath's debauch, and advising him to pass the publican's door, when the drunkard's wife interrupted him by saying: "Our Willie's just a bairn now, sir; he canna gang past the public-house as lang as he has a penny." ¹ At the same time, Arnot saw another man, turned out of a public-house when his money was gone, fall lengthways into the shallow gutter. A trickle of water in the bottom, impeded in its flow, began to dam up about his hair. "He felt the wet, and struck out hands and feet in the manner of a frog, calling out to the bystanders, 'Never mind me, save other people, I can soon.'"² In both of these cases, Arnot observed, there was "volition", but alas! there was little of the "dynamic" in it.³ "Whisky has burnt all the power out of these men's wills. In spite of their better volitions they will be the prey of the publican till they perish, unless we protect them."⁴

In answer to Stirling's contemptuous and wholesale denunciation of the men who unite for the Christian and moral good of society, as "benevolent blockheads" - the most dangerous men of the day, incapable of comprehending questions in politics

1. Ibid., p. 12.
2. Ibid., p. 13.
3. Of course, what Arnot is attempting to illustrate is that the dynamics of volition and volition itself can be divorced. These illustrations, however, fail to make the point.
4. Ibid.
or social economy, Arnot caustically retorted: "We almost agree with him. There is only one other person whom we think equally dangerous, and that is the blockhead who is not benevolent." 1

Arnot, as we would expect, strongly disapproved of the common practice of toast drinking, especially at ordination and induction dinners, and felt that such a custom proved a stumbling-block to those both within and without the Church. It acted as an incentive to drink. "What is the meaning of whirling the glasses around the head," he declared in Presbytery, "but to show that they are empty, and to laugh to scorn any coward who should lag behind?" 2

In the year 1848 he threatened to bring the matter before the Presbytery in the form of a motion to abolish it, but seven years passed before he felt sufficiently moved to draft such a declaration. The occasion which prompted him was the announcement of a private dinner given on the afternoon of the Reverend Mr. Parker's induction. 3 It was stated publicly that a number of toasts had been proposed and that the Moderator replied for the Glasgow Presbytery. Arnot felt that to remain silent would be to compromise his own temperance stand, especially since it had been publicized that his Presbytery had

1. Ibid., p. 10.
taken part in the toasts. He gave notice to the secular press of the following motion one month before the Presbytery met to discuss it, and thus provided ample time for all to prepare for the debate.\(^1\)

Whereas the General Assembly of this Church, in an Act passed in the year 1646 for remedying abuses and increasing the efficiency of the ministry, enjoined, among other things, 'that the ministers in all sorts of company labour to be faithful as the salt of the earth, seasoning them they meet with, not only forbearing to drink healths (Satan's snare, leading to excess), but reproving it in others;' whereas the General Assembly in recent times has adopted reports of its Committee on Intemperance, in which the drinking customs of the country, apart from actual excess, are distinctly and without qualification condemned; whereas drinking healths is a drinking custom, which, whether considered in its origin, its nature, or its tendency, has no claim to be exempted from that sentence of condemnation, more especially when associated with the ordination and induction of ministers: therefore, the Presbytery, considering, on the one hand, the judgment of the Church, expressed more stringently in the ancient Act, and more loosely in the modern recommendation; and considering, on the other hand, the forms of prevailing vice, the circumstances of society, and the place and calling of the Christian Church as a witness in the world, resolve, that the practice of drinking healths on occasion of the ordination and induction of ministers is, to say the least, unnecessary and inexpedient, and recommend that it should be discontinued.\(^3\)

In support of this elaborate motion, Arnot made what was regarded as a most uncompromising and violent speech.

The Reverend James Gibson, Clerk of the Presbytery, and minister of Free Kingston Church, Glasgow, replied to Arnot's motion and address, refusing, however, to debate the question of toasts. He accused Arnot of having deliberately chosen the

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1. Arnot, Temperance and Total Abstinence in their Relation to the Bible and the Church; with Special Reference to the Late Discussion in the Free Church Presbytery of Glasgow, pp. 6-7.


occasion of Mr. Parker's private dinner, on the eve of his induction, as an appropriate time to denounce the toast-drinking custom, thereby insinuating that the "whirling of empty glasses" and ungentlemanly conduct accompanying some toast-drinking occasions, were also to be expected at ecclesiastical dinners. ¹

Gibson's fiery address left the Presbytery in an uproar. Mr. Parker indignantly demanded the retraction of the phrase "whirling their empty glasses round the head", and repeatedly exclaimed that he had drunk nothing but water in these toasts, and that a teetotal gentleman at his side had done the same.² Robert Buchanan called Arnot's conduct "great cruelty and injustice" and felt that it was impossible to remedy the evil that had been done.³

Arnot, unable to answer these charges in Presbytery, because of the torrent of interruptions which met him, merely replied to Mr. Gibson's speech by saying that Gibson had been on "a different line of rails all the while," and had never once met him on the point to which he directed the attention of the Presbytery. Gibson's address, he declared, was a tirade against teetotalism, and had nothing to do with his subject of toast-drinking. Finally, after further debate, in which no one spoke in favor of toast drinking, Arnot withdrew his resolution, expressing his conviction that his object had been served by the

². Ibid., p. 13.
Arnot, however, was not disposed to leave the matter there. Soon he published a thirty-six-page pamphlet entitled *Temperance and Total Abstinence in Their Relation to the Bible and the Church*, in which he emphatically denied that he had maligning his brethren in the ministry, or had implied that they drank excessively. Never before had he been accused of such a thing, though he had written some and spoken much on the subject in almost all its aspects.

Gibson's reply, *Exposure of the Evasions, Misrepresentations and Abuse Contained in "The Book"*, Recently published by the Rev. William Arnot, Entitled "Temperance and Total Abstinence", though written largely with "acid-ink" and stooping often to personal abuse, still was correct in pointing out that Arnot had been unwise in some of his statements which seemed to place his brethren in an unfavorable light. We can readily appreciate the awkward position in which the Presbytery found itself.

The significant thing for us, however, is to note Arnot's intrepid spirit throughout the proceedings. For the sake of the principle which he held, he had deliberately defied strong public opinion, even though he knew that to do so would provoke a mighty barrage of criticism. It is true that sometimes his zealfulness

2. Arnot, *Temperance and Total Abstinence in their Relation to the Bible and the Church; with Special Reference to the Late Discussion in the Free Church Presbytery of Glasgow*, pp. 4-5.
3. One of Arnot's temperance tracts was circulated to the extent of one hundred thousand.
for the welfare of all men led him beyond the bounds of
discretion, but it is equally true that there was no one
more regretful or repentant than he when persons were
wrongfully offended.

That this was the last bitter polemic of his career
is not surprising. Three times in the years 1853 to 1855
he had acted the rôle of a controversialist: first, with
James M'Clelland concerning Free Church as opposed to
1 Secular education; then with James Stirling over the
2 Forbes Mackenzie Act; and finally with James Gibson. His
disposition, however, was not suited for argumentation — his
nature was too friendly and kindly — and thus happily we
never find him again engaged in heated controversy.

2. Supra, pp. 242-45.
CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION
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CONCLUSION

William Arnot was the youngest of the Free Church leaders who stood around Chalmers and who sleep beside him in the Grange Cemetery; and with the exception of Alexander Duff, he was the last survivor. Though he cannot be designated with Candlish, Cunningham and Guthrie, as a "lieutenant" of Chalmers, still he may be said to have held a very high position among the churchmen of his day. He was one of the most effective pulpit and platform orators that the Free Church possessed. His vivid apposite illustrations - never overdrawn, never mere "fringe and tassels" of style - surpassed even those of his friend Thomas Guthrie; and his happy knack of presenting the commonest truth in an uncommon setting distinguished him in whatever he said and wrote. Though his preaching was not as spectacular and startling as that of two of his contemporaries - Henry Ward Beecher of Brooklyn and Joseph Parker of London - it is unfair to say that it was not equally effective. All that glitters is not gold; and all that is gold in the work of Christ does not necessarily glitter. A sheet of flame flung up into the sky may indicate a melting heat below, but, as Arnot points out, it may also be merely "the

pithless flash from blazing straw."¹ The important thing in evaluating a man's preaching is not to notice the degree of its dramatic flair, but rather the degree of its warmth in its concern for the souls of men.

There was in Arnot's preaching not only excellent content, but always a note of urgency. Unlike the flash of a soaring rocket which dazzles for a moment and then dies in the night, Arnot's preaching, though often filled with beautiful imagery, never left his people cold and untouched. Every spark of his message was struck with the intent of reaching their hearts - of bringing the gospel down to earth and making it applicable to the affairs of daily life. It was this kind of preaching, with its earnest, practical emphasis, its homely, earthy philosophy and its warm spiritual counsel, that won the hearts of thousands of hearers.

As a pastor, Arnot was equally beloved. Unlike Walter C. Smith's Pulpiteer who abhorred the thought of having to settle down to a mill horse round of writing weekly sermons and visiting the sick,

Catechising the children,
and comforting them that mourn,

Blessing the young folk's weddings,
and christening their babes when born,²

Arnot delighted in the work of his pastorate. Sometimes, he complained that his schedule was so full that he was not able

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¹ The Church in the House, p. 109.
to give as much time to his calling as he wished; but never once did he suggest that he felt the pastoral oversight of his people burdensome. Firmly believing that a house-going minister makes a church-going people, he tried to visit every home of his congregation at least once a year; and wherever he went he brought with him a "blink of sunshine" and a warmth of friendship which endeared him to all. Many spoke of him as being the best family minister they had ever known. It would be impossible to give an accurate estimate of the number of people whom he helped through his ministry. Hundreds of men and women owed their secular and religious education largely to the training which they had received in his week-day schools, and hundreds more were reached for Christ through his Young Men's and missionary societies. His influence for good extended into every part of the community from the humblest tenements in the Wynds of Glasgow to the most opulent homes of Edinburgh. Merchants and bankers, seamen and dock laborers all knew him as their friend. He held a place and power among young people peculiarly his own, and few lecturers to youth in Glasgow or London enjoyed his overwhelming popularity.

Though he could picture in vivid terms the horrors of drunkenness and was widely known throughout his life as a zealous spokesman for the temperance cause, he was not the narrow-minded, ranting teetotaler of caricature. He was too big a man for this. His great desire was to heal the alcoholic, rather than merely to condemn his use of alcohol. No one can say how many families he rescued from the fiery waters, how many down-and-out inebriates
he helped back to sanity, and how many young men and women he saved from a drunkard's grave. Had the Alcoholics Anonymous organization existed in his day, certainly he would have taken a keen interest in its development, as he did in every worthwhile activity for the betterment of mankind.

The Parables of Our Lord, as we have seen, was the only one of Arnot's volumes which attempted to give a comprehensive exegesis of any branch of Scripture. We feel that it is by far his finest and most valuable work, and we do not agree with Spurgeon that it falls short of Arnot's usual high mark of excellence. Though it contains fewer piquant aphorisms and memorable phrases than do many of his other books, its conservative scholarship and its practical observations outweigh what little it lacks in literary style. It remains a sane and reliable guide in the interpretation of the Parables; and, according to a leading Edinburgh bookseller, it is still in constant demand in the United States and Canada.

Laws From Heaven For Life On Earth, while filled with many sententious lines of wisdom, at best, is only a collection of observations and advice on scattered sections of the Proverbs. We heartily agree with Spurgeon in wishing that Arnot had treated the Proverbs as he did the Parables, going steadily through the book and expounding it as he went. His mind was peculiarly adapted for such a task, and the result would doubtless have been a much more enduring and worthwhile contribution to the

2. Ibid., p. 104.
field of biblical literature. As it stands now, this work is largely disqualified from serving as a profitable commentary on the Proverbs: first, because of its deliberate indifference to the Hebrew setting, and second, because of its incomplete nature. The chief and perhaps the only value of the book lies in its wealth of perennial, practical advice often given with rare and striking insight and always with the inimitable touches of its author.

The Church in the House similarly is not a comprehensive effort, and of set purpose avoids many sections of the book of Acts involving controversial subjects. Because Arnot was primarily interested in an informal type of teaching, suited to the fireside student of the Scriptures, he made no attempt either in this study or in that of the Proverbs to give a critical or exhaustive exposition. While his informality, even if cursory and non-argumentative, was legitimate and useful, it is to be regretted that he did not give his non-critical reader a complete coverage of the text. Had he done so, this work and his commentary on the Proverbs, would have proved immeasurably more valuable, and might well have become classics in their own right, instead of limited and partial expositions of two major books of the Bible.

The year of Arnot's death marked the beginning of a new era of theological thought in Scotland - an era in which the Bible, the Westminster Confession of Faith and its accompaniments, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, were to be rigidly re-examined in the light of "higher criticism". Had Arnot lived only six
months longer, he would have read with avid interest, if not
great concern, W. Robertson Smith's article, "Bible", published
that year in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. This was the first
serious departure within the Free Church itself from the
traditional view of the Scriptures. Undoubtedly, Arnot would
not have waged open war against the higher critical school,
though one feels that he would have continued to maintain his
own orthodox position. He was not an argumentative theologian;
he was a practical preacher, much more interested in showing the
relevancy of the Christian faith to the daily affairs of men,
than in defending the theological truths on which that faith was
based. At times, as we have seen, his reasoning lacked logical
insight and left gaping holes in his arguments. Philosophically
he was not of the highest order, and ought not to be compared
with such outstanding thinkers of his day as Cunningham and
Fairbairn, the weighty theologians, Candlish, unrivaled in debate,
Buchanan and Hetherington, acute and profound alike in history and
apologetics, or even "Rabbi" Duncan, drumbie yet deep. As has
been said, "Guthrie could never have done the work of Candlish,
nor Candlish that of Cunningham, nor Cunningham that of Buchanan,
nor Buchanan that of Arnot, and so we might say of all the great
men of that period." ¹ They worked together in harmony, each man
doing the work that best suited his talents - each man playing
faithfully his own rôle. This, to a large extent, explains the
success which attended their united labors.

It is certainly not as an ecclesiastical controversialist that Arnot deserves to be remembered, for "with the exception of the temperance question, he took no leading part in the discussion of those questions over which the perfervidum ingenium Scotorum has been always wont to exercise itself with becoming ability and unbecoming acrimony." That Arnot avoided all controversy whenever possible and rarely engaged in heated discussions, does not necessarily imply that he lacked strong convictions. As we have seen in his controversies with McClelland and Gibson, he was not to be intimidated and could rise up in fiery indignation whenever he felt that wrong principles were involved. His ability to live peacefully with all men indicated rather that he possessed a large measure of tact and diplomacy. The fact that he could write after ministering for nearly a quarter of a century, "My congregation is large, loving and united. There never has been a jar in our courts or congregation," is one of the strongest evidences of this.

Arnot's reluctance to cross swords in matters of private opinion, is clearly manifested in his writings. For example, such controversial subjects as the relationship between predestination and free will, heaven and hell, religion and science, were never really discussed from a dogmatic point of view. He was willing to recognize the dilemmas involved, willing to express his personal opinions, but felt that it was not his place to pronounce a judgment to which other men must conform. Even in his

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1. Review of Memoir, The Dundee Advertiser, June 18, 1877.
original interpretation of the parable of The Draw-Net, he was careful to point out that, though he felt his own explanation was the only one consistent with all the facts, nevertheless there might be other interpretations which would prove equally valid.

It was not primarily as a preacher and pastor or as an author and lecturer that William Arnot's memory was most lovingly cherished by those who knew him best. It was rather as a man that he was beloved — a man perennially sunny in disposition, unimpaired in youthfulness of heart and blessed with strong, deep emotions and overflowing sympathy for others. To attempt to give an accurate evaluation of such a life would be as hopeless as to try to prove the splendor of a sunset, when the sun, like a ball of fire sinks lower and lower until it meets in a blistering kiss the western horizon — after having set the heavens on fire, until they glow with scarlet, crimson, cerise, vermilion, pink, rose, blush and coral leaving in his wake clouds curling like nebulous dust from under the chariot wheels of the sun. 1

Similarly, Arnot's life cannot be described, no matter how carefully and vividly, so as to do full justice to its beauty and worth.

Can we assert that Arnot has his place among the great churchmen of his century? Not if we measure greatness by the number of volumes a man writes, or the new theological theories he proposes, or the ecclesiastical victories he wins. By these standards, Arnot is not impressive. But, if we understand greatness as being, in the words of Phillips Brooks, not so much

a certain size as a certain quality in human life,¹ and accept
the definition of Thomas à Kempis—"He is truly great that is
little in himself and that maketh no account of any height of
honours,"² then William Arnot may be numbered among the truly
great men of his day. He was a child at heart who loved the
unassuming and simple things of life. "The greatest truths
are the simplest; and so are the greatest men."³

The memorial window bearing his name in the New College
Library, formerly his own church, pictures Jesus calling Peter
and Andrew from their nets: "Follow me, and I will make you
fishers of men."⁴ No more appropriate scene could have been
depicted in memory of Arnot. He was indeed a fisher of men,
endowed with the rugged nature of Peter and blessed with the
winsome manner of Andrew. "Few men have so much of the 'milk
of human kindness' in their natures; few strong men have so
much of the childlike in their dispositions."⁵

When Robert Candlish lay dying, he thought that he was
present at a meeting of Presbytery or Assembly. After
listening intently for some time, he exclaimed, "That's Arnot;
I want to hear what he is saying." His son then took the
occasion to ask, "Do you love Arnot?" "Love him?" came the

   [1, 1905]), p. 33.
2. Thomas à Kempis, Of the Imitation of Jesus Christ
   (Glasgow, 1774), p. 7.
3. A.J. and J.C. Hare, Guesses at Truth (London, 1906),
   p. 417.
4. Matthew 4:18-19. A splendid portrait of Arnot hangs in
   a central position in the New College recreation hall.
5. Review of Memoir, The Dundee Advertiser, June 18, 1877.
prompt reply. "Who would not love Arnot? I love him as a brother." So it was with every one who knew him, from the untutored ploughmen among the highland hills, to the toiling thousands in crowded cities on both sides of the Atlantic.

1. Memoir, p. 467.
APPENDIX
APPENDIX I

AN AFFECTIONATE ADDRESS

FROM FREE ST. PETER'S CONGREGATION

TO THOSE RESIDING IN ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD

"Think on these things", Phil. iv. 8

Dear Friends, - In large cities like ours, people seem to know little and care less, about their neighbours. You may live for years in one house, and not know the families on the same stair. This way of keeping at a distance may do well enough for the present world, but it does not suit those who are chiefly concerned about eternity. It is not like Christ. It is not like the disciples of Christ. As soon as a man has found out his own sin, and believes on Jesus for the saving of his soul, he begins to be concerned about his neighbours. He counts himself his brother's keeper; and all within his reach are his brethren. When he has experienced Christ's love to his own soul, he begins to love every one near him. Plucked as a brand from the burning himself he has great compassion on those who are ready to perish. Although he sees them very hardened in their sins, he does not despise them, and he does not despair of them, for, before he obtained mercy, he was as they.

We have been meeting as a Christian Church for a number of years in the heart of this district. You are accustomed to
hear our bell every sabbath in your houses. We find it very good to go up to the house of God, and hear the way of salvation. We sometimes, while there, think with concern about those of our neighbours who are not hearing the joyful sound. In such a case, the Lord whom we serve would not be silent. He would not only weep over a wicked city; He would go in among its families and say, 'Except ye repent ye shall perish.' He has gone to heaven, but He has left it in charge to all His people to do His work - and His work is to invite every sinner to turn and live. We feel that we will be unfaithful to our Lord if we do not go into the houses of our neighbours and say, 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' We cannot meet the Lord on the great day, if we have not tried to bring our fellow sinners with us to the Saviour.

The minister is chiefly occupied with the congregation - most of it from other parts of the city - that worships in the church; but though he cannot do much personally, the congregation may do something for the district. What cannot be done by one, may be done by the united efforts of many. We would fain indulge the hope that this church may be like a well of water, whence others as well as ourselves may be refreshed in this desert land. One missionary gives all his time to the visitation of the families.

Dear friends, we fondly hope you will take our visits well. Be assured we are not setting ourselves up over you. Christ has taught us to count all men as brethren, and we fear that we have not closely walked in His way. We fear we have
not sought our neighbours and cherished their friendship as we ought to have done. For anything we know, there may be in some family a father who has long maintained a respectable character, but is now beginning to give way to temptation. He knows what is right, and at first feels some remorse on account of sin; but he has met with a long train of misfortunes, his temper has become soured; he is disheartened by long neglect - nobody cares for him; nobody looks near him. He is just on the point of giving up the struggle in despair, and plunging into vice. We would like to visit such a one, we would like to tell him in time that the wages of sin is eternal death - and tell him, too, about eternal life, the free gift of God through Jesus Christ. It may be that when he sees some one caring for him and his family - sympathising with his sorrows - not upbraiding him as an outcast, but counselling him as a brother, he may say to the tempter 'Get thee behind me Satan.' There may be some who, from the pressure of poverty, at first, and other causes afterwards, have gradually fallen from the habit of attending Church, and then ceased to read the Bible and to pray. Our visits - our friendly conversation, may be the means of bringing to their memory a former and better time, and rekindling the long lost desire to go up to the house of God. There may be some who have fears about their own sin and a judgment to come, but who have never been clearly taught how mercy flows to sinners through the righteousness of Christ: it would be our delight to point out to them in the scriptures, the way of eternal life. There may be some, poor in this world,
but rich in faith - hidden ones - children of a king, though disguised in rags: it would be a privilege to acknowledge them as brethren, and serve the Head by showing kindness to the members.

And now, neighbours, since this little messenger has entered your house, we should like that it should speak a plain word to you all. What is your soul's state? Whither are you going? What will your end be? You know that you are sinners! that God the Judge is righteous! that sinners deserve to be cast into hell! but you have heard so much about Christ and mercy, that you are not much alarmed. You could scarcely say you are saved; but you have an idea that salvation is within your reach - that it is near and easy, and so you are kept quiet. Ah, friends, it is a dreadful thing when the very nearness of salvation just encourages you to remain unsaved. What though Christ be near if you are not in Christ? If you are still in your sins - if you are not converted, what will it be to you that there was so much said about mercy? It will make hell more bitter, the remembrance that mercy was so near, and that you despised it. We are not accusing you of any sins. We do not know your sins, the Lord only knows them. But we say, if you are living for the world, and not becoming new creatures in Christ, there is nothing but a breath between you and perdition.

We do not need to come and tell you for the first time, that Christ the Eternal Son of God, died for sinners, and now invites them to come to Him; now proclaims to them, - Whosoever will let him come. Probably you have all heard this before. We come to you repeating that blessed message, and adding to it
another, namely, this - 'Although there is a great and a free salvation, yet if you neglect it you must perish.'

We would like to go to heaven when we die - to go to heaven as sinners saved by the blood of Christ - to be monuments of God's mercy for ever. But it is impossible for us to have that hope, without desiring, at the same time, that you, our neighbours, should go with us. We seek to do you a friend's turn. We come to warn you. We come sounding an alarm among you, lest there should be some in a spiritual slumber. If you should die in sin, and lift up your eyes in torment, it would be too late to warn you then. Awake now. Now is the accepted time: to-morrow may be too late. What we fear most is, that you will put off this warning as you have put off many others.

We would not fear for your want of learning and knowledge; for Christ is the light of the world, and the spirit is sent to show Him unto us. We would not fear the greatness of your need; for we have a full Christ for empty sinners: but we fear you will just lay down this page, and let Christ alone till a more convenient season. We fear that same Jesus will have the old complaint to make of you - 'Ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life.'

Tis a point I long to know;  
Oft it gives me anxious thought -  
Do I love the Lord or no?  
Am I His, or am I not?

St. Peter's Free Church, Oswald Street,  
July 1848.  

To the Rev. Wm. Arnot
Reverend and Dear Sir:

My attention has been directed, only two days ago, to certain statements made by you, at a meeting held in St. Matthew's Free Church, on the 2 inst., on the subject of education. At that meeting you are reported to have said that four hundred children were educated by an association in which I take a deep interest, and that funds collected amounted to fourteen pounds, seven shillings, and then you make the comparison between the efforts thus made and your own patronage of schools, where 600 children are educated on a sum you do not name. Now, allow me to correct a most natural mistake into which you have fallen, in putting forth the above as an accurate statement of our efforts in the cause of secular education.

You have confounded two movements. The Sunday School movement is one entirely distinct and apart from the movement of the Secular School Society. The former, as you truly state, educate morally and intellectually about 400 children. The aid given in doing so is by 26 teachers, almost all of whom are now very experienced and expert in the initiatory branches of education. These noble minded youth do the work gratuitously, and so well, that my belief is, the education given during the short period of time on Sunday is equal to that given in many of your crowded schools during half the week, and the proof of this is shown by many of the scholars who go to the common Sabbath
schools carrying off prizes and rewards of merit. In place, therefore, of making the efforts of these young men the subject of merriment, it seems to me a subject pregnant with the most important results.

In the present state of the education question, all men are beginning to find that the children outside of the denominations cannot be left to the neglect which I aver is their portion. Not withstanding your assertions to the contrary; and that large class at the base of society whose exigencies require them to work for support, during the week cannot be educated almost at all, unless taken up on Sundays in the manner this Association has done and is doing. Now, in place of cavilling at the scanty means on which we do this by gratuitous aid from young men, I think it would be much better you should take a leaf out of our book, and endeavour for the class I name to place something better in our stead. I must cordially admit the great aid you and many other clergymen are giving to the education of the lower classes, but, while I do so, I maintain that, without national aid, it will be impossible for any denomination whatever to reach the mass of ignorance in the large city.

Taking it for granted that the Presbyterians of all classes of this city can overtake the education of their own people, what becomes of the education of those classes beyond the pale of any church or of the Catholics whom you may class beyond the reach or the means of education?

Of the latter, from the baptismal returns of their bishops, there cannot be less than 90,000 in this city, and of
the parties who do not attach themselves to any church there may be about the same number. Now, will you tell me where are the schools for the education of the children for this large mass of the people? With the exception of a sprinkling of Catholic schools, and some venture schools, there is no regular provision for the education of this large mass of the citizens — nor will there ever be a provision under the present system. You have not hitherto been able to keep down the average ignorance, and rest assured, as the material wealth of the people increases, and the increase of the population grows and is nurtured thereby, in place of stemming ignorance, it will be yearly on the increase.

But all this has led me from what I wished to correct in your speech about 'a great cry and little wool.' Independent of these school movements we set agoing several years ago a secular school for the working classes. This school, as you will see from the reports enclosed, had last year 180 in attendance.

Our object in keeping up this school is to show to you, and all who take an interest in the subject, what is really meant by a secular school — thus practically giving a test of the subject, and pointing out what the promoters would wish to see adopted under the auspices of the nation. We have thought it better to put forth this test of our views than to create a formal agitation by lectures and meetings for gaining the same end. Hitherto our operations are answering this end. Men's minds are getting daily less prejudiced on the subject and are beginning from this and other practical examples to see that more emotional religion and morality are taught in our schools than in those of more pretension.
We have lately established a new school in Carlton Place, which is progressing satisfactorily; and the teachers of the first one started in St. Andrew's Square are now carrying it on upon the secular basis, so that between the two schools there are practical examples of the system with nearly 300 children in attendance, and this, as you will see from the accounts, costs a good deal more than those schools which you jocularly told the public were supported for fourteen pounds seven shillings.

But what is to be the end of all this? Are we to go on like two prize fighters "in a fair" with representation and misrepresentation, and leave the poor child in helpless ignorance, for, in the eloquent words of Dr. Mackay—until

'you all agree,
I fear the little children
Will plague both you and me.'

No! the signs of the times are decidedly and unequivocally in favour of a national and secular system. You may see it in the breaking up of the Irish Board— in the resolution of Parliament to place a portion of its grants for education under the management of the Board of Trade— in the known views on the subject of men in power and in high places; and who stops the way in the accomplishment of a national system which would gratuitously reach the lowest and poorest in the land? My conscientious and firm belief is, that it is nothing but the discussions and disagreements of the leaders of the various sects of religionists throughout the country. If they were to allow the common schools to be managed by committees of ratepayers and let the clergy attend to the theological instruction
of the children, another generation would not pass ere a thorough reformation and change would be brought about over the face of society, and such a change as in place of injuring religion would be the first means of enabling the lowest classes intelligently to appreciate its high and holy aims.

Now what hinders this being carried into effect even during the coming session of Parliament? Nothing, as I said before, but the dissension of the clergy and the struggle among them concerning who shall have the power to educate. But in the present state of public opinion, among the more independent of the laity, this struggle can't last long. When we see the question almost settled in Ireland; when we see a common school education adopted on a catholic basis in Australia, in Canada and in others of our colonies, and when we see the effects of the system throughout the larger portion of the United States, throughout Prussia, Switzerland and Holland - it can't be long before the clergy must strike their flag; and rest assured if all of them were to enter nobly and enthusiastically into the subject, in place of their order coming now and then into collision with the laity on dogmas in Confessions put forth three hundred years ago by men as erring as we are, the clergy would be looked up to as they ought to be, as the benevolent and disinterested instructors in the most noble and sublime profession to which the human mind can be called.

You will doubtless see the propriety of correcting the unintentional mis-representation of these schools by sending this letter to the Scottish Guardian where your statements appeared. Other similar misrepresentations have been put forth anonymously
through the same channel, but these I decline to notice.

I am, Reverend and Dear Sir,
Yours respectfully,
James M'Clelland.

To James M'Clelland Esquire

Dear Sir,

I duly received your letter of the 9th, in which you profess to correct a mistake of mine, and take occasion to enlarge upon the subject of popular education. I shall deal with the several topics in succession.

1. As to the mistake which you say I made at a public meeting in reference to a certain educational association, I made no mistake. Your whole letter does not even seem to convict me of a mistake. The report of an educational society, of which you are president, was gratuitously sent to me, I presume, by the officials of the society. That report I held in my hand. My references were to it alone, and my references were truthful and fair. I thought of no other; I knew of no other; the document gives no reference to any other. Now, that report embodies a poem and a list of subscriptions. I indicated the hearing of the poetry. If it has any meaning there, it represents the Christian churches as leaving the poor destitute children a prey to 'beggar, filth, and crime,' while they contend with each other for the mastery; and your society in the shape of true religion manfully coming into the rescue. If that is not its meaning, will you be so kind as to expound it, and tell why it was printed in that report and sent to me.
I then read the sum of the subscription for the year amounting to fourteen pounds, seven shillings. The audience laughed. I could not help that. I was serious. The subject was serious. But the sum alongside of the pretensions was ridiculous. I compared this with the educational efforts of the one congregation in which I minister. It alone supplies a sound common education to above 600 children steadily all the week and all the year. Any man who has an eye in his head knows that there is no kind of comparison between this and the efforts of 26 amateur teachers among 400 children scattered over the city an hour or two once in the week. You assume that we made the efforts of these young men the subject of merriment. There you have made a mistake, not uncommon in your circumstances. We can appreciate and honour disinterested personal labour among the poor, even though we think it might be more wisely directed. The meeting laughed, Sir, not at the young men, who no doubt do their best, but at you, who by this report dragged forward their efforts as a mighty educational power, saving the generation, while all other educators are abandoning them to their fate. I really do not know how to argue this subject. There are no proportions for comparisons at all. One cannot get a hold of it. I say deliberately, all the letters you can write during the period of your natural life cannot make that report other than ridiculous to an intelligent Scottish audience. If Tom Thumb mount the table to enact Napoleon, the little general need not take ill the titter that runs along the ranks of the spectators. He really must not expect the British nation to pay him the compliment of manning her ships and drawing out her
armies. The comparison should not offend, for it is not extravagant. It is beyond my power to make the report of the Sunday Educational Association more ridiculous than it is.

2. **The Secular School Society** - of this also you are president. You have sent me its two reports, and you intimate that I confound the two movements. I spoke of one movement only which was reported to me. But if new information is communicated fitted to modify my judgment I shall be ready to acknowledge the change. Let us see. The first year's report gives two schools, one in St. Andrew's Square and one in West College Street. The second report confesses that one of these has gone down. You use periphrasis in the report, but the plain English is, the teacher was starved out. And though I have not seen the printed report of this year I learned from your letter that the remaining one is not now supported or managed by your society - that it is an adventure school, carried on by teachers on their own responsibility. You intimate, however, that you have this year set up a new school in Carlton Place. Of this third local habitation which your society has found whereon to rest its weary foot, I know nothing. It cannot be expected to be great, as it is only a few months old. That is, as I understand your own explanation, the only school which your association supports is but a quarter old. You do not say how many attend, or whether the fees are such as to make it any benefit to the poor.

But the liberality of the society's contributions? What of these? The first year's subscriptions amount to one hundred and ten pounds, ten shillings. The second, to a
hundred and sixty four pounds, ten and six. It appears that these sums are counted large in the circle in which you move. You triumphantly point to them in order to put to shame the saucy assembly who presumed to laugh at the poor fourteen pounds 7 shillings. No doubt Mr. M'Clelland of the Secular, with his hundred and sixty pounds looked proudly down upon Mr. M'Clelland of the Sunday with his 14 pounds; But even the larger Mr. M'Clelland, as an educationalist, is very small when compared to other people. I was very much puzzled in my school days, 'How many foxes' tails will reach to the moon?' A child would think a lucky fellow who had got a hundred and sixty was much more likely to reach his object than a neighbour who could muster only fourteen. But a grown man would rate their chances equal. I think even the larger sum absolutely contemptible as a measure of the zeal of a great national educational party. I am accustomed to see much greater efforts made by a single Christian congregation. You say you wish to correct what I say in my speech 'a great cry and little wool.' I used no such expression in my speech, nor has the reporter ascribed it to me; but as you have yourself suggested it I cannot deny its appropriateness. You are not a great educational party entitled to a potential voice in this crisis. Your society is an affair inexpressibly small, and my own fear in demonstrating its littleness is, lest I be doing the needful to it and enabling the flagging kite to rise by blowing a blast against it.

But whatever your schools were, or your single school is, they have no bearing on the question of education for the
poor, as I understand the lowest fee is four shillings a quarter. None of the reports state the fees. Those who pay a minimum fee of four shillings could and would have their children educated though the Secular Society had never been in existence.

3. The great bulk of your letter is occupied with an argument for a national system of education as against those who oppose it. Of course this is all beside the point as regards me or the Free Church. The church has pronounced in favour of a national system. We do not, indeed, stand with our hands in our breeches' pocket and cry to the government to do it. We gird ourselves for the work, and labour away with all our might supporting about 700 schools; but we know that we and the other churches are not overtaking all - cannot overtake all. We tell the government it is their duty to do it and the convener of the Church's Education scheme has now joined in active agitation to compel the government to do it immediately. We don't justify the government for waiting until we all agree. On the contrary, we urge them to take the responsibility on themselves, and come down forthwith with some scheme which shall be truly national. We, of course, have opinions as to what would be best, and we do not shrink from expressing these. (Would you forbid us?) but we never put in these to the effect of debarring the legislature from the task which they ought to undertake. Your whole argument on this head is not only useless as applied to me, but is by implication unjust. The legislature ought to put education in the power of all. But we must not suppose that this would educate the nation. There will be much
work left in bringing out the unwilling.

4. One word on the nature of this secular teaching. We all know pretty well the system of Messrs Combe and Simpson, from which it is borrowed. Your reports speak largely of human physiology and sundry branches of useful science. Thus far your system is not peculiar. I maintain that the circumstances and ages of the children being equal, the scholars in our schools are taught 'the laws of our planet' as well as the scholars in yours. The peculiarity must be sought in some other feature. The distinctive feature as the name of your society implies and the report distinctly states is, 'the entire exclusion of theological subjects.' In your other movement, however, the Sunday teaching, I observe that you impart Christian precepts (the italics are your own). Now I am impatient for light on the subject. If you bring a New Testament into the school, you offend the unbeliever and the Jew - the keystone is torn from the arch of secularism. And if you, as a society, ignore the New Testament, where do you get Christian precepts? Is it on your authority as President, or on the authority of the teachers, that the precepts are propounded on the tender mind of a child? A precept is nothing without authority. There are many good precepts that children do not like, and would fain put away. I would like to know if they are inculcated by a thus saith the Lord, or by a thus said Mr. M'Clelland. Perhaps you will show them the reasons of your precepts, and that will be the authority; but is there not danger that for the same offence the teacher in St. Andrew's Square would prescribe meat for bairns, while he of Carlton Place said, 'run him through.'
Strong reasons could be given on either side. But even though this awkwardness should not occur, how can they be Christian precepts if they were not spoken by Christ and gathered from the Bible?

There is another question on which I desiderate information. Can a teacher impart a liberal education to youth without communicating the great historical facts that there is such a book as the Bible, and that it has produced stupendous effects in the world? If he must communicate these and similar historical facts is he permitted to indicate an opinion for or against the truth of the Bible's claims to be God's word? If he does, he offends the believers or the unbelievers. If he keeps silence the children will ask; and if he refuses to answer the effect of the teaching is infidel and Christians will at all hazards keep their children away.

Again, can he impart a liberal education without communicating the fact so great in its effects on the world, that Jesus of Nazareth was persecuted to the death by the Jews, 'because he made himself equal with God'? If the teacher mentions the fact, and is silent, the children will ask - was his claim true or false? What is your teacher to do? Can he by any possibility refrain from taking a side? And if he take a side, where is secularism? I believe, with all of your pretension to philosophy, you are undertaking an impossibility. You may as well announce that you have discovered the perpetual motion, as that you can educate in a world which has the marks of the Bible so deeply indented on it, and not take a part for or against the Bible.
Now, if there are to be Christian precepts taught in both kinds of schools, I apprehend that the working people of Glasgow will prefer to get their Christianity from the Bible. In your letter you intimate that 'emotional religion' is largely taught in the secular schools. Now, it may be a weakness in me, in one not initiated, but I own I would like to know what the principle or truth is that is to be set before my child to exercise his religious emotions. I would not like the matter or ground of his emotional religion to be left to the teacher or president of any school. You give a fling in the close against 'dogmas in Confessions put forth 300 years ago.' Perhaps it may be my ignorance, but I imagine that your system excluded the Bible from the school as thoroughly as the Confession of Faith. You are perhaps aware that Christian educators pay infinitely greater regard to that old Confession put forth 1800 years ago than to those which sprung from the Reformation. A man of small experience hearing you denounce the dogmas of the Confession might say, in order to get your cooperation, we shall cast away the 300 years old Confession and fall back on the old Confession - the New Testament. He would soon be undeceived. He would find you as resolutely bent on excluding the New Testament as the books of the Reformers.

5. You give me counsel about the danger of my "order" coming into collision with the laity. By the laity, I suspect you mean yourself and brother seculars. But, perhaps, I do you wrong; that would be more of presumption than I have any right or wish to attribute to you. And if you understand by the
What do you make me? Do you take me for a popish priest? I am one of the people, Sir. I mingle with them more than you do. I sympathise with them and they with me. I lectured the other evening to 1500 of the mercantile youth of Glasgow by their own invitation on fair play in buying and selling. I do not pretend that they learned much from me; but I aver that I felt a thrill of intense and entire sympathy flowing and reflowing between myself and my audience. On the very next evening I lectured on savings banks to a crowded meeting of working people, in a room of about twenty yards from your defunct school in West College Street, and established a branch of the National Security which in one week numbered 257 depositors. I am of the people. It is true a portion of the people afford me and my family temporal support, in order that they may enjoy my services in ministering the Word. But this does not in the least isolate me in interest or feeling from the body of the community. I have sons and daughters growing up whose future on earth is more care to me than my own. They must be of the people. I am setting them afloat at the spring heads and they must flow down a generation, mingling with its mighty stream. Whether I think of God's command, or yield to nature's emotion within me, all my desire and effort will go to have a well-conditioned community in the coming days - a people on whose bread bosom my children must be cast as an atom in a rolling river rescued from blank ignorance and corroding vice, - a people fortified alike against the cold, clammy grasp of infidelity and the hideous superstition of Rome - a people
righteous through faith in God's dear Son and according to the precepts of God's Holy Word.

You have given me an advice. I take it in good part, for I believe it is the best you have. I shall venture to give you one in return. Don't imagine that the next generation will be a safe and happy one for your children and mine, if you succeed in teaching them to talk big about despising the 'dogmas' and compelling the 'clergy to strike their flag.' The Sadducees were like yourself, Sir, strong against the dogmas, yet they joined the superstitious Pharisees in persecuting Jesus and His followers. The French revolutionists were not much under the trammels of priestly dogmas, and yet it could not be a kindly thought for a parent to have his children under their authority. They were as bad as the Inquisition. Human beings swing from side to side. On one extreme the Papists have too many dogmas; on the other there is a class who cast away even those of God's truth. On neither side is there any security for freedom. Nothing will give liberty but truth. To hold no religious opinion will produce you as terrible a tyranny as to hold all the absurdities of Rome. If we could cast out superstition by the truth, we might be free indeed. But if we cast out all the dogmas, false and true together, we shall fare the worse.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

Wm. Arnot.
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