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THE SCOTTISH FACTOR IN THE FIGHT AGAINST AMERICAN SLAVERY,
1830 - 1870

BY

C. DUNCAN RICE

PH.D.
UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
1969
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Prior to writing this dissertation, my research was greatly aided by the kindness and advice of librarians in charge of the materials on which I worked. I would like to thank the staff of the Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Aberdeen
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C. Duncan Rice,

Apart from the assistance and advice mentioned above, I declare that the research, conclusions, and writing of this dissertation have been exclusively my own work.

C. Duncan Rice.
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## ABBREVIATIONS

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<tr>
<td>A.F.A.S.S.</td>
<td>American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society</td>
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<td>A.H.R.</td>
<td>American Historical Review</td>
</tr>
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<td>A.S.R.</td>
<td>British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Reporter</td>
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<td>B.F.A.S.S.</td>
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<td>B.P.L.</td>
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<td>E.E.S.</td>
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<td>F.C.A.S.S.</td>
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<td>G.E.S.</td>
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<td>J.A.S.</td>
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<td>J.S.H.</td>
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<td>M.V.H.R.</td>
<td>Mississippi Valley Historical Review</td>
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<td>N.Y.P.L.</td>
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<td>S.H.R.</td>
<td>Scottish Historical Review</td>
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<td>Bod. Brit. Exp. Mss. S.18</td>
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The location of well-known collections of anti-slavery manuscripts has not been stated in footnotes; for instance, Garrison Papers, Boston Public Library, are simply cited as "Garrison Papers". All manuscript collections referred to are listed with the names of the libraries which hold them in the Note on Sources at the end of the thesis.
This thesis studies the history of the Scottish anti-slavery societies after the abolition of British West Indian slavery in 1833. These societies aimed at abolition of slavery throughout the world. In practice, however, because of the close ties between Britain and North America, they focussed their attention on Negro slavery in the Southern States of the U.S.A. Due to the strong tradition of abolitionist enthusiasm in Scotland and the personal influence of George Thompson, the societies in Glasgow and Edinburgh were founded before bodies with similar aims existed in England. Even before the anti-slavery movement split up in 1841, they maintained their independence, and in some cases differed from London abolitionists over the correct actions to be taken against slavery.

By 1840, the American anti-slavery societies were divided into a conservative faction or 'New Organisation', and a radical or Garrisonian faction referred to as the 'Old Organisation'. This split was revealed to British abolitionists at the 1840 London World's Anti-Slavery Convention, and they themselves divided in 1841 during the visit of the American Garrisonian abolitionist John Anderson Collins. In this division, the national anti-slavery society took a conservative or 'New Organisation' standpoint. Groups of abolitionists in Glasgow and Edinburgh, allied with another group in Dublin, supported the 'Old Organisation' led by William Lloyd Garrison.
Throughout the forties, this division persisted. Nevertheless, abolitionists continually tried to influence the relationship between the British churches and slavery. Three test-cases may be taken to show the way in which different denominations used the slavery issue to attack their rivals. The same concern over church policy on slavery appears in the fifties. The fifties also saw the 'Old Organisation'/'New Organisation' split persist, although the 'Old Organisation' now had many supporters in the provinces outside Scotland and Ireland, notably in Bristol.

However, by the 1850's the movement in Scotland and elsewhere was going into a decline, although interest in slavery persisted until after the Civil War. British enthusiasm for Harriet Beecher Stowe was very different from the work of the old anti-slavery societies. Division and impotence to affect the American situation eventually hamstrung the British anti-slavery societies.

The conclusions of the thesis are that the divisions in the British anti-slavery movement were identical to American ones, and that these divisions were used to gain advantage in Scottish or national disputes on other subjects. This demonstrates the extraordinarily close community between the Atlantic middle classes in the middle third of the last century. It is also suggested that the relation between Scotland and London caused the Scottish abolitionists to behave differently in abolitionist controversies from the metropolitan leaders of the movement.
THE SCOTTISH FACTOR IN THE FIGHT AGAINST AMERICAN SLAVERY,
1830 - 1870
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY — THE LEGACY OF 1833 AND THE CONNECTION BETWEEN BRITAIN AND AMERICA

For the historian of the British and American anti-slavery movements, 1833 is not only important as the year of West Indian Emancipation. It was also the year of William Lloyd Garrison’s first visit to Britain. It is at this point that widespread British interest in the American Negro begins. Garrison himself, egocentric as always, was well aware that his trip had been of central importance in inspiring abolitionist cooperation between Britain and America. For the benefit of Liberator readers, he summarised its effects under six headings:

1st. Awakening a general interest among the friends of emancipation in this country, and securing their cooperation with us, in the abolition of slavery in the United States.
2d. Dispelling the mists with which the agent of the American Colonization Society has blinded the eyes of benevolent men, in relation to the design and tendency of that Society.
3d. Enlisting able and eloquent advocates to plead our cause.
4th. Inducing editors of periodicals and able writers to give us the weight of their influence.
5th. Exciting a spirit of emulation in the redemption of our slave population, among the numerous female anti-slavery societies.
6th. Procuring a large collection of anti-slavery documents, tracts, and pamphlets, and volumes, which will furnish us with an inexhaustible supply of ammunition.


2. Liberator, 7.9.33.
As usual Garrison overstressed the act of conversion at the expense of the preconditions for it. Nevertheless, the effect of his visit was great. One of his main achievements in 1833 was awakening an interest in American slavery in George Thompson, an Agency Committee lecturer who was to do more for Garrison's faction of the abolitionist movement than any other Briton. After the Emancipation Act was safely through Parliament, and Garrison was safely back in Boston, Thompson in turn set about forming Emancipation Societies in Glasgow and Edinburgh. They were pledged to work for the abolition of slavery throughout the world, but inevitably concentrated on support for the American abolitionists. Gradually a network of similar societies emerged in most major British towns. In 1839 an attempt was made to coordinate their activities through the foundation of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. Two years later this complex of organisations split bitterly in exactly the same way as the American movement had divided in the previous year. For a variety of reasons, they could no longer agree over accepting W.D. Garrison's leadership. British abolitionist societies nevertheless flourished during the forties, and survived in a weakened and even more divided form throughout the fifties. When the Civil War broke out, they revived their agitation. They were still able to muster enough support to make a substantial contribution to the Freedmen's Aid movement during the Reconstruction period.

This study deals with the Scottish Emancipation Societies founded as an indirect consequence of Garrison's 1833 visit. It specially stresses the factions within them which chose to follow Garrison's leadership during and after the controversial divisions of 1841, and the new societies in other parts of the British provinces which did the same. There can be no doubt that the eventual weakening of the British anti-slavery societies in the fifties was a direct consequence of these divisions.

On the other hand, the schismatic tendencies of the movement are of great interest. They directly reflect those among American abolitionists, and clearly show the similarity between the response of British and American middle class reformers to slavery.

The history of the Scottish and other provincial societies interested in American slavery casts light on these important schisms in several ways. David Daiches hints that the absence of a local parliament channelled the Scottish love of controversy into religious life, which produced the bewilderingly fragmented churches of eighteenth and nineteenth century Scotland. The same may be true of Scottish reform activities. Glasgow and Edinburgh abolitionists lacked the concern for unity which appears in anti-slavery circles elsewhere in Britain. The result was that controversies in the Scottish movement were clearer cut and generally more bitter than in the nation at large. In fact Scottish abolitionists were

so schismatic that they had no scruples in following an entirely
different course from the national anti-slavery leadership,
quite apart from chronic quarrelling among themselves. Indeed
one of the arguments of this dissertation will be that Scottish
abolitionists - and other provincial ones too - came out
in support of the extremist William Lloyd Garrison in 1841 by
way of projecting their distrust of centralisation on London,
since the British and Foreign Society took the opposite standpoint.

Beyond this, the history of the Scottish anti-slavery societies,
because of their involved internal divisions, superbly illustrates
the chronic British tendency to use the Negro slave as a pawn in
rivalries which had nothing to do with him. Even Jane Austen
once referred to the slave trade as a way of drawing attention
to the "governess trade." 1 Wilberforce himself was attacked
by those who wished to make capital out of his ignoring the work
of the press gangs. 2 As for the issue of American slavery, it
was used more simply by British Tories, who could point to its
abuses as evidence of the failure of democracy. 3 Workers in turn
pointed bitterly to the middle class hypocrisy of giving undeserving

2. A Letter to Wm. Wilberforce, Esq. M.P. on the Subject of
Impression: Calling on him and the Philanthropists of this
Country to Prove those Feelings of Sensibility they Expressed
in the Cause of Humanity on Negro Slavery, by Acting with the
Same Ardour and Zeal in the Cause of British Seamen (London, 1816),
passin.

3. N.W. Senior, American Slavery: a Reprint of an Article on "Uncle
Tom's Cabin", of which a Portion was Inserted in the 206th Number
of the "Edinburgh Review" and of Mr. Sumner's Speech with a Notice
black man "four times as much as an Englishman's pay". 1

In the Scottish case the tendency of the working classes to
make capital out of the slavery issue appears in popular
enthusiasm for attacking the conservative Free Church over the
slavery issue in 1840. It is also clear in the attacks on
the Duchess of Sutherland in 1853, over the inconsistency between
her concern for the Negro and callousness towards the victims
of the clearances.

After the division of the anti-slavery movement in 1841,
the use of the slavery issue to project pre-existing rivalries
became even more complex. Again this is well demonstrated by
the history of the provincial abolition societies. After the
movement split, abolitionists seem to have chosen their loyalties
because of preconceptions they had had long before they ever
thought of the Negro. In 1840, for instance, Scottish Voluntary
clergymen quickly allied with Garrisonian abolitionists whose
ideas they abhorred, to take the opportunity of attacking their
rival the Free Church over slavery. In 1855, exactly the same
men spurned the Garrisonian abolitionists, who were criticising
their reception of slaveholders to the United Presbyterian Church
mission at Old Calabar. In turn, they took refuge in Glasgow's
anti-Garrisonians 'Anti-Slavery Association', which was closely
connected with the U.P. Church. As for rivalries between provincial
societies and the national one, the situation was similar. The

1. 'Eliza and her Black Man,' (broadsheet, n.d.), Firth
Collection, Bodleian Library. See Appendix D.
Hibernian Anti-Slavery Society became Garrisonian after 1841 - but its leader Richard D. Webb was a lapsed or lapsing Quaker suspect as a heretic, while the Committee members of the B.F.A.S.S. were orthodox Friends close to London Yearly Meeting. In the fifties, a Garrisonian group emerged in the Bristol and Clifton Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society - but its leaders were Unitarians, already completely at odds on theological grounds with the members of more conservative abolitionist organisations. Above all, there is the constant suspicion that standpoints on the 1841 schism, at least in the case of the Garrisonians, were chosen as a provincial reaction against the attempt of the national British and Foreign Society to impose its conservative position on abolitionists throughout the country.

The use of disagreements over the foreign problem of slavery to enlarge on domestic problems of other sorts is the main theme of this study. The subject is a vast one, even within a strictly Scottish context, the more so because historians of the anti-slavery movement have tended to underestimate the extent to which it survived in Britain after 1833. Even the modern work of Eric Williams assumes that the anti-slavery societies became irrelevant after their aim of destroying the power of the West Indians had been achieved.\(^1\) The works of Dr. Kellor and Professor Curtin are admirable exceptions, but the scope of their books does not include a full study of British attitude to the American Negro.\(^2\) These are

at present most readily studied through stray references in works on the American movement. The remainder of this chapter will give some indications of the strength of the later British agitation against American slavery, and discuss the factors which produced it.

After 1833, British abolitionists remained concerned over the position of enslaved races within the Empire. The apprenticeship system itself was removed in 1833, and East Indian slavery attacked in the impressive but inoperative Act of 1843. Throughout the forties they squabbled unhappily over the problem of whether British free trade in sugar would ruin the West Indies, including their Negro populations, and worsen slave conditions in Cuba and Brazil. With more unity, they lobbied against the pseudo-abolitionist McGregor Laird, and West Indian schemes to meet their labour problems by importing Indian coolies, Mauritian peasants, or Sierra Leonean emigrants. All of these schemes, they suspected, were sinister planter ruses to resurrect the slave trade.


Even in the fifties, debate continued over the West Africa Squadron, its efficiency, and its morality. Beyond this, however, British abolitionists now diverted their attention to campaigning for the abolition of slavery throughout the world. In effect they concentrated on the 'three millions of human beings' held in bondage in the southern states of the U.S.A. The whole scope of the abolition movement had widened. It had taken upon itself the responsibility of reforming abuses outside the control of the British Parliament. Although efforts in aid of Negroes in the British colonies continued, it was now on American slavery that the attention of the British reformer was most closely focussed.

The sheer numbers behind the societies formed for this purpose are a pointer to the strength of continuing British interest in the Negro. At national level, the British and Foreign Society, founded in 1839, could raise mass London audiences of up to six thousand for anniversaries and meetings to discuss especially important events or hear star speakers. Provincial societies ranged from tiny ones like that of Berwick-on-Tweed, to organisations like the Hibernian Anti-Slavery Society of Dublin, the Glasgow Emancipation Society, and the Edinburgh Emancipation Society, none of which ever became affiliated to the London group. At times of uncommon excitement over events in the States and elsewhere, the last two were also able to raise audiences running into thousands.

2. A.S.R., 18.5.42, 28.6.43, 1.6.53.
3. C.C. Burleigh, (ed.), The Reception of George Thompson in Great Britain, Compiled from Various British Publications (Boston, 1836), p. 64; Liberator, 23.3.40.
various points in the period, too, the movement was strong enough to be able to support four separate monthlies - the Anti-Slavery Reporter, the organ of the British and Foreign Society; The Slave, (1833-1858), a free-produce organ based on Newcastle; the Anti-Slavery Advocate, (1852-1861), a highly radical Garrisonian sheet edited in Dublin by Richard Davis Webb, and published in London; and the Anti-Slavery Watchman, a courageous but ephemeral little octavo paper published in Manchester. Again, the British Friend, a Quaker paper in practice concentrating on the oppression of Negroes, was published in Glasgow by William Smeal, the secretary of the Emancipation Society there, from 1843 onwards, in protest against the lukewarmness of the London Friend on the slavery issue. There were several reasons why British interest in slavery in general and American slavery in particular should have become so great after 1833. Firstly, there was the legacy of 1833 and 1838. Once the Emancipation and Apprenticeship Acts had been successfully negotiated through Parliament, each of the major English, Scottish, and Irish cities, and many of the minor ones, possessed a miniature anti-slavery movement without immediate objectives. Its stocks of pamphlets and tracts, its offices, its funds and its societies were there to be used. Its secretaries and lecturers, quite apart from minor officials, were eager for employment most logically and conveniently found in continuing and

1. The Reporter was published fortnightly until 1846.
2. British Friend, 31.1.43.
expanding the anti-slavery agitation. At intellectual level, too, a great motive force was still there to be employed; the evangelical outburst which had been whipped up to bring the triumphs of 1833 was encouraged by its local successes to hope for wider ones, and could readily be redirected towards world abolition. The particular British interest in American slavery was encouraged by the simple fact of the close contacts between the two countries in the middle third of the nineteenth century. Family ties remained, but even more important was the constant flow of articulate professional men from one country to the other. Often they travelled on personal business or informal tours, but as frequently in church or reform society missions or deputations. The personal interchanges were seconded by the flow of printed material from one side of the Atlantic to the other. In the thirties, forties, and fifties, Anglo-American contacts were as close as they have ever been. British knowledge of American society accordingly increased, and British concern over slavery focussed more and more closely on the Christian slaveocracy of the South. There may also have been an intangible element of jealousy of America and American institutions. Having removed West Indian slavery, British commercial circles doubtless resented a competitor having the advantage of the system. In the fifties,

the British movement was joined by aristocratic 'Stoweite' abolitionists inspired by Uncle Tom's Cabin to work in a desultory way to expose the inconsistency between democracy and slaveholding. Neither of these tendencies, however, would appear among the rank-and-file of the nonconformist societies which are studied in this thesis. Their propaganda laid great stress on the unprofitability of slavery. It also shows much admiration for American institutions, which they considered could be profitably copied but were being warped by the slave system.

However, concern over the Southern States would not have been so great without the legacy from the campaigns against West Indian slavery. At political and administrative level, success had only come by developing techniques invaluable later in the movement and indeed in reform movements unconnected with Negro slavery. The propaganda methods of the Agency Committee, for instance, provided


2. e.g. Slavery in America (N.d., Reprinted from Chambers' Miscellany); Report of Committee headed by Joseph Sturge, in Proceedings of the General Anti-Slavery Convention, Called by the Committee of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, and Held in London, from Friday, June 12th, to Tuesday, June 23rd, 1840 (London, 1841), pp. 334-362. Note however that this method of argument lost some of the popularity it had had prior to 1833, possibly because of the manifest collapse of West Indian agriculture.

an object lesson for the future both in Britain and America.\(^1\)

Again, the device of the monster petition backed by endless public meetings at grass roots first came to the fore in the anti-slavery movement, as did the technique of presenting these petitions ostentatiously at Westminster.\(^2\) For the later movement, the importance of the elaborate techniques evolved was that behind them there were society committees, occasionally with salaried secretaries. After 1833 the men who had spent their time directing these activities were left without occupation.

To some leaders of the movement, success must simply have meant that an agreeable and socially acceptable way of passing the time had gone, especially in the case of female reformers. For professionals like Thompson, the situation was even more serious. The triumph of 1833 meant that their immediate livelihood was lost. For both groups, the prospect of anti-slavery activity coming to an end was unpleasant. The motive was too simple to be committed to writing, perhaps too much obliterated by the overwhelming conditioning in the importance of good works to be admitted even in private. Nevertheless, it seems that one of the main reasons why the British anti-slavery impulse broadened after West Indian emancipation was the reluctance of the abolitionists to admit that the cause into which they had channelled their energies could simply wither away from the stark fact of success. British abolitionists would be receptive to suggestions that agitation should be widened, and the old activities kept up.


In an age without mass media, it is not necessarily cynical to argue that the anti-slavery movement was a way of entertainment for a generation. This being so, there was no reason to abandon it simply because a limited success had been gained.

Given preconditions of this sort, the legacy of powerful ideas left over from the West Indian struggle had full scope. There are many possible interpretations of British evangelical support for the early anti-slavery movement. To the Coupland School it represented a spontaneous moral outburst against the national sin of chattel slavery, to Eric Williams its ideas are the reflection of revolutionary change in the balance of economic pressure groups - "Politics and morals in the abstract make no sense." In either case, the fact remains that evangelical ideas on the Negro could readily be redirected after the Empire had been cleared of its direct implication in slavery. By 1833, the evangelical mind had moved from one standpoint to another on slavery - from the attack on the slave trade, through the various suggestions for amelioration and gradual emancipation, to the cumulative attack on slavery as a sin against the decalogue which must be immediately abolished. By the last stage, slavery could be attacked in the same way as murder or theft. In the last reckoning it involved both. "Slavery is a crime;... to engage in it is to contract guilt in the sight of heaven... being aware of


this, we are bound to make no delay in hastening out of transgression, and putting an end to it, wherever it has obtained a footing in our dominions." ¹ Thus argued the Rev. Andrew Thomson of Edinburgh, as early as October, 1830.

Thomson's interest was in the particular, the local sin of British slaveholding. But if slaveholding was a crime in one country, it could be argued that it was no less so in others. After the triumph of 1833, this particular concern became a universal one. In a time of obviously shortening geographical distances, the attraction of extending Christian interest in the underprivileged throughout the known or at least the accessible parts of the world was obvious. In 1833 the British reformer had apparently secured a great victory; he had an administrative structure to use in the service of the slave, and an outlet for pleasant social activity in that service which he did not wish to lose. Immediatist thought applied to one country logically led on to immediatist thought applied to the whole world.² The internationalism of William Lloyd Garrison and his followers in America could be echoed by resolutions like that of the Glasgow Emancipation Society at its foundation - "That this Meeting, convinced that Slavery is inconsistent with the Spirit and Precepts of Christianity, and subversive of the best interests of Mankind, resolves that a Society be now formed to promote its

¹ A. Thomson, Substance of the Speech Delivered at the Meeting of the Edinburgh Society for the Abolition of Slavery, on October 19, 1830 (Edinburgh, 1830), p.4.

Universal Extinction. 1

Apart from its direct legacy to the later anti-slavery movement, it may be mentioned in passing that there are two aspects of the history of the struggle for emancipation which impinge on the subject of this thesis. The first is the enormous effect of the Emancipation Act in encouraging the abolitionist movement in America. The second is the strong Scottish feeling against colonial slavery, which may link up with the articulate abolitionist movement which emerged north of the Border after 1833.

William Lloyd Garrison was most displeased with the 1833 Emancipation Act. He wrote home a pained description of its concessions to gradualism, concluding that it was "a complete triumph of colonial chicanery over the philanthropy of the British people.... not an example for us to imitate, but a precedent for us to shun." 2 But in spite of its unsatisfactory clauses on apprenticeship and compensation, the impression of the Act on the American mind was deep, especially after abolition was completed by the Apprenticeship Act of 1833. Its effect was especially great among American Negroes, who continued to hold celebratory August 1st meetings right up to the forties and fifties. 3 Apart from this, the fact that West Indian emancipation had been successful, at least superficially, could be used as a telling piece of propaganda -

2. Liberator, 12.10.33.
3. Ibid., 24.7.40, 13.4.41; Garrison to Hay, 4.12.32, Garrison Papers. There is a large poster advertising an early anniversary meeting, in Weymouth, Mass., in 1834, in the Weston Papers.
and evidence from the British experiment was in fact widely circulated by abolitionists in America. For instance Tomlinson and Kimball's survey of the West Indian experiment was considered important enough to circulate as an issue of the Anti-Slavery Examiner, as well as in its expensive format for the more prosperous abolitionist public. Although the more perceptive American leaders saw that emancipation had been carried out by accepting a compromise which would be unacceptable to them, and by using methods inapplicable to the American situation, British success created great interest in and gave great encouragement to the abolition cause in the United States.

During the campaigns against colonial slavery and the slave trade, Scottish reformers developed an anti-slavery tradition which in later years gave them an influence out of all proportion to Scottish population. It has been argued that anti-slavery sentiment was strong in the provinces generally relative to London, and this is certainly true of Scotland. A short account of the early abolitionist societies in Glasgow and Edinburgh is given in:


the next chapter, but Scottish abolitionists could also take pride in the work of individual reformers whose national reputation entitled them to respect. As early as the 1730's, Hume's great antagonist James Beattie, of the Chair of Moral Philosophy at Marischal College, had incisively attacked pro-slavery racialist ideas. He argued that the Negro was never given the opportunity to acquire an education, and constantly held in contempt. It was therefore as irrational "to suppose him of an inferior species... as to suppose any private European of an inferior species, because he has not raised himself to the condition of royalty." 1 Beattie's reputation as an anti-slavery sympathiser was sufficiently great for him to be asked to organise the Scottish section of Wilberforce's petition of 1788. 2

Beattie's fame in his own generation was overshadowed by that of a later and much more important abolitionist, the Rev. Andrew Thomson of Edinburgh's fashionable St. George's Church in Charlotte Square. Brougham is reputed to have commended him as the only man living whom he would fear to meet in debate. 3 Thomson was considered by many of his contemporaries to be a man whose work was central in pioneering immediatist thought among British abolitionists. 4 He was born in 1779 in the little Fife village

of Sanquhar. Although licensed to preach in 1800, he only received his Edinburgh University M.A. in 1811, when he was already minister of Greyfriars Church. From 1814, he was minister of the new and fashionable, but evangelical, St. George's Church in the New Town. From this time onwards, he dominated the respectable reform life of Edinburgh. A leader of the Evangelical party in the Church of Scotland, his services to the Antipatronage Society, and his editorship of the Edinburgh Christian Instructor, were recognised with a Marischal College D.D. in 1823. But apart from his life's work on the liberal wing of the fast-splitting Church of Scotland, Thomson was a leading figure in the Scottish temperance and anti-slavery movements. His contribution to the latter came just before his death in 1831. He never lived to see British West India Emancipation carried out.

In the course of 1830, Thomson began preaching sermons calling for the immediate abolition of slavery in the British Empire. The only one of these which survives in print gives a complete statement of what later came to be immediate orthodoxy, buttressed by Scriptural arguments but still closely focussed on current developments in the West Indies.  

By the autumn of that year the Edinburgh Anti-Slavery Society had come round to sharing his views. At a meeting on October 8th he spoke in favour of what was probably the earliest petition in favour of immediate emancipation, and at


2. Slavery not sanctioned, but Condemned, by Christianity (London, reprinted, 1832).
a subsequent rally on the 19th he defended his position brillianly against intensive attacks from less radical local figures, including his close friend George Combe, the phrenologist.  

His speech on this occasion was quickly published and extensively circulated by the Committee.

Apart from Elizabeth Heyrick's little-read work, no earlier pamphlet exists putting forward the immediatist standpoint that to persevere in the sin of slavery was to compound a felony. Thomson's work became one of the stock tracts in anti-slavery libraries for the remaining years of the British movement.

It has recently been suggested that Thomson's pamphlet provided the ideology for the Agency Committee, and also for George Thompson, their most flamboyant lecturer. To some extent this is probably true; both Thompson and George Stephen admitted their debt to Thomson at various points. But what is certain is that Andrew Thomson's work gave Scotland an anti-slavery tradition which would make it fertile ground for agitation on wider issues in later decades - and also incidentally make it more ready to show regional resentment at attempts to change the

1. For Combe's importance as a critic of slavery, see unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Edinburgh, 1960, by A.C. Grant, 'George Combe and his Circle: with Particular Reference to his Relations with the United States of America', pp. 193-203.

2. Substance of the Speech, etc., passim.


direction of the tradition by men of slightly different opinions from the South. Throughout the forties, Thomson's words were being used as touchstones of orthodoxy in the Scottish anti-slavery movement. It was planned to republish his pamphlet in 1844 as a final blow to the schemes of the Free Church to keep the money it had collected in the South. As late as 1863 Thomson's name was being invoked as a final authority in anti-slavery orthodoxy. His work and that of his followers left Scotland with an anti-slavery tradition which no doubt goes far to explain the disproportionate strength of interest in American slavery there after the fight against Imperial slavery had been won.

The form of the later universal abolition movement, then, owes much to the legacy of the West India emancipation campaign. Scotland itself had a strong anti-slavery tradition which would produce extraordinarily active abolitionist societies there in future. Throughout Britain, the men and women involved in the Colonial campaign might have been expected to wish to continue work for social reasons. Again, the ideas of the early abolitionists could well be widened to apply to slavery throughout the world. The not result was that after 1833 British abolitionists were receptive to any plans for extending their responsibilities to the slave, which had been largely fulfilled at national level. They were fully ready to accept the theories of universal moral responsibility which were now becoming fashionable in Atlantic reforming circles.


The world of the 1830's and 1840's was a world dominated by nationalism. But although this was the age of Mazzini and Kossuth, it was also an age when liberal thought was moving in the opposite direction, towards internationalism. Even in the mind of Mazzini, insistence on the power of nationalism as the motive force behind the progress of history was accompanied by a parallel insistence on the brotherhood between liberal men throughout the world. "We believe", he wrote, "in the unity of the human race, and in the moral equality of all the children of God, without distinction of sex, colour, or condition, to be forfeited by crime alone." Certainly these decades were ones of nationalism, but they were also dominated by a quite conscious radical cosmopolitanism. This involved a refusal to allow the force of the new nationalism to maintain the barriers between mankind which the selfish territorial and dynastic power lusts of the past had created. Even in the most dedicated nationalists, the two tendencies can be found side by side. In the men who will be the subject of this dissertation, the internationalist one is dominant. At the mast-head of The Liberator, Garrison inscribed the words "MY COUNTRY IS THE WORLD; MY COUNTRY IS ALL MANKIND." By the time the thirties opened, the radical mentality on both sides of the Atlantic was obsessed with the hope of breaking down the barriers to world brotherhood. The closeness of the ties within the liberal Anglo-American community in the middle third of the nineteenth century was a

direct product of the desire for closer ties between nations.

Internationalism is at its most obvious in the peace
movement and the campaign for an ocean penny post. It is
also clearly linked with the free trade assumptions of the
middle class supporters of the reform community. But it
permeates benevolent activity in Britain and the United States
at all levels. The Atlantic anti-slavery movement is no
exception. Garrison's insistence on his world citizenship
was simply an expression of the attitude of his co-workers,
even those less radical than himself. As early as 1834, an
obscure Maine follower could ask Garrison:

"Is philanthropy confined by the boundaries
of countries, or must it exert itself within
the limited sphere of neighbourhood limits?
As you truly say that 'our country is the
world and our countrymen all mankind', and
the person[s] who would raise such objections
cannot be the friends of human liberty." 2

In the same year, even a non-abolitionist paper could safely
commend the introduction of British moral influence on the
strictly American question of slavery. A relatively conservative
abolitionist could also accept that "moral force cannot be bounded
by geographical lines, rivers, or oceans." 4  

   pp. 396-423; M. Curti, The American Peace Crusade (Durham, 1929),
   passim.; F. Thistlethwaite, America and the Atlantic Community
2. L.P. Cowan to Garrison, 21.6.34, Garrison Papers.
3. Extract from Salem Landmark, n.d., Liberator, 15.11.34.
4. E. Wright to Beriah Green, 17.3.35, Elizur Wright Papers,
   Library of Congress.
still called hard-pressed British friends to support the extremist John Anderson Collins with the plea that "In attempting to put away the evil that is in the world, we must forget all national distinctions and geographical boundaries, and remember that we are indeed members of one family, to whom there is nothing foreign, nothing remote." 1

Indeed it is likely that this plea would have been successful if treated on its merits alone, for British abolitionists shared Garrison's internationalism as much as his American followers. Thompson, possibly the greatest formative influence on the later British anti-slavery movement, is the most obvious case of a radical who habitually denounced the trammels of national boundaries - at one stage during his 1834 mission to America, he actually announced that "as a citizen of the world he claimed brotherhood with all mankind." 2 Throughout the thirties, forties, and fifties, British abolitionists continued to echo his sentiments. The finest example of propaganda based on internationalism was the work of the Unitarian pastor of Bridgewater, S. Alfred Steinthal. His only published sermon is based on the text from 1st Corinthians, xii, 13 - "For by one spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have all been made to drink of one spirit." The essential feature of Christianity, he argued, was its doctrine of universal brotherhood - which in turn meant that the Christian responsibility of charity

1. Garrison to E. Pease, 30.9.40, Garrison Papers.
2. Liberator, 11.10.34.
went beyond national boundaries, most specifically to America. "True charity," he concluded, "begins at home. But it is a very false charity that stops there." ¹

The internationalist aspects of the Atlantic anti-slavery movement are most revealing in explaining why it was so easy to whip up British interest in American abolition after the fight against West Indian slavery had been won. Reformers on both sides of the Atlantic saw themselves as world citizens, saw their responsibilities as going beyond mere national boundaries. Again, all were deeply imbued with current theories of perfectibility, and sure of their religious duty to raise the underprivileged. All those who were prevented by artificial agencies from realizing their God-given potential as rational and morally improvable creatures — the slave, the drunkard, the victim of war — must be given the degree of freedom from cruel masters, the demon alcohol, or the horrors of war, necessary to do so. To this extent, nineteenth century reform movements were optimistic. At the same time, incidentally, reform could be expected to improve the economic contribution of the oppressed — war, drunkenness, and the inefficiency of slavery all impeded the business life of the community. Yet the reforming impulse was also deeply rooted in feelings of personal guilt. Since personal guilt was most easily discerned in national abuses, the clearing of the conscience by the atonement for British crimes came first.

¹ S.A. Steinthal, American Slavery. A Sermon, Preached at Christ Church Chapel, Bridgewater, on Sunday, May the 1st, 1883 (Bridgewater, 1883), p.17 and passim.
for the British radical. Thus his first interest was British West Indian slavery. But the progress of reform did not stop here. Given his internationalist mentality, and his acceptance of perfectibility theories, this concern moved on to focus on the underprivileged throughout the world.

It must be stressed that such universalism was not confined to concern for the Negro slave. This was also a period of philanthropic combination when societies were formed to promote good causes in all parts of the world.\(^1\) It is not clear why the Atlantic reformer should have thought in these cosmopolitan terms. Perhaps his relative exclusion from the British and American power structure drove him to compensate for local frustration by widening his horizons. If so, it may be no accident that in the case of the anti-slavery movement the most extreme universal abolitionists were found in Massachusetts and Scotland. In one case the decline of New England federalism left the middle classes of the area relatively powerless in the face of rising democracy.\(^2\) In the other, the absence of a Scottish parliament left the population of Glasgow and Edinburgh without adequate political expression for national grievances.\(^3\)


2. A.M. Schlesinger, Jr., The Age of Jackson (Boston, 1945), pp. 267-268.

It has also been argued that the Scottish Dissenters came to be most vocal in attacking centralisation, which may explain their great strength in the Emancipation Societies.¹ In either case, for British abolitionists as a whole, the enthusiasm of 1833 could easily be redirected once its local goals had been achieved. Thus the legacy of the British emancipation struggle, together with accepted ideas of universal moral responsibility, created the conditions for the continuation of some form of world anti-slavery movement after 1833.

If such a movement was to continue in Britain, anti-slavery work in America had clear attractions. Basically there is no reason why the agitation for universal abolition should not have begun with Cuba, Brazil, or even Islam, but there were several directions in which the United States seemed more convenient and indeed more pressing. First there was the recurring element of personal guilt. British ships had brought the slaves to America, British governments had legalised the system. The British economy still depended largely on American slave produce. As early as November 1833, the eccentric British abolitionist Charles Stuart summed up the British responsibility for working to abolish American slavery in a

¹ Ibid., p. 156.
few admirable sentences:-

"The United States of America are our sister land. Like us, they boast of freedom - like us, they are pouring the Bible and light all over the world - and like us, they disgrace their professions and tarnish their fair name, by keeping slaves. Freemen, like us; and, like us, slave masters.

"They lay this sin to our charge, and unquestionably the guilt of its origin is ours. They are our progeny - they were long the subject of our laws. We tempted them, and they consented. The guilt of the consent and the continuance is theirs; but, as the crime of the temptation was ours, we owe them, on this head, all the amends which holy love can make." 1

Stuart went on to elaborate on the theories of universal moral responsibility accepted by Garrison and Thompson, but the most interesting part of his letter is the admission of British guilt. Where the British abolitionist conscience was not sensitive enough to appreciate this, American pro-slavery writers were only too glad to point it out.2

However, perhaps the most important factor tending towards British concentration on America once West Indian slavery had been abolished was the large number of personal and institutional contacts between the two countries. Between the thirties and the Civil War, the average time taken in crossing the Atlantic shortened dramatically.3 As the passage speeded up and became cheaper, so contacts multiplied. Considering

1. Stuart to Editor of London Patriot, 1.11.33, in Liberator, 12.4.34. Stuart is of great importance in the American movement as the original patron of Theodore Weld - see Barnes, Anti-Slavery Impulse, pp. 15, 33. There is a sketch of Stuart in the D.A.B.


the difficulties and discomforts of the voyage, the number of visitors on record is remarkable. This is one of the few areas in which any substantial research has been done on the Anglo-American connection in the period, and the amount of activity revealed is most striking. Most prominent American reformers visited Britain at one time or another to seek support for their various causes—Elihu Burritt, Garrison himself, Henry C. Wright, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and many others. Of the abolitionist leaders, everyone of note except Theodore Weld and Arthur Tappan visited Britain at least once in the decades before the Civil War. Part of the intention of this study is to show the way in which their visits contributed to the splitting up of the British anti-slavery societies in a direct reflection of the schisms on the other side of the Atlantic. They also had the desired effect of attracting British attention to the abuses of the American slave system. American visitors for their part saw the sympathy they generated as being of crucial importance for the cause; Wendell Phillips once wrote that "the sympathy and brotherly appeals of British abolitionists are the sheet anchor of our cause."  

An equal part in stirring up British opinion was played


by accounts brought back by travellers going in the opposite direction. The British climate of opinion was radically different from the American one in that opposition to slavery was part of assumed liberal orthodoxy. Though many British visitors effectively suppressed their scruples while in America, few failed to denounce the system roundly on their return - much to the disgust of diehards in both camps in America. Apart from men like George Thompson, Charles Stuart, and Joseph Sturge, who went to America with the specific intention of investigating and denouncing the slave system, many British travellers in America published accounts shedding light on the enormities of the South. E.S. Abdy, who visited America to examine prisons for a British government commission; Harriet Martineau, who went there to investigate its political institutions; George Combe, the Edinburgh phrenologist who toured the States as such; Charles Dickens, who seems to have crossed the Atlantic to find something to mock - all returned to present the British public with general accounts of the Republic including expressions of horror, at what they had seen, or more often heard about, in the Southern States.

There were many less famous visitors, too, whose impressions


were passed on to the British public. Elizabeth Byrd, the daughter of a Surrey parson, announced coyly on her return that "the full extent of the cruelties practised will never be known, until revealed at the solemn tribunal of the last day." 1 Joseph Chandler, a quiet Friend, took upon himself the task of going to a Baltimore slave mart and persuading the auctioneer that the system was immoral. 2 The Rev. George Lewis of the Free Church of Scotland was surprised to find that Negroes did not smell after all - "their presence is just as sweet as their masters'" - and rather pathetically shared his orange with the slaves of his fellow-travellers on the way to Montgomery, Alabama. 3 From the thirties onwards, the atrocities of the slave system, especially its moral atrocities, were placed squarely before the British public - "There is no subject," wrote Governor J.H. Hammond of South Carolina, ".... on which in especial learned old maids like Miss Martineau, linger with such an insatiable relish." 4 The revelations of all these travellers, and many more, together with the propaganda spread by American abolitionists in Europe, did much to focus British anti-slavery interest on America after 1833.

2. British Friend, 29.4.43, 30.6.43.
Just as important as personal contacts of this sort between the two countries were institutional ties, especially between the churches. An obvious area in which cooperation went on was in the reform societies themselves, where organisations devoted to the temperance, anti-war, and anti-slavery movements tirelessly and regularly exchanged publications, periodicals, and personnel. Delegates or missionaries in one cause or another went backwards and forwards across the Atlantic, especially at the time of the yearly May anniversaries, when Americans habitually appeared at the London meetings, and Britons at the New York ones. With every personal contact between reformers, and with every exchange of publications, British knowledge of the American reform world increased, and with it the potential for British interest in the anti-slavery movement itself.

A more significant area of institutional contact was in the strong ties between the respective branches of the various church denominations.¹ Like the reform societies, each of them would invite foreign delegates to the equivalent of its annual meeting, so that the officials of British churches appeared regularly at the Yearly Meetings of the Friends, the General Assemblies of the Presbyterians, the Annual Conferences of the Methodists, and the Yearly Synods of the Unitarians. For the future of the anti-slavery movement, a centrally important

¹. Thistlethwaite, *op.cit.*, pp. 76-86.
factor was that the denominations which were most active in it, the Friends and Unitarians, were also the denominations who corresponded and visited most regularly with their brethren in America. However, contacts of this sort were present in every denomination. All of them had constant visitors and delegations from their opposite numbers across the Atlantic; all exchanged epistles and advice, which could be brought to bear on questions like the slavery issue. Finally, there were denominational periodicals, which were read in both countries, and brought the opinions of fellow-denominationalists abroad out of the committee stage and down to the reading public.

More specifically, contacts with the American churches opened up the only sphere where British abolitionists could feel they were doing anything concrete to affect the American situation. The differences in the potential for action between American and British abolitionists have already been noticed. Having at least one area where they could do something must have been most encouraging to the British, especially the Scottish, whose fragmented church life gave them ample scope for working to ensure that the individual denominations took satisfactory abolitionist standpoints.

1. Ibid., pp. 78-80; Taylor, op.cit., pp. 30-31; Temperley, p.50.
Right up to the Civil War, the pulpit remained the most important organ of propaganda in an age without true mass media. For any minister to be won over to expounding abolitionists views to his congregation represented a major triumph. American Christians, moreover, at least initially, were highly receptive to persuasion from the Scottish and English churches. Scotland remained the country of John Knox, England that of Wesley. Though the prestige of the older churches depended partly on traditions of this sort, British leaders of the various denominations like Ralph Wardlaw and John Angell James of the Independents, or Thomas Chalmers of the Free Church of Scotland, were deeply respected in the States for their work and writings. Part of the reason for the fury generated by visiting American abolitionists in 1846 over the acceptance of Southern money by the new Free Church of Scotland was their realisation of its prestige in America as the leading evangelical church in Britain. Its implicit approval of slavery could be used by the proslavery hordes to convince doubters that their system was respectable after all. "My work is to make slavery disreputable", wrote Frederick Douglass, and I cannot do this while Christian churches in this country are extending the hand of Christian fellowship

1. G.E.S. Reports, 1837, p. 131; Liberator, 10.4.40; T. Smyth, The Character of the Late Thomas Chalmers, and the Lessons of his Life, from Personal Recollections (Charleston, 1848), passim.
to the slaveholders and endorsing their character as slaveholders.”¹ Their attitude to the controversy over whether the Evangelical Alliance should receive delegates from churches receiving slaveholders into communion was similar.²

Clearly American abolitionists saw the pressure their British colleagues could exert through the Churches as being centrally important. Throughout the period, they constantly exhorted the British churches to remonstrate endlessly with their sinning American brethren. To begin with, this could be done informally, first by attempts at personal persuasion, and then by extending social and religious ostracism to individual Americans visiting Britain for Church purposes or on special occasions like that of the Great Exhibition in 1851. Judging by the extent to which those American pleas were echoed by British individuals and periodicals, the possibilities must have been fully exploited.³ Beyond this, the American

1. Douglass to Scoble, 9.5.46, Bod. Brit. Emp. Mss. S.18, C10/75. Southern concern over British church denunciations of slavery has not been fully studied. The importance of the connection between propaganda and the pulpit in the wartime South is examined in J.W. Silver, Confederate Morale and Church Propaganda (Tuscaloosa, Ala., 1957), passim, especially pp. 13-24.

2. A.S.R., 2.11.46.

abolitionists suggested action through the regular channels of church communication, beginning with friendly advice, and using breach of communion as a final resort. ¹

In spite of the tactical problems involved in bringing up so explosive a subject, the British churches, and even individual congregations, poured resolutions and remonstrances, mild and extreme, across the Atlantic from the thirties onwards. ² Once again, the Scots appear to have been most enthusiastic, most prolific of anti-slavery literature, and most extreme - the Reformed Presbyterian Church actually ended by refusing to accept any individual connected with slavery into communion. ³ The positions of the Scottish churches on the slavery issue were used extensively in jockeying for advantage in their contorted denominational rivalries. In 1843, at the Disruption, the Evangelical party left the Establishment.

1. [E. Pease], Society of Friends in the United States: their Views on the Anti-Slavery Question, and Treatment of the People of Colour, Compiled from Official Correspondence (Darlington, 1840), p.21; A.S.R., 1.9.60; General Anti-Slavery Convention Proceedings.... 1840, pp. 121, 126-128, 133; F. Pillsbury to E. Baines, 5.7.54, Leeds Mercury, 8.7.54.

2. e.g. Liberator, 15.1.41; A.S.R., 21.10.41; Deliverance of the Reformed Presbytery of Edinburgh on American Slavery and Church Fellowship with Slaveholders (Edinburgh, 1843); Memorial and Remonstrance Respecting Slavery, to the Churches of the United States of America, by the Synod of the United Secession Church (Glasgow, 1848).

3. An Expostulation with those Christians and Christian Churches in the United States of America, that are Implicated in the Sin of Slavesholding, by a Committee of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Scotland (Glasgow, 1848).
to form the new Free Church of Scotland. Both Evangelicals and their 'Moderate' opponents, however, were at odds with the Scottish Dissenters, who were currently gaining strength. Most English nonconformist sects had branches in Scotland, but the Free Church and the Church of Scotland were also opposed by Presbyterian sects which adhered to a Voluntary system of church government. The main ones were the Reformed Presbyterian Church, and the United Secession and Relief Secession Churches which combined in 1847 to form the United Presbyterian Church. In retrospect, it seems that the abolitionist activities of Scottish and English Churches can have had little effect in America beyond annoying proslavery men and encouraging abolitionists in their already firm conviction of their own righteousness. But their effect on the British movement was great, since each remonstrance attracted attention while it was being adopted. It usually did further service by being printed in the newspapers, or being made up into pamphlet form and circulated more widely. It is in these directions that the importance of the church connection for the British anti-slavery movement lies.

A final area of contact between America and Britain was in the circulation of reviews. The fashionable British magazines, from organs like the Westminster and Edinburgh Reviews down to more obscure sheets like the Eclectic and Fraser's Magazine were all circulated in America. Particularly in the

longer settled tidewater states, it remained acceptable to ape British attitudes in the world of letters, and the British reviews played a disproportionate role as opinion-formers in America.\(^1\) American abolitionists were acutely aware of the fact that British periodicals could be well received in areas where their own politically suspect literature would be anathema, and were all the more anxious to have their British supporters call on the reviews to attack slavery by whatever means they could. Phillips, for instance, could encourage them to do so with the thought that "the prejudice which trends underfoot the 'vulgar' abolitionist - dares not prescribe the literature of the world."\(^2\) Garrison himself spent most of his 1846 visit to Britain trying to make contacts with those influential in editorial circles.\(^3\) With some reviews, notably Carlyle's vehicle Fraser's, the abolitionists failed miserably.\(^4\) In other directions they were moderately successful, and many of the major British magazines published anti-slavery short stories and articles which were well received in the abolitionist press, and no doubt read in American circles closed to literature from less reputable sources.\(^5\)

4. A.S.R., 1.1.50, 1.2.50, 1.3.50, 1.4.53, 1.3.54; _Anti-Slavery Advocate_, Nov., 1852.
5. e.g. _Eclectic Review_, April, 1841; _Blackwood's_, Jan., 1853; _Westminster_, April, 1853. See also A.S.R., 1.2.53.
American abolitionists were not only anxious to enlist British help in attacking the South. They also called on them as allies against rival factions of the anti-slavery movement itself. This is nowhere more clear than in Garrison's insistence on the importance of 'unmasking' the American Colonization Society to British reformers. Indeed the Colonization Society had substantial support in this country, and the effort put into setting its deficiencies before the public is a measure of the importance American abolitionists set on British opinion. After the movement divided in 1840 and 1841, their hunger for British approval of their own particular faction became even greater. Before his 1853 visit to Britain, Charles Miller McKim of Philadelphia, one of Garrison's most able followers, noted that his main reason for going was that "The cause of genuine, thorough, catholic [Garrisonian] abolitionism needs a representative in England." Some time before, Elizur Wright, of the opposite camp, had reported from London, by way of a triumph for his party, that


2. Ibid., pp. 216-218. Elliott Cresson at first won the confidence of a section of the abolitionists community, and founded a British African Civilization Society in July, 1833, with the Duke of Sussex as patron.

3. Memorandum on "Reasons why I should go to England," Spring, 1853, McKim Papers, N.Y.P.L.
"there are no no-government [Garrisonian] people here." 1

Apart from the basic division between Garrisonians and their opponents, most of the other factions of the American movement sent representatives to England in the fifties to gain support for Negro education, free produce, or the Vigilance Committees of the Underground Railroad. 2

In conclusion, then, the legacy of 1833 and the new popularity of ideas of universal reform responsibility, meant that the British abolitionist movement did not end its activities because of success in emancipating the slaves within the Empire. Societies pledged to work for World Abolition thus emerged immediately after the Emancipation Act had passed. The character of Anglo-American ties in the period meant that the obvious place to begin work was in support of the abolitionists of the U.S.A.

The extent of this support has been demonstrated elsewhere. 3 The purpose of this study is to show that this support was not a unified one. This sheds more light on the similarities between the British and American middle classes in the pre-Civil War decades, by showing the way in which the whole spectrum of American anti-slavery opinion reappears in England, Scotland, and Ireland. When the American societies split along Garrisonian and anti-Garrisonian lines, in the disastrous schisms of 1841,

1. E. Wright to S. Wright, 3.4.44, Elizur Wright Papers, Library of Congress.

2. See below, pp. 467-472.

the British ones did so too. The whole series of dissensions which followed in the resulting search for an anti-slavery orthodoxy was mirrored on this side of the Atlantic. A detailed examination of one section of the British abolitionists, those who supported Garrison, shows how they were prepared to use the quarrels over abolitionist orthodoxy to further pre-existing feuds over church affairs, or because of standing tensions between the provinces and London. The study of the Garrisonian anti-slavery movement points to the strength of anti-slavery traditions in Britain, and the different form these traditions took because of regional differences, particularly in Scotland. It also points to the ability of British and American radicals alike to use propaganda from one reform cause to help them in others. But most of all, it gives further evidence of the reality of a middle class Atlantic community in the period from the thirties to the Civil War.
CHAPTER II

THE FORMATION OF THE SCOTTISH SOCIETIES AND THEIR COMPOSITION.

The central thesis put forward in this dissertation concerns the disproportionate strength of the Scottish anti-slavery movement after 1833, in relation to the British movement as a whole. Glasgow and Edinburgh developed enthusiasm for 'universal emancipation' long before it appeared in England. It remained greater throughout the thirties, although Scottish abolitionists also came to share the national concern over the apprenticeship system, which partly diverted their attention from the cause at world level in 1837 and 1838. Nevertheless, a difference in emphasis of interests between Scottish and English abolitionists is clear, and the Glasgow and Edinburgh Emancipation Societies campaigned continuously for universal freedom throughout a decade when no single London or national anti-slavery society could continue to remain active without interruption. The difference in interests remained after 1840. In that year the tumultuous proceedings of the World's Anti-Slavery Convention showed British abolitionists how far the unity of the American movement had been lost, and what issues were at stake between factions across the Atlantic. The response of the London based national organisation, and British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, was to take a conservative position which allowed it to continue with its own sedate brand of abolitionist effort. An opposition group of abolitionists, however, fully accepted the characteristically American ideas of universal freedom.

reform put forward by Garrison and his followers. 1 When the British
movement subsequently chose its loyalties to one faction or another
in the U.S.A., the conservative B.F.A.S.S. was still to be opposed
by a group of 'Garrisonian' or 'Old Organisation' abolitionists.
These were at first concentrated on the two highly organised radical
societies in Glasgow and Edinburgh, aided by a few articulate
individuals in Dublin. Throughout the forties and fifties, these
Scottish and Irish abolitionists continued to follow a different
course from the British and Foreign Society, strongly supporting
the Garrisonian movement in America, instead of the more 'respectable'
elements with whom the London leadership remained in contact.
Although they were joined in the last ten years before the war by
Garrisonian groups in other provincial cities, most notably Bristol,
the Dublin group, the G.S., and the Edinburgh Ladies' Emancipation
Society were the only anti-slavery bodies which continuously
dissented from B.F.A.S.S. viewpoints after the schisms of 1840 and
1841.

The Scottish anti-slavery movement after 1833 seems to have
had very different characteristics from the movement in Britain as
a whole. The reasons for this difference lie only partly in the
different conditions in which Scottish reform movements operated.
The fact that Glasgow and Edinburgh Garrisonians frequently found
allies against the B.F.A.S.S. in other provincial cities suggests

1. The most illuminating introduction to this crucial controversy,
is F. B. Tolles, (ed.), 'Slavery and the "Woman Question."
Lucretia Mott's Diary of her Visit to Great Britain to Attend
the World's Anti-Slavery Convention of 1840,' Journal of the
that the disagreements within the national movement may also be seen as part of a wider series of tensions between the provinces and London. No doubt distrust of centralisation within the anti-slavery movement had different local causes in each case. Among abolitionists, however, they could conveniently be expressed by adopting a Garrisonian standpoint, when the national society, with its headquarters in London, took the opposite one. Scotland was not the only area with a strong tradition of localism which made sections of its abolitionists adopt a nonconformist position as a way of projecting distrust of centralisation. However, it certainly was the area where such a tradition was most highly developed, and where the largest proportion of abolitionists took the Garrisonian standpoint of which the B.P.A.S.S. disapproved. Hints of differences between the approaches of London, Glasgow, and Edinburgh, appear long before 1840. Not the least important of these is the very early foundation of the main Scottish societies, the object of which was "the Abolition of Slavery throughout the World."1

Both the Glasgow and Edinburgh Emancipation Societies, with their ladies' auxiliaries, were founded immediately after the passage of the Emancipation Act.2 Their formation came four years before that of the other important Garrisonian body of the future, the Hibernian Anti-Slavery Society.2 Not only this, but they were

1. Minute for 7.12.33 G.E.S. Minute Books; I. This was proposed as part of a resolution passed at the first public meeting of the G.E.S. on Dec. 12th - Minute for 12.12.33, ibid.

2. E. Baldwin to Stokes, 17.7.37, Bod.Brit.Emp.Mss.5.18, C2/13; Baldwin to Stokes, 29.7.37, ibid., C2/14. These letters suggest that the Society was extremely feeble at this stage, since they ask for as many pamphlets as possible from London, but plead lack of money to pay for them. This contrasts with the large publication programmes and substantial budgets of the Scottish societies, especially the Glasgow one.
the first societies formed which aimed at organising support for universal emancipation of slaves outside the British dominions.

The larger of the two great Scottish foundations of 1833 was the Glasgow Emancipation Society, although it first met five weeks after its Edinburgh counterpart. It is by far the most important of the provincial societies cooperating with the American abolitionists. It survived without a break until the Reconstruction period, in spite of threats to its existence from internal divisions, shortage of funds, and the attractions of the less uncompromising anti-slavery bodies which emerged in Glasgow by the 1860's. Its life spans the whole history of British-American cooperation in the movement, and as such its activities cast essential light on the history of the Garrisonian abolitionists whom it represented. These activities may be studied through a mass of printed material published from time to time by the Society, and also by the Society’s enemies.¹ Most important, however, are the four large volumes of G.E.S. Minute Books, compiled by the Society’s dominant leader, William Smeal, a radical Quaker grocer.²

On December 6th, 1833, a group of Glasgow abolitionists gathered to discuss plans for the formation of a new anti-slavery society in the city.³ The possible reasons for their wishing to continue agitation against slavery are several. At the simplest

1. Printed sources published by critics of the G.E.S. are used in Chapters V and VI above.

2. The Minute Books are preserved along with Smeal’s other books and papers in the Smeal Donation, Mitchell Library, Glasgow.

level, they may have been bored by the fact that the abolitionist activity which had played so large a part in their social lives before August had now been brought to a close. It is likely, too, that the intellectual attack on West Indian slavery had gathered a momentum which would induce reformers to extend the area for which they had previously felt responsible. The general connection between the anti-slavery movement prior to 1833 and support for universal abolition has already been discussed briefly. In either case, the connection between the meeting of December 6th and genuine interest in the South-West of Scotland was amply proved by the way in which the G.E.S. flourished in the early years of its life. This initial meeting gathered in response to a circular sent out by John Murray of Bowling Bay, a landowner from just south of Glasgow, who belonged to the voluntary Relief Secession Church and had been a leading opponent of West Indian slavery. Although only three ministers were present, the meeting's greatest piece of encouragement was an approving letter from the great independent theologian Dr. Ralph Wardlaw. Murray himself was there, as interim secretary, but the chair was taken by the Quaker Anthony Wigham, a cousin of the John Wigham whose wife and daughter were to be the leading spirits in the radical Edinburgh Ladies' Emancipation Society. Soon after the foundation of the Glasgow Emancipation Society Anthony Wigham left Glasgow for Aberdeen, where he later

1. See above, pp. 11-20.

2. The only useful biography of Wardlaw is W. L. Alexander, Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Ralph Wardlaw, D.D. (Edinburgh, 1846). His Scripture Commentaries was a standard theological reference work.
became a leading member of a new society also committed to universal emancipation.¹ John Murray, who had clearly kept himself informed of the current revival in the American abolitionist movement, read out Garrison's Appeal to the Friends of Negro Emancipation throughout Great Britain and the circular Statement of the New England Anti-Slavery Society.² He followed this by reading resolutions on world emancipation passed at a meeting to form the new Edinburgh Emancipation society six weeks before, on October 25th. Murray was finally appointed interim secretary, and a sub-committee chosen to arrange a public meeting on December 12th, at which it was hoped a new Glasgow society similar to the Edinburgh one would be launched.³

The sub-committee met next day to draft the resolutions for the new Society's first public meeting. It was to be entitled "The Glasgow Emancipation Society, having for its object, the Abolition of Slavery throughout the World." However, there was an indication that its work was to begin with North America. The Society, "having ascertained with deep concern that there are 2,200,000 Slaves

1. Aberdeen Almanacks, 1838, 1839, 1840. He was Aberdeen delegate to the 1843 Anti-slavery Convention. See Aberdeen Journal, 27.9.43.

2. The former is one of Garrison's well-known pamphlets (London, 1833). The latter was presumably an anti-colonizationist statement designed to aid Garrison's British trip, since this was the issue with which the New England Society was chiefly concerned. See R. H. Zorn, 'The New England Anti-Slavery Society: Pioneer Abolitionist Organisation,' J.N.H., XLIII, 1957, pp. 157ff. Although Garrison did not visit Scotland in 1833, Glasgow abolitionists had been well warned against the Colonization Society by Captain Charles Stuart, who had lectured against it four months before the Emancipation Act. See Liberia; or, the American Colonization Scheme Exposed, A Full and Authentic Report of a Lecture Delivered by C. Stuart, Esq., at a Public Meeting in the Rev. Mr. Anderson's Chapel, Glasgow, 15th April, 1833 (Glasgow, 1833).

3. Murray's circular calling the above meeting, and his second circular calling the public meeting of 12.12.33, are in the fly-leaf of G.K.S. Minute Books, I.
in the United States of America," resolved to assist George Thompson in the American anti-slavery mission which he was planning to extend the work he had done for the Agency Committee. The public meeting gathered five days later in Wardlaw's Chapel in West George Street, perhaps the most prestigious venue which could have been chosen other than one of the buildings of the Established Church, and an indication of the strength which the Society expected to draw from among the Voluntaries. Indeed these were always to provide the strength of the G.E.S. Predictably, the public meeting adopted all the resolutions set before it. Robert Graham of Whitehill, then Lord Provost, sent word that he would be prepared to become President. The general response was good, especially considering the very high five shilling minimum annual subscription. This was only the first of the series of highly successful meetings which the G.E.S. held in the thirties. The large audiences gathered give remarkable proof of the continuing interest in the anti-slavery movement in Glasgow after 1833.

The favourable response to the appeals of the new Society arose partly from Glasgow's earlier interest in the movements against the slave trade and colonial slavery. The history of Glasgow's contribution to these movements has yet to be written. However, strong local interest

2. See below, pp. 95, 100, 102ff.
4. It should, however, be remembered that all those who attended meetings were not subscribers. Audiences are usually described in the Minutes as 'members and friends' of the G.E.S. The large audiences at meetings described later in this dissertation were no doubt partly attracted by the hope of seeing an interesting debate, possibly a scurrilous one, rather than by initial interest in slavery.
in abolition would have arisen if only because of the city's previous deep implication in slave labour and the slave trade. Glasgow had always been the British city closest to the tobacco-growing areas of America, and also had interests in the rum and sugar trade which have received less historical attention. The Macdowalls of Glasgow had vied in splendour with the Cunliffes and other Liverpool merchant dynasties. Much of the local business community had burnt its fingers over Negroes in 1794, during one of the worst crashes in Scottish economic history. This was produced partly by the failure of the great West India house of Houston & Co., in the midst of an extraordinary speculation aimed at cornering all the slaves in the Atlantic market prior to the expected abolition of the slave trade. Glasgow's investments in slavery had been enormous, and there is no need to resort to the elaborate link of a collective guilt complex to explain the connection between these investments and the city's strong abolitionist movement. This would have followed because of a natural tendency of Glaswegians who had no 'slave' investments to use the issue of slavery as a weapon against political enemies who happened to have invested up to the hilt in the West Indian trade. In fact historians have not noticed the obvious importance of local alignments of this sort. A city like Liverpool, where there was no reason to live except the possession of West Indian or American commercial interests, never developed anything more than a rudimentary anti-slavery movement under the Cropper family. Cities like Glasgow and Bristol, however, which did have substantial West India holdings but also

sections of middle class population without such interests, who could exploit the slavery issue, are of central importance in the movement against the slave trade and colonial slavery. This connection explains the paradox of Glasgow's being the city of the tobacco lords, and also the most important centre of Scottish abolitionism. Support for emancipation was all the greater because of a strong tradition of general philanthropy, which had made Glasgow one of the best-run cities in Britain in the time before the Reform Act, when its political life was controlled by a tiny property-conscious but benevolent oligarchy. Indeed the 'close corporation' structure of local government does not appear to have divorced the authorities from the middle class community.

One of the first two M.P.'s elected for the city on a widened franchise after the 1832 Reform Act, was James Ewing, the last Lord Provost to be chosen before it. The other was James Oswald of Shieldhall, who later cooperated with the G.E.S. as its parliamentary mouthpiece. The thriving group of benevolent organisations in post-war Glasgow may be fitted into the widening

2. Ibid., III, 484.
3. E.g. Minutes for 9.6.35, 28.3.36, G.E.S. Minute Books, I. One of Ewing's successors, John Dennistoun, M.P., was even more interested in the abolition movement, and on one occasion chaired its Anniversary Meeting - Minute for 2.8.38, G.E.S. Minute Books, II. Oswald himself is of interest as having inherited the fortune of his uncle, Richard Oswald of Auchencruive, who had made part of his money in the West India trade. See Eyre-Todd, op.cit., III, 257-264.
structure of Scottish philanthropy brilliantly described by L. J. Saunders.¹ The Scottish temperance movement led by John Dunlop had begun in the city several years prior to 1833, incidentally much affected by Dunlop's close ties with the American teetotal societies.² Perhaps because of its commercial prosperity, Glasgow's philanthropic impulse, in financial terms, was extraordinarily strong. During the cholera epidemic of 1830, for instance, voluntary contributions to relief totalled £10,000, in spite of the fact that £8,000 had already been raised by a compulsory levy for sanitary expenditures.³ Cholera relief is a special case, and some of this money doubtless represented middle class payments for spiritual insurance against the disease. Nevertheless, it is easy to see how a city which was able to produce such sums over and above its regular charitable commitments could support the largest anti-slavery movement outside London throughout the 1830's.⁴ The position was the more favourable in that the local anti-slavery movement had already come partly


4. In spite of this strong philanthropic impulse, however, Glasgow proved incapable of dealing with the problems created by rapid population growth after 1830, and subsequently became one of the worst slum areas of Britain. See W. Ferguson, Scotland, 1689 to the Present (Edinburgh, 1968), pp. 300-302.
under the influence of George Thompson, who was to be the first of the professional British abolitionists to turn to universal emancipation. Not only this, but the city had been only slightly behind Edinburgh in calling for immediate emancipation. A gradual emancipation society had been founded in 1823, the same year as its Edinburgh counterpart, and this was converted to immediatism only three weeks after the famous speech of Dr. Andrew Thomson, and thus a little time before the national movement changed its standpoint. From admittedly imperfect evidence, Dr. Ralph Wardlaw's biographer contends that he came out in favour of universal emancipation at this extraordinarily early stage. Apart from its own special conditions, Glasgow shared in at least one imponderable applicable to all Scottish cities which increased the attraction of the movement for universal abolition. The close similarity between Scottish intellectual conditions and those in New England had already been noted by Miss Taylor. The most extreme leaders

1. G. Thompson, Substance of an Address to the Ladies of Glasgow and its Vicinity, upon the Present Aspect of the Great Question of Negro Emancipation...also, Some Account of the Formation of the Glasgow Ladies' Emancipation Society. (Glasgow, 1833). The body referred to is a different one from the G.L.E.S. organised as an auxiliary to the G.E.S. in December. Some of Thompson's long series of debates with Peter Borthwick, the West Indian agent, were held in Scotland and reprinted in pamphlet form. See A Full Report of the Proceedings at the Meeting of Messrs. Thompson and Borthwick, at Dalkeith, on Friday the 22d March, 1833. Taken from the Glasgow Chronicle (Glasgow, 1833).


3. Ibid., p. 299.

of the American movement came from religious denominations at odds with Calvinist clerical leaders in the Presbyterian and Congregationalist churches. Although Scotland had no substantial body of transcendentalists, or universalists, or perfectionists, the abolition movement was largely composed of men and women from 'Voluntary' denominations similarly at odds with a Calvinist establishment, the Church of Scotland. Although the reasons for church rivalries were not necessarily similar on each side of the Atlantic, it may well be that a consciousness of shared opposition to a theological and clerical vested interest produced unusual affinity between Scottish and New England reformers, which in turn explains the Scottish tendency to accept the most extreme abolitionist standpoints being put forward by religious radicals in America. This was applicable in Glasgow, as in the rest of Scotland. It is no accident that the new Society did not draw its strength from the establishment, but from the Voluntary congregations, which were currently expanding in Scotland. 1 When the G.E.S. wished to circulate material, it had it printed in the local liberal press, and distributed as inserts in the Voluntary Magazine and the Scottish Congregational Magazine. 2 Most major British cities developed an interest in world abolition after the Emancipation Act was

2. Minute for 6.4.36, G.E.S. Minute Books, II.
safely passed, but there were several reasons why Glasgow should have been one of the first to do so.

Similarly, there are good reasons why Edinburgh was the other of these two. The Edinburgh Emancipation Society was founded even earlier than the G.E.S., on October 25th, 1833. It is of great significance for the future history of the Scottish anti-slavery movement that one of the leading figures in its formation was George Thompson. After the passage of the Emancipation Act, Thompson's assets were his oratorical ability, a series of contacts in the abolitionist communities of most British cities, and the reputation of having been the most colourful of the Agency Committee's professional lecturers. \(^1\) His attention had already been drawn to the possibility of campaigning against American slavery by the close friendship he had formed with Garrison during the latter's famous visit to London from June to August. \(^2\) After August Thompson logically moved on to stirring up the British public on the new subject of universal emancipation. As a man of dubious social background, Thompson probably fell short of being acceptable socially to the magnates of the national abolition movement, as the sneers of George Stephen indicate. \(^3\) It was therefore sensible

1. There is no good account of Thompson's early life. I have not seen the unpublished and unavailable Trinity College fellowship dissertation by R. English, 'George Thompson and the Climax of Philanthropic Radicalism, 1830-1842.' There is a short sketch in the D.N.B. See also W. L. Garrison, (ed.), Lectures of George Thompson, with ..., a Brief History of His Connection with the Anti-Slavery Cause in England (Boston, 1836), pp. v-x.


for him to concentrate on the scenes of his past successes in the provinces. He spent the latter part of October in Edinburgh, delivering a series of lectures on the importance of emancipation throughout the world as a natural extension of the ending of West Indian Slavery. The last of his appearances came at a great rally on October 27th. The chair was taken by the most prominent Voluntary minister in the City, the Rev. Dr. John Ritchie of the Secession Church, later a well-known local radical and the city's delegate to the Complete Suffrage Union Conference in 1842. Unfortunately the records of the Edinburgh Emancipation Society are less full than those of its Glasgow counterpart. Its minutes have not survived, and there are serious gaps in the printed reports available, no doubt partly because material has gone missing, but also because the Society, unlike the G.E.S., did not enjoy enough consistent support to make the regular publication of reports in bound form possible. The Society's first meeting, however, altered the nature of Edinburgh abolitionist activity. The old Society for the Abolition of Negro Slavery was reorganised as the Edinburgh Society for the Abolition of Slavery throughout the World, normally referred to thereafter as the Edinburgh Emancipation Society. Moreover, it was now committed to support for the widened cause of universal abolition of the slave trade and slavery. Thompson's intention

3. Minute for 6.12.33, G.E.S. Minute Books, 1; G. Thompson, A Voice to the United States of America from the Metropolis of Scotland; being an Account of Various Meetings held in Edinburgh on the Subject of American Slavery, upon the Return of Mr. George Thompson from his Mission to that Country, (Edinburgh, 1836), p. 3.
had been to muster Scottish support for the visit to America which he was planning on Garrison's invitation, and no doubt it satisfied him that the E.E.S. came out strongly in favour of his proposals. Its early months, like those of the G.E.S., were spent in raising money for his support while he was abroad.\(^1\)

In the absence of regular committee lists, the officials of the Society have been traced by combining available information on the committee of 1834 and 1836. The former is included in the \textit{Edinburgh Almanack} for 1835, under the old name of the Edinburgh Society for the Abolition of Negro Slavery, the body which Thompson converted to his own purposes in 1833.\(^2\) A Committee list for 1836 is printed in Thompson's pamphlet \textit{A Voice from the Metropolis of Scotland.}\(^3\) There is a great deal of overlap between these two committees, but the working officials had changed during the space of two years. In 1834 the Treasurer was the Quaker Alexander Cruickshank, while the Secretaries, at this point four in number, were Dr. Andrew Macaulay, a physician, James Ogilvy, an accountant, Henry Tod, a Writer to the Signet, and the great botanist Dr. R. K. Greville.\(^4\)

1. Ibid., p.5.
2. Oliver and Boyd's Edinburgh Almanack...1835, p. 453.
4. Greville is probably the most distinguished of all active Scottish abolitionists. One of the most important scientists of his generation, as well as an active philanthropist, his most important work was \textit{Algae Brittanica} (Edinburgh, 1830). Although without any undergraduate degree, he was given a Glasgow LL.D. in 1824. He became M.P. for Edinburgh in 1856. There is a relevant sketch in the D.N.B.
In the 1836 committee, Greville and Macaulay had temporarily stopped abolitionist work, while Cruickshank and Ogilvy had become ordinary committee members. Tod remained a secretary along with one William Somerville, Jr., probably a stationer, while the new treasurer was William Oliphant, Jr., a prominent local bookseller. Soon afterwards, however, these officials gave way to other active leaders, some of them simple committee members thrown into prominence by the energy with which they worked in the movement. By 1840 secretarial work was being shared by Greville and Alex Cruickshank. The other most active members were the Quaker John Wigham, soon to be Smeal's brother-in-law, and John Dunlop, later one of the important figures in the Edinburgh branch of the Anti-Corn Law League. An important member who later joined the committee was Charles Ziegler, who owned a bookselling and publishing firm at 14-16 South Bridge, and handled much of the Society's publishing work throughout its history. What material is available on the rest of the committee during the early history of the E.E.S. is presented below. However, Dunlop, Greville, Cruickshank and Wigham were the men in control of the movement at the time of the great division of 1841.¹ In 1846 they still formed a caucus who would transfer representative Edinburgh abolitionist opinion to Broad Street.² The duties assumed by members of the

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¹ Letters preserved in Rhodes House indicate that correspondence in 1840-1841 was equally shared between Cruickshank, Dunlop, and Greville. John Wigham was Treasurer and Ziegler a committee member. Tod was still serving on the E.E.S. Committee in 1846, when he was a member of the Free Church Assembly as well. See Cruickshank to Scoble, 13.6.46, Bod.Brit.Emp.Mss. S18, C15/130.

² Cruickshank to Scoble, 8.6.46, ibid., C15/130a.
Edinburgh committee were always more flexible than those allotted to Glasgow officials. No doubt this resulted partly from the sporadic nature of benevolent activities in Edinburgh. As a centre without constant commercial activity, even its middle class population was not stable enough to guarantee abolitionist interest at any time of the year. Greville once had to explain that a rally in August was impossible because the closing of schools, courts, and university meant that "There is scarcely a Member of Committee in Town." He suggested that Glasgow would be a much better prospect, "being a commercial place always in a state of activity." Indeed it is possibly because those who could leave the city in the summer that the R.E.S. has so much less continuity in its leadership and general activities than the Glasgow Society.

Given this seasonal difficulty, and the basic conservatism of Edinburgh as a city, it is something of a paradox that this was the place where the British movement for universal abolition began. The explanation lies not only in the personal influence of Thompson, though this can hardly be exaggerated, but also in Edinburgh's long tradition of involvement in philanthropic work in general and the anti-slavery movement in particular.

Philanthropy in Edinburgh had an eminently practical tone; during the depression of 1816-1817, the city had the unemployed working classes earn their relief money by cutting out the paths around the Calton Hill, building the scenic road across Holyrood.

1. Greville to Tredgold, 28.4.40, ibid., C7/72; E. Wingham to M. Estlin, 27.7.53, Garrison Papers. Bristol was another community with similar problems. See F. M. Tribe to M. W. Chapman, 11.6.52, Weston Papers.
Park, and levelling Bruntsfield Links for the middle class golfing public. Nevertheless, the pattern of widening Scottish philanthropic interests may also be seen in Edinburgh by the eighteen-twenties.

As for the anti-slavery movement, Edinburgh's traditions were if anything stronger than Glasgow's. In 1791, the Edinburgh Society Instituted for the Abolition of the Slave Trade felt confident enough of public support to embark on publishing the evidence of the Commons' Select Committee, "although the Funds of the Society are at present exhausted by prior Publications." Mass enthusiasm was doubtless curbed by the trials of the 1790's, but the city's first mass meeting for over twenty years, in 1814, was aimed at the abolition of slavery. Ferguson considers this meeting, which raised ten thousand signatures for its petition, to be a classic example of the intertwining of secular and religious radicalism in Scottish reform politics.

By 1823,


3. An Abstract of the Evidence Delivered before a Select Committee of the House of Commons, in the Years 1790 and 1791; on the Part of the Petitioners for the Abolition of the Slave Trade (Edinburgh, 1791), preamble, [p.1].


5. Anderson, op. cit., pp. 442-443. See also T. Pringle, Narrative of a Residence in South Africa, edited by A. M. Lewin Robinson (Cape Town, 1966), pp. ix, xxvii, xxx. Note that Pringle's first literary patron was Josiah Conder, editor of the Edinburgh Star, who introduced the first edition of his Narrative, and himself became one of the most important English journalistic abolitionists as editor of the London Patriot.
the city possessed a well supported Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery. What really brought Edinburgh to prominence in the anti-slavery movement, however, was the reputation it acquired as a centre of extremist abolition viewpoints, due to the pioneering work of the Rev. Andrew Thomson, the evangelical minister of St. George’s Church in Charlotte Square. Thomson converted the majority of local abolitionists to support for immediate emancipation long before this standpoint had been taken in the country at large. The result was the formation of a new society committed to immediatism. By the time of the Emancipation Act, Edinburgh had already shown evidence that its anti-slavery opinion was advanced. It was only logical that the city which had given birth to the first immediatist society in Britain should also organise the first group committed to universal abolition.

By the beginning of 1834, then, both Edinburgh and Glasgow had active new societies working to extend emancipation


2. Anderson, *op. cit.*, pp. 405-406. Although Thomson’s first mention of immediatism at a meeting on Oct. 8th caused the Lord Provost, William Allen, to leave the chair, the city subsequently gave an excellent reception to his speech of the 19th, printed as *Substance of the Speech Delivered...on October 19th, 1830.* See also *Slavery not Sanctioned, but Condemned, by Christianity* (London, n.d., [probably, 1832]), and pp.13-14 above.

throughout the world. In institutional terms their structure was the usual one for a reform society of the period. This may be examined in some detail as being typical of other provincial anti-slavery organisations. Although the two Societies differed because of the greater continuity of anti-slavery work in Glasgow, both worked on the basis of having a treasurer and two or more secretaries. None of these officials was ever paid anything more than his administrative expenses; apart from lecturing 'agencies', there does not appear to have been any case of formal employment being given in an anti-slavery society outside London. The roles of the secretaries were confused, and it was normal for them to divide paperwork between them along whatever lines were most convenient. Thus Murray and Smeal were effectively co-secretaries until the death of the former, while Cruickshank and Greville shared the work of the E.E.S. equally in the 1840 to 1841 period. Beneath these secretaries was an unwieldy committee decorated with the names of city reformers prominent in other causes. Attendance at committee meetings was only full at times of extraordinary excitement, and in effect the Societies operated through small groups of active administrators working over the heads of members less interested in day-to-day administration. The Glasgow Emancipation Society allowed itself the luxury of having three or four vice-presidents, again men well-known in the local reform community.¹ The significant

¹. O.E.S. Reports, 1834-1851 give printed committee lists showing the structure of the committee. New committees were only listed in the Minute Books until 1836. The E.E.S. seems to have abandoned its honorary officials after 1834.
point about this structure is that influence was concentrated largely in the hands of the secretaries. It was for this reason that Smeal and Murray very nearly got off with committing the entire G.E.S., conservative element and all, to support for the Garrisonian faction in the disputes of 1841. The Societies' general policy was sometimes referred back to meetings of all their 'members and friends,' while committees were theoretically elected at anniversary meetings. But the secretaries in each case carried the bulk of correspondence, deciding on their own initiative whom they should write to and who should be invited to speak in Glasgow and Edinburgh. In controversial times this went far towards deciding the way in which local sympathies should be moulded. Moreover, although the resolutions which would go before public meetings were first vetted by members active enough to attend committees, they were originally drafted by the secretaries, and seldom challenged unless they were highly controversial. The same goes for the many printed pamphlets and reports published in Glasgow and Edinburgh after 1833. Finally, the secretaries usually possessed the overwhelming advantage of knowing more about the progress of events in America than their committees, and were unlikely to have their grasp of any anti-slavery subject challenged by rank-and-file subscribers. Apart from the fact that they spent most time doing abolitionist work, this would have followed because all official communications from other societies passed through their 1. See below pp. 214ff.
hands, as did the stream of pamphlets, reports, and periodicals sent from America for distribution in this country. The most striking British example of this superiority of knowledge was Richard Davis Webb of the Hibernian Society, who steeped himself in abolitionist literature to a point where he came to be one of the leading abolitionist writers in America, but the same was also true of the Scottish Societies. Smeal eventually came to edit a paper initially concentrating on the anti-slavery movement, while Dunlop and Greville both became important pamphleteers in their own right. Scottish and other provincial secretaries were never to have the enormous power of the paid secretaries of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, where a man like John Scoble could be left virtually in command of policy at New Broad Street from one Anniversary Meeting to the next. Nevertheless, their power was very real, especially at times of controversy, when the Societies' attitudes could be judiciously weighted in one direction or the other. Because the structure of the Edinburgh and Glasgow Emancipation Societies gave the Secretaries such great power, their background and viewpoints had disproportionate importance in the history of the movement.


2. Smeal's early editing of the British Friend is discussed pp. 251-2, below. Greville was the author of Slavery and the Slave Trade in the United States of America (Edinburgh, 1845), and Dunlop of two anonymous works, American Anti-Slavery Conventions: a Series of Extracts Illustrative of the Proceedings and Principles of the "Liberty Party" in the United States: with the Bearings of the Anti-Slavery Cause on Missions (Edinburgh, 1846), and American Slavery: Organic Sins, or, the Iniquity of Licensed Injustice (Edinburgh, 1846).

3. See below, pp. 452-453.
This was even more so in relation to the schisms within and between the anti-slavery societies with which this dissertation is largely concerned.

During the controversies over these schisms, events in Glasgow and Edinburgh were guided by the Secretaries of the two Emancipation Societies. Their opinions and temperament are thus of the utmost importance. When the lines of future disagreements were laid down during the great controversy of 1840 to 1841, the course of the G.E.S. was governed, at the expense of a spectacular internal battle, by the aggressive radicalism of William Smeal and John Murray. In the Edinburgh Society, however, the reverse process took place, and it remained closely in touch with the Tappanite B.P.A.S.S. The dominant factor in this case was the attitude of Dunlop, Greville, and Cruickshank, whose political radicalism stopped short of the social iconoclasm of the British and American Garrisonians. One of their strongest supporters was John Wigham. However, what is really interesting about the Edinburgh situation as regards Scottish support for William Lloyd Garrison, is not the course of the men's Emancipation Society but the Ladies' one. This had been formed at the same time as the E.E.S., and in constitutional terms was run in exactly the same way. Its secretary was Wigham's wife Jane, William Smeal's sister. Cooperating closely with Eliza Wigham, John's daughter by a previous marriage, she made the Edinburgh Ladies' Emancipation Society one of the most effective Garrisonian organisations in the country after 1841.

In fact the American schisms were to be repeated within John Wigham's household at 5 Gray Street. ¹ While the old man shuddered at the

¹ M. Estlin to M.W. Chapman, 27.10.55, Weston Papers.
heresies of the Garrisonians, his womenfolk were using the secretaryship of the local Ladies' Society in exactly the same way as Smeal and Murray in the G.E.S. In fact the importance of the Smeals and Wighams in the Scottish anti-slavery movement, especially its extremist wing, is such that the two families must be examined briefly in their own right.

Both families originally sprang from the North Country, and moved to Scotland in the later eighteenth century, oddly enough at a time when the number of Friends in Scotland was declining seriously.\textsuperscript{1} It was not until the 1850's that the Society began to revive, perhaps partly due to the work of Smeal in Glasgow, and the Wigham family in Edinburgh, where another Quaker, Alexander Cruickshank, was also deeply involved in the Emancipation Society.\textsuperscript{2} In fact the Edinburgh meeting was stronger than the Glasgow one in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and it was in Edinburgh that Smeal's parents lived during their early years in Scotland. Their work there is obscure, though William Smeal was born in Leith in 1793. The family apparently moved to Glasgow near the turn of the century, since William's brother Robert was actually born there in 1804. It may be an indication of their American interests that Robert was married in 1834 to a Friend from Kinmuck Monthly Meeting in Aberdeenshire,


2. Ibid., pp. 181-182. A guide to the strength of Scottish Friends in this period is that the largest of the four meetings was Glasgow, with fifty or sixty members.
who had emigrated as a girl to New York State but later returned
to this country. As for William Smeal, he remained connected
with Edinburgh Two Monthly Meeting throughout his life, although
his regular occupation was the management of his grocery business
in the Gallowgate. Robert Smeal succeeded to the medical practice
of an unidentified relative, James Smeal, whose life is not recorded
in Friends' House but who was briefly a Secretary of the G.E.S.
until being succeeded by Murray in 1834.¹ It is of the utmost
importance that the Smeal Family came to be connected to the
Wighams of Edinburgh through the marriage of Smeal's sister Jane
to John Wigham in 1840. Jane had previously been secretary of
the Glasgow Ladies' Emancipation Society.² This match was partly
a product of Smeal's Edinburgh connections, but the ties between
the families had no doubt been strengthened through John Wigham's
cousin in Glasgow, Anthony Wingham, a much respected G.E.S. Vice-
President whose occupation is described as "manufacturer", and
whose later Aberdeen history suggests that he was a wholesale
ironmonger.³ In fact the Wighams were a considerably more
numerous family than the Smeals, and much more printed information
on their history has been preserved. The head of the family was

1. Family information from typescript Quaker Biographical
   Dictionary, Friends' House; business information from
   Glasgow Post Office Directories, 1834-1841.

2. Address to Prudence Crandall, Appendix, G.E.S. Reports,
   1835, p.42.

3. Glasgow Post Office Directory, 1834; Aberdeen Almanacks,
   1846.
Cuthbert Wigham of Cornwood, Northumberland, who had been converted from episcopacy in 1734. The first of his family to come to Scotland had been a grandson, John Wigham, who settled in Edinburgh as a manufacturer after an extraordinary life as a minister, during which, incidentally, he had travelled in America from 1794-97. His sons were Anthony Wigham of Glasgow and Aberdeen, and John Wigham of Edinburgh, who was in partnership in a shawl-manufacturing business with his cousin a third John Wigham. The former John Wigham, usually described as John Wigham, Jr., was the one who became prominent in Edinburgh radical circles. The latter John was the abolitionist leader. One of his daughters by his first marriage was Eliza Wigham, who never married, and was still a force in Edinburgh philanthropy in the 1870's. Again, it is important to notice the relationship between the Wighams and other Quaker families. John Wigham, Sr., had married Jane Richardson of Whitehaven, which connected the family with the Richardsons of Newcastle, a tie producing much Garrisonian suspicion that the


3. J. Wigham to H. W. Chapman, 4.1.47, tried to sort out this confusion for American abolitionists. She remarked that all the Wighams lived within five minutes of one another "and are on terms of the closest love and friendly intercourse."


5. Mr. W. H. Marwick informs me that one of his early recollections is being taken to see Miss Wigham, as a small child. See also Eliza Wigham: a Brief Memorial, pp. 10-16.
loyalty of Jane and Eliza Wigham was being subverted by New Organisation and the free produce heresy. On the other side of the coin, Eliza Wigham's cousin Mary, Anthony Wigham's daughter, eventually married into the Edmundson family of Dublin, itself related to Richard Webb's wife Hannah. The Wighams were thus in close contact with the Irish abolitionist Friends led by Webb and Richard Allen. Eliza Wigham spent many summer vacations in Dublin, and the remnants of the Wigham family, after John's death without further issue, actually moved to Ireland permanently. This gives a fascinating insight into the importance of family ties within the community of Friends, but it also had clear implications for the homogeneity of the abolitionist movement. The same was true of the Edinburgh abolitionist group, which was joined in the fifties by two highly important ex-Friends disowned for their marriages. One was Elizabeth Pease Nichol, the Darlington Garrisonian leader who married a Scottish professor of astronomy. The other was Priscilla Bright Maclaren, the second wife of the great Edinburgh radical, Duncan Maclaren. All came from a solid middle class background, best typified by the sound but unspectacular concerns of the Wighams and Smeals.

1. Ibid., p. 3; A. Paton to Garrison, 7.2.51, Garrison Papers.
3. Information from Mr. W. H. Marwick, & Mr. George Milligan, Friends' House.
This substantial background is typical of the leaders of the two Scottish emancipation societies founded in 1833. Complete lists of the committee of the Glasgow Emancipation Society are available, while committee membership of the E.E.S. may be reconstructed from what fragmentary evidence is available. With the use of Post Office Directories, local Almanacs, and other ready biographical guides, it is possible to work out the occupation of a high proportion of the abolitionists who were prominent enough to take committee places. Of the principal officials of the G.E.S. from its foundation in 1833 until its disastrous division in 1841, at least two were landed gentry. These were John Murray of Bowling Bay, its Secretary from 1834 onwards, and Robert Grahame of Whitehill, its President, who was Provost of the city in 1834. As already mentioned, the two other Secretaries to hold office were a surgeon and a grocer respectively. The office of Treasurer was held by James Johnston, and after his emigration to Canada, by James Beith. The former was probably a provision merchant, and the latter an umbrella-maker and partner of Beith, Allen, & Co., "manufacturers," who had become a burgess in 1816. The vice-presidents during most of this period were Anthony Wigham, and the Rev. Drs. Wardlaw, Heugh, and Kidston, all Voluntaries outside the Scottish Establishment. In 1839 they were joined by Baillie William P. Paton, a future leader of the anti-Garrison party in Glasgow, described as a "commission merchant" or broker. The committee itself

always included about thirty per cent of ministers, and these will be discussed presently. Of the ordinary lay committee members, thirty nine were appointed and served for varying periods prior to 1841. Due to the Scottish love of commonplace names, there is some difficulty in identifying a few of these, but there are only three whose names definitely do not appear in the Post Office Directories, and can therefore be assumed to have lacked professional or business interests. It may be noted in passing, however, that only seven of the seventeen members added during the alliance with the Chartists in 1841, had the respectability of having interests substantial enough to be advertised in the Directory for that year.¹

To return to the pre-1841 Committee, the first obvious fact is that all owned or managed professional or commercial businesses, though none was substantial enough to have become famous in national history in the same way as men like Gurney or Sturge did in England. Secondly, the thirty-nine members had the remarkable total of one newspaper editor, two "writers" and four booksellers or publishers, including George Gallie, of Renfrew Street, who did most G.E.S. publishings during the decade. Apart from these, professional occupations only accounted for four members, one teacher, one accountant, one doctor, and James McCune Smith, the Negro medical student at the university.²

¹. G.E.S. Reports, 1841. See also Appendix C.
². Smith, a medical graduate of Glasgow, later became one of the most important Negro abolitionists, successively editing the Colored American and the Anglo-African. He is sketched briefly in the D.A.B., but well deserves a full modern biography.
All the rest who have been definitely identified came from substantial business backgrounds, ranging from shipping agents, and spirit dealers, to the most interesting of all, Robert Kettle, a cotton yarn merchant. The substantial level of prosperity of the group is indicated by the number who are listed as burgesses of the city, in a majority of cases by purchase. Although problems of identification are created by the duplication of Scottish names, only one of the thirty-two lay members of the committee at large who were neither gentry nor professional, was definitely not a burgess. This exception was William Smeal, although his father, who founded the family grocer business, had become a burgess by purchase as early as 1804. As for religious backgrounds, no formal attempt has been made to trace those of the lay committee members, since a good guide to the Society's religious composition is given by the denomination of the ministers who sat on the committee up to the schism. Of twenty-two who did so from 1840 to 1841, including vice presidents, nineteen have so far been identified. The remaining three are James MacTear, Edward Campbell, and Robert Thompson. These are not mentioned in the Ecclesiastical lists of Oliver and Boyd's Edinburgh Almanac and National Repository, and it is therefore probable that they were Baptists, Methodists, or Unitarians, whose ministers are not included in this work. The denominations of the others were overwhelmingly Voluntary. Only four were established ministers, one of whom was the Paisley radical

1. Information from Anderson, Burgesses....of Glasgow.
Patrick Brewster, four were congregationalists, one a Baptist, one a Wesleyan Methodist, and three Relief Secessionists. Four were United Secession Church ministers. Voluntary ministers were thus in an overwhelming majority, especially those of the specifically Scottish denominations, the Relief and United Secession Churches. Since only one of the Establishment ministers is mentioned in the Free Church Fasti, it is clear why the G.E.S. later took so rigid a standpoint over the Send Back the Money campaign. In composition, then, the G.E.S. Committee prior to the 1841 split were substantial middle class. In religious terms, they were overwhelmingly Voluntary in sentiment.

A comparable picture is presented by the committee of the Edinburgh Emancipation Society, although problems of identification in this case have been much greater. The lists used have been those for the 1834 and 1836 committees mentioned above. Since no annual lists are available, a working guide to composition has been produced by examining the background of those abolitionists who appear on the Committee in one or both of these years.

Like the Glasgow Society, the Committee of the E.E.S. was overwhelmingly middle class, although apparently drawn from groups closer to the professional establishment of the city.

1. Clerical members have been traced through the Ecclesiastical Lists in Oliver and Boyd's Edinburgh Almanac and National Repository, 1834-1841; Fasti Ecclesiae Scotticaneae; occasional references in G.E.S. Minute Books. W. Ewing (ed.), Annals of the Free Church of Scotland, 1843-1900 (2 Vols., Edinburgh, 1914). II, 76-363, provides a Fasti for the Free church;

The 1834 Committee list, unlike the 1836 one, was decorated with an honorary President, the Evangelical lawyer Lord Moncrieff. It also includes three Vice-presidents, of whom one is Henry Cockburn, the Scots law-lord, one the important Establishment minister the Rev. Dr. Robert Gordon, who went to the Free Church at the Disruption, and one a Scottish episcopal minister. The secretaries and treasurers for each year have already been examined. Apart from the ministers who were Vice-presidents, the Committee contained eight clerical members of whom one remains unidentified. Their denominations reflect the Glasgow picture of overwhelming Voluntary strength. One belonged to the Reformed Presbyterian Church, one to the Associate Synod of Original Seceders, and one, the Rev. William Goold, was a Cameronian. Four, the Rev. Drs. Peddie and Ritchie, William Peddie and Edward Halley of Leith, were ministers of the United Secession Church. As for lay members, thirty three served in 1834, 1836, or both years, not counting James Ogilvy and Alexander Cruickshank, who were ordinary committee members when not serving as Secretaries. Of these three may be identified as substantial gentlemen by the titles "Esquire" or "Honourable", or the names of their estates. One, Captain Hugh Rose, was an ex-military officer. Ten came from the Edinburgh legal establishment, being identified as Writers to the Signet, Advocates, or members of the Society of

1. Identification from ecclesiastical lists in Oliver and Boyd's Edinburgh Almanack; Fasti Ecclesiae Scotticæ; Ewing (ed.), Annals of the Free Church.
Solicitors before the Supreme Courts. One was an Accountant, one an "agent," and three medical doctors. One is described as an "engineer," and eight have been traced with reasonable accuracy as owners of commercial establishments. Three are as yet unidentified.¹

The conclusion to be drawn from this limited sample of Committee members must be that the E.E.S. leadership was if anything more dominated by the substantial middle class than the G.E.S. The difference is that it seems to have had a higher proportion of professional members, drawn particularly from law and medicine, always two of the most important establishment groups in Edinburgh society. However, the denominations of the clerical members suggest that the E.E.S. was composed of men from religious backgrounds other than the Established Church of Scotland. Apart from the Rev. Dr. Gordon, all the ministers involved were Episcopalians or Voluntaries. Although full information is not available for the lay members, it is probable that they mirrored the loyalties of their clerical leaders. Dr. Greville was a Scottish Episcopalian, John Wigham and Alexander Cruickshank Friends, and the Accountant H. D. Dickie a Baptist. Edinburgh Committee membership is probably best characterised as dominated by men who would have been firmly entrenched in the local social establishment if it had not been for their unfashionable religious affiliations. Both the

Scottish Emancipation Societies were thus predominantly middle
class and Voluntary in composition. However, it is probable
that it was because Edinburgh abolitionists numbered more men
from the established and socially conservative professions that
they took a less radical course than Glasgow when the British
abolition movement divided in 1841.

As regards the Scottish anti-slavery movement as a whole,
some conclusions may be drawn from this evidence. First,
its leadership was characteristically middle class, but it was
by no means as prosperous as that of the later British and
Foreign Society set up in London. This is not to say that
the Committee members of the Glasgow and Edinburgh Societies
were by any means poor, although in the case of the G.E.S.
the ones who remained after the division of 1841 may have
been slightly more so. However, there was nothing in the
Scottish movement to rival the merchant princes who dominated
the B.F.A.S.S. The strong grip of the Friends on the Broad
Street Committee has already been demonstrated, and among
these Friends were some of the wealthiest men in England.1
To take two examples, Joseph Sturge, the richest corn-merchant
in the midlands, and Joseph Gurney, whose fortune laid the
foundations of Barclay’s Bank, are very far removed from little
provincial Quakers like Smeal and Cruickshank, and the other

1. Temperly, op. cit., pp. 49-53; P. Emden, Quakers in
Commerce, A Record of Business Achievement (London, 1989),
passim, gives a thorough account of the more successful
Quaker businesses of the nineteenth century. The families
of Penso, Sturge, Richardson, Gurney, Lloyd, and Allen
round whom this narrative centres were all represented
on the B.F.A.S.S. Committee.
who served with them in the two Scottish Emancipation Societies. However, it is very far from being the intention of this dissertation to argue that the schism in the British movement leads back to any sinister social division between provincial and national leaders. On the contrary, it seems that these schisms resulted from strong cultural traditions in the provinces, which had different contacts with America, and responded negatively to London attempts at imposing abolitionist uniformity. For one thing, the difference in wealth was one of degree. It did not represent a lateral division within British society as a whole, but a vertical division between one part of the country and another. In purely Scottish terms, the leaders of the G.E.S. and E.E.S. were extremely well-off, and the fact that Scotland was a very much poorer country than England meant that their relative wealth and status within Scotland was coequal to that of the Sturges and Gurneys within England. On a national level, such middle class interests were homogeneous. The later British division between Tappanites and Garrisonians was not produced by lower middle class distrust of an upper middle class, and there is no need to construct an elaborate argument to prove that it was, since the relative differences between English and Scottish society were so great as to make the concept of such a crude alignment meaningless.

However, there is one allied conclusion from what data is available on the composition of the Scottish Committees, which is highly relevant to the divisions within the British movement as a whole. The emphasis on Voluntaries among the men the G.E.S.
and E.R.S. selected as their leaders suggests a reason why the Scottish movement should have developed differently from the London one. Although technically similar to the English Dissenters who were in control of the Broad Street Committee, Scottish Voluntaries operated in very different conditions from their anti-Establishment colleagues south of the border. It may be that the constant sense of struggle produced by the period of the Voluntary Controversy and the Ten Year's Conflict placed Scottish Voluntaries very much closer to the extremists of the American movement than the English Dissenters in the P.F.A.B.S., who were led by Friends accustomed to express their peculiarities in strictly religious terms.

In Scotland, however, the consciousness of constant opposition between Voluntaries and Establishment, which as far as ministers went might genuinely affect livelihood, may well have caused the Voluntaries to place themselves in the rôle of the persecuted, similar to the self-rôle chosen by the leaders of the American movement. A recent perceptive essay argues that what caused these leaders to adopt an extremist position was the very opposition they faced, which hardened and extended their views on the rottenness of society, as well as giving certain emotional satisfactions.¹

It may well be that the Scottish abolitionists, largely dominated by Voluntaries, actually took a Garrisonian standpoint, highly unpopular in British terms, because of the emotional satisfaction of extending the bitterness of old conflicts with the Establishment.

In the same way, their tendency to extremism was heightened by the ever-present factor of tensions between their provincial world and that of London, which reinforced any existing tendency on the part of the Voluntaries, or some of them, to choose standpoints at odds with those of the country at large. This was probably even more the case because of the attraction of projecting inter-regional rivalries into philanthropy, at a time when they were being ironed out in political terms. As far as the Voluntary-dominated Societies are concerned, it may be that Tomkins' suggested psychological explanation of the movement in America is also applicable to Scotland. Acting on the consciousness of constant opposition from London, which was a general factor in Scotland, the preponderance of the much-persecuted Voluntaries must have made the tendency to adopt highly unorthodox standpoints in the Scottish abolition societies even stronger. Although the Edinburgh Emancipation Society remained basically Tappanite after 1841, Dr. Ritchie, the old campaigner of the Voluntary Controversy, went for Garrison. Although this is a more amorphous factor than the clear wish of the Voluntaries to use the slavery issue against the Establishment and the Free Church, for good reasons of selfish institutional advantage, it is one which merits serious consideration in studying the history of the Scottish movement.

The discussion of Tomkins' work leads on to the question of whether the Scottish cases shed any light on the current controversy over the background of the American abolitionists
and the origins of the anti-slavery movement. As in the American case, it may be that the elements who were interested in the cause are so disparate that evidence can be found to support widely varying theses. This is partly due to the problem of discovering the composition of rank-and-file support for the movement, but would arise in any case from the differences within the committee of each Society. As regards the theses of Donald and Skotheim, it is probably generally true that both the G.E.S. and the E.E.S. were led by middle class elements who were rising rather than any form of displaced elite. In Glasgow the dominant element are minor manufacturers or merchants profiting from the phenomenal industrial growth of the city during this period. The Edinburgh leadership came from substantial nonconformists in business and the professions, the rising and self-confident class just outside the establishment and best exemplified by Duncan Maclare, "the living voice of Scottish middle-class dissenting radicalism." If collective guilt is used as an explanation for the movement, this may well accord with the situation in Glasgow, where the city's West Indian and American interests, past and present, left it much to atone for; but it is hardly applicable to the growth of universal abolition sentiment in Edinburgh. If economic interests are involved, they were piecemeal ones rather than those of a class,


2. Ferguson, op.cit., p. 306.
though the basic attitude that slavery was wrong may well be a bourgeois one. It would be true to say that publishers like Oliphant, Ziegler, and Gallie would gain from selling the pamphlets a controversial abolition movement was sure to send to the presses; no doubt the sewn muslin manufacturer, the linen and woollen draper, and the cotton yarn manufacturer listed on the G.E.S. Committee had interests in textiles which affected their attitudes to U.S. slavery, as had the two woollen drapers on the E.E.S. Committee; it is highly likely that the many grocers involved had developed their anti-slavery attitudes as part of their attack on the inflation of sugar prices by the West Indians, and simply extended these attitudes into their campaign for universal abolition. These are all economic interests, but they are widely disparate. Insofar as such interests lie at the root of the Scottish abolitionist movement, they form an agglomeration of individual interests, rather than any cohesive class or group motive which may be seen as causing Scottish middle class interest in American slavery. It is not even true to suggest that Glasgow and Edinburgh abolitionists developed interests in the comfortably remote problem of American slavery to divert attention from their own abominable treatment of the working class they controlled. Within the very narrow limits of laissez faire benevolence, these men did what they could in philanthropic causes at home as well as abroad. The most extraordinary facet of their charity was its universalism. In any Scottish city, a small coterie of
middle class philanthropists controlled the committees of the whole gamut of societies concerned with charity at home and abroad.¹ If any conclusion may be drawn from the composition of the Scottish emancipation societies, it is much less ambitious than theses which purport to explain the origins of the movement in the United States. It is that until information on each individual abolitionist, leader and rank-and-file, becomes available, it will be impossible to give a full answer to the question of why British and especially Scottish reformers gave so much attention to the abolition of American slavery.² It is possible that such information could be gathered for the leadership groups of the Societies where records have been preserved, but it is impracticable to calculate the composition of the audiences who gave their informal support to the movement by attending the public meetings which the abolition committees organised.

What it is possible to study adequately is the way in which the abolitionist leaders differed over the matter which should be discussed at these public meetings. Aside from

1. Saunders, op. cit., p. 234, cites two examples, Robert Kettle (my cotton yarn merchant), and Malcolm Macfarlane. See Appendices A and B. This complexity of course reflects the American benevolent movement. See C. S. Griffin, Their Brother's Keepers, passim.

2. This is similar to the American conclusion of Miss Flandeland, in 'Who were the Abolitionists?', J.N.H. XLIX, 1964, p. 115. She remarks - "The sheer number of abolitionists, the thousands of unacknowledged and unsung, the myriad of personalities, and the vast diversity of exigencies which moulded each individual's decision to join the movement makes it impossible to label or categorize them."
Miss Fladeland's thesis, the best interpretation of the American anti-slavery movement is the contemporary one of Emerson, who discovered an irresistible tendency towards disintegration in the reform movement as a whole. Its stress on the views of minorities produced divisions and subdivisions designed to accommodate the views of the most idiosyncratic individuals - "They defied each other, like a congress of kings, each of whom had a realm of his own to rule, and a way of his own that made concert unprofitable." The British anti-slavery movement, like the American one, was to be prostrated by schism and counterschism in 1841. At this point, the Scottish and other provincial societies took a very different standpoint from the national British and Foreign Society in London. The examination of this division and its repercussions is, in essence, the subject of this dissertation. It must be approached with two conclusions on the origin and composition of the two major Scottish Emancipation Societies in mind. First, their clerical membership was drawn predominantly from the Voluntary churches, Scottish denominations with somewhat different characteristics from their English Dissenting counterparts. Secondly, both the O.E.S. and E.E.S. were founded in 1833, building on strong traditions of local anti-slavery interest, and taking standpoints more advanced than those adopted by English abolitionists at the same time.

The result was to foster an assumption of local autonomy within the anti-slavery movement which was to have disastrous effects when British abolitionists were presented with a clear-cut choice of American allies in 1841. The strengthening of this tradition of autonomy, and the growth of early friction between the Scottish cities and London abolitionists, is the subject of the next chapter.
CHAPTER III

GARRISONISM AS ORTHODOXY, AND THE BEGINNINGS OF THE REGIONAL REVOLT AGAINST LONDON

In many ways the years from 1833 to 1839 were the golden age of British anti-slavery. The memory of the success of 1833 was still fresh. The cumulative triumph of 1838 also falls within the period. The disastrous schisms of the next decade were still in the future. Outwardly the movement presented a picture of purposeful unity. In no area of the country was this period of anti-slavery prosperity so marked as north of the border. The abolition movement was the golden child of the Scottish reform world, and in a decade which saw no London society continuously active the new Glasgow and Edinburgh Emancipation Societies canvassed tirelessly for universal liberation of the Negro. Their pamphlets, their reports, their public meetings, followed one another with a regularity unmatched elsewhere in Britain at this stage. Even in cities so much smaller than London, both could count on audiences of two or three thousand for meetings on more attractive subjects. Even when the Glasgow Society met publicly in the Trades Hall to present a favourable address to O'Connell, a crypto-political action which split the Committee and lost a certain amount of support in the city at large, the audience drawn was reported as three thousand.¹

¹ Minutes for 19.9.33, 23.9.35; G.E.S. Minutes Books, I; G.E.S. Reports, 1836, pp.13-16; A Full and Correct Account of the Meeting Held in Hope Street Baptist Chapel, to Present the Emancipation Society's Address to Daniel O'Connell, Esq., M.P. (Glasgow, 1835).
Indeed the thirties were a time of massive anti-slavery interest throughout Britain. The difference from the Scottish situation was that the movement's support was nowhere institutionalised, after 1833, to the extent achieved by the two main Scottish societies. Even in London, as in most national reform movements the focus of interest, no anti-slavery society remained continuously in action from the successful campaign against West Indian slavery up to the beginning of the forties. This by no means implied that national anti-slavery interest had waned. The difference was partly that once the focus had moved to America, where relatively little concrete action could be taken by abolitionists, the need for a national society to channel such action was less. Thus the study of the movement in the thirties shows that a national society could only flourish at times when the current subject of interest did give an opportunity for work concerted by some form of national institutional structure - in 1833; in the years of the fight against apprenticeship; and again from late 1839 onwards. By then British interest in world abolition had risen to heights creating a need for some vehicle through which pressure could be brought on the governments concerned, either through lobbying at Whitehall, or by memorialising diplomats from guilty foreign nations. In all these cases, some form of national body was required to express the opinions of the country's abolitionists.

Thus the thirties show intermittent attempts at the formation of new national anti-slavery societies, which only succeeded
permanently in 1839. In the spring of 1834, the young radicals of the Agency Committee transformed their old organisation into the so-called British and Foreign Society for the Universal Abolition of Slavery and the Slave Trade. Stephen, the Croppers, and Joseph Sturge remained its leaders—men at best dubious as to the wisdom of Thomas Fowell Buxton's compromise with the planters, conscious of the need for keeping a close eye on their recent opponents in the Caribbean, and also au fait with the newer wide interest in world abolition of slavery. After its foundation, however, the new Society prospered badly. Probably this was because of the lack of support from grass roots at a time when there was no specific issue on which provincial abolitionists had the need or opportunity of making their ideas known through London. The situation was changed by the light shed on the atrocities of the apprenticeship system by Joseph Sturge's Caribbean visit in 1836-37. On his return, he was

1. H.R. Temperley, 'The British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society', Chapter II, passim. I am greatly indebted to him here, and indeed on all aspects of the movement in London.

2. Referred to for convenience as the Universal Abolition Society, in distinction from the later British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, founded in 1839.

3. Temperley, pp.29-35.

4. H. Richard, Joseph Sturge, pp.133ff. Sturge's findings on apprenticeship were published as J. Sturge and T. Harvey, The West Indies in 1837, being the Journal of a Visit to Antigua, Montserrat, Dominica, St. Lucia, Barbados, and Jamaica, Undertaken for the Purpose of Ascertaining the Actual Condition of the Negro Population of those Islands (London, 1838).
instrumental in forming the new Central Negro Emancipation Committee in November, specifically aimed at doing the same propaganda and coordinating work in the fight against apprenticeship as Stephen's Agency Committee had done against slavery. Coexisting with the now dormant Universal Abolition Society, it led the British abolitionist public to final victory with the abolition of apprenticeship in the West Indies. Again, the concentration was on national guilt and direct implication in the sins of the planters themselves. There would be further issues of importance within the Empire in the future; but they would be peripheral, and none would have the compelling importance of the questions of imperial slavery and apprenticeship. For the moment, the fashionable anti-slavery interest was universal abolition, at which the next British national anti-slavery society formed was aimed. This was the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society itself, a body emerging from the remains of the old Universal Abolition Society, which finally succeeded in surviving as a permanent London focus for national anti-slavery agitation. Possibly because of an unwillingness to allow the West Indians to escape public vigilance a second time, more centrally as a product of rising interest in world abolition, the B.F.A.S.S. survived in comparative prosperity up to the Civil War, and indeed remains extant in skeleton form at the present day. Its formation required a series of meetings in the spring of 1839, at which its

Pacifist lines of action were threshed out. Meanwhile, the old Society for the Mitigation and Gradual Abolition of Slavery throughout the British Dominions dissolved itself on April 28th, after lingering on in a sort of permanent sine die adjournment ever since 1833. The Central Negro Emancipation Committee was dissolved a little later, over June and July, and the B.F.A.S.S. remained as the sole ostensible leader of the British anti-slavery movement, apart from Thomas Fowell Buxton's more specialised African Civilization Society. The shopping and changing of the London societies of the mid-thirties was over, and from this point on the British and Foreign Society was to be permanently active at national level. Although often at loggerheads with its less conservative provincial colleagues, it was always there as at least one possible focus for British abolitionism.

While the London societies were organising and reorganising in this way, the Scottish abolitionists continued their work on both fronts, against the apprenticeship ghost of slavery, and in favour of world abolition, especially American abolition, whenever an opportunity was presented. At this stage, the operations of the British anti-slavery movement were generally harmonious. Outwardly, there was little sign of the disastrous series of


schisms which a combination of frustration and a willingness to use anti-slavery disagreements as a cover for other rivalries produced in the forties. Even in the cities which were to produce the most vociferous Garrisonianism of later years the disagreements which arose were normally friendly. After all, the thirties were the era of good feelings in the American anti-slavery movement, and there was little reason why British abolitionists should take it upon themselves to start internal squabbles without encouragement from their colleagues across the Atlantic. The future British growth points of ideas more radical than those of the B.F.A.S.S. were still dormant. The Hibernian Anti-slavery Society was only formed in 1837, and in any case began its history in close contact with London and under the guidance of Joseph Sturge's rich and respectable friend Richard Allen. The Bristol and Clifton Ladies' Anti-slavery Society was only constituted as late as 1840, and even then was still nothing more than a rubber stamp for London petitions; its days of ferocious bluestocking leftistism were not to come until the fifties. As for individuals, even George Thompson, the leading Garrisonian of the next decade, was still fashionable enough because of his Agency


Committee lectureship and his near martyrdom in Boston for his alarming enthusiasm for universal reform to remain unnoticed even by the most respected and conservative abolitionists in England.  

As went Thompson, so went Scotland. The two major Scottish societies spent the first few years after West Indian emancipation working in close cooperation with the Quaker nabobs of the London Committee. Joseph Sturge, symbolically, remained a corresponding member of the Glasgow Emancipation Society until his resignation when its Garrisonian colours began to show ominously in 1841.

The cooperation of the Glasgow and Edinburgh Societies was of course most effective in the campaign against West Indian apprenticeship. As soon as the first flush of enthusiasm had waned after 1833, it became clear that the radical agonising over the mistake of compromising with the planters had not been misplaced. The apprenticeship system, it was painfully obvious, simply gave the West Indians scope to renew slavery under a legal form.

1. The Universal Abolition Society, for instance, had gladly accepted his services in trying to raise provincial support. See Thompson to G.E.S. Committee, 18.2.34, 17.4.34, 6.8.34, G.E.S. Minute Books, I.

2. G.E.S. Reports, 1834-40 conveniently print lists of the Committee for each year. Sturge to Smeal, 25.1.41, his letter of resignation, is mentioned as having been discussed by the Committee in Minute for 25.3.41, G.E.S. Minute Books, III, and is reprinted in Resolutions of the Public Meetings of the Members and Friends of the Glasgow Emancipation Society; Correspondence of the Secretaries and Minutes of the Committee of the Said Society, Since the Arrival in Glasgow of John A. Collins.... in Reference to the Divisions among American Abolitionists (Glasgow, 1841).

3. Mathieson, British Slavery and its Abolition, pp.273-300. Care must be taken to avoid seeing the apprenticeship as a system working uniformly in each of the British islands. The most balanced modern assessment is in W.L. Burn, Emancipation and Apprenticeship in the British West Indies (London, 1937), pp. 362-381 and passim.
Twenty million pounds of British taxpayer's money had been given to these men, and their only return was to make a semantic distinction to disguise the system they had been paid to abandon. If anything, the new slavery was all the more cruel and more vicious because of the planters' awareness that the end-point of full control over their labour force had been set by the imperial legislature, and that only a limited period remained for them to draw their final profit from their slaves. Sturge's publication of the findings of his trip was the turning point. Thereafter, as abolitionist orators revealed new apprenticeship atrocities, and the anti-slavery public grew in awareness of the way in which it had been duped, fervour for abolition rose if anything above the uncomplicated levels of 1833. Organisation was even more perfect now, and as the last attack on the West India interest began, the future renegades of the Scottish and Irish societies lined up firmly behind the conservative leaders of the English movement.

As in the emancipation struggle of five years before, the key to success in attacking apprenticeship was grass-roots provincial pressure on Westminster. Joseph Sturge's Central Negro Emancipation Committee was an even more efficient version of the old Agency Committee, and its role in the national movement was to coordinate the all-important petitions and pressure on local M.P.'s which the provinces alone could provide. The Glasgow and Edinburgh Societies alike spent 1837 and 1838 faithfully holding

1. e.g. G.E.S. Reports, 1837, p.24.
meetings to pass resolutions against the conduct of the West Indians, and sending deputations to reason with the Scottish M.P.'s. They drew up mammoth Scottish petitions, and forwarded them to their London allies for presentation; the Glasgow Emancipation Society petition of 16th April, 1833, alone had 102,200 signatures. In the final stages they sent their own delegates to join English and Irish abolitionists in collective lobbying at Westminster. Delegates from all the country's anti-slavery societies would meet in London, hold mass meetings in Exeter Hall, and march solemnly through London bearing copies of their memorials, resolutions, remonstrances, and petitions to present to Lord Gleenlag or whichever minister it was thought most strategic to try to influence. The whole exercise presented the capital with striking proof of the national support for repeal of the apprenticeship clause, and the Scottish delegates were there with the rest. Naturally the officials of the two main Scottish societies were most prominent in enterprises involving as much expense as this, but this is not to


2. G.E.S. Reports, 1833, p.14; Smee to Stokes, 15.9.37, loc.cit.; Minute for 15.4.38, G.E.S. Minute Books, II; J. Murray to E. Wright, 20.7.37, Elizur Wright Papers, Library of Congress.


say that the apprenticeship agitation in Scotland was confined to Glasgow and Edinburgh. By one means or another, smaller Scottish cities managed to send single delegates to the gatherings organised by the Central Emascipation Committee to demonstrate its support to Parliament. Before this development began, interest in apprenticeship had been so widespread that George Thompson had found it worthwhile to lecture in places as obscure as Saltcoats, Irvine, and Ballater on one of his forays north of the Border. "Give me the battering ram of opinion", he appealed to British abolitionists at large, "and let me bring the prison house forever to the ground". Possibly because of his personal influence, possibly because the apprenticeship issue was a clear-cut one, and the rivalries of the next decade had not been fully developed, Scottish reformers answered his demand and solidly supported London efforts. The British anti-slavery movement presented a superficially united picture during the campaign against apprenticeship, apart from very occasional signs of undue radicalism from the West of Scotland.

Thus if only in view of the united support they gave to the national effort over apprenticeship, it is fair to say that up to

1. e.g. Paisley and Aberdeen. See Minute for 17.5.38, G.E.S. Minute Books, II.

2. Cutting from Aberdeen Herald, 22.4.37, in Thompson Scrapbooks, IV; Ms. list of lecture appointments for July, 1837, in G.T.'s hand, ibid.

3. G. Thompson, Speech.... at the Great Anti-Slavery Meeting Held in Hood Street Chapel, Newcastle, on Thursday, January 25, 1838 (Gateshead, 1838), p.10.

4. Murray to Scoble, 12.6.35, Bod.Brit.Eng.Ms.S.18, C20/29, insists that unlike the members of the Universal Abolition Society, the G.E.S. had always been convinced that "nothing but full and complete emancipation would answer."
the end of the decade the Scottish emancipation societies, and indeed the Hibernian Anti-slavery Society as well, worked in close cooperation with the later more conservative London abolitionists. However, there are certain signs, even at this stage, that neither the Glasgow or Edinburgh Society would meekly follow a southern lead unless it suited them to do so. As early as 1834, both societies had avoided becoming auxiliaries to the new Universal Abolition Society. In the same year, the Glasgow Emancipation Society stipulated that any funds they forwarded to the London society should be used for purposes they themselves specified - that is to finance the trip of their agent George Thompson to the United States. Four years later, the G.E.S., under Thompson's influence, carried out a temporary merger with the new Aborigines' Protection Society, a move entirely outside the policy of the national movement. Finally, the most important pointer of all to the future independence of Glasgow and Edinburgh abolitionists was their close personal connection with Thompson himself, and his strong influence north of the Border.

On its formation, in 1834, the Universal Abolition Society set about organising provincial support on the traditional lines followed by Victorian reform societies. The London or national society would act as coordinating agent and propagandist for the whole, while existing or new provincial societies would become its 'auxiliaries'. The central society would act as treasury for the cause, spending nationally collected money on pamphleteering and press work, as well as being the vehicle for presenting nationally organised petitions to parliament or individual politicians.
The auxiliaries would carry out the humbler work of collecting what funds they could to forward to London, and whipping up grass-roots support for petitions and less formal measures organised by the national society. Naturally this system was of great appeal to small struggling local societies without the funds or support to issue their own propaganda or organise their own petitions except as contributions to more grandiose ones - but the sacrifice of independence and prestige were less attractive to societies in a more flourishing state. So it was in the British anti-slavery movement, and when the Universal Abolition Society offered the Scottish societies the opportunity of becoming its auxiliaries in 1834, the offer was declined.

At this stage, both the Edinburgh and Glasgow Societies already had large independent organisations of their own. Both had thought of agitating for universal abolition before London abolitionists evidently pirated their novel reform idea, and in any case had funds and numerical membership adequate for their propaganda needs, and indeed greater than anything the London Society could boast at that time. This was not to imply that they were out of sympathy with the aims of the new national Society. On the contrary, the Committee of the Glasgow Emancipation Society at least agreed that its aims were the same as theirs, and resolved unanimously to act "in concert" with the committee in London. This was only agreed, however, on the basis of including an escape clause stating that they would only continue to do so as long as they were "satisfied" with its proceedings.

1. Minute for 20.3.34, G.E.S. Minute Books, I.
They also resolved "that such funds as they may transmit to the said Committee shall be applied exclusively to the support of George Thompson's Mission to the United States." 1 As for the "Address to the President" with which the Universal Abolition Society had begun its onslaught on American slavery, and which it hopefully enclosed with its circular to potential auxiliaries, the members of the G.E.S. Committee refused to accept some of its expressions and in some cases to sign it. John Murray of Bowling Bay, their somewhat cantankerous Secretary, was commissioned to write off to London asking for its meaning to be clarified, and suspiciously enquiring why some of the great anti-slavery names of the past were not among its supporters. 2 Murray's letter produced nothing more than an evasive reply from the clerk of the London Secretary, John Scooble, the latter bite noire of the Garrisonian bloc of abolitionists - and Glasgow continued its career without being an auxiliary of the new national society. 3 The attitude of the Edinburgh Society is more obscure, although it was also approached by the Universal Abolition Society. 4 In effect, however, it retained the same independence as its sister society in Glasgow. Like the G.E.S., it had been founded to campaign for universal abolition before the Universal Abolition Society, after a series of lectures by the inevitable George Thompson. 5 Already

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
3. J. Crisp to Murray, 29.3.34, G.E.S. Minute Books, I.
4. Thompson to Committee of G.E.S., 18.2.34, ibid.
5. Thompson, A Voice to the United States of America from the Metropolis of Scotland, etc., p.3. See also above, pp. 53-55.
prosperous and well organised by the spring of 1834, it retained its independence throughout the decade. Even in 1839, when the larger B.F.A.S.S. appealed to the provinces for support, the only reply from the Edinburgh Society was a polite letter from its Secretary, the prominent Edinburgh reformer Dr. Robert Greville, indicating that the Society could not unite with the London one due to dissension in the Committee over the wisdom of the B.F.A.S.S.'s pacifist policy. Many members were as opposed to war and bloodshed "as the Friends themselves" - but the West African Coast was evidently considered a case apart. "The law", concluded Greville, "must be made a terror to evildoers." Thus both the larger Scottish societies retained their independence in the thirties, no doubt increasing their inclination to follow their own course in the next decade by doing so.

A second sign of growing independence among Scottish abolitionists came in 1838, with the temporary merger between the Glasgow Emancipation Society and the new Aborigines' Protection Society. This society had been founded in 1836 to look after the interests of aborigines outside the old British slaveholding territory in the Caribbean, including the population of British India. Its leaders were the philanthropists Montgomery Martin and Sir Culling Hardley Smith, its paid agent, not unpredictably, George Thompson. Once success in the fight against apprenticeship had come, Thompson, penniless as usual, was again left with his

talents as a reform agitator unemployed, and took the chance of a lecturing contract with the new Aborigines' Protection Society. He held this post until he progressed to his agency for Joseph Pease's British India Society after its foundation during the next year.¹

As usual, Thompson was left with the role of travelling endlessly round the country, appealing for the support of known philanthropists, holding public meetings, and lecturing vividly to existing anti-slavery societies. In Glasgow he evidently felt that his personal influence was great enough for his colleague Montgomery Martin to be presented to the G.E.S. with a view to its becoming united with the Aborigines' Protection Society.²

At a public meeting on 6th September, 1838, after spirited speeches by Thompson and Martin, support for the aims of the national society was whipped up, largely by playing on the wrongs of British India. The local Society was reconstituted as the Glasgow Emancipation and Aborigines' Protection Society.³ In fact the union only seems to have remained effective for just over a year, and the last mention of it appears in the minutes for October 1839, when Sir Culling Hardley Smith appeared at a meeting to memorialise Lord Melbourne on the plight of the Amistad captives.⁴ After this the

1. Offprint from India Review, Jan., 1843, p.7, copy in B.P.L.; Minute for 13.5.39, G.E.S. Minute Books, II. A number of cuttings on Thompson's work in this area have been preserved in Thompson Scrapbooks, V.

2. Minute for 6.9.38, G.E.S. Minute Books, II.

3. Ibid., G.E.S. Reports, 1838, pp.53ff.; Public Meeting. Junction between the Glasgow Emancipation Society, and the Aborigines' Protection Society, from the Glasgow Argus, of Sept. 16th, 1838 (Glasgow, 1838), passim.

Glasgow Society presumably shifted its interests towards Thompson's new agitation for British India Reform. Perhaps it also became more interested than ever in the American situation as the news of the exciting if distressing schisms among American abolitionists began to filter over to Britain. But it is significant that it was the Glasgow Emancipation Society, the least conformist of the anti-slavery societies in the forties, which followed a course quite outside the B.F.A.S.S. policy of non-cooperation with the Aborigines' Protection Society. The only other Society to take this line was Newcastle, which later became the centre of Henry Highland Garnet's free produce movement. Like Glasgow, it was to differ from the B.F.A.S.S. in later years, and like Glasgow it was at this stage closely under the personal influence of George Thompson. For both Societies, this small friction of 1839 provides a pointer to future independence.

But for the Scottish societies, the final and most obvious hint that they would later come to split violently with the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, was their close connection with George Thompson, the later leader of the group of British reformers who supported the Garrison wing of the American movement instead of the more moderate elements with whom the Broad Street Committee cooperated. Thompson's career covers almost every aspect of reform history from the thirties to the sixties, and the


absence of any study of his life leaves an obvious gap in nineteenth century British biography. By the time he went to America in 1834 as the agent of the Glasgow and Edinburgh Emancipation Societies, he had made himself famous in British reforming circles. Thompson's life and background were humble, his success clearly that of a self-made man. This fact is of immense importance since it may have placed him beyond complete acceptance by the nabobs of the London reform societies, and endeared him proportionately to provincial radicals who were only too conscious of the same slight. His background was among the lower middle class of the North country, his religious training Wesleyan. His hatred of slavery may lead back to his father's experience in the crew of a slave ship. By the time of the West India Emancipation crisis, he had painstakingly educated and equipped himself as a first-rate public speaker and debater. During the months from his first employment in the cause in 1831 until the passage of the Emancipation Act, he toured the provinces tirelessly, stirring up constituency opinion to support the campaign at Westminster. During this time, he was the only lecturer employed continuously by the Agency Committee. Partly because of his

1. Biographical Sketch and Portrait of George Thompson, Esq., (Reprinted from the India Review, Jan., 1843, Calcutta), pp.1-3; Offprint from Norwich Advertiser, n.d., 1846, copy in Boston Public Library; Obituary on "The Late George Thompson", in British Museum; W.L. Garrison (ed.), Lectures of George Thompson, with ... A Brief History of his Connection with the Anti-Slavery Cause in England. (Boston, 1838.), Introduction, pp.v-x.
widely publicised series of debates with Peter Borthwick, the agent of the West Indians, and partly because he was never involved in the compromise between Thomas Fowell Buxton's moderate followers and the planter group over apprenticeship and compensation, he gained a reputation as the man whose contribution to the success of 1833 was second only to that of Clarkson. A young man of twenty-nine at the time when the Emancipation Act passed, he naturally continued using his talents in the same field - and with British nonconformists wakening to their universal moral responsibility for world abolition, he had no difficulty in finding employment. It was at this stage that he began agitation in Glasgow and Edinburgh, where the two societies joined forces to send him off on his first trip to America in 1834.

Thompson's anti-slavery mission was the most adventurous episode in an adventurous career. But his reforming activities went on for forty years after his return. Up to the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863, he continued to lecture the British on their duty to remonstrate with America on slavery; after 1840 he was particularly active, when he came to embody the Garrisonian viewpoint in Britain, especially in the provinces. Since his easy witticisms and fluent platform moralisation were equally effective in many reform causes, and since he was enough of a product of his

1. Liberator, 22.3.34. Some of Thompson's debates with Borthwick are published in W.L. Garrison (ed.), Lectures of George Thompson, but there are also several editions printed in 1833.

2. Thompson to Garrison, 5.11.33, in Liberator, 11.1.34; Thompson to Garrison, 27.3.34, Garrison Papers.
generation not to wish to departmentalise benevolence, he became deeply involved in other movements. Like Garrison, Wright, and the Tappans, he frequently spoke in favour of the peace and temperance reforms, although unlike them he never became a leader in the societies formed for these purposes. 1 In British history as such, Thompson is best known for his work for the Anti-Corn Law League, whose agent he was in 1842 and 1843, and for his agency for the British India Society. 2 From his agency for the Aborigines' Protection Society in 1838, he developed an interest in land reform in India, which eventually led him into becoming a lecturer for the new British India Society. In the same cause, he soon became editor of the British India Advocate, and eventually rose to occupy a seat on the Court of East India Proprietors. 3 Again, his first visit to India in 1843 was widely publicised at home, especially among abolitionists, who quickly saw the connection between cheap free cotton from India

1. G. Thompson; A Voice to the United States of America from the Metropolis of Scotland, etc., pp.33-34; G. Thompson, The Speeches Delivered at the Soiree in Honour of George Thompson, esq., in the Renfrewshire Tontine Inn, on the Evening of Wednesday, 25th Jan, 1837 (Paisley and Glasgow, 1837), pp. 8-13; C.C. Burleigh (ed.), Reception of George Thompson in Great Britain (Boston, 1836), pp.103-117.

2. London Patriot, 13.1.40; G. Thompson, Paradise Regained by Sir James Graham, Bart. (Carlisle, 1842); J.H.Bell, British Folks and British India Fifty Years Ago. Joseph Pease and his Contemporaries (London, 1891), pp.20-21, 77-79.

and the downfall of American slavery.\(^1\) In the fifties, after
his short and not especially successful spell as M.P. for Tower
Hamlets, Thompson crowned his career by becoming editor of his
own reform paper, The Empire.\(^2\) After its failure, he was to
spend the Civil War years working to whip up British support
for the North. On his final visit to America in 1864, he had
the new sensation of finding himself socially acceptable there,
and being received in the White House by Lincoln. He remained
mesmerized by Garrison's great personal charm throughout his life,
and the friendship between these two erratic men was still close
when Thompson died in poverty in 1873.\(^3\)

For the future history of British abolitionism, for the
course later taken by the Scottish anti-slavery movement, and
for the connection between Britain and America in general,
Thompson's "anti-slavery mission" of 1834-1835 is of central
importance. His trip would never have taken place but for
Garrison's tour in 1833. Delighted at meeting so radical a
colleague, Thompson developed a deep attachment to the American,
and appeared on platforms with him on several occasions. Garrison,
with some justice, claimed in retrospect that it was he who had
persuaded Thompson to consider going on the mission in the first
place.\(^4\)

1. G.E.S. Reports, 1843, pp.42ff.; British Friend, 31.1.44,
   30.3.44.
2. Anti-Slavery Advocate, Feb., 1855. The Empire eventually
   went bankrupt. It was probably because of this that Thompson
   made his second trip to India, from which he returned in desperate
   financial straits, and critical health. For this and other
details of Thompson's career in the fifties, see below, p.164-165.
3. Filler, The Crusade against Slavery, p.76; Thomas, The Liberator
   p.429; W.P. Garrison et al., Garrison, IV,335.
Again, Garrison's visit had the usual result of making everyone hate everyone else with renewed enthusiasm; he went home leaving the well-meaning rank-and-file philanthropists of Britain filled with pious horror at the machinations of the Colonization Society and its agents. They had been more prepared for this by the exposures of the eccentric West Indian/Scottish evangelical Captain Charles Stuart, and the American Negro minister Nathaniel Paul, than Garrison would admit. — but in either case it became more urgent for the conscientious British abolitionist to do something concrete about American slavery once the comfortable hope that the Colonization Society was dealing with the situation had been dispelled. No doubt this made them all the more willing to provide funds for Thompson's mission.

The sudden realisation of the moral importance of American slavery leads on to a second point arising from the preparations for Thompson's departure. He was the only one of all the British abolitionist visitors to the United States who was specifically


delegated and financed as the agent of the members of the British anti-slavery societies. Even John Scoble's trip in 1842 was made as the result of the decision of a Committee constantly criticised for not being au fait with the kind of grass-roots anti-slavery enthusiasm which sent Thompson on his way. Unlike the visits of individuals like Joseph Sturge or J.J. Gurney, who came from income brackets high enough to pay their own way, or like those of the Rev. James Cox or E.S. Abdy, who were combining abolitionism with other business, Thompson's was the result of true popular demand for British action on a foreign problem. His support came from mass interest among the men of relatively modest means who collected the money to pay his expenses and stipend. The striking indication of the course the British anti-slavery movement of the future was to take is the fact that this rank-and-file demand for Thompson's services was almost wholly concentrated in Scotland. Glasgow and Edinburgh were cities where his personal influence and reputation were already great, which were known for a tradition of anti-slavery radicalism often in advance of the rest of the country.²

By the time Garrison set sail for Boston, the Emancipation Act was safely through Parliament. Thompson spent most of the

1. For instance in W. Estlin to S.H. Gay, 23.7.53, Gay Papers, Columbia University Library.

time before he followed him across the Atlantic proselytizing against the Colonization Society in Scotland.¹ The new Edinburgh and Glasgow Emancipation Societies were founded before the enthusiasm over the West Indian success had had time to wear off, the Edinburgh one on 25th October, 1833, and the Glasgow one a few weeks later, on 12th December.² The Glasgow Female Emancipation Society was also formed at this time.³ Each of these new bodies was only too glad to add to its dignity by adopting Thompson as its agent in America. He was a figure with national prestige, and the concept of an active attack on American slavery within its own territory was an attractive one. Even when the national Society added to Thompson's funds, later in the year, he was careful to reassure the Secretary of the G.E.S. that he would always regard himself as "peculiarly your representative."⁴ Since great interest was being shown at this time in the fate of Prudence Crandall's school at Canterbury, Connecticut, the ladies of the two Scottish cities instructed Thompson to carry goodwill presentations to her—"a piece of plate from Glasgow and three specially bound volumes from Edinburgh."⁵ Their credentials were presented to him at mass

1. Thompson to Garrison, 5.11.33, in Liberator, 11.1.34; Thompson to Garrison, 27.3.34, Garrison Papers; Minutes for 12.12.33, 8.1.34, 4.3.34, G.E.S. Minute Books, I.
2. Minute for 12.12.33, G.E.S. Minute Books, I; G.E.S. Reports, 1835, pp.9-15; Liberator, 12.4.34. See also above, pp.999.
4. Thompson to Committee of G.E.S., 18.3.34, loc.cit.
5. Liberator, 13.9.33.
farewell meetings, the proceedings of which were triumphantly published and distributed throughout the country. The audiences of two thousand and upwards who came to these meetings are a good indication of the interest the anti-slavery mission aroused in Scotland. ¹

Thompson left Liverpool on board the Champlain on 15th August, 1834. ² By the time the ship docked in New York five weeks later, Garrison had made American abolitionists well acquainted with Thompson's previous labours in the cause. ³

Once through the Customs with Miss Crandall's silver salver, he was able to write to anti-slavery men in Boston on the warm welcome he had received from their counterparts in New York. ⁴

He also mentioned, however, that he had been "somewhat curiously received by the other dwellers in this commercial metropolis." Actually the other boarders in his hotel had greeted his arrival by organising an impromptu meeting, passing resolutions deploiring the presence of "foreign incendiaries" in the house, and forcing Thompson and his family to look for lodgings elsewhere. ⁵

1. See for instance Minutes for 24.1.34, G.E.S. Minute Books, i.
2. Thompson to R. Purvis, 9.8.34, Garrison Papers.
3. Liberator, 10.8.33, 11.1.34, 22.3.34, 12.4.34, 3.9.34.
5. Liberator, 27.9.34.
Thompson's reception was bad. It would have been even worse if he had arrived sooner—when the United States had arrived off New York at the height of the anti-Tappan riots of the previous July, its passenger Harriet Martineau had recorded that the Captain and Pilot made it clear that if Thompson had been on board, they would not have risked being responsible for his lynching by allowing him to go ashore. These two New York responses set the tone for his reception in the United States until his hurried departure in the following November. Convinced abolitionists were to welcome him eagerly, while the proslavery response was a violent reaction to the whole idea of interference from abroad. No single incident illustrates this twin effect of British agitation against American slavery so clearly as Thompson's 1834-35 visit.

Thompson's tour is covered factually in the standard works written after the Civil War. After a lecture at Lowell, and an appearance at the meeting of the New England Anti-Slavery Society, he spent October touring Maine uneventfully and with moderate success. It was only in the early days of the next month that he first encountered nativist and/or proslavery violence; on his return to Lowell, the Town Hall, in which he

was speaking, was surrounded by a crowd of "mobocrats" who threw several missiles through the windows. One of their brickbats passed so close to Thompson's head that "a slight change of its direction would have silenced the eloquence of our friend forever." Thereafter he remained in the Boston area for some time. His lectures became a weekly Bostonian event. After attempting to help Garrison in his efforts to subvert the moderate Congregationalist-inspired American Union, he left for short visits to New York and Philadelphia at the end of February. On a second visit to Philadelphia in March, the press of abolitionists to hear Thompson was so great that the galleries in the church where he lectured partially collapsed. Soon afterwards, he made for upstate New York to campaign in Troy and Albany, on his way to appear at the anniversary of the American Anti-Slavery Society in mid-May. From then on Thompson remained in Boston, making short missionary excursions to neighbouring towns. His most important expedition involved


3. H. Benson to G.W. Benson, 27.3.35, Garrison Papers; A. Buffum to Garrison, n.d., in Liberator, 4.4.35.

ten day's stay in Andover, trying to persuade the students to follow the example of Lane and secede from their seminary on anti-slavery grounds.¹ This apparent exercise in anarchism brought feeling against Thompson to a violent level. One of his meetings was again broken up by rioters in Abington in September, and by the following month Boston itself was unsafe for him.² A series of demonstrations culminated in the great mob of October 20th, which just stopped short of martyring Garrison. The handbills distributed round Boston on the morning of the same day prove conclusively that it was not Garrison himself but that "infamous foreign scoundrel" who was intended for the tar-kettle. In fact the only thing which saved Garrison was a discreet shout of "He is an American!" from the crowd.³ By this point most Boston abolitionists were convinced it was unjustifiable to risk Thompson's valuable life any longer.⁴ Thompson himself afterwards wrote that ".... my life was sought.... I left your country under the conviction that I could not go abroad without the almost certain prospect of death."⁵ The truth was that distrust of Thompson as a foreign emissary, combined with existing feeling against abolition, ended by making it impossible for the Boston authorities to protect him. Having

1. Liberator, 18.7.35, 25.7.35, 1.8.35, 8.8.35.
2. ibid., 10.10.35, 17.10.35.
5. Thompson to H. C. Wright, 25.11.35, Garrison Papers.
kept his intention of departure secret, he rowed out to
the New Brunswick packet on November 8th, leaving his family
to visit relatives in the South, presumably incognito. ¹

The tragedy of the British attempt to aid the American
anti-slavery movement is condensed in the various responses
to Thompson's visit. These fall into two clear groups.

There was no middle ground of opinion on the character of
"the mad missionary." ² On the one hand, convinced
abolitionists, from a basis of complete agreement with Thompson,
hopefully eulogised his powers of persuasion. ³ Apart from
Garrison, and female devotees like the Weston sisters, even
more restrained men like the quiet Rhode Islander Henry Benson
and the Unitarian minister Samuel J. May, felt he was doing
good work. ⁴ All these individuals were convinced that he
could not fail to convert large numbers of scoffers to correct
anti-slavery principles. In fact the issue was far too emotive
for thinking in these terms to be realistic. If Thompson
converted any Americans at all, it is highly likely that they
were strongly biased towards abolitionism before hearing him —

1. A.W. Weston to M. Weston, 30.10.35, loc.cit.;
   Garrison to H.B. Garrison, 17.11.35, Garrison Papers;
   Garrison to H.B. Garrison, 9.11.35, ibid.

2. Extract from New York Courier and Inquirer, 11.5.35,
in Liberator, 30.5.35.

3. S.J. Forten to J. M. Smith, 8.9.35, Child Papers,
   B.P.L.; G.L.L. Row to Garrison, 27.10.34, Garrison
   Papers; Fragment of Diary of Debora Weston, Weston Papers,
   entries for 23.5.35, 1.8.35; H. Reed to Garrison, 15.7.35,
in Liberator, 18.7.35; Ms. draft of Philadelphia A.S. Soc.
   Report for 1835 (?) in possession of American Antiquarian Soc.,

4. Diary of Debora Weston, entry for 8.11.35; H. Benson to
   G.W. Benson, 25.2.35, Garrison Papers; May to Garrison, 24.11.35,
   ibid.
or else too young to know any better, as in the case of
the Andover twelve-year-olds he triumphantly led to
secession from their seminary in July. The second response
to Thompson, from the opposition, was if anything strengthened
as time passed. The proslavery press and public not only did
not mellow towards him as his tour went on, but became more
rabid in denouncing him as his conduct and character gave them
further support for their prejudices against abolitionists.
Thompson's visit was a godsend to the supporters of slavery,
since there were several directions in which he could be
pilloried where other abolitionists could not. First, he
showed even more than the usual abolitionists' lack of diplomacy.
Secondly, his own past was not entirely free from moral lapses.
Thirdly and most important, his foreign origins made it possible
for the proslavery forces to bring the whole weight of anti-
British prejudice to their aid. In fact the Glasgow and Edinburgh
ladies who sent Thompson on his way could hardly have found a less
suitable way of helping their friends in America.

In 1834 Thompson was the only man on the American anti-
slavery scene who came anywhere near Garrison in the tactlessness
with which he attacked men revered for their respectability and
holiness. After his denunciation of the faculty at Andover
Theological Seminary, a moderate paper gloomily prophesied that
Thompson would go on to subvert the colleges at Amherst and
Cambridge, and closed by bewailing the evil times which had now

1. G.L.L. Row to Amos Phelps, 21.11.34, Phelps Papers,
B.P.L.; Phelps to C. Phelps, 18.7.35, ibid.
fallen upon the abolition movement. "It is now all I,
and no attempt is made to enlist the good and wise men of
the land. ALL IS AIMED AT THE RABBLE." Even
so, this reaction was insignificant compared with the
controversy which had raged all summer over Thompson's earlier
attack on the London Baptist minister Dr. Cox, a Committee
member of the Universal Abolition Society. Cox had politely
refused to attend the Anniversary of the American Anti-Slavery
Society, on the grounds that he wished to maintain a position
of neutrality, not in terms of the "great principles" the
Society advocated, "but with regard solely to the political
bearings of the question, with which as a stranger, a foreigner,
and a visitor, I could not attempt to intermeddle." He may
also have been influenced by a warning from his Southern
Colonization friend Dr. Bethune that "he was not answer
for his life if he attempted to speak." Thompson's response
to the message of apology was to denounce Cox and his colleague
Hobson scathingly that even Garrison felt it discreet to
expurgate the comments in his later edition of his friend's
American speeches. Although Thompson's stand was later
supported by some British abolitionists, possibly with existing
anti-Baptist prejudices, it could only damage the cause so far as
American opinion went, especially with Garrison simultaneously

1. Extract from Boston Courier, in Liberator, 1.8.35.
2. J. Rankin to Thompson, 26.5.35, in Thompson Scrap-
Books, I; cutting from New York Observer, n.d., ibid.;
Liberator, 16.5.35, 23.5.35; Cf. W.L. Garrison (ed.),
Letters and Addresses by George Thompson, p.74.
holding Cox up to ridicule as "this servile and timorous man." ¹ In this and the Andover incident alike, there is no reason to suppose that Thompson was doing anything other than putting forward what he saw as the truth. But nevertheless the result was simply more ammunition for his opponents.

Again, the Glasgow and Edinburgh Societies had been unaware of lapses in Thompson's past which made him a useful figure for the proslavery body to illustrate the depravity of abolitionists in general. He later admitted that in 1829 he had embezzled £80 on leaving his then employer. By 1839 his repentance was quite clear; he had paid £150 back, including interest, and could count his former master as a friend. ² But the way in which news of this crime leaked out in 1834, when the proslavery press published affidavits swearing to it, harmed the anti-slavery cause much more than outright confession would have done. ³ The calculated risk of the London Committee, who knew of the embezzlement but still endorsed Thompson's mission, did not pay off. ⁴ Even abolitionists came to distrust him in the end because of the rumours together with his own and Washington Street's refusal to deny or excuse them. ⁵ No formal denial could be published, and when a form of explanation was

1. Glasgow Chronicle, 6.3.36; extract from Birmingham Reformer, in Liberator, 5.5.35; Minute for 1.3.36, G.E.S. Minute Books, I; G.E.S. Reports, 1836, p.23; London Patriot, 1.6.36, reprinted in C.C. Burleigh (ed.), The Reception of George Thompson in Great Britain (Boston, 1836), pp.116-132; Liberator, 30.5.36.


4. E. Wright to Weld, 18.11.35, in Barnes and Dumond (eds), op.cit., I, 246.

5. ? to Caroline Weston, 3.11.35, Weston Papers; S.E. Sewall to Garrison, 27.10.35, Garrison Papers.
offered by the New England Anti-Slavery Society, the issue
was simply avoided by stating that (unspecified) accusations
had been made against the Englishman. His credentials,
references, and anti-slavery biography were appended in the
hope that they would serve to restore his good name. 1 In
fact the situation remained as obscure as it had been before.
The proslavery press was still left with ample scope to snipe
at Thompson as a felon, who had come on his anti-slavery mission
as a convenient way of escaping English justice. 2

Finally, a bias was created against Thompson by the
ironical factor that the support which had made his trip
possible came from British abolitionists. The easiest way
in which the press could attack Thompson was by stirring up
feeling against him as a foreigner. Generally speaking, British
backing for the abolitionists probably lost them more support
than it gained by making it possible for proslavery writers to
whip up patriotic distrust of their opponents. Throughout their
publications, references to British plots to subvert American
democratic institutions are common. 3 This is not to say that

3. Liberator, 31.7.40, 20.11.40; W.P. Garrison et al.,
   op.cit., I, 497-498; M.W. Chapman, "Memorials of Harriet
   Martineau", loc.cit., II, 294; S.J. May to Mary Carpenter,
   29.12.43, May Papers, B.P.L.; Garrison to Webb, 1.3.45,
   Garrison Papers; Vindict on the Liability of the Abolitionists
to Criminal Punishment, and on the Duty of the Non-Slaveholding
States to Suppress their Efforts (Charleston, 1835); J.H. Hammond,
Two Letters on Slavery in the United States, Addressed to Thomas
   Clarkson, Esq.; (Columbia, 1845), passim.
nativism was strong enough in the U.S.A. for foreigners to be unpopular sui generis. The crux of the matter was that where welcome visitors like the Rev. Dr. Cox discreetly refused to interfere in domestic politics, a foreign abolitionist missionary was by definition bound to do so—at least as far as the popular mind was concerned, as the handbills circulated before the Boston riot, and later in Salem, indicate. Theoretically it was possible to draw a distinction between different kinds of interference. The Salem Landmark, for instance, saw no objection to "moral influence, "but severely criticised "an improper and unconstitutional interference." In fact this distinction was much too subtle to be accepted by the public, and it was easy to claim that Thompson's aim was to "subvert our settled institutions", especially since Charles Stuart had spent the summer of 1834 campaigning in the West, and it was convenient to dismiss both by denouncing foreign interference. Again, the much reprinted letter of the Rev. Dr. D.D. Whedon of Wesleyan University to the Editor of Zion's Herald compared Thompson to the Papist emissaries then producing horror in the American Protestant world, and went on to play on the revolutionary legacy of anti-British sentiment—"England is mighty only from the retinue of slaughtered and enslaved nations

1. A copy of the Boston handbill is reprinted in J. Thomas, op.cit., p.198. The only copy of the Salem handbill, dated 30.10.35, is preserved in Thompson Scrapbooks, III.

2. Extract from Salem Landmark, in Liberator, 15.11.34. This argument was repeated after the 1851 Springfield riot against Thompson in G.W.Simmons, Public Spirit and Mobs. Two Sermons Delivered at Springfield, Mass., on Sunday, February.23, 1841, after the Thompson Riot (Springfield and Boston, 1861), p.27.

3. Extract from New York Courier and Inquirer, 13.9.34, reprinted in Liberator, 11.10.34.
in her train; she has been, and still is, a GIGANTIC SLAVER."¹

In this and a second letter, Whedon brought up the old argument that the slavery Thompson was trying to overthrow had been inflicted on America against her will by British tyrants, a claim which was later used against him elsewhere.²

However much Thompson's visit did to create interest in Britain, in American terms it simply played into the hands of the proslavery party. Not only this, but Thompson's chance of rising above the various criticisms levelled at him was lowered by the opportunities his mission provided for satire. The spectacle of a handful of old Scotswomen sending Thompson across the Atlantic to overthrow the whole fabric of American society was too rich for the wittier proslavery journalists to resist. The New York Courier and Inquirer, as usual, outdid everyone else in its attacks. The ladies of the Glasgow Female Emancipation Society it described as "caring old women", and "the old pussy-cats of Glasgow." Its finest effort was the suggestion that Thompson

"represents Miss Lucretia McTabb and a bevy of old maids at Glasgow, who pay his board, wages, and travelling expenses, to lecture the citizens of the United States on their domestic duties; one of the most urgent of which is, to lodge him in Bridewell, until he give security to keep the peace — after which, he ought to be packed up like a quintal of codfish, and sent back to the Caledonian damsels who exported him."³

1. Reprinted in Liberator, 25.2.35.

2. Whedon's second letter is reprinted in Liberator, 28.3.35; extract from New York Courier and Inquirer, 11.5.35, in Liberator, 30.5.35.

Attacked and ridiculed in all these directions, Thompson could hardly be expected to convert anyone to anything. The direct effect of his visit on the American situation was minimal. He had little success in winning support for the cause, and only managed to produce another slight stiffening in the lines of division between proslavery and abolition groups. On the one hand, the opponents of abolition intensified their attacks, encouraged by the special opportunities for abuse provided by Thompson. On the other, the abolitionists closed ranks in response to the press and mob attacks on their hero, with Garrison's writings in the Liberator and elsewhere becoming even more fanatical.

The only effect of danger and oppression on his followers seems to have been to encourage them to persevere. Their tendency was to interpret the new violence of their opponents as conclusive evidence that the monster was at last in its death throes. Thompson himself felt that the mob violence against him was a symptom of the moral cancer produced in democracy by slavery, and called for a greater effort towards abolition as the only way of saving the ideals on which the great Republic was founded. In effect the events of his


tour did nothing but confirm both American parties in the opinions they had held before he set foot on United States soil. A single positive effect of his mission may have been that the experience he had gained as a leader of the 1833 struggle was passed on to American abolitionists, especially through the work of organising support in the smaller New England towns. Even here, however, Thompson's positive achievement is lessened by the fact that the basic administrative framework of the American Anti-Slavery Society had been laid down before his arrival in America.¹

Where Thompson's mission did have a real effect in making converts to the anti-slavery cause, and to Garrison's faction within the cause, was in Britain itself. On this side of the Atlantic, anti-slavery principles were fashionable, and persuasion was still possible. After 1839, Weld's great work became the fountainhead for almost all anti-slavery information on platforms and in pamphlets.² Before then, appropriately lurid data on the American situation was scarce, and the 2,400 items of pamphlets and newspapers, and three volumes of placards and cuttings which Thompson hoarded and


brought back with him came to perform a very real function.  

With the fund of rather distorted knowledge he drew from these documents and his own experience, he became highly qualified to keep British audiences enthralled with vivid indictments of republican slavery. He had proportionate success in attracting large crowds and encouraging them to form local abolition societies, or alter their existing ones for purposes of helping the American movement. In Scotland alone, during the short time from his return until he became absorbed in the apprenticeship struggle in July, he held one or more enthusiastic meetings in Greenock, Dumbarton, Bonhill, Stirling, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Montrose, Aberdeen, Dundee, Ballater, Airdrie, Kilmarnock, Saltcoats, Irvine and Galuskirk. 

At each of these towns, a new anti-slavery society was formed, or an existing one galvanized into action. In several cases, remonstrances were subsequently adopted for sending to America, sometimes by the "inhabitants" of the area, sometimes by individual


2. See C.C. Burleigh, (ed.), op.cit., passing Report of the Discussion on American Slavery in Dr. Wardlaw's Chapel, between Mr. George Thompson and the Rev. R.J. Breckenridge. (Glasgow and Boston, 1836.); A Voice to the United States, from the Metropolis of Scotland; Cuttings and Ms. Memoranda in Thompson's hand in Thompson Scrapbook, VI; Aberdeen Herald, 15.4.37, 22.4.37. All these accounts of meetings show Thompson's use of his specifically American information.
congregations or societies. 1

The areas where Thompson was most successful on his return were the areas where his influence was to be strongest in the future. This influence was to be a radical one.

In studying the divisions in the British movement, the interest of Thompson's trip is that his strengthened friendship with Garrison was centrally important in leading him to take an 'Old Organization' line in 1840, when British abolitionists split up to take sides on the American schisms. 2 It will be argued in this study that much of the disunion in Britain leads back to regional and provincial distrust of the London New Organisation British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. But it was also due to the personal factor that parties in the strong Glasgow and Edinburgh groups were prepared to follow the lead of the Garrison-trained George Thompson, whom they continued to regard as "their" agent after their great effort to send him to America in 1834. Thompson was a Garrisonian, he had much abolitionist opinion in Scotland in his pocket, and so the course he took in 1840 must have had a considerable effect on the Scottish movement. The same was true of Dublin, another point of contact with American.

1. Voice to the United States from the Metropolis of Scotland; Remonstrance on the Subject of American Slavery by the Inhabitants of Dumbarton and the Vale of Leven (Glasgow, 1837); Letter on American Slavery. The Association of Congregational Churches in Aberdeen and Banff Shires, to their Congregational Brethren in the United States of America (Aberdeen, 1837, fully reprinted in Aberdeen Herald, 15.4.37); The Earnest Expostulation of Christians of All Denominations in Montrose and its Vicinity, with the Christians of the United States of America (Montrose, broadsheet, 1837); J.R. Campbell to Elizur Wright, 4.8.37, Elizur Wright Papers, Library of Congress.

2. See below, Chapters IV and V, passim.
radicalism. Richard Davis Webb, the Dublin Quaker printer, was confessedly converted to support of the abolition movement by Thompson. Throughout the forties he was influenced by him as well as by his numerous American friends.

From the first sign of the schisms to the time of his death, in spite of occasional radical suspicion of his willingness to compromise for political reasons, Thompson threw his great anti-slavery influence behind Garrison and his extremist followers. Although clearly upset at the disunion, he took a Garrisonian standpoint on the admission of the Massachusetts female delegates, to the 1840 World's Anti-Slavery Convention, where the question was first raised in Britain. In the late forties and throughout the fifties, fortified by Garrison's visit in 1846, and his own second American tour in 1850, Thompson was behind the series of attempts to form a national Garrisonian Society, to break the British and Foreign Society's claimed monopoly of anti-slavery orthodoxy in this country. The short-lived Anti-Slavery League of 1846, the Manchester Anti-Slavery League which seceded from the Manchester Union in 1854, and the Emancipation Committee of 1859, were all formed partly at Thompson's instigation and looked up to him as their major


British leader. 1 Again, the Dublin group's Anti-Slavery Advocate, and the Glasgow one's British Friend, as well as Thompson's son-in-law F.W. Chesson's ephemeral little Anti-Slavery Watchman, saw him as the main foil to the conservatives of the London Committee and the fashionable new free produce societies focussed on Newcastle. 2 All the other major British Garrisonian leaders at this stage were tied to the regional societies they had led into opposition to the B.F.A.S.S. - Mary Estlin to Bristol, Wilson Armistead to Leeds, Chesson to Manchester, Jane Wigham to Glasgow, her brother William Smeal to Glasgow, and Richard D. Webb to Dublin. Thompson was the only national figure on their side, and as such his attitudes were influential with them all. Since his own Garrisonian sympathies go back to 1834, the importance of his first American visit in moulding British support for the Old Organisation in the forties and fifties is central.

As for the Scottish societies in the thirties, the tie they had formed with Thompson in their support of his 1834 mission was only one of a number of factors looking forward to the independent course they were to follow in later years. Their very independence, and the strange course of Glasgow in


2. For instance, the motto at the masthead of the little Anti-Slavery Watchman was a quotation from Thompson - "The American slave is an animated hoeing-machine in the fields; a pampered, or a scourged hound in the house; a dumb Chattel in the Court of Justice; a leper in the house of prayer; an Outcast even in the Christian Churchyard,"
affiliating itself with the Aborigines' Protection Society, indicated that whatever the superficial unity of the thirties, the D.F.A.S.S., founded in 1839, could not expect unquestioning Scottish support in its fight against the Garrisonians.

Both the Glasgow and Edinburgh Societies were to split in 1840, with the radicals retaining control in the men's society in Glasgow and the Ladies' one in Edinburgh. The origins of the split do not lead back to any social division. What breakdown can be done shows that the Scottish abolitionists were as rich by the standards of their country as Sturge and Gurney were by theirs. Smeal was a prominent Glasgow grocer, Murray a landed gentleman, the Wighan family eminently successful in both the grocery and ironmongery businesses. The Scots who were to move into opposition to the D.F.A.S.S. were to do so for reasons less tangible than direct social ones. The main factors at work were a regional arrogance which produced resentment of London dictation, and the accident of the personal influence of Thompson, himself in favour of Garrison. Unlike any of the other British centres of Garrisonian support, the tradition of nonconformity was created in the 1830's, the heyday of mass Scottish abolitionism. In Glasgow and Edinburgh reformers were accustomed to hearing nothing but adulation of Garrison, and were considerably less favourably disposed towards the clique of English businessmen-philanthropists in control of the national movement. In short, Scottish abolitionists were well prepared to take a very different course from the conservatives of the London Committee when presented with the bewildering story of schism and counter-schism exposed to the British public in the course of the World's Anti-Slavery Convention of 1840.
CHAPTER IV

THE WORLD'S CONVENTION AND THE PRELUDE TO DISUNION.

The division of the British anti-slavery movement followed on from the exposure of American schisms in this country in 1840. Until the late thirties, however, the American movement, like the British one, maintained a superficial unity. No doubt stresses and strains were present from the outset - personal rivalries, policy disagreements, and the geographical factor of Bostonian distrust of New York. Sometimes these tensions might become open. Both Tappans, for instance, showed doubts about the violence of Garrison and his supporters, and their enthusiasm for the most advanced reform movements - while Garrison, as he was to do so often in future years, took refuge in the injured innocence of a prophet unappreciated in his own generation. The Tappan brothers had never been entirely happy with his vitriolic outbursts in the Liberator. As early as 1831 Arthur Tappan tactfully mentioned to Garrison that "you would do more good, if you would....have more argument and less invective."¹ By the beginning of 1835 his brother Lewis thought it expedient to warn Thompson of abolitionist feeling against "the unchristian language of the Liberator....Mr. G's error....is in applying severe epithets to individuals rather than to bodies of men and to principles."² The undercurrents of disagreement over policy, as in Britain, were present in the

1. A. Tappan to Garrison, 12.10.31, typescript copy, Garrison Papers.

2. L. Tappan to G. Thompson, 2.1.35, ibid.
American movement long before the open splits appeared. Garrison was not the only radical whose violence alarmed more staid abolitionists. By 1837 his heterodoxy and inconvenient bluntness had been cast into comparative insignificance by the tirades of his young disciple Henry C. Wright, and even the tolerant James Gillespie Birney was writing to New York insisting that the National Society should renounce his doctrines. Significantly, his complaint was no longer against mere violence, but against the introduction of the 'extraneous issues' of women's rights and nonresistance which were later to wreck the movement. Birney prophetically thought them enough: "to frustrate the whole concern, no matter how strong it may be."

This same year, 1837, was the one when Garrison began to forget about the attack on the slaveholders in his enthusiasm for castigating less than satisfactory abolitionists among his allies. He horrified the New England churches, and his own more compromising followers, by attacking local clergymen with institutional ties in the South, even those prominent in anti-slavery societies. Certainly disagreements did not go as far as producing open splits in the anti-slavery societies. Even so, Garrison's savage response to clerical criticism produced violent controversy looking forward to the miserable disunity of the forties. In retrospect, the Pastoral Letter issued by the General Association of Congregational Churches in July, and the 'Clerical Appeal' of five Congregational ministers specifically attacking Garrison's own mismanagement of the cause,

seem more reasoned, more tactful, and more 'Christian' than the violent denunciations they produced in the *Liberator.*

Garrison's attack on Lyman Beecher's orthodox Sabbath views in the year before, and his support of the Grimke sisters in their feminist and anti-clerical lecturing, had already produced much heart searching about his leadership. His scathing attacks on the well-known and well liked ministers behind the 'Clerical Appeal' must also have worked towards the later formation of 'New Organisation' anti-slavery societies. These same ministers and their colleagues were to be the leaders of the later attempts to disassociate abolitionism from William Lloyd Garrison. No doubt he remained leader of the "moral and spiritual elite of New England," but the forces which were to direct the movement into new channels were gathering as early as 1837. Apart from the clergy, the irresponsibility implied in Garrison's hysterical counters to minor criticism much better ignored, horrified more tactful reformers. Stanton, for instance, previously under the spell of Garrison's remarkable charm, but appalled by the disunity the clerical controversy would produce,


3. Ibid., pp. 135-140; Barnes, *op.cit.,* pp. 97-98.
prophesied that the movement would be rendered "powerless, and an easy prey from contending against one another."\(^1\)

His friend Birney hinted unhappily that forcing Garrison to resign might "be the best thing we could do for the cause of Emancipation."\(^2\) Left in an unenviable position by the crisis, Lewis Tappan, like most moderates, felt that the whole sorry incident would have been best ignored. As it was, he pointed out to Garrison, that "the SPIRIT EXHIBITED BY THE EDITOR PRO-TEM, [of the Liberator] AND SOMETIMES BY YOURSELF, HAS NOT BEEN SUFFICIENTLY KIND AND CHRIST-LIKE" - so "dramatic" a reply to so innocuous an attack could "only induce our opponents to believe that we are weak, discordant, and inefficient."\(^3\)

Certainly the affair of the 'Clerical Appeal' did not break the institutional unity which characterised the movement in the thirties. But the arguing, bickering, and slanging of later years had begun, and the controversy fell along the lines of later divisions. The old arguments on what was to be done for the slave were to be forgotten in the excitement of attacking or defending Garrison's views on the use of female lecturers, and the corruption and uselessness of action through existing church and political institutions. The formal parting of the ways between the

men who wished to make abolition respectable, and those to whom respectability in what was then the accepted meaning of the word was unacceptable, did not come until 1839, and the societies continued for eighteen months more in at least a working unity. But the clerical controversy looked forward to the fragmentation of the forties, and struck a substantial blow at the hope of working together to unite American Christian opinion in favour of the Negro.

There are few indications that the threats to abolitionist unity in America in the late thirties were understood in Britain, There is no evidence in periodicals or correspondence of any British awareness of the issues at stake. However, the open and disastrous division, which would demonstrate the existence of tensions in the movement to those too far away from America to understand them for themselves, was not long in coming. Throughout the year and a half from the time of the 'Clerical Appeal' to the Spring of 1839, the breach widened as Garrison's paranoia and the influence of John Humphrey Noyes led him further towards giving the appearance of championing practical anarchy, and moderates became increasingly embarrassed by the difficulty of dissociating the movement from his more unacceptable heresies. The alternatives of the moderate leaders were three. They could ignore Garrison, they could attempt to explain him away, or they could disown him. The first two proved impossible; the third was the final solution taken as the whole American movement split down the middle in the open quarrels of 1839 and 1840.
The events leading to the national split in the movement began, as so many of its problems did, in Massachusetts. During 1838 Garrison's extravagances had become intolerable to conservative abolitionists. Abby Kelley had been elected to one of the standing committees at the May Quarterly Meeting of the Massachusetts Society, to the chagrin of the clerical abolitionists present. In September, Garrison had marshalled his female voting machine, captured a Boston Convention of the American Peace Society, and arranged to have its remaining members draft what amounted in conservative eyes to a 'no-human-government' Declaration of Sentiments. The purpose was to launch a new Non-Resistant Society under his own leadership, striking at the entire institutional basis of society by discountenancing all authority using force as an ultimate sanction. From now on the Liberator concentrated less and less on the single issue of abolition. Even a sympathiser could caution Garrison that "...every square inch of the Liberator which is devoted to subjects which have not the smallest reference to the anti-slavery controversy, is mischievous to the cause." Among the abolitionist rank-and-file, the reaction to Garrison's dragging the cause in the wake of his own wider reform interests strengthened. By the beginning of 1839, conservative Massachusetts abolitionists were prepared to break Garrison's power over the state society once and for all.


2. G. Bourne to Garrison, 1.10.38, in W.P. Garrison et al., op. cit., II, 239.
The leaders of the anti-Garrisonians were Congregationalist clergymen deeply committed to the abolitionist cause, but appalled by Garrison's continual harangues against the churches, no doubt all the more so because their own livelihood and status were tied to everything he was attacking. Amos Phelps, Garrison's old friend, was one, dangerous because of his standing as one of the first well-known men converted to the Massachusetts Society. Perhaps the most despicable in Garrisonian eyes was the Rev. Nathaniel Colver. Two years later his attacks on Garrison's British followers were to earn him the description of a "wolf in sheep's clothing...a practical unbeliever in the Gospel.... unworthy of confidence or respect." Another of the Massachusetts rebels was the Rev. Charles Torrey, no lukewarm abolitionist as his later 'martyrdom' in a Southern prison indicates. Finally, there was a Alanson St. Clair, later prominent in the political abolition movement. It can be assumed that other clergymen had been alienated by Garrison's extremism. Those who attempted to take over the Massachusetts Society in 1839 were simply those who retained enough faith in the movement to try to rescue it from the perils of perfectionism. Actually their 'plots' made

2. Collins, op.cit., p. 47.
little impression on Garrison's control. Although supported by the visiting Stanton at the A.G.M., the resolutions they put up on the inconsistency of abolitionist and nonresistant views were quashed from the Chair, and Garrison's Report, unashamedly packed with extraneous issues, carried over their heads by a massive 'promiscuous' vote of 183 to 24.¹ It seems more likely that this implies potential anti-Garrison voters had already been sufficiently alienated to wish to avoid all association with the cause, than that 87% of Massachusetts citizens who disapproved of slavery accepted the policy of linking abolition and more advanced reform causes. However, Garrison's position within the Society remained strong. The new York response to moderate appeals for help was ineffective. Birney and Stanton were shouted down at the March Quarterly Meeting of the Massachusetts Society, while the fund-collecting agents sent into New England by the National Society found abolitionists there zealously uncooperative. The only hope for the conservatives, with the possibility of capturing the local society gone, was in a new society devoted to the anti-slavery agitation alone. Significantly, it was to leave loopholes for political action. As the controversy broadened to the national level, Phelps and his sympathisers withdrew after the May Anniversary in 1839 to form their own 'New Organisation' Massachusetts Abolition Society. The new body was provided with its own organ, the Massachusetts Abolitionist, initially managed by Stanton, but later edited brilliantly by Elizur Wright.²


In Massachusetts at least, the discord latent in the movement since 1837 or sooner had broken out into active organisational disunity. Meanwhile, the National Society itself reached the point of disintegration under the strain of accommodating the increasingly wide range of abolitionist opinions. Just a fortnight before the Massachusetts conservatives broke away, Garrison's followers had appeared at the May meeting of the American Society, to vote down Mr. Colver's motion for the exclusion of women by 180 to 140. Although leaving the committee in office, they had gone on to knife plans to send a fund-raising mission to England. They narrowly failed to do the same for Birney's resolution in favour of conscientious political action.1 Convinced by this as well as the subsequent open breach in the Massachusetts Society, and the lack of all financial aid from their New England auxiliaries, the New York Executive Committee proceeded to wind up the affairs of the American Anti-Slavery Society. By the time of the 1840 Annual Meeting, the Emancipator had been transferred to the New York Young Men's Anti-Slavery Society, and the Society's activities carefully brought to a standstill. Unfortunately its graceful demise was forestalled. The activists in Boston shepherded four hundred Massachusetts abolitionists, mainly from Essex County, to the Annual Meeting in New York, on the steamer Rhode Island. Their expedition was managed by a new general agent of the

1. Ibid., II, 297; Collins, op.cit., p. 30; Barnes, op.cit., p. 159.
Massachusetts Society, John Anderson Collins, the future wrecker of British abolitionist peace. The A.G.M. was duly swamped by enthusiastic Garrisonian females, and a new Committee voted in to replace Tappan and his lieutenants, complete with female members. The response of the unfortunate conservatives, ousted from control of the National Society they had built by what amounted to a bloc vote from Lynn, Massachusetts, was to withdraw to form the American and Foreign Society. Its lines were more orthodox, with a direct call for the use of the vote. From this point on, two organisations operated side by side in America. Neither had a fraction of the strength of the old national society in its heyday; the abolitionist centre of gravity had shifted to state level once and for all. But the national split is of immense importance as the symbol of a series of divisions which split the movement right down to grass roots.

Indeed it was in national terms that the disagreements and divisions among American abolitionists appeared in Britain. British reformers were faced with the bewildering spectacle of two groups of American philanthropists of evident high reputation at loggerheads, and in control of rival societies each claiming to work for the same ends. The issues at stake could be and can be interpreted variously. Among Garrison's followers, the seceders were denounced as a cabal of power hungry compromisers determined to turn the movement to their own ends. Because they

1. Ibid., p.167-170; Merrill, op.cit., pp. 157-160; W. F. Garrison et al., op.cit. p. 297.
had failed to persuade abolitionists less selfish than themselves that their views on political action were the correct ones, they had "resolved to drive the ploughshare of division through the entire Anti-Slavery field."¹

In Garrisonian eyes, the 'New Organisers' had simply failed to withstand temptation, and had forgotten the Negro in coming to terms with corrupt institutions. The implication of Birney, Stanton, and Gerrit Smith in the Liberty Party movement of 1840 gave colour to the accusation. From Boston, waverers were exhorted to be "distrustful of every measure tending to lower the anti-slavery enterprise from a holy warfare into a struggle for place and power."²

The question of how abolition could be carried out without the use of power, and without the moulding of opinion through the churches, was glossed over with vague remarks to the effect that it was to be a work "analogous to conversion."³ By comparison, the testimony of the moderates seems mild and well-reasoned. Perhaps because of a fear

1. Collins, op. cit., p.37

2. Right and Wrong in the Anti-Slavery Societies; The Seventh Annual Report of the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society (Boston, 1840), p. 18. A similar standpoint against political action could be taken by an unaffiliated abolitionist like James Russell Lowell - see M. Duberman, James Russell Lowell (2nd edition Beacon Books, Boston, 1968), p 75. A counter-argument is put forward in E.G. Loring to W. E. Channing 17.8.38, Channing Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society: "The worldly & corrupt would desire nothing more than that the good should retire in fear and disgust from the sphere of politics."

3. Right and Wrong in the Anti-Slavery Societies, p.17.
of discreditting the movement, there were few public outbursts of personal feeling; from the beginning, any meekness in the controversy was on the side of the New Organisation. Nevertheless, conservative distrust of the violence of the Liberator and the new leaders of the American Society, remained. Most specifically, Tappan and his followers shrank from the range of side issues which Garrison, with his fine disregard for expediency, insisted on linking with the abolition movement. Women's rights, anti-sabbatarianism, nonresistance, and temperance were all added to Garrison's objections to the course of the churches over slavery, and used as collective ammunition for his vigorous anti-clericalism. No doubt the conservatives disagreed with the line taken on these issues by Garrison himself, Collins, Phillips, H. C. Wright, Quincy, the Posters, the Westons, the Chapmans and the Childs. No doubt they also feared that the enthusiasm for Christian anarchy in Boston would strike at the foundation of the traditional society in which they had economic and other stakes. More simply than this, they also felt that the anti-slavery cause could only suffer in terms of public opinion, its only possible medium of success, by being linked with the series of heresies accepted by the Garrisonian Society in Massachusetts, and its growing group of millenarian adherents. Even someone as interested in general reform as Elizur Wright could go into opposition to Garrison because his commonsense told him that slavery had to be dealt with first, and that
an overnight declaration of universal reform was impracticable. In their statement of the reasons for the split, reprinted by Garrison with horrified asides, the Committee of the American and Foreign Society also put most emphasis on the argument that the country was not ready for some of the "reforms" proposed, and that support for the anti-slavery cause could only be lost by insisting on them. Most dangerous of all was the call to break up "existing ecclesiastical arrangements," and the effort to make willingness to "vilify" the ministry a test of anti-slavery society membership. No one seems to have seen women's rights as the real cause of the split.

This was only the controversy providing the issue on which both sides could fasten to argue over the direction in which the movement was being led. Tappan himself wrote Weld to suggest that it was irrelevant, and sadly noted that "since he [Garrison] introduced the question, the slave has been lost sight of mainly." The debate over who was to blame for the split, and what exactly was at stake, would go on for many years. Although Weld could insist that he and his wife felt "impelled to stand aloof from both of the National Anti-Slavery Societies," few others avoided taking sides.

1. E. Wright to Garrison, 6.11.37, in W.P. Garrison et al., op.cit., II, 181.
2. Statement of the Executive Committee of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, in Liberator, 5.3.41.
4. Weld to Gerrit and Anne Smith, 18.6.40, ibid., II, 843. See also Whittier to M. A. Cartland, 2.7.40, in Pickard, Life and Letters of Whittier, I, 259; 260.
In fact the movement was divided from top to bottom by the
time the scene shifted to London, immediately after the
disastrous May Meeting in New York. It was at the World's
Anti-Slavery Convention organised in London in July, 1840,
by the B.F.A.S.S. that the disagreements among Americans
were first presented clearly to British abolitionists.
Their response dominated their own anti-slavery activity
throughout the two decades remaining before the Civil War.

The World's Anti-Slavery Convention, rightly or wrongly
so called, was reported in great detail at the time, and has
been described frequently in more recent secondary works.¹

Once again, the 'woman question' was the issue on which
unity foundered, although not necessarily the only issue,
or the main one, on which the two sides differed. When
the Broad Street Committee first hit on their master stroke
of holding a convention to unite abolitionists from all
corners of the earth, they evidently assumed that only male
delegates would be sent. The original call for the
Convention, adopted in June 1839, simply invited "delegates",
without any stipulation as to sex. By May 1840, however,
American events had brought home the danger that some
abolitionists might bring the Convention into ridicule by

1. Proceedings of the General Anti-Slavery Convention,
Called by the Committee of the British and Foreign
Anti-Slavery Society, and held in London, from
Friday, June 13th, to Tuesday, June 23rd, 1840.
(London, 1841); F. B. Tolles, (ed.), "Slavery and the
"Woman Question" - Lucretia Mott's Diary of the
World Anti-Slavery Convention of 1840 'Journal of the
Friends' Historical Society, Supplement No. 23
(London, 1932): AAR, 17.5.40, 17.7.40, 15.7.40; London
Patriot, 17.6.40, 24.6.40.
packing it with females. It was hurriedly resolved "that
women can only be admitted as Visitors under such regulations
as may hereafter be arranged."¹ A second circular was composed,
referring pointedly to the prospective delegates as "gentlemen."
Almost simultaneously, Garrison reprinted an explanatory letter
by Sturge, commenting editorially that "the spirit of new
organisation has plotted to gratify its contempt of WOMAN, even
in the World’s Convention."² He could see no case for withdrawing
the female delegates already chosen, perhaps due to a partial
ignorance about British attitudes to women. As his ship lay
anchored off Sandy Hook, he wrote confidently that British
philanthropists could not insult their Queen by refusing to
accept the American ladies, though he stated his intention
of submitting a "protest" if the outcome was different.³
However, even his own followers were not convinced that it was
wise to insist on sending female delegates. Sarah Grimke, of
all people, wrote to Elizabeth Pease of Darlington, that "a
discussion on the subject [of women’s rights] is greatly to be
deprecated - it is....all important that nothing should be
done to divert the meeting from the great subject of human
liberty which has called them together."⁴ But Garrison’s

2. Liberator, 8.5.40.
3. Ibid, 29.5.40.
4. S. M. Grimke to E. Pease, 7.5.40, Garrison Papers.
determination that the females should sail was unaffected by
delicate considerations of this sort. Although expecting
to be late in arriving at the Convention, he instructed George
Bradburn to "fail not to have the women recognised as equal
beings" in the Convention. In the event, the Philadelphia
and New England Societies sent a substantial number of female
delegates, among them many names of importance in feminist
history - Sarah Pugh, Abbey Kimber, Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth
Neall (Gay), Emily Winston, Mary Grew, and Abby Southwick.
Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Garrisonian wife of the New Organisation
leader, was also present though not as a delegate. New
Organisationists had every reason to echo Gamaliel Bailey's
malevolent wish for Garrison's party - "I hope unfavourable
winds may delay them until the Convention is over."3

The female delegates were predictably excluded. However,
by actually appearing at the Convention, they provided the
issue for polarising American quarrels in front of a British
audience. With representatives from both American factions
present, led by Birney, Stanton, and Colver on the one side, and
Phillips and Bradburn on the other, open disagreement was
inevitable. The refusal to seat the women pushed Garrison
into his silent protest of remaining in the gallery with them
throughout the proceedings, after his late arrival. It seems
clear, however, that it was his condoning their coming in the

1. Garrison to G. Bradburn, 24.4.40, ibid.
2. C. C. Catt et al. N. R. Shuler, Woman Suffrage and Politics
   (N.Y., 1923), p.17.
first place which led to dissension at the Convention, and eventually the British fragmentation of the next twenty years.

It was the World's Convention which first demonstrated to the British abolitionist public that their American colleagues were at odds. It was at this point that they began to take sides over Garrison's 'extraneous issues.' Up to the time of the Convention, the ugly series of American slanging matches were carefully kept out of the British press, and presumably remained unknown to all but leaders like the B.F.A.S.S. Committee and those few enthusiasts with enough money to subscribe to American periodicals. The Reporter printed no comment on the disagreements until June 1840, when the Convention events and the news of the formal split in the National Society in New York hit the Headlines simultaneously. The London Patriot, key to nonconformist reform opinion, took the same discreet course. Not only this, but when the divisions became open at the time of the Convention, it seems to have taken some time for the press to realise that there was disunity present among men who might logically have been expected to be united in pursuit of the same object. The Scotsman, for instance, covered the proceedings fully, but did not mention the woman question.¹ The London Standard took a similar course.²

Most interestingly of all, the Scottish Guardian raised its Tory voice against the Convention as a faceless rabble of infidels, Jews, and females, but did not go on to consider whether

it might be disunited over the form anarchy was to take.¹ The indications are that without having the issue set squarely before them in the Convention, and then played upon by later American efforts, British abolitionists would have remained united for the time being, leaving the disruptive forces among them to break out later.

However, the process was a two-way one. There already were tensions in the British movement, frictions between groups who would respond eminently well to a quarrel of the kind begun at the World's Convention. The London Committee was to remain respectably New Organisation, while the Scottish radicals were to respond to Garrison's fanaticism and heighten their quarrel with the South. Even at the Convention itself, this tendency began to appear. When it opened, Mr. Farmer, the Convention's official shorthand writer, simply noted that the upper end and one side of Freemason's Hall was filled with ladies, "including several female abolitionists from the United States."² However, the now senile Thomas Clarkson had no sooner left the hall, and business arrangements been explained, when the argument over the 'woman question' broke out in full force, over Wendell Phillips' resolution that a list of delegates should be compiled, including those with credentials from any anti-slavery body.³ Members of the B.F.A.S.S. Committee cautiously explained that their standpoint

¹ Scottish Guardian, 26.6.40.
³ Ibid., pp. 23ff.
had been taken to meet the normal usages of British society. They were supported most effectively by the Rev. Nathaniel Colver, who insisted spitefully that

"That brother [Phillips] and others are from a society which allows of ladies sitting in its meetings; but a large portion of the delegates are from a branch who have resisted this attempt to change the customs of the country; and, but for the assurance that the Convention would be composed as it now is, a large number of us would not have been here today."1

The American response to this was the observation of George Bradburn, the friend of Garrison and a member of the Massachusetts legislature, that a Convention which excluded half the world, could not, by definition, be a World's Convention.

Thus the argument over whether it was proper to include females as working members in a 'promiscuous' conference, was set before the Convention by openly differing American abolitionists. But the ominous pointer to the future divisions among British abolitionists was that the threads of the argument between the quarreling Americans were immediately taken up by local delegates. The British and Foreign Society's standpoint had been explained as soon as Phillips proposed his resolution, and was supported by a letter from the eccentric Captain Stuart. British feeling in favour of the opposite side was best summarised in a long speech by George Thompson, ostensibly aimed at unity but in fact arguing for accepting the Garrisonian demands for the admission of the female delegates.2 Thompson's aim was to avoid

1. Ibid., p. 27.
an open schism - no doubt partly because of a sincere feeling that this was for the good of the movement, but also because he was one of the handful of men to whom anti-slavery was a livelihood. He can hardly have failed to see that in the event of a final division of the American sort, he would be compelled, sooner or later, to come down on one side, thus alienating his friends on the other. He began by remarking that he "deprecated" the question of the women having been raised in the Convention at all. His way of avoiding possible harmful consequences was to suggest that the disagreement should not be pushed to a decisive vote, which could only make the delegates regard those voting differently as opponents - " (Cries of no, no)." From this conciliatory point of view, he went on to dissect the Committee arguments against admitting women. If they could not be admitted because of usage and custom, this could only be so because of the objection that they were no longer "confessedly unequal with ourselves." If the invitation to the female delegates had not been intended, then this was a direct affront to the American abolitionists who had sent them. The American ladies were as qualified as any delegates to sit in the Convention. However, since the circumstances meant that "nothing is to be gained, and much may be lost by a vote," his hope was that Phillips would withdraw the motion. 1

Conciliatory or not, Thompson's speech was Garrisonian in its sentiments on the role of women in the movement. He was

only too accurate in insisting that an attempt to force the issue would only lead to disunity. The opposition to the Garrisonians was as adamant on the position of women as any of the female delegates themselves could have been. The Rev. Alexander Harvey of Glasgow, for instance, fumed that "my own decided convictions are, if I were to give a vote in favour of females sitting and deliberating in such an assembly as this, that I should be acting in opposition to the plain teaching of the word of God." Although the possibility of compromise with such attitudes appeared thin, Thompson's advice was ignored. After Birney had broken in dramatically with the news of the startling developments at the May Meeting of the American Society, elaborating his account with an exposé of the heresies of "No Human Government" and "Nonresistance" a vote was taken and the Committee amendment to Phillips' original provocative resolution carried "by an overwhelming majority."

With the 'woman question' disposed of, the Convention continued in comparative calm until its ending on June 23rd. There were further disagreements, over the role of the churches in withholding communion from slaveholders, on the vexed question of the sugar duties, and over the suggested abolitionist duty to abstain from the use of slave produce. None, however, had the long-term importance of the June 12th debate on the 'woman question'

1. Ibid., p. 38.
2. Ibid., pp. 41-43.
3. Ibid., pp. 56-76, 396-413, 437-447.
and the Convention's attitude to it. The facts remained that the American female delegates had been excluded, and that the debate remained open. Possible reasons for their exclusion were many. There may have been some truth in the suggestion that the wealthy and conservative Friends of the London Committee had seized the chance of excluding the women as a convenient way of striking at known Hicksite Quakers like Lucretia Mott and Sarah Pugh.¹ Again, churchmen like the Rev. Alexander Harvey may have been struck by the unspoken fear that to agree to women appearing in the convention hall was only one step away from having them turn creation upside down by becoming elders of the Church or even entering the ministry.² More simply, it is likely that the London Committee and indeed all but the most stalwart radicals shrank from the ridicule they would face for appearing in a Convention stigmatised by so cranky an innovation as female membership. Even Daniel O'Connell gently reminded his American friends "of the ridicule which some ignorant persons might have thrown upon our proceedings" if the female delegates had been seated.³


2. G.E.S. Annual Report, 1841, p. 29. For an example of the kind of writing giving rise to ministerial tears, see [Sarah M. Grimke] The Spiritual Rights of Christian Females, advocated in a Letter by an American Lady, with Notes Appended by a Lady in this Country (Peterhead, 1839).

But in the last resort, the immediate reason for the refusal to admit the women is not centrally important. For one thing, the woman question was only one of a number of points at issue between the various factions, and was a vehicle rather than a cause of the disagreements. It had not been the basic reason for the disunity at the Convention, and it was only one of many reasons for disunity in general.¹ As Sneal hinted darkly, "A separation from sundry staunch abolitionists must be effected, and a reason, of course, be assigned."² In fact what separated the factions was two entirely different conceptions of the pace and methods of reform. Again, the most instructive side of the controversy was its effect rather than its cause. The arguments at the Convention set the American disagreements before the British abolitionist public for the first time. For the purposes of this study, the debate on the 12th of June represents a turning point in the British movement. The responses of different groups of abolitionists to the different standpoints of their American colleagues lead back to varying origins and aims which had been obscured by the essential unity of the thirties, and look forward to the chronic schisms of the forties and fifties.

The B.P.A.S.S. Committee's triumph in managing to have the ladies excluded had done nothing to solve the problem of discontent. The varying opinions of the members of the Convention covered disagreements over the aims and methods of the movement which had

¹. See for instance L. Tappan to Weld, 26.5.40, Weld-Grimke Letters, II, 836; S. Grimke to E. Pease, 11.2.42, ibid., II, 920-921.

been open in America for some time, and which would soon ripen into disunity in British circles as well. American Garrisonian opinion was united in denouncing the Convention as a sham. As early as the day of opening, Lucretia Mott had written in the confidence of her diary about "The World's Convention - alias the 'Conference of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society,' with such guests as they chose to invite."¹ As news of British developments filtered back to New England, Deborah Weston angrily wrote to inform her sister of the plot to make "the world convention the fag end of the yearly meeting."² Oliver Johnson's graphic editorial in response to the news accepted Mrs. Mott's theory that the Convention "has proved to be only a Convention of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society."³ In the same issue he printed a letter from Wendell Phillips, bewailing the gathering's timidity over the church communion question, and concluding sanctimoniously that "the meeting which deprecated discussion for fear of division among such brothers as he [Noby] was not the World's Convention which Massachusetts, at least, anticipated."⁴ This criticism shrank into mildness in comparison with that of Garrison, whose first editorial after his return assured readers that "If there is any one act of my life of which I am proud, it is in refusing

to join such a body." He went on to give a eulogy of his "worthy associates" who had followed the same course as himself, characteristically forgetting the work of Wendell Phillips, George Bradburn, and Professor Adam, who had taken their seats at the Convention and done the cause in England considerably greater good by doing so. Rogers' comments were most pointed of all. After drawing some amazing parallels between the time when King Edward "came down [!] to these glens and mountains to 'new organise' Scottish independence" and the current struggle between the abolitionist factions in New Hampshire, he went on to complain that the spirit of New Organisation had "a snug abode in London." What perplexed him most was that in spite of the British delicacy on the role of females, his travels here had shown him "women...toiling in the hay-field and the hoe-field, and even hammering stone for Macadamising the road along the great highways." Whatever Convention usages might be, Woman was evidently not considered out of her sphere here.

At the other end of the scale, more conservative American abolitionists expressed comparative satisfaction with the results of the Convention. At the simplest level, there was the standpoint of Mrs. Stanton, who merely felt that Garrison had made a fool of himself at the Convention and every time he spoke outside it.

Others even felt that the Convention had done positive good. Weld, for instance, though by no means committed to the New Organisation, felt that the Convention had done much to continue the process of bludgeoning the South into "the certainty that they are becoming infamous in the eyes of the civilised world." Again, the Quaker poet John Greenleaf Whittier cautioned that irrespective of the women at the Convention, there must be no "depreciating and under-valuing its really glorious ANTI-SLAVERY character." He dismissed Rogers' criticisms with the shrewd comment that "he went dreaming of setting the whole world free from all kinds of oppression - mental, physical, social, religious, and political," only to find himself "amidst quiet Quakers, sturdy impassive country gentlemen, and baronet M.P.'s settling down to the work of abolishing slavery....as if they were engaged in reckoning the interest on the British National Debt."  

Clearly the opinions of American abolitionists on the World's Convention, and by implication their views on the woman question and the other differences which had arisen, varied widely. As was to be the case so often in the future, British standpoints faithfully reflected those in America. British abolitionists had not reached the point of thinking in terms of forming rival societies working side by side, but the issues raised set them


arguing along lines which could only conclude in this way as the months went by. Open disunity among the British leaders did not come immediately the debate over the Woman Question began. But the debate which followed, acting upon pre-existing rivalries, created the potential for division. Once worked upon by extremist American visitors aiming to destroy unity rather than preserve it, the situation could only produce a complicated series of schisms running right through the British movement, directly reflecting those on the other side of the Atlantic.

During the Convention and after it, the main supporter of the conservative or New Organisation standpoint on the series of disagreements was the B.F.A.S.S. Committee itself. Its viewpoint was expressed on the opening day by Dr. Bowring and the Rev. James Burnett, and although its organ the Reporter printed the debate without comment, the implication of the Committee's course must have been clear. If not, it must surely have become so a fortnight later, when the Reporter again ignored the question of disunion, apart from a hint included as a half-display ad. - "To Correspondents - The subject on which An English-woman has written to us will not be discussed in our pages." A less discreet course was taken by the Broad Street Committee's ally in the national press, the London Patriot, which editorially saluted "so decided a condemnation of the mischievous attempt to introduce some

2. *Ibid.*, 1.7.40
female delegates," and incidentally hinted ominously at "other extravagances" in the New England states.\(^1\) The London Committee's consistent opposition to the Garrisonians on the 'woman question' and the other distasteful issues they connected with the movement, was stated at the time of the 1840 Convention. This remained their policy right up to the Civil War.

B.F.A.S.S. policy in effect tended to dominate local opinion throughout large sectors of the country.\(^2\) But in 1840, apart from abolitionists in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dublin, and the other future growth points of support for Garrison, there is evidence of some individual opposition to the Broad Street line. On June 12th, no British abolitionist of stature delivered a full scale speech in favour of George Thompson's standpoint. However, during the later proceedings, O'Connell's important support was thrown behind the pro-female faction.\(^3\) Immensely influential in the movement, in spite of political and religious views which must have been at best distasteful to many abolitionists, his defection was a serious blow to the Committee. The injury it did was made worse by his views being printed and reprinted in America. Although he admitted that he had once felt differently due to fears of the ridicule which seating the women would produce in England, he later wrote to Mrs. Mott coming out strongly in


favour of their being given the rights as well as the duties of
men. His letter pointed out that "Mind has no sex. ... We are
engaged in a strife not of strength but of argument. ... We rely
entirely on reason and persuasion common to both sexes." ¹
Although O'Connell was ostensibly dealing with the question of
the admission of the female delegates to the Convention, his
attitude must have strengthened the disciples of Garrison in
England in other directions as well. His countryman Father
Mathew, the great leader of the Catholic Irish temperance movement,
took a similar stand, to the great delight of the Liberator. ²
Of similar importance was the startling though undocumented
allegation of William Howitt, with his wife Mary perhaps the best
known literary partnership in the field of didactic novels, that
the exclusion of the women was a factor of their heresies rather
than their sex. ³ Again, at press level, if the Patriot could take
one side, an exceptional paper like the Leicestershire Mercury
could take the opposite, and attack the refusal to seat the female
delegates on grounds quite acceptable to Garrison himself. ⁴

1. D. O'Connell to L. Mott, 20.6.40, in Ninth Annual
Report of the...Managers of the Massachusetts A.S. Society,
appendices, pp. vi-vii.

2. R. Allen to Garrison, 1.9.40, Garrison Papers; Liberator,
25.9.40.

3. W. Howitt to L. Mott, 27.6.40, in Ninth Annual Report of
the...Managers of the Massachusetts A.S. Society, appendices,
pp. vii-x. Whittier, an orthodox Friend, thought this
accusation nonsense - Whittier to Cartland, extract, n.d.,
in Pëckard, op.cit., I, 258.

The greatest opposition to the B.F.A.S.S., however, came from more predictable areas, where there were traditions of friction with the London Society, and where British support for the Garrisonian movement was to be focussed during the next two decades. It has already been suggested that the disputes between the Scottish abolition societies and the national one in the thirties prepared the way for the independent course they were to follow when the Garrisonian problem arose in 1840-41. The opposition to the exclusion of the women was concentrated in the two Scottish societies and in the new Hibernian Society, founded in 1837. Considering the distance between Scotland and London in contemporary transportation terms, the Scottish societies had been well represented at the Convention. Some delegates were men who would have been in London on business anyway - O'Connell, for instance, was interestingly sent as a G.E.S. delegate, Thompson as delegate for both Glasgow and Edinburgh, and the now suspect Rev. Dr. James Hoby as representative for Aberdeen, including cases like this, Glasgow seconded twenty-four delegates, including Smeal, Murray, and the two M.P.'s for the city of Glasgow, James Oswald and John Dennistoun. Edinburgh had eight delegates, Greville and Dunlop among them. Aberdeen named two, though only the Rev. John Kennedy had actually travelled south for the Convention. Paisley had one as well as a half-share with Glasgow in William Smeal. The little society of Berwick had the smallest delegation of all, sharing the services of the Rev. John Clarke, the Missionary, with Kingston, Jamaica. Other Scottish abolitionists appeared as the delegates of churches rather than anti-slavery societies, as in the case of the
Rev. Alex. Harvey of the Relief Synod in Glasgow.¹

It should be stressed that by no means all of these men came out against Committee policy on female delegates. John Dunlop, for instance, later led his section of the Edinburgh Emancipation Society into support of the B.F.A.S.S., and actually gained some status from his pamphlet in support of the Liberty Party.² However, the aggressive majority in the case of the Glasgow delegates, and a vocal minority of the Edinburgh ones, with their Dublin Allies, became the most difficult opposition to the B.F.A.S.S. course in relation to Garrison after the 1840 Convention. The action of Thompson, pleading for unity but effectively commending the Garrisonians, no doubt had great effect in encouraging Scottish tendencies towards acceptance of Old Organisation viewpoints. At the meeting on July 27th to meet Garrison before his return to America, Thompson was able to push through a G.E.S. resolution in favour of the women of America engaged in the abolition cause, clearly aimed at making good the defeat at the Convention.³ The position of Smeal and Murray was more specific. Smeal pencilled enthusiastic lines of approval opposite the part of his copy of Garrison's Glasgow speech

1. A list of these delegates is printed in the Proceedings - also in A.S.R., 17.6.40.

2. [J. Dunlop], American Anti-Slavery Conventions: A Series of Extracts Illustrative of the Proceedings and Principles of the "Liberty Party" in the United States; with the Bearings of the Anti-Slavery Cause on Missions (Edinburgh, 1846).

criticising the London Committee's behaviour. Later in the year, the two Secretaries went on to set the cat among the clerical pigeons by embellishing the Annual Report with an account of the "pain" they had suffered at the exclusion of the female delegates. They went on to characterise the D.P.A.S.S. conduct in this and other directions as "illiberal, unauthorised, and overbearing." Even more interesting than this response within the Glasgow Society was the attitude taken by the Rev. Patrick Brewster, Church of Scotland minister of the Abbey Church in Paisley. A Chartist with a personal flamboyance fit to out-Garrison Garrison, it may be that his support for the participation of women in reform movements is connected with his experiences with the Scottish Chartists, whose female wing was especially strong. In either case, Brewster went on record as saying to Garrison that he would have given a hearty welcome to the women if he had been present at the Convention.

In Edinburgh, gaps in source material make it difficult to pin down responses to the events of the Convention. Certainly the briefness of Garrison's stay there - little more than twenty four hours - suggests that his welcome was not as great as it was to be in Glasgow. Nevertheless, later

1. Ibid., p. 9. Smeal's copy is preserved in the Mitchell Library.
2. G.E.S. Report, 1840, pp. 17-18
3. L. C. Wright, Scottish Chartism (Edinburgh, 1951), p. 41
4. Liberator, 4.9 40.
5. See below, p. 167.
developments in Edinburgh, especially among female abolitionists, imply and at some points state opposition to what the London Committee did over the Convention. Before Birney, Stanton, and Scoble came to visit Edinburgh in the autumn, John Wigham warned them of expected radical opposition if they at any time alluded to the 'woman question' or "to any point where there has been a difference of sentiment." To the distress of his Garrisonian wife and daughter-in-law, he himself remained relatively conservative on the anti-slavery question. He associated the Edinburgh opposition to the London Committee with Thompson's influence — "Some persons in this end of the Island think that, George Thompson's merits have never been sufficiently appreciated by the London Committee. He is a great favourite in this country, and were anything said to lessen or injure him, it might lead to very unpleasant results."¹ In Edinburgh as in Glasgow, there are hints of differences between abolitionists even before open disunion was produced by the tour of J. A. Collins. Perhaps Garrison was implying a deeper approval when he wrote that "I like the people (of Scotland) better than I do the people of England; they are more like New Englanders in their appearance and manners."² Conversely, the people of Scotland were one of the few groups still left in Britain in 1840 who liked him and what he stood for.

2. Garrison to S. J. May, 5.9.40, Garrison Papers.
The other area of support for the Garrisonian viewpoint on the Convention was Ireland, more specifically Dublin. Although Dublin was to become the nerve-centre of British support for the American Garrisonians, it had joined the fight against American slavery relatively late. Its leading abolition figure throughout the period was the doctrinally suspect Quaker printer Richard Davis-Webb. Like those other figures in the provincial reform world, George Gallie of Glasgow, George King of Aberdeen, and Charles Ziegler of South Bridge, Edinburgh, Webb's business was that of a printer, publisher, and bookseller. He appears to have been comfortable throughout his life, with his printing shop large enough to support three journeymen. Born around 1804, his secondary schooling was at Ballitou, an Irish liberal Friends' school. He distinguished himself there as the poet editor of a school magazine. While a pupil, he incidentally met his wife, a niece of the uncle with whom he lodged. His life from 1840 onwards can be traced through his massive output of semi-legible but charming letters to the personal friends in America made after meeting his hero Garrison at the 1840 Convention - Garrison himself, the Phillipses, C. Miller McKim, Sidney Howard Gay, and above all the Weston sisters. Throughout the forties he virtually controlled


2. The bulk of Webb's papers are deposited in Boston Public Library. There are also substantial numbers of his letters in the Gay Papers, Columbia University Library, and the May Collection, Cornell University Library.
the interchange of ideas (and men) between the British and American Garrisonians, and also made a considerable contribution to the American cause in his own right. His personal pamphlet publications are few, but the Anti-Slavery Advocate he edited was widely circulated in the States, and he was a regular contributor of unsigned articles to the Standard, first during the editorship of Mrs. Child, but increasingly so under his and Thompson's friend Sidney Howard Gay - so much so that the expenses paid to him for the postage of his letters to the Standard in 1848 alone amounted to ten pounds. 1

Webb was converted to the anti-slavery movement, by his own account, by one of George Thompson's evangelizing appearances in Dublin. 2 Webb's personal character had certain traits which eventually determined the course he took when the American disagreements were brought to his notice at the Convention. First, if the exclusion of the women was in fact caused by the distrust of London Friends for the Hicksite heresy, it is worth noticing that Webb was by no means an orthodox Friend. He had little admiration for Irish Friends - "they are parrots" - and

1. S. H. Gay to Webb, 6.6.48, Garrison Papers; Gay to Webb, 31.7.48, ibid. Many of Webb's letters in the Gay Papers have references to his contributions to the Standard and his work as its British distributor. There is a complete file of the Anti-Slavery Advocate at Colindale. Webb's only important pamphlet was The National Anti-Slavery Societies in England and the United States, or Strictures on 'A Reply to Certain Charges Brought against the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, etc., etc,' by Lewis Tappan of New York, United States: with an introduction by John Scoble (Dublin, 1852).

was aware of their distaste for him as a heretic. In 1844 he finally resigned from the Society over what he considered its cowardly course on the Indiana Yearly Meeting affair.\(^1\) He retained certain usages of the Friends in his family, but three years later had even "thrown off the Friend," or abandoned Quaker dress.\(^2\) Webb is probably best characterised as being doctrinally unplaceable and therefore without the stake in the orthodoxy backed by the leaders of the London Committee. By 1860, like most American Garrisonians, he regarded himself as a theological pariah.\(^3\)

The other factor in Webb's character which may have encouraged him to take a Garrisonian standpoint was a certain provincial distrust of control from London. Throughout the forties he seems to have thought of the success of Irish and Scottish abolitionists in forming an alliance with the Garrisonians as a sort of provincial coup at the expense of the metropolis. He once remarked to Maria Weston Chapman that if the B.F.A.S.S. Committee had been in their right minds, "they would have kept Garrison and the other ultraist delegates enclosed in their own exclusive circles, and only allowed provincials

1. 'Jottings for Maria Weston Chapman,' [Webb to M.W. Chapman, 22.2.42; Garrison Papers; Webb to M. W. Chapman, 29.2.44, ibid.

2. Webb to S. H. Gay, 17.4.47, Gay Papers.

3. Webb to C. Miller McKim, 10.9.60, May Collection, Cornell University Library - "I am only a very middling sectarian of any kind whatever."
like himself to look at them from a distance, like the cat and
the King." As it was, the credit of the association with
Garrison was transferred to plainer men like the Dublin
abolitionists. In a later letter, he pointed out that the
débacle of the B.F.A.S.S. treatment of Garrison had meant
that "the little men" were given a chance to meet and help
Garrison and his friends, whom they had expected to see
constantly surrounded by the magnates of the London Society.

There is a definite feeling in Webb's letters of status gained
by the visits of the Garrisonian leaders. Quite apart from
the question of provincial distrust of London, there must
have been a certain boost to the ego of the head of a middling
Dublin household in entertaining the leaders of what was with
all its shortcomings a national movement. As Webb once said
of Garrison, "I never felt myself so great a man as when he
was under my roof."

The Hibernian Anti-Slavery Society through which Webb
worked was formed in the summer of 1837, to replace the old
Dublin Anti-Slavery Society in the fight against apprenticeship
and for universal abolition. Although it never became an
auxiliary of any London Society, its formation was carried out
with the cooperation and advice of the Universal Abolition

1. 'Jottings for Maria Weston Chapman', loc.cit.
Society. Its leaders were drawn from the small group of reforming Protestant nonconformists in Dublin, whose social life centred round the home of the well-to-do orthodox Quaker draper Richard Allen, a lukewarm Garrisonian of the future in spite of his staid religious background. In many ways this was a family circle; Webb and his brother Thomas were brothers-in-law of Richard Allen, and their sister Anne Webb Allen the brilliant hostess of the group. The circle was later joined by Eliza Wigham of Edinburgh, who spent long summer vacations in Dublin with her sister Maria Wigham Waring, in turn married to Webb's wife's brother. The radical Unitarian James Naughton completed their number. Their reform interests were completely central to their life. Webb's son later wrote that he remembered playing with the Allen children, and saying to their presumably devout dolls "Now thee's going to a slavery meeting; now thee's going to a temperance meeting." Their endless interest in reform involved enthusiasm for any cause which was brought to their notice. Again Webb's son records that "slavery, temperance, British India, anti-opium, anti-capital punishment, anti-corn law, cold water cure" were their interests. The Dublin newspaper joke was to refer to them as "anti-everythingarians." But their main interest was in slavery and temperance, and this was the group who set about forming the Hibernian Anti-Slavery Society, with Webb and Naughton as Secretaries, and Allen as Treasurer.

Predictably this trio, with their wives, and Webb's brothers and father, formed the delegation of the Hibernian Anti-Slavery Society to the World's Anti-Slavery Convention in 1840. Their response to the policy of the London Committee in excluding the female delegates was similar to that of Smeal and Murray in Glasgow. Webb for one wrote to Mrs. Mott expressing sympathy with her in spite of theological disagreements which he implied had caused dissension between her and certain other abolitionists.  

Many years later he was to attribute the failure of the Convention to the high number of clergymen present.  

The other two Dublin leaders also developed a distrust of the London Committee line on the women. Allen and Haughton later explained that they could not send delegates to any future World's Convention unless it was convened "without reference to sex or sect." When they gave their formal refusal to send delegates in 1843, they remarked that the exclusion of women had "cramped the action of the last [1840] Convention [and] neutralised its efficiency." It does not follow from the fact that this small group of Dublin activists took the Garrisonian standpoint, that by any means all Irish abolitionists agreed with them. The Cork Society, for instance, was at this stage thoroughly under the B.F.A.S.S. thumb.  

2. Webb, op.cit., p. 6. The same view was expressed by Elizabeth Cady Stanton in Eighty Years and More (London, 1898), p. 80.  
4. Allen to Scoble, 24.4.43, ibid., C12/94.  
The Belfast Society also, wedded to its Ulster Presbyterian conservatism, was to remain a faithful auxiliary of the Broad Street group. But the fact remains that in the area which was to become the centre of Garrisonian feeling in the forties and fifties, the 1840 World's Convention produced attitudes directly conflicting with those of the London Committee, and looking forward to the later radicalism of the Dublin group.

Thus the controversy over the female delegates at the Convention partly crystallised the viewpoints which were to lead on to the open schisms in the British anti-slavery societies a few months later. Opinions on the one question of women's rights, and by implication on the whole series of issues dividing the American parties, differed in Britain. On the one hand the conservatives of the London Committee refused to entangle the cause in inevitable complications by admitting the female delegates. On the other, isolated individuals and papers throughout the country, as well as solid organised abolitionist groups in Dublin and Glasgow, and to a lesser extent Edinburgh, saw this course as a rejection of the correct methodology of enlisting help from all quarters. By the time the delegates returned from the Convention, arguments on the correct course to follow were general. In the Scottish case at least, these fell along the lines of previous tensions and rivalries. What had not yet appeared, however, was any suggestion that a split in the anti-slavery societies, should follow from the disagreements. There was no thought of forming separate societies to carry out

1. J. Standfield to Tredgold, 3.11.40, ibid., C10/59.
different plans, good motives were still admitted on both sides, and the first desire expressed as a rider to all disagreements was for continuing united action. The potential for division was there, but it was only to be realised by the introduction of a new element, with the arrival of a man in a key position whose concern for unity was minimal. It was only with the visit of J. A. Collins in the next year that the arguments which had arisen at the Convention were projected into a sense of the urgent need to "come out and be separate" from those in the opposite abolition camp.

The best proof of the initial desire to reconcile the differences of the Convention is the continuing willingness of the British abolition societies to entertain American delegates from the side they disagreed with. Several of the visitors did in fact tour the provinces, in three distinct groups - first Professor and Mrs. Mott, with Sarah Pugh and Abby Kimber; secondly Garrison himself, with the faithful Rogers, a more unwilling Charles Remond, himself a Negro, and William Adams, the lapsed Scottish Quaker from Pawtucket; and finally Birney and Mr. and Mrs. Stanton, in company with the much distrusted John Scoble, the Secretary of the B.F.A.S.S. None of these groups was refused a hearing in the societies with views opposite to their own. Most striking of all was the enthusiasm of the Glasgow and Dublin groups, the later centres of Garrisonian feeling, for receiving the Birney and Stanton group.

Mrs. Mott's reception was less surprising, since although she was known to have peculiar views, she had no compulsion to express them in places where they were least acceptable. Again, she did concentrate her short visits on societies which would naturally
have been most anxious to welcome her. Nevertheless, even in London she had not been ignored. Certainly Mrs. Mott's party were not given invitations to the huge receptions at Jonathan Backhouse's and the Gurneys', though notice was given that "they would ask the others, but where there were young people they were afraid of our principles." Nevertheless, she was encouraged to speak at a meeting after the Convention, when Scoble's characteristically spiteful attempt to thwart her was drowned out by cries of "No! No! - Mrs. Mott!" Thereafter she was entertained in London by conservatives like Gurney and Dr. Bowring. She was predictably well received during her later ten day visit to Dublin. In Edinburgh she made no attempt to meet abolitionists publicly, though she stayed with George Thompson in his cottage at Gorgie, and was introduced to the famous Edinburgh phrenologist George Combe. In Glasgow, though present with her husband at the G.E.S. Annual Meeting on August 8th and 10th, the attack on the American visitors came not from the minority of conservatives on the G.E.S. Committee, but from Chartist interlopers with whom Mrs. Mott at least felt a certain sympathy.

1. 'Lucretia Mott's Diary', entry for 13.6.40. See also J. Mott, Three Months in Great Britain (Philadelphia, 1841), pp. 15-16.
2. 'Lucretia Mott's Diary', entry for 24.6.40.
3. Ibid., entries for 29.6.40, 9.7.40.
4. Ibid., entries for 22.7.40, 26.7.40.
5. Ibid.; entries for 7.8.40, 10.8.40; Minutes for 7.8.40, 10.8.40, G.E.S. Minute Books, II. Mrs. Mott asked to speak in favour of the Chartist, but was refused. - J. Mott, op. cit., p. 64. Mott (pp.65-69) also records strong Glasgow Quaker opposition to the party as Hicksites. This involved Sneal, among other local Friends, in issuing a letter disassociating themselves from the Hicksite heresy. This again supports the thesis that genuine intellectual differences between Sneal and the conservative Quakers of the London Committee were not important, and that later support for the Garrisonians was a convenient way of projecting provincial distrust of London centralisationist leadership.
was to be expected; but the evident desire to hear and meet her among London abolitionists was not, while the failure of Glasgow anti-Garrisonians to argue with her suggests that they too still stuck to the old ideas of maintaining unity wherever possible.

The reception of Garrison and his companions gives similar evidence. Unlike Mrs. Mott, their exclusion from the Convention had been their own choice and not that of the London Committee. In spite of Garrison's open distrust of the B.F.A.S.S., he was entertained along with delegates of different views. No doubt what he said in public tended to repel his more conservative hearers; at the party held in the Crown and Anchor for the foreign delegates, he succeeded in alienating most of his audience. "Forth came," wrote Mrs. Stanton, "much folly." Nevertheless, although the biases against Garrison and his views were made clear by the actual course of the Convention, there was as yet no attempt to refuse social acceptance to him and his followers, no suggestion that the cause would best be served by publicly disowning those who disagreed. Garrison, Remond, Rogers and Adams were received with other delegates at the massive banquet run afterwards by Samuel Gurney. With his chronic tendency to grovel for the support of aristocrats, Garrison's head was quite turned by his reception. He reported gloatingly to his wife on the splendour of the occasion. The Duchess of Sutherland and Lady Byron, already showing their understanding of the social cachet to be gained by the inversion of values implied in entertaining black men, had been charming to Remond. Also, Garrison wrote triumphantly, the Duchess "behaved very graciously and... shook me cordially by

the hand...she has since expressed a wish to have an interview with me; but," he concluded triumphantly, "I think it doubtful whether I shall find time to call." Even in London, there were still directions in which Garrison and his friends were considered respectable members of a basically united movement.

Garrison's tour of the provinces concentrated on areas where support for his faction was strongest. But even in Edinburgh, where the male Emancipation Society included a majority pro-London element on its Committee, his party's reception was cordial. He arrived on July 21st, and spoke at a temperance meeting that evening which went on devoutly and enthusiastically from seven till two. There were no signs of any disposition to argue that Garrison's cause was not the anti-slavery one. Dr. Greville introduced Garrison at a subsequent breakfast held for the party with the comment that "it would be little better than a mockery" to go into the details of their guests' exertions for the slave. Even the Evangelical Edinburgh Witness, later the absolute antithesis of an Old Organisation paper, wrote enthusiastically about Garrison's "firmness...mildness, gentleness and benevolence." The Witness was evidently a little disappointed that Rogers did not fit its preconceived ideas of American editors as "a sort of fustian hercules - ignorant, impudent, and vulgar." As for Remond, it was surprised that in spite of his black skin, "his utterance was quite as good as that of most well educated Scotchmen." In spite of the disagreements,

it does not seem to have occurred to anyone that Garrison should be refused a hearing. Naturally this was even more the case in Glasgow, where the three American travellers were received with overwhelming enthusiasm. There is no evidence that the future secessionists dissented, although the Rev. Alexander Harvey, for one, had spoken at the Convention against seating the female delegates. Garrison himself thought the public meeting held for him on the 27th August important and united enough to devote the first two pages of the first Liberator after his return to America to a reprint of the Glasgow Argus report of its proceedings. The leaders of the G.E.S printed the proceedings under the Society's auspices, without any opposition from conservative members. Even more striking, the great Dr. Wardlaw, a key figure among Glasgow's later pro-B.P.A.S.S. minority, agreed to have his chapel used for the meeting, acted as chairman, and actually found himself eulogised in the Liberator as one of the small band of "faithful" abolitionists in Britain. In fact Wardlaw had introduced Rogers with the remark that he was "- not from Harmony - (cheers) - not from the misnamed cradle of misnamed socialism - (cheers) - but from Concord." Evidently the view was still that any anti-

1. See above, pp. 144.
5. Report of the Speeches and Reception of the American Delegates, etc., p. 3.
slavery worker could help the movement, and that cooperation could and should continue within the same societies, irrespective of individual views on other subjects. The same was true of Dublin, where Garrison's party decided to lecture at the last minute, at Webb's earnest invitation. Rogers had already visited Dublin, while the Motts were there, but on his second visit he was joined by Garrison, leaving Remond and Adam in Glasgow. During the couple of days they spent in Dublin, there was no sign of opposition to Garrisonian views, although the Dublin audiences seem to have been largely working class. Rogers and he left Dublin well pleased, on the government packet of August 2nd, to sail home from Liverpool together two days later. C. P. Grosvenor, Elou Galusha, the hated Colver, and James Cannings Fuller went home by the same sailing of the Acadia, symbolically set apart by ship's regulations from the two radicals, who went in the forward cabin at half price, "in a sort of second table condition" - no doubt consoled by being spared the company of the nameless "wine and brandy drinkers" in the after berths.

However, the significant fact about the Dublin society in 1810, was not that it gave a welcome to Garrison and his friends, in a town where the movement was always to be dominated by a small clique of Old Organisation sympathisers, but that a similar welcome was given immediately afterwards to Garrison's known rivals,

1. Webb to Garrison, 23.7.40, Garrison Papers.

2. Ibid. The reason for strong working class interest in Dublin may simply be that so many of the poorer population there must have been actively considering emigration to America.

Birney, Stanton, and Scoble. In Edinburgh, as was to be expected, their welcome was enthusiastic, without any indication that future Garrisonians like Jane and Eliza Wigham objected to welcoming them because of what had happened at the Convention. Indeed they were all invited to stay with old John Wigham, and were presumably looked after by the Wigham womenfolk. Although Scoble's distasteful character appears to have emerged even at this stage — Mrs. Stanton's wholehearted dislike for him developed at this early stage of their trip — it does not seem to have led to opposition to the three men at the receptions held for them. Birney's position as the only American ever to visit Edinburgh while an active presidential candidate does not seem to have been noticed by the Scottish press.

On October 14th, the New Organisationists were given a successful public meeting, followed by a breakfast on the 16th, both supported by the Edinburgh Committee and both well attended. In fact, the treatment of this party and Garrison's one was identical.

If a good Edinburgh reception for these men was to be expected, a welcome in Dublin and Glasgow was not. Indeed Garrison's earlier visits to Glasgow had strengthened existing biases. While in Edinburgh, John Scoble wrote pessimistically that he had heard "our friend Smeal is excessively sore about the woman's question."

1. J. Wigham to Tredgold, 6.10.40, Bod.Brit.Emp.Mss. S.18, C10/178. Mrs. Stanton recorded that they had also mingled freely with abolitionists of both sides while in London — op.cit., p. 79.


"Again, Thompson wrote significantly to Webb that they expected to be "favoured(?)" with a visit from the conservative group at the adjourned Annual Meeting of the G.E.S.\(^1\) Actually Birney, Stanton, and Scoble did not come north in August because of the difficulty of raising an audience in Edinburgh in the summer months, when all worthwhile citizens went off on holiday – but when they did arrive in Glasgow in October, a public meeting was called to hear them on October 20th, Garrisonian sympathies or no. The meeting was again held in Dr. Wardlaw’s chapel, with Wardlaw himself in the Chair. Not only Thompson, but Charles Remond, whom an attack of lung inflammation had detained at Bowling Bay, united with the visitors in attacking the Colonization Society.\(^2\) In fact the welcome here was enthusiastic enough for Scoble to write happily that "From all I could learn by inquiry and observation, I am extremely happy to say that Garrisonism has made but little way in Scotland."\(^3\)

After short visits to Carlisle and Belfast, Scoble and his American companions reunited in Dublin, again to be complimented with a public meeting. Again, Dublin was hardly the place where they could most expect to have been received well, since Garrisonian leanings were already present there. However, although Webb wrote to Garrison that "we won’t be so much at our ease with them," he did not go on to make any suggestion that the best course would


3. Scoble to Tredgold, 30.10.40, loc.cit.
be to refuse to help these missionaries from the other side.\textsuperscript{1} Their public meeting was adjourned for a second night, and was attended not only by the Anti-Slavery Society Organisers but by O'Connell himself. All the speakers joined in explaining Ireland's special role due to the large number of emigrants to the U.S.A.\textsuperscript{2} Even in Dublin, it was still possible for sympathisers of Old and New Organisation to work in cooperation.

The evidence thus suggests that although the controversy at the World's Convention had played upon pre-existing tensions to make British abolitionists sympathise with different groups in the American abolitionist movement, disagreements had not yet reached the stage where united action between the two sides was impossible. No anti-slavery society had split in two, no society had declared its independence of any other because of differing views. Garrisonism was strong in some areas, weak in others - but Garrisonian abolitionists were still tolerated among the men who had rejected Garrison's ideas at the Convention, and vice versa. In short, it was still assumed that in spite of all the arguments, cooperation between men and women holding different views on the means to the great common end of emancipation was still possible and desirable.

In fact it is possible that by the late autumn of 1840, the memory of the arguments among British abolitionists was fading, as the last of the American delegates filtered home, and the Reporter continued to ignore points of disunity.

1. Webb to Garrison, 2.9.40, Garrison Papers.

Webb at least, with as much knowledge of the opposition case as anyone in Britain, was inclined to blame the whole argument on Scoble. He had shared Mrs. Stanton's "hearty well-grounded horror of him," and viewed him personally as "a self-willed, tyrannically minded, narrow-souled, clever bigot." It had now been proved that differences of opinion on subjects outside the movement need not destroy unity of action within it, and there is no reason to believe that the British societies would have gone on to form two separate parties working side by side if their disagreements had not been resurrected and indeed sharpened by the introduction of a new factor. In 1841 they did in fact split into two factions, when they were pushed into a situation where acceptance or rejection of one man could be used as a test of orthodoxy. The one man was John Anderson Collins, the Garrisonian who had brought the "boatload of ultraism" to the 1840 Annual Meeting of the American Society. The situation brought about by his visit in 1841 was to do the same for the British movement as his marshalling of the Massachusetts forces had already done a year earlier for the American one.

1. Ibid.
CHAPTER V
JOHN ANDERSON COLLINS AND THE BRITISH REFLECTION OF THE U.S. SCHISMS

By the time Collins' mission was decided upon, few of the American delegates to the World's Convention remained in Britain. Garrison and Rogers had sailed on the Acadia on September 4th, 1840.1 As for the other Old Organisationists, the Motts, Sarah Pugh, and Abby Kimber followed Garrison home on the 27th.2 Professor Adam remained in the country, but with the campaign for British India reform gaining momentum, his attention was taken up by his Indian studies.3 Since Phillips and his wife had left Britain to tour the Continent immediately after the Convention, the only Garrisonian abolitionist who seemed likely to spend the winter in Britain was the Negro Charles Remond. At this time he was in Scotland, living as John Murray's house guest while being treated by William Smeal's brother Robert for some form of tubercular trouble.4

By the autumn of 1840, then, British abolitionists seemed disposed to accept one another's shortcomings peacefully, and no Old Organisationist Americans remained active on this side of the Atlantic. No personnel was at Garrison's disposal for agitating his standpoint in Britain. As soon as any specific issue led him to believe that

3. Adam to Tredgold, 19.3.41, Bod. Brit. Emp. Mss. S.18, C4/6; Adam to Tredgold, 12.5.41, ibid., C4/3.
British support was essential, it would be necessary to send a new delegate across the Atlantic to acquire it. The specific issue arose with his discovery of the 'plot' of the Tappan faction to steal the _Emancipator_. The required delegate was found in John Anderson Collins, the Andover graduate who had become General Agent of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society. It was during the course of his visit to collect money to replace the _Emancipator_ that the American schisms were presented in a light which made a similar division in the British anti-slavery societies inevitable. In this division Scottish abolitionists made a different choice from English ones, which decided the special course they were to follow for the next twenty years.

Up to the beginning of 1840 the _Emancipator_ had been the official paper of the American Society, expressing Executive Committee attitudes in a way which the _Liberator_, always Garrison's personal organ, had never done. As the Committee hardened in its opposition to Garrison and his supporters, the _Emancipator_ had predictably come out in support of Tappan and the moderates. The 'transfer of the _Emancipator_' had taken place just before the resignation of the old national Committee in May 1840, when the paper, for reasons which were stated as financial, was made over to the New York Young Men's Anti-Slavery Society. Even after this, the _Liberator_ still found cause for continual sniping at its subservience to the 'disorganisers'. What the _Liberator_ did not state until after Garrison's return, presumably because it took him to sense the opportunities for abuse implicit in the Executive Committee's disposal of Society property before their resignation, was that the continuity in policy was hardly surprising,
since the New York Young Men's Society was firmly Tappanite.\footnote{1} The paper had effectively become the organ of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. In fact many of the old Executive Committee were also officials of the New York Society. This change of the ownership of the paper by the old Committee to themselves under another name was the "swindle" which Garrison saw as being the most unforgiveable of the many sins of the seceders.\footnote{2} The question of whether or not the Emancipator had been stolen now became one of the focal points of debate between Old and New Organisation abolitionists in America. Unlike many of the previous differences, the question could be posed along simple lines of right and wrong.

The facts of the transfer do not suggest the dishonesty implied in Garrison's accusations. The later defences of the Executive Committee's conduct seem more convincing than the attempts to keep the accusation of fraud alive.\footnote{3} Certainly the Committee seem to have alienated the American Society's pamphlets, or part of them, because they needed cash. In April, for instance, Stanton had written that it was essential to raise funds by transferring pamphlet stocks to enable him to marry Elizabeth Cady.\footnote{4} On the other hand, since long arrears of salary were already due him, the

1. The first statement of the case as one of embezzlement is in the Liberator, 4.9.40.


3. Compare for instance the defence of the transfer in L. Tappan to M. Waring, 14.5.47, Garrison Papers, with the mudslinging of even so gentlemanly a Garrisonian as Quincy in An Examination of the Charges of Mr. John Scofield and Mr. Lewis Tappan against the American Anti-Slavery Society (Dublin, 1852). The manuscript of this pamphlet is in the Garrison Papers, Vol.21.

4. Stanton to Phelps, 17.4.40, Phelps Papers, B.P.L.
acceptance of payment in the form of virtually unnegotiable pamphlets involved a substantial personal sacrifice. Again, as for the Emancipator itself, any further loss incurred would be taken personally by the individual Committee members, who had already sunk a substantial investment in it. The suggested alternative of using money raised by the sale of pamphlets and other assets was unworkable since there was no reason why the market for abolitionist literature should suddenly become so bullish that stocks could be disposed of overnight. By the time of the transfer, the New York leaders saw their course as the only possible solution to the paper's difficulties. Later one of the seceders, probably Leavitt, wrote that if the Emancipator had not been made over to the Young Men's Society, most of the subscribers would have deserted the paper after it fell into the hands of "the interloping committee." The main point influencing the Committee, however, must have been that in their then financial position the paper could not go on being produced - and if it could not go on being produced it could not earn money to pay off debts which it had incurred, and which were their personal responsibility. As arrangements for the transfer were made, Stanton wrote to Phelps, whom he had no occasion to mislead, that "There is no trick, ruse, or plot about this matter. We have, & can get, no means.""2

By the outset of 1840, the national society was financially moribund. Stanton's assessment was not unduly presimistic. In Barnes' words,


2. Stanton to Phelps, 11.4.40, Phelps Papers.
the Society had been "starving to death" since the previous year.¹ Due to the refusal of the state societies to send funds, the Committee genuinely had no money to use on behalf of the Emancipator or indeed anything else. The capital value of Society property was high, probably in the region of $15,000. But this sum could do little good since all of it was locked up in fixed assets, largely office equipment and the stocks of unsaleable pamphlets already mentioned. The practical alternatives were to allow the Emancipator to sink, or to transfer it to an organisation with the capital to manage it. No doubt the relative conservatism of the Committee meant it was also aware that if the Emancipator failed, the only abolitionist papers surviving would be the Liberator and Rogers' extremist Herald of Freedom. In January, 1840, they accordingly accepted the offer of the New York Young Men's Anti-Slavery Society, largely controlled by themselves, the same men as the Committee of the National Society. The management of the paper was taken over by them, and its ownership transferred, while Joshua Leavitt retained its editorship.²

On his return, Garrison thus found that in spite of his earlier success in driving his opponents from the National Society, the Emancipator had been put out of his reach. Moreover, given the fact that the New York Society's Committee was dominated by the


men who had left the American Society after the purge in May, and gone on to become the Committee of the new American and Foreign Society, the paper was effectively being produced as the organ of the secessionists. On the other hand, the original American Society now had no paper but the Anti-Slavery Standard, and, since the change of Committee had not magically made the Society solvent, no money to run that. Faced with this uncomfortable situation, Garrison began to enlarge on the theory of the plot to steal the Emancipator. In the limited sense that the paper had once been Society property but no longer was so, his accusation was justified. On the other hand, what Garrison did not choose to see was that the Emancipator had legally been transferred by currently elected members of the Executive Committee, and that this had been done at a time when the alternative was to allow it to go out of production.

Collins' health was always mentioned as the reason for his trip to Britain. But in spite of the veil of secrecy kept round his mission - it was not mentioned in the Liberator until Christmas day 1840, twelve weeks after he left America.¹ it is clear that the real reason was Garrison's feeling that it was essential to get foreign financial help to put the National Anti-Slavery Standard on a sound enough footing to compete with the Emancipator.² The credentials given Collins graphically outlined the fraud over the Emancipator transfer.³ The contrast between the $11,000

1. Liberator, 25.12.40. It was also stated that he had gone "in order, if possible, to recruit his shattered constitution", in the Ninth Annual Report... of the Massachusetts A.S. Society, p.33.


estimated capital of the society and its allowing the paper to go for want of $150 to save it was carefully played on, ignoring the facts that the $11,000 was held in the form of frozen or unmarketable assets, and that "saving" the Emancipator simply meant getting out another issue, which might take as bad a loss as previous ones. Again, the credentials pointed out that although the Executive Committee had failed to raise the $150, they had cheerfully voted Leavitt's salary as Editor and the expenses of Birney and Stanton to the World's Convention. It was not stated that Leavitt's salary had been contracted for a year previously, or that the expenses were paid to Birney and Stanton in useless and outdated tracts which apparently never had any money realized on them. The letter went on to accuse Tappan and his associates of further defrauding the Society by gutting its office of equipment and stocks and transferring them to the secessionist American and Foreign Society. It was not mentioned that the costs of these assets had originally come out of the pockets of the old Committee, or that the pamphlets had been distributed to meet outstanding salary obligations. Evidently the hope was that this exposé, added to an account of the compromises of the New Organizers from the time of the 'Clerical Appeal' onwards, would be enough to make British abolitionists open their purses to save the Standard.¹

The event showed that their hope was wildly optimistic. Collins was to run up against many obstacles, not the least of which

was his own character. In fact he was entirely the wrong man for the job, equalled in tactlessness only by Garrison, Roger, and Wright themselves. His first abolitionist achievement had been to discover the 'Clerical Plot' against Garrison while he was an undergraduate at Andover. Thereafter he had become the General Agent of the Massachusetts Society. Although the darling of radical females like the Weston sisters who formed its backbone, he was quickly to earn a reputation for unwillingness to compromise after his arrival in Britain. He crossed the Atlantic with the distinction of having chartered the steamer Rhode Island to carry the "boatload of ultraism" to the Annual Meeting of the American Society, to pack it for Garrison and 'original abolition'. Teetotal, rigidly anticlerical, and pacifist, like most Garrisonians, Collins was also beginning to show the social radicalism which later led him into Owenite experiments at Skaneateles and the editorship of The Communist and the Social Pioneer and Herald of Progress. Although he never publicly expressed his socialist principles in Britain, the accounts

1. There is no biography or even useful sketch of Collins, apart from a short article in the D.A.B. See Thomas, The Liberator, p.312.

2. A.W. Weston to D. Weston, 8.3.39, Weston Papers; D. Weston to A.W. Weston, 17.3.39, ibid.; D. Weston to A.W. Weston, 3.5.39, ibid.; Webb to Garrison, 30.5.41, in Liberator, 25.6.41.


of his meetings at Glasgow, Ipswich, and elsewhere show a
sympathy with the British labour movement, hardly acceptable among
the solid middle class philanthropists from whom he hoped to
raise money. ¹ Some remarkable letters of his to Elizabeth Pease
show just how near to socialism his sophisticated assessment of
British society went. After boarding ship at Liverpool, he
wrote assuring her that the slavery of her countrymen "has all.....
grown out of the system of exchange, by which one class of men
can secure the fruits of the poor laborer without returning him
an equivalent." ² Presumably Collins' private correspondence
to Miss Pease remained private, but attitudes of this sort can
hardly have escaped the prosperous men on whom he called in his
search for funds, and his chances of success must have been proportion-
ately reduced. Indeed his stated opinion was that to remain silent
about British oppression was to retard the principles of abolition.
Again, the course of his visit was to show how much the bitterness
of Collins' language antagonised British abolitionists. Even
Thompson came to be critical of the missionary's ineptitude as a
debater and public speaker. ³

Apart from Collins' own shortcomings, Garrison's plan to raise
British money to replace the Emancipator would have faced overwhelming

1. Extract from Glasgow Saturday Post, n.d., in Liberator,
   28.5.41; "Address of the Workingmen of Glasgow to John A.
   Collins, Esq.", ibid.; Extracts from Ipswich Express, 5.1.41,
   in Liberator, 30.7.41, 6.8.41.

2. Collins to E. Pease, 4.7.41, Garrison Papers. See also
   Collins to E. Pease, 16.8.41, ibid.

3. Collins to Garrison, 27.12.40, Garrison Papers; Thompson to
   Webb, 8.2.41, ibid.; H. Gairdner to Collins, 20.4.41; ibid.;
   J. Button to Collins, 27.5.41, ibid.
handicaps. The request for funds could not have been made at a worst time. For one thing, the World's Convention had left most British abolitionists in no condition to help Collins. A reaction into comparative apathy was bound to succeed the high pitch of excitement it had demanded. Apart from this, the financial strain of delegates' trips to London must have been great. Again, demands on British abolitionists immediately before Collins' arrival had been unusually high, as most of the men he approached were eager to remind him. Apart from the collections made by local societies, for the successive visits of the touring American delegates, a highly successful killing had been made by Dawes and Keep of the Oberlin fund-raising mission—in Bristol alone they had collected five hundred guineas.¹

Finally, a large part of the attention which might have been given to Collins was now being diverted to the fashionable cause of British India reform. It was particularly attractive as far as prospective Garrisonians were concerned, because of Thompson's involvement in campaigning for the British India Society. Apart from the smaller fry, Thompson himself, even if he had not been beginning to show signs of balking at the more outrageous 'extraneous issues', would have been unable to justify the hopes placed in him by Garrison because of the amount of work he was doing for the British India Society.² There was to be no full-hearted support  

¹ Collins to (?), 26.11.40, ibid.; Estlin to Webb, Chapman, 13.11.45, Weston Papers.  
² E. Pease to Collins, 24.12.40, Garrison Papers; Thompson to Collins, 3.3.41, ibid.
from Thompson. One of the many criticisms which Collins later made of British abolitionists was that Thompson was "in his nature timid and compromising." 1

Added to the current political excitement over the Corn Laws and the Charter, these drawbacks would have made Collins' chances of success slim, even without the suspicion of heterodox views on the Sabbath, women, and political authority. This was carefully fostered by Scoble and Sturge during the course of Collins' stay. Indeed most American abolitionists apart from Garrison could see how hopeless the British prospects were.

Collins was given his credentials by the Executive Committee of the American Society on 25th September 2 but they were Committee credentials and nothing more. None of the ordinary members or provincial societies were consulted or informed about the decision to send him. Even within the Committee, there was dissension.

Charles Burleigh, the Secretary of Foreign Correspondence, who composed Collins' credentials as an official duty, was unconvinced of the value of the mission. After writing the letter to the Abolitionists of Great Britain, he wrote that he would not authorise his name to be appended to it at all, if this was to imply any approbation of the plan of sending Collins abroad. 3 Personally he insisted that "I entirely disapprove of the whole plan..... I do not wish to convey the impression to any body that I think well of the mission." He finally remarked that he was unsure whether the


president should sign the credentials for the Society, since the Society members would probably be unwilling to support them. Burleigh also warned Mrs. Chapman that the Philadelphia faction headed by Mrs. Mott and J. Miller McKim agreed with him about the Committee action being highhanded, "especially considering that we have objected to the old Committee for having at times taken too much upon themselves." As for his home state of Rhode Island, he knew of no abolitionists who would approve of the plan, "while most decidedly disapprove." Even the rank of the national society had no voice in Collins' mission, which in the last resort was sanctioned only by the Committee directly under Garrison's control. In Massachusetts, the secret of Collins' departure was so well kept, even from the Weston sisters, that the rank and file were given no chance to dissent from what was in effect Garrison's decision. Even Garrison himself seems to have had occasional doubts about the decision. When he wrote to eulogise Collins to Elizabeth Pease, he felt obliged to explain the appalling straits into which the "original society", had fallen, and assure her that before sending Collins "we have.... strained every nerve to support ourselves." He was aware of the obstacles to success in Britain, especially "the new organisation spirit among you", and had carefully warned Collins against them.


2. Speech of Rev. Nathaniel Colver at Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society Anniversary Meeting, in Liberator, 12.2.41. Apart from the letter to Mrs. Chapman mentioned above, there is no reference to Collins' trip in the Weston Papers until letters from Collins himself began arriving in September 1840.

wrote to Darlington that "...... nothing but the extreme exigency of the case. ...... would have reconciled me to his going to England for the purpose of procuring pecuniary aid." 1

The doubts of American abolitionists about the Collins' mission soon sank into insignificance beside the pessimism revealed by their British sympathisers. After linking up with Remond, who had now recovered and moved from Glasgow to London, he set up headquarters with him in a lodging house in Southwark. Until February, 1841, he was to remain there apart from a discouraging visit to Edinburgh in late November. Thereafter, until his departure on July 4th, he spent his time among the radicals in Glasgow, Dublin, and Manchester, causing controversy which set British abolitionists in two camps wherever he went. The excellently documented division of the Glasgow Emancipation Society at this time is symptomatic of the disunity produced in the whole British movement by his visit. 2 In fact the opening months in the capital set the tone of disappointment for the whole Collins mission. Collins' sensitive nose for sectarianism was quick to tell him that the majority of British abolitionists was as much dominated by conservative fears and love of status as the 'disorganisers' at home. In fact as he wrote to Garrison, satisfactory attitudes to freedom were even less likely to be found in Britain, where the whole system of government was 'a vast and complicated system of slavery.'

1. Garrison to E. Pease, 1.12.40, ibid.
2. See below, pp. 421ff.
His experience of English industrial conditions was already beginning to push him towards his experiments at Skaneateles. He had quickly realised that English society was based on the success of the possessing class in stealing the labourers' property in the fruits of their own labour. As for the B.F.A.S.S., he had become convinced that their having Scoble, Birney, and Stanton tour the country was simply aimed at fostering the belief that "the new organisation movement represents the summum bonum of genuine freedom, and that old organisation, of the Garrison school, is the climax of absurdities."¹ A month later, he had become convinced that the British denominations were as much steeped in New Organisation, or pro-slavery, sectarianism, as their American counterparts -

"The abolitionists I have met with have been laced up in sectarian jackets, and screwed up like the bride in the ballroom, unable to step to the music. This country is all opposed to negro slavery, and it must be abolished by the square and compass. It must be done.... without removing the dead carcass of a Quaker, Methodist, Baptist, etc., if perchance they stand upon freedom's track. The car must stop, or go round...... New Organisation is the panacea."²

In the last resort, however, such conservatism was a cross which an ultra like Collins might have expected to bear. The real disappointment was that not even the most extreme British abolitionists showed any enthusiasm for helping him in rousing the nation. Considering he seems to have made no attempts to hide the socially...

². Collins to Webb (?), 28.1.41, ibid.
alarjing aspects of his own radicalism, this is hardly surprising. But they were also acutely aware of the disadvantages of trying to raise money at this time. Harriet Martineau, for instance, initially told Collins frankly that she did not wish to approach her friends for more assistance, in view of the way in which they had responded to her appeal for the Oberlin delegation. This was all the more so in view of the current need for energy in fund-raising on behalf of the British poor. She also felt "certain that ....... an appeal like this, following upon their late liberal charity, would.... alienate them entirely from a cause which they regard already as degraded by quarrels." Finally, Miss Martineau rather unkindly pointed out that it was unlikely the cause would perish for want of a single newspaper. Even in the G.E.B., Smaal took a similar standpoint of kind apathy, on the same ground that recent appeals to abolitionist generosity made a good response to Collins' demands unlikely. Even the two figures who were to be his staunchest defenders outside Glasgow, Richard D. Webb and Elizabeth Pease, wrote that although they would do all in their power to raise money, their hopes of success were low. Both were again aware of the apathy following the campaign of Dawes and Keep, while Miss Pease also pointed to the involvement of the public in political issues at home.

Thus on the one hand Collins' chances of success were to suffer from unsuitability of his own character and lack of a clear mandate

1. H. Martineau to Collins, 9.11.40, ibid.
from America, and on the other from the peculiarly unpromising British situation. The pessimism of the handful of British Garrisonians and his own complaints about the New Organisation tainted British abolitionism was borne out by the failure of his early efforts in London. Thomas Powell Burton, for instance, was able to plead that his time and money were entirely devoted to the African Civilization Society, and only gave Collins ten pounds on the written understanding that his name should not be used in making future applications.¹ A kind letter from Mrs. Hill of Edinburgh, Bowland Hill's sister-in-law, enclosing five pounds, gave several introductions which came to nothing.² Hopes of seeing Sir Charles Forbes, President of the British India Society, and of approaching the Duchess of Sutherland, likewise never bore fruit. Certainly Samuel Burney and Thomas Sturge, probably out of personal distrust of the Broad Street Committee, subscribed fifty pounds each, but beyond this there was little positive response from London.³

The first excursions Collins and Remond made to the provinces were if anything even less encouraging. At the beginning of November, encouraged by George Thompson, Collins went north to stay with him in his cottage at Duncan Street, Newington. He went so far as to approach the Edinburgh Emancipation Society Committee, and try to

3. Thompson to Sir C. Forbes, 22.11.40, Garrison Papers; Thompson to (?), 22.11.40, ibid.; Collins to Garrison, 27.12.40, ibid.
enveigle Captain Charles Stuart into a discussion of the American divisions in front of the Committee. Stuart initially quibbled about the rules of their debate, and subsequently left Scotland. Collins returned to London in disgust, leaving the minds of the members of the R.K.Y. still "poisoned" by the previous talks of Birney, Stanton, and Scoble.¹

Further attempts to stir up interest outside London were equally unsuccessful. In spite of the Edinburgh setback, Collins and Remond decided, at the end of December, to make the pilgrimage to Ipswich to try to enlist the aid of Thomas Clarkson, now intermittently senile but still the father-figure of British and indeed Atlantic abolition. On their arrival Mrs. Clarkson refused them an interview. The local ex-colonizationist Friend, R.D. Alexander wrote begging them not to trouble the old man with discussion of the upsetting divisions in the movement. On insisting, the two Americans were invited to dinner at Playford Hall, only to find that every allusion to the schism prompted Clarkson to an attack on "the great evils which would necessarily grow out of the destruction of the sabbath and of religion. He would also speak of the dangerous influence of Owenism."² It may have consoled Collins to conclude that others had had the old man's ear before Remond and he, and that "his mind had been entirely preoccupied

1. J.A. Collins, Right and Wrong among the Abolitionists, pp.70-73; Collins to Stuart, 8.11.40, Garrison Papers; Stuart to Collins, 8.11.40, ibid.; Collins to M.W. Chapman, 3.12.40, Weston Papers.

with the old cry... of your [Garrison's] desire to subvert the State & to prostrate all religion." However, the awkward fact was that there was to be no endorsement from the most revered abolitionist in Britain.\(^1\) Two highly successful meetings in Ipswich Town Hall must have done something to restore Collins' confidence, but held out no hope for future success among middle class abolitionists. Order could only be kept by converting the meetings into what amounted to Chartist rallies. No Ipswich clergyman attended except, predictably, the local Unitarian pastor, a Rev. Mr. Thomas.\(^2\)

The final excursion from London made by the two Garrisonians was even more disastrous. The town chosen on this occasion, was Darlington. Although no one in Britain was to give him a fraction of the help which came from Miss Pease, the general Darlington response to Collins' attempts to 'old organise' it was a complete defeat for the Garrisonians. After carefully preparing a resolution "censuring the London junta", Collins and Remond had the humiliating experience of seeing the meeting captured by local New Organisation abolitionists. Their final resolution was to adjourn the meeting on the grounds that there was "no representative of the London interest present".\(^3\) By the end of January, then, Collins' attempts to raise money and convert British abolitionists to Garrisonian principles had met with nothing but

1. Collins to Garrison, 5.1.41, loc.cit.

2. Extracts from Ipswich Express, 5.1.41, in Liberator, 30.7.41, 6.8.41. Taking over middle class reform meetings for their own purposes was a method widely used by the Chartists, with particular success in Scotland. See Wright, Scottish Chartist, pp. 80; London Patriot, 13.1.40; Scottish Guardian, 16.3.41; Scotsman, 12.5.41. Abolitionist meetings were not immune to this form of action.

disappointment, both at the level of personal approaches and in the attempts to support the Old Organisation case in public meetings. Collins' early ineffectiveness, however, did not prevent his splitting the British anti-slavery movement in two during the spring and summer of 1841.

The reasons for Collins' having such an enormous effect on the movement seem to be two. First, in spite of all his disadvantages, Collins' influence was increased out of all proportion by a single advantage, the friendship and assistance of the influential Miss Elizabeth Pease. Secondly, it must be emphasised that the two groups of British abolitionists were set against one another in the later stages of the visit, not by Collins' influence in itself, but by their response to the moral terms in which his appeals for support were framed. His eventual decision to approach the B.F.A.S.S. directly to ask for endorsement meant that they had to come down for or against the case he was putting forward in pleading for funds elsewhere. Since this case was based on the premise that a crime had been committed by the Tappan faction, the Broad Street choice was essentially a moral one.

In terms of the Emancipator transfer and the manoeuvres which were said to have accompanied it, the question was no longer which group had adopted the most acceptable abolitionist tactics, but which group was criminal and which was not. The possibility of some form of compromise on a middle ground, even in Britain, had gone. The B.F.A.S.S. refused to support Collins, implicitly condemning his standpoint by doing so. Most English societies followed its lead. The Dublin one, on the other hand, accepted Collins' case. The Glasgow Society, after extensive debate, did the same. British
abolitionist societies thus took different attitudes to the controversy over the acceptance or rejection of Collins. The detailed evidence available on the G.E.S. split with the London Society, and its internal divisions, suggests that this division was not solely the product of past rivalries and the tensions which had become evident at the World's Convention. The crucial point in Glasgow and elsewhere was that with an argument stated in Collins' terms of right or wrong, a case had finally arisen where it was no longer possible for men taking different standpoints to cooperate in the same movement or the same societies. Previous differences in opinion, even with differing backgrounds between English and Scottish abolitionists, did not split the British anti-slavery movement. Collins' mission did, because he was prepared to bring moral as opposed to tactical accusations against the wing of the American movement opposed to his own. It was because of this that British abolitionists, already differing in opinions, now felt forced to accept or reject cooperation with one American faction or the other. The Collins mission produced schisms on this side of the Atlantic out of all proportion to his earlier ineffectiveness in London.

Without Miss Pease's help, Collins' campaign might well have been given up after his failure to raise enthusiasm in Darlington. Collins was remarkably fortunate in arriving in Britain at a time when she had newly emerged as one of the more energetic of Garrison's devotees in the British movement, and before she cut down on her anti-slavery work after the death of her father early in 1846. Joseph Pease and his brother Edward, 'the father of the railways', both of them Friends, had originally worked a substantial wool business in Darlington,
but Elizabeth's father had retired as a merchant in early middle age. Thereafter, most of his energy seems to have been expended in reform movements. In fact Miss Pease must have been familiar with anti-slavery ideas since childhood. Her father had been prominent in the 1833 campaign, and had developed advanced views on American slavery at an early stage. In the year of the Emancipation Act, he had invited Cresson to his house at Feethams to try to convey him from colonizationist ideas. He had been involved in the campaign to shorten the West Indian apprenticeship, but by the late thirties his interest was focussed almost exclusively on British India. This is not to say that he or his family had lost sight of the Negro, since it could be argued that the practical way to end American slavery was to undercut its produce by promoting free agriculture in India. Thompson, for instance, once asked a G.E.S. Anniversary why they should "leave freemen famishing by millions on the banks of the Ganges and the Jumna, that you may steal men from the banks of the Gambia or the St. Mary's, and lash them to their hated task on the banks of the Mississippi or the Potomac."  

1. There are sketches of both Pease brothers in the D.N.B. There is no modern biography of Joseph Pease. The most informative work on the family is J.H. Bell, British Folks and British India Fifty Years Ago: Joseph Pease and his Contemporaries (London, 1891). See also Emden, Quakers in Commerce, pp.42-59. The family developed marriage ties with the Hackhouses and the Gurneys. Joseph Pease, the first Quaker M.P., was the son of Edward Pease, and Elizabeth's cousin. See also A.M. Stoddart, Elizabeth Pease Nichol (London, 1899)  


3. G.E.S. Reports, 1839, pp.60-67; W. Phillips to Thompson, 7 July, 1839, Garrison Papers.  

4. G.E.S. Reports, 1839, p.65. Thompson's ideas on India are best summed up in his widely-circulated Six Lectures on British India, published in a number of editions after 1840.
American abolitionists were just as alive to the importance of the interest Pease was stirring up over India. Remond spoke extensively on India while in Britain, while Phillips' response to news of the formation of the British India Society was to write enthusiastically of "the impulse that this new development of England's power will give the Anti-Slavery cause in America." 1

In either case, whether because of his early American interests, because of free trade views, or because of simple benevolence towards India, Elizabeth Pease's father aided in forming the British India Society. Its other leaders were Sir Charles Forbes, Montgomery Martin, the Irish Home Ruler, and Thompson, the Society's first agent. Pease lobbied for British India reform at the World's Convention of 1840. He was still one of the leaders of the Society when Indian slavery was legally abolished in November 1843.2

Devoted to her father as she was - she was prostrated for several years by his death.3 - Elizabeth Pease could hardly have avoided

1. Phillips to Thompson, July, 1839, Garrison Papers; Liberator, 4.9.40, 25.9.40, 13.11.40; extract from Port of Tyne Pilot, n.d., in Liberator, 14.5.41; Speech of Professor Adam at Massachusetts A.S. Soc. Anniversary, 1840, reprinted in Eighth Annual Report... of the Massachusetts A.S. Society (Boston, 1840), appendix, pp. xxi-xxii; see also E. M. Davis to E. Pease, 28.12.39, Garrison Papers; Garrison to E. Pease, 1.9.40, ibid.

2. J. H. Bell, op. cit., pp.17-21 and passim; An account of the formation of the British India Society is printed in Q.E.S. Annual Reports, 1839, pp.81ff; 'Lucretia Mott's Diary', entry for 10.6.40.

enthusiasm over abolitionism. Nonetheless, it was only in her thirties that she became personally prominent in the movement. She organised a Women's Abolition Society in Darlington in 1836, and was responsible for an Address to the Women of England on apprenticeship. After 1838, she devoted much of her attention to American slavery, although she also acted as her father's secretary in his Indian work. At one stage she warned Collins that her first commitment was to the British India cause — "my heart is paramountly in it & I feel assured, that in aiding it, we are helping the poor slave, infinitely more effectively than in any other way." However, she continued to put extraordinary efforts into working for the American abolitionists from 1839 until her father's death. Part of the reason for her absorption in good causes may have been a growing feeling that she was past the age when marriage could reasonably be expected. Again, 1839 saw the beginning of her close friendship with Wendell and Ann Phillips, with whom she corresponded regularly after their return to America. At the Yearly Meeting of the same year, she attempted to interest British Friends in denouncing American Quaker practices in relation to American abolitionism. Part of the reason for her absorption in good causes may have been a growing feeling that she was past the age when marriage could reasonably be expected. Again, 1839 saw the beginning of her close friendship with Wendell and Ann Phillips, with whom she corresponded regularly after their return to America. At the Yearly Meeting of the same year, she attempted to interest British Friends in denouncing American Quaker practices in relation to American abolitionism.

2. E. Pease to Collins, 23.3.41, Garrison Papers.
3. She was thirty-two in 1839.
to slavery. Later she anonymously published a series of letters from Richard Bassett of Lynn, Massachusetts, telling of his disownment by the Society, and incidentally exposing Quaker compromises over the Negro. She went to London with her father for the World's Convention, where she met the Garrisonian leaders through Wendell and Ann Phillips and George Thompson. She struck Mrs. Mott as being a "fine, noble-looking girl," but also impressed her, presumably unfavourably, by a tendency to talk "orthodoxy." Apart from her friendship with Thompson and the Phillipses, Old and New Organisation contacts had tried to influence her before the Convention.

By the time it was over, her preference for Garrison was complete. Thompson could write that she seemed "quite in love with W.L.C." Like Webb, she seems to have been glad that Garrison had been rejected by the B.F.A.S.S. Committee, so that provincials like herself could fraternise with him at the expense of London leaders. Later she wrote that "Thanks to some who have barely taken him by the hand..... I have been privileged with a much larger share of his

1. E. Pease to M.W. Chapman, 23.4.40, Weston Papers; [E. Pease, (ed.)] Society of Friends in the United States; their Views on the Anti-Slavery Question and Treatment of the People of Colour, Compiled from Original Correspondence (Darlington, 1840). The copy in the Widener Library has "[NOT PUBLISHED]" in bold type above the title. The originals of Bassett's letters are now in Boston.

2. 'Lucretia Mott's Diary', entry for 6.6.40.

3. A. Phillips to M.W. Chapman, 30.7.39, loc.cit.; M.V. Ball to E. Pease, 6.5.40, Garrison Papers.

company than I ever dared to anticipate would fall to my lot." 1

Her friendships and background, then, apart from a personal
dislike of compromise evident throughout her life, left Elizabeth
Pease sympathetic to the Garrisonians. She threw herself into
working in Collins' support, now convinced, like the Garrisonians,
that the choice of sides was not a question of preference but one
of moral duty. She was also influenced by a personal liking for
Collins and a common feeling with him over working class movements.
She shared his attitude to the Chartists and saw suffrage reform
as being central to all others. Once she wrote to Phillips that
"it is to class legislation that nearly all the evils which affect
Britain.... is [sic] to be attributed and so long as this
hydra-headed monster is suffered to remain, it is vain to strike
off one of its heads....in the shape of Corn Laws, Monopoly,
union of church and state of aught else." 2 It is hard to see
how Collins could have made any progress at all without her daily
correspondence with him, and the trouble she took to recommend
him to her Quaker acquaintances. The Garrisonian anti-slavery
movement in Britain would have been considerably stronger if this
remarkable Friend had gone on supporting it as she did during
Collins' mission. After his departure, she continued to assist
Garrisonian visitors, particularly Henry C. Wright. 3 But the really
active period of her anti-slavery career ended in 1846. Joseph

   See also E. Pease to A.W. Weston, 30.12.41, Weston Papers.
Pease died early that year, and his daughter spent the next two years in sickness and convalescence of her own. During Garrison's 1846 visit, she was unable to give him any assistance.

The link between this period of her life and the history of the Scottish Garrisonians, is that part of her convalescence was spent in Edinburgh with her friends Jane and Eliza Wigham.

Her anti-slavery activity here was confined to helping the Edinburgh preparations for the Boston Bazaar run annually by Mrs. Chapman, but her Scottish connection was maintained for the rest of her life. In 1853, while at a water cure, she met John Pringle Nichol, the Professor of Astronomy at Glasgow. She married him in the same year, accepting disownment by the Society of Friends to do so.

She was one of the few active female Garrisonians remaining in Glasgow during her stay there, and joined Mrs. Wigham and her stepdaughter in leading the Edinburgh Ladies Emancipation Society after her husband's death, although he never seems to have played anything more than a secondary part in her life. After a short visit to Dublin in 1857, Webb

1. E. Pease to E. Neall Gay, 29.1.48, loc.cit.
3. E. Pease to Garrison, 12.11.48, Garrison Papers.
recorded that she was "as staunch and true and openhearted as ever", but could only describe Professor Nichol as "passable". After the Civil War, Mrs. Nichol became president of the Ladies' Emancipation Society in the final phase of its existence. In fact Elizabeth Pease Nichol, Jane Smeal Wigham, Eliza Wigham, and Priscilla Bright Maclaren, John Bright's daughter and Duncan Maclaren's wife, the four ex-Garrisonians, were still leading figures of Edinburgh female reform in the 1870's. Bell notes that the idea of writing his book about the Pease circle was first put forward at a meeting in Mrs. Nichol's house, at which Mrs. Maclaren was present.

An average of two letters per day written by Miss Pease on Collins' behalf is preserved in the Boston Public Library collection alone. Her support must have been all the more effective because of the status attached to the name of her father in abolitionist circles. Unfortunately her contacts were mostly females without control over anti-slavery societies, but nevertheless their support was one of the few pieces of encouragement Collins received until his move to Glasgow in February. Harriet Martineau, for instance, in spite of some worries about the basis of Collins' accusations, allowed her name and work to be used on behalf of the Garrisonians.

2. Annual Report of the Edinburgh Ladies Emancipation Society, and Sketch of the Anti-Slavery Events and Condition of the Freedman (Edinburgh, 1867). At this point its principal interest was Freedman's Aid.
Anne Knight, the Chelmsford Friend who later became a pioneer British feminist, was also prepared to give her support to Collins. Harriet Gairdner of Edinburgh and Mary A. Rawson of Sheffield indicated their sympathy for him, although neither was in a position to have extensive influence. Julia Smith of Norwich, another of Miss Martineau's friends, was also helpful until put off by Collins' artificial expansion of the list of subscribers to his later pamphlet.

Even with Miss Pease's help, however, it is unlikely that Collins' mission would have had so divisive an effect if he had not produced a situation where British abolitionists were forced to come out for or against him. It was during his stay in London that the issue required to crystallise existing differences into formal disunion emerged. Remond and Collins continued their attempts to find influential contacts, until discouragement led Collins into the deliberate decision of forcing the B.F.A.S.S. to accept or reject the Garrisonian accusations. Collins' first months in this country had been disappointing in the extreme. His partnership with Remond

1. H. Gairdner to Collins, 10.12.40, 12.2.41, Garrison Papers; M.A. Rawson to E. Pease(?), 5.2.41, ibid.; E. Pease to Collins 12.2.41, ibid.; Mrs. Rawson had been converted to temperance by Garrison in 1840, after the Convention, when he visited her in Sheffield — see Tolles, (ed.) , op.cit., p.38, n.3. Mrs. Gairdner was a friend of Mrs. George Thompson, but does not appear prominently at any point in the history of the anti-slavery movement other than the Collins mission.

2. E. Pease to Collins, 8.4.41, Garrison Papers.

soon proved unsatisfactory. Temperamentally, the two men were ill-suited to one another. By December Collins was writing to Miss Pease that she should not worry about Remond's doubts about his (Collins') health "as he is of a slothful temperament and he cannot conceive how an individual is capable of performing treble the labor to himself." ¹ Although the two men lived together in Southwark, and ostensibly worked for the same ends, their attitudes to the priorities of reform were widely different. An open quarrel between them was in progress by February, 1841, after which they agreed to work separately. Thompson sent the news of the disagreement to Webb accompanied by a denunciation of Collins' ineptitude in public.² Webb summed up the difference after Collins had returned when he wrote that the reason why Remond had managed to collect more money in Ireland than Collins was that apart from his colour, manners, and charm "he had great tact and discretion. Collins has neither the one nor the other.....no one, (not even himself) could comprehend his crotchets." ³ It is true that Collins was the only Garrisonian apart from Douglass whom Webb ever brought himself to dislike. Nevertheless, the simple difference between Remond and Collins is that where one was prepared to come to terms with British abolitionists at their own relatively conservative level, the other refused to do so. Instead Collins

¹. Collins to E. Pease, 8.12.40, ibid.

². Thompson to Webb, 8.2.41, ibid.

³. "Jottings for Maria Weston Chapman", to be used in the Anti-Slavery Standard, but signed, addressed and dated as Webb to M.W. Chapman, 22.2.42, Garrison Papers.
insisted on preaching views advanced far beyond the general stream of middle class reform in Britain. On occasion Remond assured his correspondents that he did not share all Garrison's views, which was something Collins could never do.\(^1\) In fact Remond had traditional ideas which even made it possible to come to terms with New Organisation British leaders. The chances of fruitful cooperation between these two men were low. Indeed Collins made his greatest impact on the British movement after they had separated and Remond was working with equal success in his own way in the Midlands and Ireland.

Finding Remond so unsatisfactory an ally was not the only problem which faced Collins during his stay in London. By the end of November, he was already homesick and greatly discouraged by his negative reception. He had called at Broad Street to put his case, only to find Sturge "cold and distant". Scoble, on the other hand, was surprisingly pleasant, and offered him the double-edged compliment of a complete set of B.F.A.S.S. publications.\(^2\) By this point, in spite of Miss Pease's constant help, it must have been clear that nothing was to be gained by continuing along the lines which had already been tried. For someone of Collins' active temperament, being stuck with the thankless work of making constantly snubbed calls must have been intolerable. By early December any alternative seemed attractive. The idea of accosting the B.F.A.S.S. Committee, hitherto officially silent on the American divisions in

2. Collins to ?, 26.11.40, Garrison Papers; Collins to E. Pease, 4.12.40, ibid.
general, to force them to take one standpoint or another, was first suggested by Thomas Sturge, a substantial Southwark shipowner with a marked distrust of the Broad Street leaders including his brother Joseph.\(^1\) Up to this time, Collins and Remond had made no mention of the division in the American movement in their public appeals for funds.\(^2\) Collins at once became enthusiastic about Sturge's plan. If the Committee refused their support, his intention was to ask them if their refusal was due to the female delegates having been sent to the Convention. The day after dining with Sturge, after drafting his letter to Broad Street, Collins wrote to Miss Pease that forcing the issue in this way would at least "give me an opportunity to get the subject of division before the committee etc." He was to see Thomas Sturge again that evening to discuss the text of the letter.\(^3\) Two drafts of his letter have been preserved, much scored and altered and evidently composed with some care.\(^4\) The final version was sent off to J.H. Tredgold on December 10th.

In fact the letter of December 10th did not mention the divisions in the American movement explicitly. It briefly explained Collins' being deputed by the American Anti-Slavery Society due to

1. Sturge had been a committee member of Buxton's African Civilization Society, the aims of which were very much outside B.F.A.S.S. policy.


its financial difficulties, and suggested that the sum of £2,000 would enable the Society to carry on its work until the current depression eased and its own members were again able to support it. He finally insisted that if the B.F.A.S.S. were financially unable to make a grant, they should give "an expression of their cordial desire for the success of the.... Society." This letter could hardly have been better calculated to produce a situation in which Collins could divide British abolitionists for and against his opinions whenever he wished. Although the letter itself did not mention the American divisions, the credentials to which he referred the Committee certainly did so. It must have been clear to the Committee that they now had the uncomfortable choice of giving support to Collins, or refusing it. In the first case they would tacitly appear as champions of the 'extraneous issues'. In the second, they would open themselves to a demand for a formal explanation of their disassociating themselves from the American Society. The consequent playing up of the issues which had led to disunity in America together with the new problem of the Emancipator transfer, could only lead to parallel disunity in Britain. No Garrisonian on either side of the Atlantic thought Collins' step a wise one, although many were to rally to his support as the controversy grew.

1. This and all the rest of Collins' correspondence with Tredgold was reprinted in Collins, op.cit., Appendix L, pp.56-59, and in Liberator, 5.3.41, 12.3.41. Originals and transcripts are preserved in the Garrison Papers, and Rhodes House, Oxford. It was also circulated as a broadsheet, printed by J. & J. Headman, Darlington. There is a copy in the B.P.L. addressed to Smeal and Murray on the back.

Even Garrison himself later wrote sadly that applying to the London Committee "was an error of judgement..... We supposed he would make an appeal to the abolitionists at large, and take his chance accordingly." 1 Even Thomas Sturge came to comment on Collins' ignorance of British abolitionists and the B.F.A.S.S. Committee. 2 But for this ignorance, he would hardly have taken Sturge's own advice and precipitated an open schism by sending his letter of December 10th.

The B.F.A.S.S. Committee gained a little time to make a decision by sending a courteous note acknowledging Collins' letter. 3 In the end, however, they naturally had to refuse Collins' request for support. 4 Its eventual reply gave no encouragement whatsoever to any hopes Collins may have had. What he was given was a great deal of room for manoeuvre if he wished to force the issue of disagreement to be exposed in the future. 5 Tredgold stated flatly "whatever the amount of their funds, they [the Committee] could not consider themselves entitled to dispose of them in the way you desire; so that they feel it their duty to decline altogether the consideration of a money grant."

1. Garrison to E. Pease, 1.3.41, Garrison Papers.
2. T. Sturge to M.W. Chapman, 5.4.41, Weston Papers.
Collins' alternative request for an expression of support for the American Society was refused even more decisively. "Painful" as they found the decision, the Committee had instructed Tredgold to say "that the course recently pursued by the American Anti-Slavery Society has alienated their confidence." Actually the decision to reply in this way had been made at a Committee meeting which had previously heard letters from Colver, attacking Garrison and Collins and taking pains to point out the alarming views ascribed to the Old Organisationists. 1 But given the previous sympathies of the B.F.A.S.S., it is hard to see how they could have responded in any other way to Collin's approach.

He was now given the opportunity of asking the Committee to explain why they had discountenanced the American Anti-Slavery Society. Tredgold's reply reached him on the 4th, and he wrote again the following day, contrasting the Society's pledges to assist the victims of slavery and the slave trade throughout the world, with their statement that they were not "entitled" to give help to the American national society. 2 He passed the initiative back to Broad Street by demanding that "you will favour me with the charges implied in the 'course recently pursued by the American Anti-Slavery Society' which has 'alienated' your confidence."

Since he received no reply within two days, Collins sent off a second note insisting that a special Committee be called to discuss


2. Collins to Tredgold, 5.1.41, printed in Collins, op.cit., Appendix L, pp.57-58; Liberator, loc.cit.
his letter, so that he could be relieved from "so painful a state of suspense."  

After a brief response indicating that a meeting was to be held on the 15th, the Committee's real reply was finally sent. Tredgold wrote that he was instructed "to inform you that the Committee have brought no 'charges'. What has been 'alienated' from the American Anti-Slavery Society is the 'confidence' of the Committee in the salutary influence of that Society on the Anti-Slavery cause since the division which took place in May last;—that cause in the United States the Committee now consider as more truly represented by the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society."  

The Broad Street Committee had now been forced to declare themselves formally for the A.F.A.S.S. and against the A.A.S.S. When Collins began holding public meetings at which he brought moral accusations against the American and Foreign Society, and the New Organisationists began to bring counter-accusations against Garrison's American Society, it would be impossible for them to avoid involvement. Once they had been manoeuvred into the declaration of January 15th, Collins was in a position to divide the British movement. His accusations against the rival of his American parent society also implied accusations against the British national society, which had gone on record as supporting it. The eventual outcome was that the Scottish and Irish abolitionists who accepted his facts split away from those in England and among their own countrymen who rejected them.


Before Collins moved to Scotland in early February, however, the situation had been worsened by the work of more conservative American abolitionists. It was early in 1841 that statements of Garrison's 'infidelity' were first put before the British public. Like the accusation of sharp practice over the *Emancipator*, this was one of which there could be no compromise. British abolitionists could either accept this absolutely damning accusation and shun Garrison, or else assume that his opponents were lying and refuse to cooperate with them. The question of whether Garrison was or was not an infidel is unimportant. The probability is that he was not, and that the tenets which his opponents insisted constituted 'practical atheism' were only those quite acceptable in the Friends, but socially dangerous if applied universally. \(^1\) This is certainly true of his pacifism, his views on the Sabbath, and his objections to a paid ministry. The connection between the last two beliefs and the bitterness of conservative clergymen against him is only too obvious. Nevertheless, the result of the 'infidel' accusation was to increase disunity in the same way as the moral charges made by Collins.

The most important letters denouncing Collins and Garrison were written by the Rev. Nathaniel Colver. His accusations against Garrison were based on the events at the Chardon Street Convention, held in Boston in November, 1840. Emerson's famous essay loosely

\(^1\) This view was frequently put forward by Garrison and his followers. See, for instance Garrison to E. Pease, 1.3.41, Garrison Papers, or H.C. Wright, *First Day Sabbath not a Divine Appointment*, with the Opinions of Calvin, Luther, Melanchthon, Barclay, Paley, and others (Edinburgh, 1846), p.9.
lists the groups it represented - "Madmen, madwomen, men
with beards, Dunkers, Muggletonians, Come-outers, Groaners,
Agrarians, Seventh-day Baptists, Quakers, Abolitionists,
Calvinists, Unitarians, and Philosophers." 1  Colver, who
actually attended the Convention, reported dramatically to
Sturge that

"He [Garrison]... identifies himself with
every infidel fanaticism which floats,.....
as to have lost his hold on the good. He
has recently headed a Convention to inveigh
against the Sabbath, the church, and the ministry.
It was affecting to see what a company he had
identified himself with - the wildest of the no-
marrige Perfectionists, Transcendentalists, and
Cape Cod - all in harmonious effort against the
Bible as our standard of faith, and especially
in denouncing the ministry, etc." 2

No doubt Colver had sacrificed accuracy to his sense of
propaganda, since the Convention distrusted Garrison's
leadership as much as anyone else's, as the Liberator frantically
pointed out. 3 Nevertheless, the accusations must have sounded
sinister enough to British abolitionists. The same letter
mentioned that Collins had left America "under suspicious
circumstances" and that he was "not entitled to your confidence."
The association with Garrison's 'infidelity' was obvious, and the
circulation of Colver's letters was to do untold harm to Collins'
mission.

1. R. Emerson, "The Chardon Street Convention", Collected Works
2. Colver to Sturge, 1.12.40, loc.cit. See also Colver to Sturge,
30.11.40. Both letters were printed and circulated round
Sturge's abolitionist contacts in the provinces.
3. Liberator, 29.1.41.
The circumstances in which the letters were printed are obscure. Collins and his allies assumed that they had been circulated by the B.F.A.S.S. Committee. Scoble replied equivocally to demands from Elizabeth Pease for further information on Colver's charges being released to the public. He denied that the Committee had circulated the letters, or sanctioned their circulation, but admitted that they had thought it best that prominent abolitionists should be made acquainted with them. The most probable explanation is that Sturge distributed the letters on his own initiative, with the knowledge of at least some of his friends on the Committee. He had already shown a certain lack of scruple over the means he used for abolitionist ends during the apprenticeship period. Colver's letters were discussed at the Committee meeting on January 1st, when the reply to Collins' first letter was also on the agenda, but there is no mention of any plans to publish them in the Minute Books. Presumably Sturge did not send out the circular including the letters without the knowledge of other Committee members, but there does not seem to have been anything of the order of a Committee or Society decision to defame Collins systematically by ensuring that all abolitionists had access to the Colver letters.

1. E. Pease to Scoble, 25.3.41, B. F. A. S. S. Minute Books, I, 8/18, C9/70; Scoble to E. Pease, 25.4.41, ibid., C9/72, original in Garrison Papers, Minute for 15.4.41, B.F.A.S.S. Minute Books, I, mentions the discussion of Miss Pease's complaints. The whole interchange of letters is printed in the Appendix to Tenth Annual Report of the Massachusetts A.S. Society.


Whoever was responsible for circulating the letters, the effect they would have was obvious enough to cause great consternation among Garrisonians on both sides of the Atlantic. Nevertheless, this was by no means the only serious attack on Collins. Stuart's circular, for instance, later ridiculed his mission in support of the "woman-intruding" Anti-Slavery Society, but did not cause anything like the same alarm. Again, other critical letters were to be made public, including one from J.W. Alden, the Secretary of the Massachusetts Abolition Society, incorporating recent resolutions against him. None, however, included the 'infidelity' accusation, so that none were as dangerous as the Colver exposé. When the letters reached her, Miss Pease began writing busily to her contacts, including John Scoble, to counteract their effect. When the letters became public in America, James Cannings Fuller at once wrote a testimonial which it was hoped would outweigh Colver's accusations.


4. J.C. Fuller to E. Pease, 20.2.41, Garrison Papers; J.C. Fuller to A.S.R., not printed, 20.2.41, ibid. This includes resolutions passed in favour of Collins by the General Anti-Slavery Convention for Western New York, held in Palmyra, Wayne County. Colver's remarks were said to be "as groundless, as they are mean and assassin like." Extracts from both letters were printed as a broadsheet, and Fuller was also cited by Collins, op.cit., p.73. Miss Pease's correspondence with Scoble demanded that the B.F.A.S.S. Committee should circulate the Fuller letters to counteract the Colver ones, and a copy of the letter of 20.2.41 sent by her is Bod.Brit.Emp.Mss.S.18, C9/71. Fuller also wrote to Garrison, 28.1.41, defending Collins, this letter being printed in Liberator, 5.2.41.
himself ridiculed Colver in the *Liberator*, while the Massachusetts Society hurried to pass resolutions reaffirming confidence in Garrison and Collins both, although Colver actually appeared at their meeting and defended himself adroitly.\(^1\) In Haiti, Mrs. Chapman, collecting material there for her abolitionist writings, wrote frantically to Thomas Sturge, Elizabeth Pease, and Harriet Martineau, to ask how the rumours of infidelity could be quashed.\(^2\) The circulation of the Colver letters was to be the greatest misdeed put at the door of the B.F.A.S.S. by Collins' radical abolitionist allies in Glasgow and Dublin. Collins himself wrote home that "opposition is increasing in consequence of these letters to an inconceivable extent", and that it was because of their misrepresentations that his visit would have to be extended.\(^3\) The accusation against "that Papish Click [sic]" was now that it had criminally tried to fabricate evidence of Garrison's infidelity, as its allies in the A.F.A.S.S. had criminally stolen the *Emancipator*.\(^4\) From this side or the other, the outcome could only be complete fragmentation of the British anti-slavery movement.

1. *Liberator*, 29,1,41; resolutions of Massachusetts A.S. Soc., passed 27,1,41, 28,1,41, printed in *Liberator*, 5,2,41. The debate on these resolutions is printed in *Liberator*, 12,2,41.
By the time Collins moved to Glasgow, the London visit had only yielded a total of £195. The unfortunate thing for the anti-slavery movement, however, was not his financial failure, but the fact that his work had brought the movement to the point of splitting up to form groups operating as rivals or even enemies rather than allies. Certainly the events of 1840 had prepared the ground for division, but unity suffered even more as abolitionists responded to the accusations brought by Collins against the B.F.A.S.S. and the A.F.A.S.S., and the counter-accusations brought by Colver against Garrison and the American Anti-Slavery Society. Wherever Collins sought support in 1841, abolitionists would be put in a position where they had to withdraw their support from one organisation or the other.

When Collins arrived in Glasgow, the Emancipation Society was already in a state of crisis over past disagreements. Collins' visit provided the issue which split Glasgow abolitionists into two rival societies, the newer one cooperating with the B.F.A.S.S. and the older Emancipation Society refusing to do so. From 1841 onwards, Glasgow was to have two separate anti-slavery organisations, seldom cooperating and frequently quarrelling openly. As in America, the touchstone of which society individual abolitionists supported was their attitude to the advanced reform proposals put forward by Garrison and his disciples.

The G.E.S. Secretaries, although biased towards Garrison by temperament and the experience of the World's Convention, had

1. Collins to F. Jackson, 3.2.41, ibid.
not at first tried to persuade Collins to come to Glasgow. Thompson had contacted Smeal during Collins' earlier visit to Edinburgh with Remond, but the only result was a discouraging letter saying that circumstances made it impossible to back Collins' plans, but that they would be glad to see him in Glasgow.\(^1\) G.E.S. activity was always cyclical.\(^2\) In November 1840, Glasgow resources must have been seriously overdrawn after the demands of the Convention itself, followed by the successive visits of Garrison, Dawes and Keep, and Dirney and Stanton.\(^3\) By the early weeks of 1841, however, the situation had changed. Open controversy over the future course of the Society had broken out. Controversy, in its early stages at least, meant greater interest and greater attendances at public meetings, and it was this interest which was to produce such enthusiasm for Collins' visit in February. By this point, Murray and Smeal were hard-pressed by more conservative Committee members distrustful of their obvious sympathy for the Garrisonians. They must have been only too glad of an ally to help them keep the G.E.S. firmly aligned with the original American Society. Even so, no personal letter inviting Collins to Glasgow is extant, and there was certainly no official decision to have him come north as the guest of the Emancipation Society. Whether he was invited informally, or arrived of his own accord because the city's abolitionist reputation

1. Smeal to Collins, 10.11.40, ibid.
2. After the great enthusiasm over the Free Church controversy of 1846, for instance, Society activities virtually collapsed for several years.
made it more attractive than London, Collins' visit came at a time when the Glasgow Garrisonian leaders were under serious attack from conservative opposition. The situation was exactly the same as the characteristic New England one in 1839 and 1840, with humanitarian but conservative clergy reacting against advanced ideas introduced by radicals who had no stake in quashing anticlericalism.

As Secretaries of the G.E.S., Smeal and Murray were responsible for compiling the Society's Annual Report. The annual meeting had been postponed in 1840, in the hope that American delegates from the Convention would be able to attend.¹ The draft of the 1840 Report was read at a Committee on 7th August, and was "unanimously approved". However, only Messrs. Connell, Murray, Gunn, and Smeal, all Garrisonians, were present, although four did not form a quorum under Society rules.² At the public Annual Meeting later in the evening, the draft Report was again adopted. It was a later Committee meeting which drew attention to passages in the Report objectionable to the conservatives. A sub-committee was appointed to revise these before the Report went to press.³ The disagreement had apparently been settled amicably. Keep and Dawes of the Oberlin Institute were entertained later that evening, Birney and Stanton a month later, and the affairs of the Society went on as before.

¹ Minute for 27.7.40, ibid.
³ Minute for 14.9.40, G.E.S. Minute Books, II.
The sub-committee met on October 21st, and agreed on paragraphs to substitute for ones criticising the conduct of the World's Convention. It was then resolved that the Report should be put through the press as usual by the Secretaries. When Collins arrived, the Report had not yet appeared, but it had already been sent off to the printers in a form bound to cause trouble with clerical moderates like Drs. Wardlaw, Hough, and King and their allies on the Committee. The text of the passages which had first been the cause of the conservative complaint could hardly have been more offensive than the ones substituted.

Actually the sub-committee appointed for revision was heavily weighted towards men of Garrisonian sympathies - Henry Langlands, James McTear, Robert Kettle, Murray, Smeal, and George Thompson. They seem to have made little alteration in Smeal's original text. The passage which was to be brought up as the rationalisation for secession when the Report was published, still criticised the conduct of the B.F.A.S.S. Committee at the Convention severely:

"Several of the early measures of the Convention, or of the Managing Committee, gave considerable pain to the minds of some of your Representatives. .......

The suppression of a large and important part of the speech of the venerable president, Thomas Clarkson, Esq., [on the efficacy of free produce action as a way of ending slavery] and the exclusion of certain of the Delegates from America, may be mentioned as acts which, in the opinion of these Gentlemen, were of an illiberal, unauthorised, and overbearing character."

The 'substituted' passage which the seceding conservatives found so objectionable ran to no more than a page, but it gave the


2. Minute for 14.9.40, ibid. Kettle was the only one who later resigned when the committee split.
impression of overwhelming G.E.S. agreement with the criticisms of the management of the World's Convention. Not only this, but Smeal and Murray had added an extraordinary series of appendices setting out the full Old Organisation case in the American schisms. The female delegates excluded were listed, with resolutions of American abolition societies commending those who had refused to take their seats at the Convention. O'Connell's letter to Lucretia Mott attacking Broad Street policy on the female delegates was also printed. Finally, Mrs. Chapman's Right and Wrong in the Anti-Slavery Societies was reprinted in full, prefaced by the claim that it "contained sentiments in themselves so excellent, and the spirit which it displays is so thoroughly that of Universal Freedom, that it is earnestly recommended to all, to READ WITH ATTENTION." Mrs. Chapman began by attacking the British and Foreign Society over the Convention, bordered on nonresistance by coming out against all forms of political action, painted the American clergy as the worst pro-slavery villains of all, and ended by explaining that in the advances in the Women's Rights campaign their opponents were "silently.... witnessing the general progress of the age." Smeal and Murray can hardly have expected conservative Committee members to relish being implicated in putting forward ideas of this sort.

1. G.E.S. Reports, 1840, pp.17-18. Clarkson's original speech was circulated separately as a broadsheet - copy in Mitchell Library, Glasgow.

2. G.E.S. Reports, 1840, pp.23, 33-34.


Collins was first received by the Glasgow Committee on February 11th. Attendance was small, and he simply outlined the position in the U.S.A., including the disagreements there. Both sides gained time by agreeing to wait until Collins' promised pamphlet was available before deciding whether or not to hold a public meeting to welcome him. By this time New Organisation sympathisers in Scotland must have been well warned against Collins. Wardlaw for one had been sent copies of the Colver letters, and had certainly circulated them in Glasgow by the time of a second meeting to discuss the reception of Collins on March 3rd. Again, it was at this time that Captain Charles Stuart produced another of his letters, denouncing the women's rights ideas held by Collins and other "rhapsodists of the United States." An infuriated Elizabeth Pease sneered that Stuart, "poor man... needs a jacket as strait for his body as that which he wears on his mind", but the letter to Wardlaw was dangerous enough. The Glasgow Committee felt that the best solution to the Collins problem would be to promote the debate with Stuart which had fallen through in Edinburgh. After this, they could decide whether or not to receive Collins officially. At the same meeting where Smeal was instructed to arrange the Collins/Stuart debate, he was also asked to write to the B.F.A.S.S. to request an explanation of reports

1. Minute for 11.2.41, G.E.S. Minute Books III.
2. Minute for 3.3.41, ibid.; Collins to Garrison, 2.3.41, Garrison Papers.
4. E. Pease to Collins, 12.2.41, Garrison Papers; Minute for 3.3.41, G.E.S. Minute Books, III.
that they had been circulating defamatory comments on Garrison and Collins. Both groups in the Committee shared a new understanding of the current possibility of disunity. It was resolved that "the continued cooperation of this Committee with that of London, will very much depend upon the nature of the information now solicited." ¹

Both attempts to unite the G.E.S. Committee by appealing to outside authority were to fail. Stuart flippantly refused Smeal's request. Perhaps his rather emotional accusations were more effective in print than in sober debate before a fact-finding tribunal. Responding to the invitation, he dodged the issue by stating that his charges were factual and therefore not worthy of debate. He went on to deride the impartiality of Smeal and "dear John Murray.... knowing the total and deplorable derangement of your views in this matter, both as to facts and principles." ²

The approach to the B.F.A.S.S. was not only unsuccessful but positively destructive. Smeal's original curt demand for an account of Broad Street conduct over the Colver letters was made at approximately the same time as Webb's enquiries on behalf of the radical Hibernian Society. Humiliatingly, the G.E.S. was forced to be content with replies in the form of copies of Tredgold's letters on the same subject to James Haughton and Richard Allen, and indeed no satisfactory answer was ever given. Tredgold insisted that Collins' attacks on Birney and Stanton had simply lost him B.F.A.S.S. confidence. His second reply to Dublin and Glasgow ended the

1. Ibid.

2. Stuart to Smeal, 8.3.41, reprinted in Resolutions of the Public Meetings of the G.E.S. .... in Reference to the Divisions among American Abolitionists, p.25.
correspondence by stating abruptly that no further good could come of it. In the end the final result was to be a complete breach of relations between Glasgow and the London Committee.

Against a background of worsening relations with the B.F.A.S.S., the division in Glasgow was accelerated by new factors. One of these was the publication of Collins' Right and Wrong among the Abolitionists of the United States, a compendium of pro-Garrison propaganda combined with Collins' personal defence of his conduct. The work was published in the middle of March by George Gallie, the G.E.S. Committee member who owned a bookseller's business in Buchanan Street. Apart from Miss Pease even the most extreme of Collins' sympathisers seem to have had doubts about the violence of his attack on the New Organisation. Even Harriet Martineau, who wrote the pamphlet's preface, had felt chary about supporting it without proof for its accusations. Nevertheless, with the pamphlet published, the anti-Colver side of the case had been set before Glasgow abolitionists. Debate over the question of acceptance of Collins' credentials was now greatly speeded up. On March 10th he had drafted a letter officially asking the Committee for "such a sum as it may be their pleasure to contribute, and also to give me the weight of its influence to collect funds in different parts of Great Briton [sic]". The issue could no longer be avoided.

1. Smeal to Tredgold, 5.3.41; Tredgold to Haughton and Allen, 12.3.41; Murray and Smeal to Tredgold, 29.3.41; Tredgold to Haughton and Allen, 17.4.41. This interchange is printed in Resolutions...... of the G.E.S., etc., pp.26ff. Discussion of the letters is noted in Minute for 12.3.41, B.F.A.S.S. Minute Books, 1.

2. E. Pease to Collins, 24.3.41, Garrison Papers; H. Gairdner to Collins, 20.4.41, ibid.

3. H. Martineau to Collins, 20.2.41, ibid.

4. Collins to G.E.S. Committee, 10.3.41, draft in Garrison Papers.
A decision would have to be made in the near future as to whether his credentials should be recognised. In the light of the New Organisation accusations and his own pamphlet, the process of making this decision would inevitably split the G.E.S. Committee once and for all.

Meanwhile, polarisation of the groups in the Society was being increased by the other publication which appeared at this time, the carefully 'old organised' Report for 1840.

The first fruit of its distribution was the immediate resignation of Joseph Sturge from his position as a corresponding member of the Society. A series of letters intended to make him reconsider this decision, failed to overcome his distrust of a society which could circulate such material.⁴ In Glasgow the effect was as bad. Moderates reacted violently against the Report in the first instance, and were reinforced in their opposition to Collins' reception. After a period of jockeying for advantage within the Society, in which they were defeated, they were to resign from it completely.

The anger of moderate members at the failure to revise the Report satisfactorily first came out at a Committee meeting on March 10th. It was ostensibly called to discuss a characteristic but more trivial offence of the Secretaries, who had recently sent out one of their routine circulars accompanied by copies of Harriet Martineau's letter recommending Right and Wrong.⁵ After this matter

1. Sturge to Smeal, 25.1.41; Smeal to Sturge, 4.2.41, 20.2.41; Sturge to Smeal, 22.2.41; Smeal to Sturge, 24.2.41; Murray to Sturge, 25.2.41; Sturge to Smeal, 3.3.41. All printed in Resolution..... of the G.E.S., etc., pp.7-10.

2. Minute for 10.3.41, G.E.S. Minute Books, III.
had been disposed of, Dr. King complained that the Report "bore
the appearance of the .... Society having taken the side of the
Abolitionists in America who are understood to be the .... Woman's
Rights' party." The Secretaries replied, a little unconvincingly,
that they had had no intention of committing the Society, but
had only wished to give the public an opportunity of judging for
themselves. Continued after adjournment, the Committee meeting
discussed publicly resolving that the Report had not gone through
the Committee, and thus did not bind the Society as a whole. 1
On the defeat of this resolution, the secession of the conservatives
began with the immediate resignation of Dr. Wardlaw. Wardlaw notwith-
standing, however, the moderate members had by no means given up
hope of purifying the G.E.S., and returning it to the uncomplicated
conditions of the past.

The next meeting minuted came after all members had had a
chance to read Collins' pamphlet. Its feelings were overwhelmingly
Old Organisationist, and in favour of Collins. A resolution that
he should be "cordially welcomed" was passed by 10:4, over an
amendment calling for an extension of the wait for additional
information. It was agreed that the B.F.A.S.S. replies to Smeal
had been unsatisfactory, and resolved 9:2 that a circular recommending
Collins should be drawn up to counteract the effect of the Colver
letters. At a shorter meeting four days later, such a circular was
adopted, this time by 10:5, again over an amendment calling for
delay. On the face of it, the testimonial was innocuous enough.
It mentioned the schisms in America, and stated that the Glasgow

1. Minute for 16.3.41, ibid.
Society would have liked to remain aloof from them. On the other hand, it continued, the Society felt bound to help all who were working for emancipation. Since the American Society had never done anything other than this, it (and Collins) would continue to enjoy G.E.S. support. The obvious intention was to endorse Garrison while underplaying abolitionist differences as much as possible.

Unfortunately for the future of the G.E.S., the more conservative clerical abolitionists were not long in launching a counter-attack on the discreetly Garrisonian position gained by Murray and Smeal. The meeting of March 29th had also discussed the resignation of the Rev. Dr. Hough, and agreed to depute the Rev. Dr. King, George Watson, and the conservative leader William Paton to call on Heugh and Wardlaw to try to persuade them to reconsider their withdrawal. The next Committee meeting showed to what purpose the deputation, all three vocal Tappanites, had "called on" Heugh and Wardlaw. On April 13th, Drs. Heugh and King appeared at the Committee, armed with a message from Wardlaw stating the conditions on which he would be prepared to withdraw his resignation. Enough conservative members were present for his conditions to be met. Paton reported that both Dr. Wardlaw and Dr. Heugh would return to their positions as Vice-presidents if the Society accepted principles to be put forward by the Rev. Dr. King, King proposed three resolutions firmly committing the G.E.S. to the

1. Minutes for 25.3.41, 29.3.41, ibid. The draft of the pro-Collins circular is included in the minutes.

2. Minute for 13.4.41, ibid.
alliance with the New Organisation. First, the G.E.S. was to
disclaim any judgement at all on the 'Woman Question'.
Secondly, pending further information, no preference for either
American society was to be expressed. Thirdly, the Society was
to avoid identification with any publication or agent of either
Society. The three proposals, seconded by Dr. Hough himself,
were passed 14:9. Naturally it was then decided that the circular
in favour of Collins was not to be issued after all. It was
further agreed that King's resolutions should be printed instead,
to make the Society's true position clear to the public. The
proposed use of these resolutions makes it clear that their
conciliatory aspects were more apparent than real. They were
to be sent out as a reply to the fifty-nine abolitionists who
had written to ask for the reasons for the delay in giving Collins
a hearing, and also to the Glasgow Female Emancipation Society,
whose members had expressed a wish to have Collins lecture to
them along with Thompson. The way in which the conservatives now
in control of the Committee used their 'neutrality' to reject
Collins indicates how far the radical 'extraneous issues' had
frightened them into a definite commitment against Garrison and the
extremist wing of the American movement. When the meeting of
April 13th ended, Old Organisationists, led by characteristically
conservative abolitionist ministers, were again in control of the
G.E.S.

It was later argued by Glasgow Garrisonians that the
conservatives had only gained this advantage by packing the Committee
with impressionable members not previously active in the Society.¹

¹ Report of the Discussion at the First Meeting of the Members
of the G.E.S., p.18.
The sequel showed that it was necessary to do exactly the same
themselves to regain control and commit the G.E.S. to support
for the Garrisonians. On the 16th April, a public meeting
was held in Albion Street Church, with McNair in the chair.
Although the minutes of this meeting are terse, it was clearly
held without the knowledge or presence of conservative members.
It was resolved, evidently without opposition, that the meeting
was disappointed at the Committee decision over Collins, and that
the Secretaries should call a public meeting to discuss the
situation.¹ What followed, on April 27th, was the so-called
'Bazaar Meeting' at which the Garrisonians were able to commit
the G.E.S. to radical sentiments on abolition and other issues.
It was this meeting which finally frightened off conservative
members unwilling to go outside the normal principles of middle
class reform. From this point onwards, the G.E.S. was to be one
of the leading areas of British support for Garrison.

It is improbable that the conservative clerical Committee
members attended the Bazaar Meeting. Its most interesting members
were a strong body of Chartists. One of the most significant
pointers to the sympathies of the Garrisonians, and the reason why
they were seen as being so dangerous in Glasgow, is that the chairman
on this occasion was the Rev. Patrick Brewster.² Brewster was one
of the best known Chartist leaders in Scotland, although Establishment
minister of the fashionable Abbey Church in Paisley and brother of

1. Minute for 16.4.41, G.E.S. Minute Books, III.
2. Minute for 27.4.41, ibid.
Sir David Brewster, Principal of Edinburgh University. He was later tried before the General Assembly for his Chartist sermons. Like many of the Scottish moral force Chartists, he was also involved in a number of middle class reform movements, notably the temperance and anti-slavery ones. The Chartist movement was probably more 'respectable' in parts of Scotland than in other areas of Britain, and Brewster was by no means peculiar in linking non-violent support for suffrage extension with an interest in the abolition movement. His extremist ideas on abolition remained throughout his career, while his friend the Rev. Dr. Ritchie of Edinburgh similarly became a Garrisonian and a moral force Chartist.

Brewster was a better known figure than any other abolitionist in the West of Scotland, and his favourable response was one of Collins' few successes in this country. Apart from Brewster's chairmanship, Collins seems to have set about carefully packing the Bazaar Meeting. Dr. Ritchie was also introduced from Edinburgh, as one of the principal speakers at the meeting.

Aside from Brewster and Ritchie, the Bazaar Meeting was very much dominated by Chartists. In the end, Old Organisation motions satisfactory to Collins were passed, but only in conjunction with resolutions in favour of the Chartist movement. The takeover of


2. P. Pillsbury to S. May, 5.11.55, May Papers; Wright, op.cit., p.166.

3. Brewster to Collins, 5.4.41, Garrison Papers; Minute for 27.4.41, G.E.S. Minute Books, III.
meetings in favour of free trade, temperance, or abolition, was
a recognised Chartist tactic, in Scotland as in England.¹
Indeed the meeting of the G.E.S. to welcome Mrs. Mott and her
party in 1840 had been virtually broken up by Chartists, who
were suitably denounced in the Liberator in return.² What was
peculiar about the Bazaar Meeting was that, for the first time,
Scottish Chartists attended an anti-slavery meeting and had the
Six Points incorporated in the resolutions passed, with the
knowledge and support of the middle class organisers. Collins
had formed a similar alliance with Chartists in Ipswich, but
presumably because these Chartists were without middle class
connections of the sort present in the Scottish Chartist movement,
had failed to gain acceptance from any local middle class reform
leaders.³ In Glasgow, it was possible for a sizeable section
of the G.E.S. Committee to use Chartist votes against a more
conservative section to commit the Society to the Garrisonian wing
of the American anti-slavery movement. At the same time, the
necessary support was exchanged for a commitment of one specific
meeting of the Society to Chartist demands for suffrage extension.
In Scotland, the connection between parts of the Chartist movement
and middle class reform movements was close enough for occasional
cooperation of this sort to be possible. In at least one Chartist
periodical, Garrisonian abolition was glowingly endorsed, in contrast

¹ London Patriot, 13.1.40; Liberator, 22.1.41; Scottish
Guardian, 16.3.41; Scotsman, 12.5.41.
² Minute for 10.8.40, G.E.S. Minute Books, III; Liberator,
2.10.40.
³ Liberator, 30.7.41; See above, p.191, n.2.
to the hypocrisy of conservative British anti-slavery leaders like Gurney or Wardlaw.\textsuperscript{1} Similarly, occasional visiting American abolitionists indicated their support for the struggle of the Chartists in Britain, in a way which only Scottish abolitionists on this side of the Atlantic were ever prepared to do.\textsuperscript{2} Even in Scotland, in spite of the high proportion of radical abolitionists, such cooperation was only a side-product of disunity among middle-class abolitionists. The Garrisonian group in Glasgow were prepared to use a Chartist alliance to defeat more conservative opponents. To the conservatives, however, the willingness to sell the Society to the Charter must have been another factor which frightened them away from Smeal and the Garrisonians. Garrison's local supporters had introduced yet another 'extraneous issue'. The clerical conservatives Wardlaw, Heugh, and King, and their followers, could refuse to cooperate with them, not only because they had heard they were committed to non-resistance, anti-sabattarianism, and women's rights, but also because of their willingness to endorse the socially and politically dangerous Six Points.

Apart from a brief visit to Dublin, Collins spent the whole of April in Glasgow. His pro-labour sympathies became fully evident to local Chartists as well as the G.E.S. Committee members.

\begin{enumerate}
\item Chartist Circular, 29.5.41.
\item e.g. Liberator, 6.11.40, 12.2.41; British Friend, 30.4.44.
\end{enumerate}
He gained great notoriety for his part at the meeting of April 16th. 1 A 'Workingman's Meeting' was held on the 26th, the day before the Bazaar Meeting, and an Address adopted for presentation to Collins next day. The attendance of Chartist sympathisers at the Bazaar was consequently great enough for the Garrisonian and Chartist resolutions to be adopted together by acclaim. The first resolutions were proposed by the Rev. Dr. Ritchie, supported by a local Methodist minister, the Rev. George Rose, and the aged Glasgow radical James Turner of Thrushgrove. They moved that all "friends of the slave" should cooperate, irrespective of opinion on subjects other than abolition; that the G.E.S. Committee had committed an "act of gross injustice" to Collins in detaining him in town without a hearing; and that seventeen new (Garrisonian) members should therefore be added to the Committee. The price of the support of the Chartist part of the audience was paid in the final resolution:

"That .... it is the opinion of this Meeting, that the People of this Country are entitled to those rights of suffrage for which they have been contending these last three years, and that we pledge ourselves to use every moral and legal means to obtain our own liberty and the liberty of all mankind." 2

1. Collins to Editor of Glasgow Argus, approx. 20.4.41, reprinted as broadsheet, Garrison Papers; Collins to Webb, 18(?).4.41, Garrison Papers; Extract from Glasgow Post, 17.4.41, reprinted in Liberator, 14.5.41. This account indicates that on the 16th Chartist were attempting to pass resolutions against all abolitionists, in spite of their later conduct at the Bazaar Meeting. These may of course have been different groups of the fragmented Glasgow Chartist movement.

2. Minute for 27.4.41, G.E.S. Minute Books, III; Extract from Glasgow Post, n.d., including Workingman's Address and proceedings of Bazaar Meeting, printed in Liberator, 28.5.41; Resolutions of the Public Meetings..... of the G.E.S., etc., pp.2-5.
The Glasgo\w Emancipation Society, constitutionally or otherwise, was now committed to support for Collins. Garrison saw the Bazaar Meeting as an enormous triumph for unity on a radical platform, but any unity created on April 27th was in fact superficial. The Garrisonian Committee members had gained the support of Chartists who were not normally aligned with the movement, at the cost of making a further division with the conservatives on whom the Society depended for its prestige within the City inevitable. The creation of a Chartist alliance must have horrified conservative abolitionists. The Rev. Mr. Harvey, who had denounced the women's rights agitation at the Convention as a violation of the law of God, had actually reported Collins' friendship with the Chartists to Tredgold a week before the Bazaar Meeting.¹ The next Committee Meeting of the Society was not held until May 19th.² The clerical members, or at least the more distinguished of them, were by now thoroughly alienated. Harvey and Wardlaw began by challenging the right to add Committee members at all, but were voted down by an amendment stating that the question should be referred to the "members and friends" of the Society. It was finally agreed that all who had contributed five shillings to the funds over the last three years should be regarded as members for voting purposes. It was decided that a general meeting should be called to discuss the problem on May 31st. It was perhaps because of Collins' absence in Ireland that the published proceedings recorded plaintively

2. Minute for 19.5.41, G.E.S. Minute Books, III.
that "The Attendance was not very numerous". In spite of the arguments of Drs. Hough and King, it was agreed that the new members should be added.\textsuperscript{1}

The next two months saw the gradual withdrawal of the conservative members of the G.E.S. Anthony Wigham of Aberdeen's resignation was accepted on July 20th, those of Dr. King, Brown, Kettle, Blyth, W.P. Paton, Lethem, Macintyre, and David Anderson on the 30th. At the meeting before the 1841 Anniversary, the final blow came with the second resignation of the Rev. Drs. Hough and Wardlaw.\textsuperscript{2} Earlier in the year Collins had written that "Smeal and Murray mistook greatly when they thought that Wardlaw and that school would allow them to do what they thought was right, without regard to the interest of their cloth."\textsuperscript{3} In fact this was exactly what happened. It was impossible for most clergymen to accept the threat to their profession implied in the social and religious theories of the Garrisonians, or the threat to their class implied in the alliance with Chartism. On the other hand, what seems to have divided the sides was more an awareness of these threats than different religious or social backgrounds. John Murray belonged to the Relief Synod, but so too did the Rev. Alexander Harvey. William Smeal was a Friend, but Anthony Wigham, another Quaker, was among the first to resign. Strangest of all, Browster belonged to the Church of Scotland, and was to remain in it at the Disruption. Again, there does not seem to have been any marked class split in the Committee; a breakdown along lines of occupation shows that all

\textsuperscript{1} Smeal to Collins, 22.5.41, Garrison Papers; R. Reid to Collins, 24.5.41, ibid.; Report of the Discussion at the First Meeting of the Members of the G.E.S., passim.

\textsuperscript{2} Minutes for 20.7.41, 30.7.41, 2.8.41, G.E.S. Minute Books, III.

\textsuperscript{3} Collins to Webb, 18(?)4.41. loc.cit.
but two of the men who had served on it prior to 1841 were listed in the Post Office Directory, with professional or shopkeeping occupations. As for the new members added at the Bazaar Meeting, it may well be they were less prosperous than the seceders on the old Committee in general, but the evidence available suggests that all seventeen of them came from some level of the middle class.

In spite of their implied Chartist sympathies, it is unlikely that any of them had labour or even labour aristocracy backgrounds. Even after 1841, all sectors of the Glasgow abolitionist movement, perhaps including the group of moral force Chartists which cooperated with it, were solidly middle class. This picture of relative social homogeneity adds weight to the theory that there was enough similarity of social origins in the Scottish anti-slavery movement, even in 1841, for it to have remained unified if it had not been presented with the problem of whether or not to receive Collins, in terms which meant no compromise was possible.

In the other areas of potential Garrisonian support where Collins tried to raise support, there was less range of abolitionist opinion than in Glasgow. Here his influence only led local anti-slavery societies into a breach with the B.F.A.S.S., rather than producing internal division. In Edinburgh, the male Society flatly refused to receive Collins after the debacle of his earlier attempt.

1. See above, pp. 69-70.

2. See Appendix C. This is prepared purely from the P.O. Directory, and Anderson, (ed.), The Burgesses of Glasgow, and is not necessarily fully accurate, due to the duplication of common Scottish names. The most important single element to leave the Committee were its Congregationalist clergymen. The one clergyman added was the Rev. George Rose, a Methodist.
to arrange a debate with Stuart. 1 The Edinburgh Committee contained as active a conservative element as the Glasgow one, without the complication of aggressively Garrisonian secretaries. John Wigham, perhaps in defence against the alarming feminism of his wife and daughter, was and remained cantankerously opposed to the 'extraneous issues', while Dunlop was personally convinced of the importance of the political abolition movement which Garrison had disavowed. 2 The two secretaries, Dr. Greville and Alex. Cruickshank, lacked the initiative and probably the wish to do in the Edinburgh Emancipation Society what Murray and Smeal had done in Glasgow. Finally, the city's two most energetic Garrisonians, Thompson, and the Rev. Dr. Ritchie, were more active in the Glasgow society than the Edinburgh one. Collins applied to the E.E.S. for an hearing in March, and Dunlop's message refusing him was sent off a month later. 3

Any Garrisonian success in Edinburgh at this period was to come among female abolitionists. This situation was exactly the reverse of the Glasgow one, where the Ladies' Auxiliary Emancipation Society remained in the hands of the conservatives, and a 'New Glasgow Female Anti-Slavery Society' was formed by Collins as a Garrisonian replacement. 4 In Edinburgh as in Glasgow, the response to Collins' pamphlet seems to have been mixed. Harriet Gairdner wrote that it had "opened the eyes" of many Edinburgh abolitionists,

1. Dunlop to Collins, 20.4.41, Garrison Papers.
2. M. Estlin to M.W. Chapman, 27.10.55, Weston Papers; [Dunlop], American Anti-Slavery Conventions, passim.
3. Dunlop to Collins, 29.4.41, loc.cit.
including, to some extent, John Dunlop, but also felt that its harshness had alienated others. Collins never gave up his work in Glasgow to try to raise Edinburgh support. Perhaps an extended stay there would have produced exactly the same results as his Glasgow activities. Elizabeth Pease certainly became disillusioned by her friend's apparently short-sighted concentration on one city. As it was, the Edinburgh Ladies' Society came out in support of Garrison of its own accord.

Under the domination of Mrs. Jane Smeal Wigham and her stepdaughter Eliza Wigham, later helped by Mrs. Elizabeth Pease Nichol, the Edinburgh Ladies' Emancipation Society came to be one of the main British Garrisonian abolition societies, contributing regularly to the Boston Bazaar, and feting any Garrisonians who happened to visit the city. The initiative among female abolitionists in the city remained with Garrisonians throughout the history of the movement, in spite of sporadic attempts to move towards the New Organisation in the fifties.

What seems to have happened in 1841 was that conservative female abolitionists quietly dropped out of the committee, without the kind of publicised schism which was created in the G.E.S. The situation was thus a little different from the Glasgow one. During and after Collins' visit, both Edinburgh

1. H. Gairdner to Collins, 20.4.41, Garrison Papers.
2. E. Pease to Collins, 21.4.41, ibid.
4. This conclusion has been reached in spite of the fact that committee lists, minutes, and reports for the society during this period are unavailable. A controversial division of the Glasgow sort would have produced a body of pamphlet literature, and inevitably have been mentioned in letters to American abolitionists. Even Collins, whose complete British correspondence has survived, makes no mention of a schism among the Edinburgh ladies.
societies remained basically united, though their response to the issues which split Glasgow abolitionists differed. The Ladies' Emancipation Society became vehemently Garrisonian. The Edinburgh Emancipation Society proper, however, remained in cooperation with the B.F.A.S.S., and became known as one of the areas most receptive to New Organization America visiting Britain. ¹ After a temporary collapse due to the strain of the Free Church controversy in 1846, it was reconstituted in 1854 as the New Edinburgh Anti-Slavery Society, still illiberal by Garrisonian standards. ² As in Glasgow, the social and religious background of the two groups seems to have been similar, so much so that the dividing line between them was only one of sex. The most striking example of abolitionists of identical origins with differing viewpoints was the Wigham family, with old John Wights a leader of the pro-B.F.A.S.S. element, and his wife and daughter two of the most active Garrisonians in Britain. Possibly the Wighams used their abolitionist differences against one another in family disagreements, in the same way as the British churches later used their standpoints on slavery to assist them in preexisting disputes with their rivals.

Collins' final area of activity was Dublin. Much smaller in number than those in Edinburgh and Glasgow, Dublin abolitionists were easily dominated by the secretaries of the Hibernian Anti-Slavery Society, Richard D. Webb and the Unitarian James Haughton. Both men had returned from the World's Convention strongly prejudiced in favour of Garrison and his party. Although Dublin, like Glasgow,

1. Phelps to E. Wright, 1.3.44, Elizur Wright Papers, Library of Congress.

welcomed all the groups of touring abolitionists after the
Convention, it was with the Garrisonians rather than their rivals
that the secretaries continued corresponding after the delegates'
return to America. Nevertheless, Webb did not hear of Collins'
arrival from Miss Pease until January, and even then he shared
her pessimism about the chances of a mission at this point.
He insisted that Irish abolitionists were few and uninfluential,
but at least strongly for Garrison. Collins and Remond were
invited to Dublin "to relax from your cold and thankless labours
amongst the banded hosts of English 'New Organisation'". 1
Although unable to accept this invitation at the time, Collins
did remain in touch with the Hibernian Society. By the end of
March Webb was again pleading that he should come to Dublin, this
time to hold active public meetings. 2 Actually the Collins issue
had brought the Hibernian Society to the point of complete breach
with the B.F.A.S.S. without his ever having visited Dublin. In
the same letter Webb deplored their conduct as "shuffling and
contemptible". He surmised that "they have all been led astray
by Scoble, who .... hates Garrison worse than he hates the devil".
Presumably he drew these conclusions from the interchange of
correspondence the Hibernian Society had begun on hearing that the
Broad Street Committee had been a party to the circulation of the
Colver letters. Webb and Haughton must also have been aware of the
Emancipator accusations, so that the whole situation was one where

1. Webb to Collins, 7.1.41, Garrison Papers.
2. Collins to Webb, 28.1.41, ibid.; Webb to Collins, 24.3.41. ibid.
disagreements would involve moral principles and threaten the basis of cooperation between Dublin and London. Richard Allen had written to Broad Street on February 4th, and again a fortnight later, asking for the B.F.A.S.S. reasons for circulating slanders against Collins. Since there was no satisfactory reply, he and Haughton wrote on behalf of the Committee insisting that Collins should be given a hearing, and that extracts countering the Colver and Massachusetts Abolitionist extracts should be printed in the Reporter. The only reply was the one sent in duplicate to the G.E.S., stating that the Committee had passed resolutions in favour of Birney and Stanton, and that to endorse Collins would therefore "stultify their own acts". Stokes finally asked to be excused further correspondence. All that remained, after Collins' arrival in Dublin, was for Webb to write agreeing that correspondence between the two societies should be finally closed, while expressing a wish for united action if this should become possible. From this point onwards, Dublin's small group of active abolitionists, led by Webb, were to operate completely separately, pledged to supporting the Garrisonians in America. Since Webb's contribution to the American movement was greater than any Briton other than Thompson, the secession of the Hibernian Society is of central importance.

Collins' later visit to Dublin made little difference to the situation. The small group of Garrisonian abolitionists had already

2. Webb to Tredgold, 10.5.41, ibid., C10/158.
decided in his favour, and against the Broad Street Committee and its American allies. Collins actually found time for a short visit to Ireland while the situation in Glasgow was still fluid, just after the Albion Street Chapel meeting on 16th April. 1 After one meeting in Dublin, he returned to the "great city of smoke, filth and suffering", travelling in company with Webb's brother Thomas. 2 In spite of Smeal's pleas for his assistance, Collins spent the second half of May and most of June in Ireland. 3 His public activities were not great. It was perhaps only because of lack of money that his return was postponed so long. Although the Liberator stressed the magnificent reception he had had from "the small but faithful band" in Dublin, it also mentioned that his return to Boston was expected at any time. 4 In fact no public meetings were held at this time. Garrison himself had been convinced for some time that Collins' return was overdue. 5

By this time Collins' mission had clearly failed. He had raised little money during his trip, and it is probable that he had to borrow money for his passage home from Phillips, who left Britain with him on the July 4th packet. 6

2. Extracts from Dublin Freeman's Journal, n.d., in Liberator, 25.6.41, 9.7.41; Collins to Webb, 29.4.41, Garrison Papers; Webb to Garrison, 30.5.41, ibid.
3. Smeal to Collins, 22.5.41, ibid.
5. Garrison to Collins, 1.4.41, Garrison Papers.
6. Phillips to Collins, 29.6.41, ibid.; Collins to E. Pease, 4.7.41, ibid.; W. A. Phillips to Webb, 27.7.41, ibid.; Liberator, 27.7.41.
In the history of the American anti-slavery movement as a whole his visit had been unimportant. The Standard survived as a rival to the Emancipator on its own merits, and the 1841 squabbles in London, Glasgow, and Dublin did little to affect existing disunity in America. Collins himself soon faded out of the movement. He wrote bitterly on his return of "the oppressive incessant toil & drudgery which 17/20ths of your entire population are subjected & ...... the luxury, prodigality, & idleness which is saddled upon the other 3/20ths." ¹ His analysis of industrial society had been far too advanced for the majority of British abolitionists. In another two years he found himself parting company from the most extreme of his American abolitionist colleagues. By mid-1843 even Abby Kelley was horrified by his support for communistic theories of property.² Later in the year he resigned from his agency after attacks from Douglass, Remond, and Gay, to move on to his uncertain future in Utopian experiments at Skanasteles.³

In the British movement, however, Collins' mission had provided the final factor leading to disunity between abolitionist societies or sections of abolitionist societies. There had been rivalries and disagreements before his arrival, but Garrison's decision to send an agent to raise funds produced a breakdown of cooperation between his supporters and those suspicious of him.

In the light of the moral arguments over the rights and wrongs of the Emancipator transfer, and the controversy over whether the B.F.A.S.S. had or had not spread lies about Collins, the alliance between abolitionists holding different views on these matters could not survive. A prominent American female abolitionist once wrote of the schisms that they

"might have been prevented. A little forbearance, a little toleration, a little of that charity which 'never faileth' would have saved us all this trouble and dishonour. I think that a spirit of conciliation was wanting on both sides... they should have clung to one another, while they could, without sacrifice of principle." 1

Certainly forbearance had been lacking in Britain, and even more so in the Americans who influenced Britain. Few abolitionists had less tact than Colver and Collins. But "want of charity" alone had not produced the reflection of the American schisms in Britain. The real key to the disunity in the movement was that preferences had now become principles. With the rivalries in America stated in the moral terms produced by Collins' visit, the rival groups which already existed began to accuse one another of malpractices which made continued cooperation impossible.

Thus the effect of Collins' visit on existing tensions in the British movement was to begin the extraordinary series of schisms and counter-schisms which characterised its history throughout the forties and fifties. The foundations of two opposed anti-slavery movements had now been laid. One was conservative, dominated by the B.F.A.S.S., and in alliance with the A.F.A.S.S. The other was far less so. Garrisonian abolition was now supported in Britain by the small but immensely active society in Dublin, the majority of the Glasgow Emancipation Society and the new Glasgow Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society, and the female society in Edinburgh. The division

1. Mary Grew to E. Pease, 18.3.41, Garrison Papers.
was to become more elaborate in the fifties as new plans for abolition complicated the simple split between Old and New Organisation. Again, although the Scottish and Irish Garrisonians were always most important, they did not remain alone. Nevertheless, the emergence of an independent Garrisonian movement in these three cities was the beginning of the division of the British abolition societies along lines identical to the American ones. In this sense Collins' visit may have been the most influential and at the same time the most disastrous event in the history of the British movement against American slavery. This was even more so in the case of Scotland. At the same time as it created the Garrisonian abolition societies, the Collins mission destroyed what unity remained among British supporters of the American abolition campaign.
John Anderson Collins' visit had been instrumental in formalising the divisions between British supporters of the Old and New Organisation abolitionists of the U.S.A. Throughout the decade which followed, the issues which he had raised continued to absorb the attention of the anti-slavery societies in this country. The London Anti-Slavery Reporter officially tried to ignore the disunity in the movement, but consistently disassociated itself from Garrison and his followers. The Garrisonians in Dublin, Glasgow, and elsewhere continued to work independently of the Broad Street Committee. ¹ Certainly some of the Garrisonian distrust of the B.F.A.S.S. sprang from personal hatred of its secretary, John Scoble, while the movement was further hamstrung by its divisions over the question of free trade in slave-grown sugar. ² The main point at issue, however, was the extent to which British abolitionists should cooperate with American reformers prepared to link the anti-slavery movement with causes less acceptable to conservative middle

1. A.S.R., 8.1.45, 23.5.45, 2.11.46; Glasgow Argus, 18.4.44; Murray to Soul, 22.11.41, Bod. Brit. Emp. Misc. S.18, Cl15/133; Estlin to Webb, 13.11.45, Weston Papers; Thompson to Webb, 10.4.46, Garrison Papers.

class philanthropists in this country. From 1841 onwards, much British anti-slavery energy was dissipated in squabbles over this issue.

There remained one area in which British abolitionists, of whatever faction, could still cooperate. All were agreed that the best way in which they could help the Negro was by putting pressure on the American churches, north and south, to testify against slavery. In some cases, they might hope to do this through personal influence during visits to America. Sturge, for instance, made his 1841 trip in the expectation of persuading leading American Friends to strengthen their opposition to slavery. 1 The Free Church deputation of 1844, notwithstanding the charges of proslavery conduct later made against them, seem to have made personal attempts to demonstrate the sinfulness of tolerating slavery. 2 More formally, the various English and Scottish churches, since 1833, had continually sent memorials and remonstrances to the corresponding denominations in the U.S.A., urging them to use their influence to bring slavery to an end. The extremism of denominational attitudes might vary, but manifestoes of this sort were still being sent regularly immediately before the Civil War. 3


3. An example of such late enthusiasm was the attempt to stir up British Methodist support for a document issued by the Black River Methodist Episcopal Conference, New York, entitled "An Appeal to all Members of the Great Methodist Family, Affiliated with the Methodist Episcopal Church throughout the World" (1858), reprinted in W.H. Pullen, The Blast of a Trumpet, calling upon Every Son and Daughter of Wesley, in Great Britain and Ireland, to Aid their American Brethren in Purifying their American Zion from Slavery (London, 1860), pp. 39-42 & passim.
In some cases an individual might take it upon himself to write on behalf of his 'co-professors' throughout Britain. In others, several congregations might adopt a memorial to send to America. Again, complete denominations managed on occasion to unite in expressions of horror at the countenance given to the slave system by their fellows in America.

Even agreement over church action broke down during the 1840's, as abolitionists began to quarrel over the problem of whether they should refuse communion and thus all cooperation to American clergymen connected even indirectly with slavery. Nevertheless, once Collins had returned to Boston, the only direction in which abolitionists in this country were still unified was their


2. Remonstrance on the Subject of American Slavery, by the Inhabitants of Dumbarton and the Vale of Leven (Glasgow, 1837); Letter on American Slavery. The Association of Congregational Churches in Aberdeen and Banff Shires, to their Congregational Brethren in the United States of America (Aberdeen, 1837), in Aberdeen Herald, 15-4-37; The Earnest Expostulation of Christians of All Denominations in Montrose and its Vicinity, with the Christians of the United States of America (Montrose broadsheet, 1837); American Slavery. Remonstrance of the Congregational Union of Scotland (n.p., 1840); Memorial and Remonstrance Respecting Slavery, to the Synod of the United Secession Church (Glasgow, 1846); Address of the Irish Unitarian Christian Society to their Brethren in America (Boston, 1846); An Expostulation with those Christians and Christian Churches in the United States of America, who are implicated in the Sin of Slave-holding, by a Committee of the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Scotland (Glasgow, 1846); American Slavery. Report of a Meeting of the Members of the Unitarian Body, held at the Freemasons' Tavern, June 13th 1851, to Deliberate on the Duty of English Unitarians in Reference to Slavery in the United States. (London, 1851).
determination to attack slavery through their links with the American churches. This had always been the most promising approach to the problem of British support for American emancipation, in the absence of any political link between the two countries.\(^1\)

Apart from their shared hope of cooperating over church standpoints on slavery, British abolitionists continued arguing along the same lines. The group in control of the American Anti-Slavery Society were assumed by their rivals to be the party in favour of female equality, abolition of the Sabbath, and destruction of the paid ministry, as well as free love and general anti-social licence.\(^2\) Indeed the more thoughtful British Garrisonians were aware of the prejudice caused by the excesses of the men whom Stuart once called the "American rhapsodists."\(^3\) By 1846 Webb could write dubiously of the cold British welcome which would await Garrison, because of the extremism which had set the Quakers against him "almost to a man."\(^4\) For the Garrisonians as a body, however, the Broad Street Committee had sold the cause to a church ministry whose acquiescence was the mainstay of Southern slavery.\(^5\) More specifically, they could be attacked as allies of


2. A. Cameron, The Free Church and her Accusers in the Matter of American Slavery; being a Letter to Mr. George Thompson Regarding his Recent Appearances in this City (Edinburgh, 1846), pp.24-30. These fears were not entirely unfounded. See, for instance, H.C. Wright, First Day Sabbath not of Divine Appointment, passim. Even Garrisonians could admit the heresies of their colleagues, as did Smeal in British Friend, 31.1.45, 28.3.45, 31.3.45.

3. Circular on J.A. Collins, 1841, printed in Liberator, 7.5.41.


5. Glasgow Female Emancipation Society, An Appeal to the Ladies of Great Britain in Behalf of the American Slaves (Glasgow, 1841) pp.5-6
the clique responsible for the 'theft' of the Emancipator.
Finally but not least significantly, conservative British
abolitionists could be accused of joining in the pro-slavery
attempt to destroy the personality cult of Garrison.¹

One aspect of the tensions between the abolitionists which
emerged even more strongly during the forties was the way in
which they reflected strictly British regional rivalries.
By supporting the Garrisonians, leaders in Scotland and Ireland
were putting themselves in a position where they were dominating
a self-contained reform movement. If they had remained in
cooperation with the magnates of the conservative national
society based on London, they would have been playing the
subordinate role of minor provincial figures controlled from the
metropolis. Given the realities of British politics then and
now, this role must already have been only too familiar to them.
Webb's personal satisfaction at being able to work in cooperation
with men who were, after all, leaders of a national American reform
campaign, may well be typical of other provincial reformers
antagonised by constant central control of their affairs.²
Certainly it was largely on Scottish and Irish abolitionists
that the American Anti-Slavery Society depended for its support
throughout the decade. Miss Pease's Darlington efforts had always

1. J.A. Collins, Right and Wrong among the Abolitionists of
the United States, pp.45ff.; H.C. Wright, William Lloyd
Garrison, Letter to the Committee of Glasgow Female Anti-
Slavery Society (Glasgow, 1845), p.1; Letter of H.C.
Wright, 13.8.45, in British Friend, 30.8.45.

been those of an individual, and on her father's death soon
after the bitter exchanges of the Collins visit, she appears
to have been overcome with grief to an extent which ruined her
health. \(^1\) The emergence of the group of extremist abolitionists
centred on the Estlin family and the Bristol and Clifton Ladies' 
Anti-Slavery Society was only a development of the fifties.
The Rev. Mr. Steinthal of Bridgewater had not yet developed
abolitionist interests, while the same was true of the future
great benefactor of the Garrisonians, Wilson Armistead of Leeds. \(^2\)
Support for the Garrisonians was thus still focussed on Dublin,
Glasgow, and Edinburgh, where sympathetic groups were led by the
three erratically Quaker families of Webbs, Smells, and Wighams.
Support for the other American faction was centred on the B.F.A.S.S.,
dominating its string of more or less docile auxiliary societies
throughout the country. Until the more complicated developments
of the next decade, the schism in the British abolitionist movement
was perpetuated along provincial/metropolitan lines.

Apart from the old arguments of 1840-41, however, abolitionists'
attention in the forties was largely taken up by controversy over
the correct abolitionist course of the British churches. All
were agreed that working for the adoption of a correct church
standpoint on slavery was the greatest contribution British
abolitionists could make to the cause. But the unfortunate problem

1. Garrison to H.B. Garrison, 8.11.46, Garrison Papers.

2. For the activities of these individuals in the next
decade, see below Chapter VII, passim.
posed in considering church action was that the various groups of abolitionists failed to agree over what the correct church attitude to slavery was. The resulting arguments between abolition societies and the separate churches added a new dimension to the already lamentable disunity in the anti-slavery movement. For the abolitionists themselves, arguments over the role of the churches reinforced the suspicion of conservatives for Garrisonians and vice versa, and were used in many cases to gain advantage in the continuing debates over the issues raised in 1840 and 1841. In this way the controversy over church attitudes to slavery attracted more attention than any aspect of abolition in the forties - as a problem important in itself, as a new aspect of old disagreements strictly within the anti-slavery movement, or as a convenient way of focusing pre-existing tensions between rival groups of churchmen and churchgoers. Each of these levels of controversy appeared in the three major crises which called church policy into question during the decade – the Indiana Secession of the Society of Friends in 1843; the affair of the Free Church of Scotland in 1846; and the attempted formation of the Evangelical Alliance in the same year. Examined in detail, each of these strikingly shows the extent to which the extraneous issue of slavery became a vehicle for tensions and rivalries between church and reform groups in mid-Victorian Britain. In each case conservative and radical abolitionists differed over the correct course to take. In each case their differing viewpoints were adopted by sections of the nonconformist public using the slavery issue as a means of belabouring their opponents in past clerical controversies.

The way to controversy was opened by the failure of the Bible to give any unambiguous statement of the correct Christian attitude.
to slaveholding churches, or indeed to slavery itself. Since
church members habitually saw scriptural references as giving
the ultimate sanction for their actions, pamphlet controversy
on such references to slavery continued inconclusively until
the year of the Emancipation Proclamation. 1 In some cases such
arguments might create dissension among churchmen, as in the
exchanges of Fuller and Wayland. 2 On other cases, controversy
over the course a given church should follow over slavery might
give rise to a flurry of publications on the related point of

1. Unfortunately there is no study of the light cast on 18th and
19th century intellectual history by the biased use of
ambiguous scriptural texts to support preexisting attitudes
to slavery. Partial studies of the scriptural controversy
during restricted periods are D.B. Davis, The Problem of Slavery
in Western Culture (Ithaca, 1966), and more specifically C.L.
Shanks, 'The Biblical Anti-Slavery Argument of the Decade 1830-
A Memorial (Boston, 1700), printed in Proceedings of the Massachusetts
Historical Society, 1863-64, pp.161-163, and J. Hepburn, The American
Defense of the Christian Golden Rule or, an Essay to Prove the
Unlawfulness of Making Slaves of Men (New Jersey, n.p., 1715),
reprinted in Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society, 1877,
pp.113-140, are both early abolitionist works suggesting that the
tenor of the New Testament was at variance with the slave system.
On the other hand a pro-slavery Jesuit could use scripture to defend
not only slavery but the slave trade, in R. Harris, Scriptural
Researches on the Licitness of the Slave Trade, Showing its
Conformity with the Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion,
Delivered in the Sacred Writings of the Word of God (Liverpool, 1788).
Most American and British abolitionists used Biblical sanctions in
the nineteenth century, the most systematic attack being A. Barnes,
Inquiry into the Scriptural View of Slavery, 1846, which I have
not had the opportunity of reading. A characteristic controversial
work was Domestic Slavery Considered as a Scriptural Institution,
in a Correspondence between the Rev. Richard Fuller and the Rev.
Francis Wayland, revised and corrected by the Authors (New York, 1845).
Many additions to the controversy were published in connection with
the incidents examined in this chapter, especially the Free Church
affair - see below, pp. 329, 337. A very late example is Goldwin Smith,
Note that Scripture arguments were considered to be most effective
on waverers, and as such were distributed widely by the American
A.S.A., as in The Anti-Slavery Examiner, No.5: the Bible against
Slavery, an Inquiry into the Patriarchal and Mosaic Systems on the
Subject of Human Rights (New York, 1838). A Scottish contribution was
D. Dick, All Modern Slavery Indefensible (Montrose, 1836).

2. Domestic Slavery Considered as a Scriptural Institution, etc.
scriptural references. This was most clearly so during the discussion of the Free Church's policy from 1844 to 1847. Each argument over the role of the churches was paralleled by a renewal of argument over the old question of whether or not literal reading of the Bible made emancipation obligatory.

The ambivalence of Scripture on slavery no doubt made church arguments all the more difficult to settle, especially since the opposition in any given squabble could always be represented as being un-Christian in perverting Revelation for their own ends.

Discussion of church attitudes to slavery had not been central to the British abolition movement prior to 1833. After 1833, the new universal abolition movement set about bringing pressure to bear on the American churches. Nevertheless, although tension occasionally arose when individual clerical visitors to America were accused of shortcomings in their testimony against slavery, as in the case of Thompson's crude attempt to unmask the Baptist ministers Cox and Hoby during his 1834-35 visit, action remained united. Appeals to the American churches were normally couched respectfully and were restricted to courteous advice in a way which made it difficult to differ over the approach which should

1. Most obviously in D. Dick, In Favour of the Free Church, and also of the Abolition Cause: or, on American Slavery and the Free Church of Scotland, Inclusive of the Wrongfulness of all Modern Slavery (Edinburgh, 1849).

2. Although Church of England failure to look after the religious needs of the slave population was repeatedly criticised, as in J.A. Yates, Colonial Slavery. Letters to the Right Hon. William Huskisson, on the Present Condition of the Slaves, and the Means Best Adapted to Promote the Mitigation and Final Extinction of Slavery in the British Colonies (Liverpool, 1824), pp.24-25; Negro Slavery; or, a View of Some of the More Prominent Features of that State of Society, as it Exists in the United States of America and in the Colonies of the West Indies, especially in Jamaica (Loudon, 1823), pp.42-43, 56-58.

be taken. It was only in the late thirties that a more divisive issue was introduced with the suggestion that formal sanctions should be used against churches and churchmen whose position on slavery was unsatisfactory, for example by refusing communion or 'fellowship' to denominations which accepted slaveholders as members. The publication of Birney’s *The American Churches the Bulwarks of American Slavery* in 1839 had enormous effect, for instance on the Glasgow Emancipation Society. After 1841 the Garrisonians proposed taking the extreme standpoint of refusing communion to Americans who were abetting slaveholders through their church policies. Less radical British reformers refused to take so conclusive a step as excluding Americans connected with slavery from church privileges and activities. As a result, one aspect of the opposition between the factions of the British anti-slavery movement in the forties was disagreement over the degree of harshness with which they should try to make the churches in the U.S.A. give up their proslavery practices. In this way united action on church attitudes to American slavery was to break down at a point when the whole British movement had already gone through a process of fragmentation over other issues.

The first controversy in which the differing standpoints of the two wings of British abolitionists emerged was the one over the

1. For instance the relatively gentle *Letters on American Slavery*. The Association of Congregational Churches in Aberdeen and Banff Shires to their Congregational Brethren, etc., *loc.cit.*

secession from the Indiana Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends, in 1843. In this year Friends in Indiana divided into two meetings with different attitudes to slavery. Indeed by this time the harmony of most American denominations had been shattered or severely strained by the slavery issue. The division of the Presbyterian Church into Old and New School in 1837 undoubtedly implied differing attitudes to the problem of discipline over the sin of slaveholding.1 Years later, Harriet Beecher Stowe could satirise the clergy of both sections as being ready for reunification now that the northern wing had also abdicated its responsibilities over slavery, the one point at issue in the original division.2 The forties were also to see the disruption of the Methodists, first through the secession of the tiny Wesleyan Methodist Connection after the Utica Conference of 1843, and subsequently by the division of the whole denomination into the Methodist Episcopal Church North and the Methodist Episcopal Church South.3 Baptist abolitionists led by Elon Galusha forced a similar division in their church in 1845, although the small Free-Will Baptist group had previously made attitude to slavery a test for communion. An abolitionist Baptist Free Missionary Society


had been organised as early as 1843.¹ Only the Catholics, because their hierarchical system of church government controlled squabbling, and the congregationalists, because they were in effect confined to New England, remained relatively homogeneous on the slavery issue.² Even in the latter case, controversy arose later in the decade over cooperation with southern churchmen in the national interdenominational missionary societies.³ As the forties opened, then, unity in the American churches was in the process of disintegrating over slavery.

The Society of Friends itself was still apparently unanimous in its disapproval of slavery. But it had begun to show serious disagreements over the way in which slavery should be attacked. Friends were not united in wishing to cooperate with radicals distasteful because of their ideas on other social reforms, while some at least feared the effect a strong abolitionist standpoint might have on their business relations with southerners. The Hicksite schism of 1827 greatly complicated Quaker attitudes to slavery. A recent study suggests that Hicksites were those Friends


² Rice, American Catholic Opinion in the Slavery Controversy (Columbia, 1944). Mrs. Rice, however, points to the contemporary opinion that the absence of schism was due to the conservatism of the position taken by the Church, (p.158), and her work reveals a fascinating range of opinion kept within the Church.

³ Cole, The Social Ideas of the Northern Evangelists (Columbia, 1954), pp.96-131; Anti-Slavery Advocate, Oct., 1854; A characteristic American pamphlet on this controversy was S. Williston, Slavery not a Scriptural Ground of Division in Efforts for the Salvation of the Heathen (New York, 1844). The most interesting Scottish contribution was [J. Dunlop], American Slavery; Organic Sins, etc.
most 'alienated' from the prosperous business society emerging in nineteenth century America.\(^1\) It may thus be significant that the tendency was for abolitionist Quakers prepared to cooperate with Garrison to be Hicksites. Mrs. Mott and her husband are obvious examples, as are Sarah Pugh, Abby Kimber, and Isaac T. Hopper. Although a Scottish Friend like Smaal could register proper horror at Hicksite beliefs and yet cooperate with the Motts and their party in 1840, most British Quakers seem to have assumed that disruptive Garrisonian abolitionism was somehow connected with the dangerous radicalism of the Hicksites.\(^2\) On the other hand, Quaker abolitionists in both countries began to show growing suspicion of the failure of the orthodox American Meetings to maintain their testimony against slavery, whenever this might involve danger to business interests or contact with non-Quaker abolitionists known to hold extreme social and religious views.\(^3\) Indeed at least one abolitionist Quaker attacked her fellows for their conservatism over the woman question, always a point at issue.

2. For documentation of the B.F.A.S.S. attitude to Hicksite visitors in 1840, see pp. 152,165 above. English Quakers were overwhelmingly orthodox. During Mrs. Mott's Glasgow visit, Smaal put his name to a manifesto of the city's Quakers, dated 12.8.40, disassociating themselves from Hicksite tenets, in Glasgow Argus, n.d., extract reprinted in Liberator, 9.10.40.  
3. See for instance the complaints in W. Bassett to A. Kelley, 6,11.39, Abby Kelley Foster Papers, American Antiquarian Society; [E. Pease (ed.)], Society of Friends in the United States; their Views on the Anti-Slavery Question and Treatment of the People of Colour, Compiled from Original Correspondence (Darlington, 1840).
in the anti-slavery movement. Within orthodox American Quaker circles, a growing element who shrank from the Hicksites but perhaps shared their sense of 'alienation' from the Society in its new established position, began to question Quaker unwillingness to launch a further anti-slavery campaign. Such 'alienation' was signalised in 1843, in Indiana, by the first formal division within the Society itself over the slavery issue.

The Indiana secession attracted great attention in Britain, as indeed did all the splits in the American churches in the pre-Civil War period. British Quakers took different sides on the Indiana question according to their ideas on abolition, though certainly their preconceptions may have been formed for reasons other than abolitionist ones. The indications are that the division of British opinion falls along the lines of the old tensions between provinces and metropolis, and between Garrisonians and Tappanites. Friends of the conservative London Yearly Meeting gave their support to the old Indiana meeting. Radical Quaker abolitionists like Webb and Smeal, already disposed to distrust the leaders of the London Meeting, loudly called for recognition of the secessionists, largely through the Glasgow British Friend. Independent of varying ideas on abolition, these differing attitudes also seem to have been the product of disagreements and rivalries which had emerged before Indiana affairs and perhaps even the slavery question were ever at issue.

1. A. Grimke, Letter to Catherine E. Beecher in Reply to an Essay on Slavery and Abolitionism, Addressed to A.M. Grimke (Boston, 1839, p.119.
If the pattern of British attitudes to the secession was complex, the reasons for the secession itself were even more so. The standard history of the Indiana events, written within ten years of their occurrence, assumes that attitudes to slavery were the only point over which the two parties disagreed. Its author William Edgerton, however, set out to demonstrate that the new Yearly Meeting had only separated to maintain the Society's ancient testimony against slavery. After being staunchly anti-slavery until at least 1839, he explained, the Indiana meeting had been diverted from its principles by a coalition of colonisationists and businessmen alarmed at the damage which would be done to their southern interests by the issuing of anti-slavery memorials, and the opening of Meeting Houses to abolitionist lecturers. The turning point in the history of the old Yearly Meeting had come in June, 1840, when the backlash from a visit by Arnold Buffum had given conservative Friends enough strength to begin work against abolitionist activity. The Yearly Meeting had passed a general resolution against the extremism of the movement. Its Committee for the Concerns of the People of Colour even began to throw out resolutions on abstinence from slave produce.

In 1841 the Yearly Meeting, on a recommendation from its Meeting


for Sufferings, instructed members not to allow meeting houses to be used for anti-slavery gatherings.¹ By the time of the 1842 Yearly Meeting, eight abolitionist Friends had lost their places on the Meeting for Sufferings. The abolitionist minority were ejected from the Meeting House after strong protests, and subsequently agreed that secession was the only course open to them.² A General Convention called by this group, led by Charles Osborne, met on the 6th and 7th of February, and organised itself as the Indiana Yearly Meeting of Anti-Slavery Friends. A Declaration of Sentiments was issued and sent with epistles to other Quaker Meetings, suggesting the opening of correspondence. With the sending of the epistles to London Yearly Meeting, British Friends were introduced to the Indiana situation. They were urged to support the new Meeting, partly on the grounds that the secession was the result of following the frequent Epistles of Advice sent to America by them in the past.³

Edgerton's account stated the issue squarely in terms of slavery and anti-slavery. Nevertheless, it seems that this was not the only ground for division, though it was repeatedly stated as such. Even Edgerton commented on the extent to which economic interest moulded his opponents' evidently pro-slavery action, and it seems unlikely that eight Friends would have been removed from the Meeting for Sufferings between the 1841 and 1842 Yearly Meetings purely because of abolitionist

¹. Ibid., pp. 49-50.
². Ibid., pp. 62-73.
³. Ibid., pp. 74ff. The Epistle to London Yearly Meeting is printed, pp. 92-96.
opinions. Thomas H. Drake sees the secession as a reaction of rural Quakers to the domination of city conservatives closely connected with the Eastern and also the Southern business world. Beyond this, the schism may be seen as one between Friends concerned with maintaining the primitive testimonies of their Society, and those prepared to come to terms with the nineteenth century world. Doing so would allow them to abandon their old compulsion towards spiritual and even physical martyrdom, and compromise wherever the traditional testimonies would have made economic life difficult. The Hicksite secession itself had been one aspect of this dualism. There is at least one indication that in Indiana the slavery issue was used as a cover for personal and economic differences which were splitting the Yearly Meeting before Buffum's visit brought matters to a head. Although Charles Osborne was attacked for cooperating with members of other denominations in his anti-slavery activities, he had not been a member of an abolitionist society since leaving Tennessee forty years before. The criticism of Osborne thus appears as an attempt to get rid of an articulate and popular Friend who differed from the current leaders of the Meeting on the extent to which modern Friends should expose themselves to the snares of business success. The rage of the secessionist Friends at the declension from the ideals of the early Society implied in the admission of the known duellist and slaveholder. Henry

2. Doherty, op.cit., passim.
3. H. Wickersham to E. Pease, 30.1.44, Garrison Papers.
Clay as a visitor to Meeting in 1842, also implies a difference of opinion wider than the pure anti-slavery one. Whatever speculations may be made about the background of the Indiana secession, British abolitionists did respond to it in terms of a simple difference within the Society over its attitude to slavery. Once again the American division was reflected among British Christians. Some Friends in this country did not sympathise with the Indiana secessionists, in spite of their own dominant role in the abolitionist societies, past and present. Indeed they had repeatedly sent Epistles of Advice to the Yearly Meetings in America through the London Yearly Meeting, exhorting them to take the very standpoint which the secessionists had adopted. British Friends, however, had been divided by the arguments of 1841. Garrisonian abolitionists, some of them at least nominal Quakers, now bitterly criticised the conservative Friends in control of the London Yearly Meeting. Miss Pease had launched an attack on the apathy of American and British Friends as early as 1840. Collins attributed many of his difficulties to the barriers they put in his way in 1841. Garrison himself complained of the way in which he was attacked by British Quakers for his opinions. "My bitterest opponents in England," he wrote, "are found in the Society of Friends."  

1. Edgerton, op.cit., pp.84-86.  
3. [E. Pease, (ed.)], Society of Friends in the United States; E. Pease to N.W. Chapman, 23.4.40, Weston Papers; Collins to Garrison, 1.1.41, Garrison Papers.  
4. Garrison to E. Pease, 1.6.41, ibid.
Later he came to the conclusion that their attitude was the main obstacle to his success in Britain in 1846. By 1852, Mary Harman was convinced that the movement would have been better off completely without the Quakers.

As far as British Garrisonians were concerned, the events of 1841 made it clear that Quaker abolitionism had come to be less than satisfactory. On the other hand, there were Friends whose support for Garrison remained strong after 1841, and who took an independent attitude to the Indiana secession. The principal focus of opposition to the policy of the London Yearly Meeting was the British Friend, a periodical edited from 1843 to 1868 by William and Robert Smeal. Founded partly because of the lack of coverage given to American slavery by the London Friend, its first issue pledged an unbiassed support for all abolitionist efforts in Britain and abroad, as well as "IMMEDIATE REPEAL" of the Corn Laws, and the spreading of information on the temperance and peace movements. The new journal was intended to replace another provincial Quaker periodical, the now defunct Irish Friend, which had also operated independently of the London Friend. The new British Friend took an uncompromisingly Garrisonian tone, at least during the first few years of its life. In the later forties and throughout the fifties, it gave less coverage to the American abolitionists and printed more articles

1. Garrison to H.B. Garrison, 10.9.46, ibid.
2. M. Harman to R. Weston, 24.9.52, Estlin Papers, B.P.L.
on general moral improvement. At the time of the Indiana
secession, however, Smeal's paper became the vehicle for those
Quakers who disapproved of the London Yearly Meeting's evident
intention of ignoring the fate of the Yearly Meeting of Anti-
Slavery Friends. Because of the importance attached to British
opinion among American Friends, its support gave great encouragement
to the new Indiana Meeting, disappointed by the failure of the
London Yearly Meeting to endorse its position.2

William Smeal and his brother led protest against the
action of the national body over the secession, possibly because
of a Glaswegian distrust of the tendency of the London Yearly
Meeting to legislate wholesale for Quakers throughout the country.
But they may have been even more alarmed at the lack of support
for the seceders in other Meetings in America. The London Yearly
Meeting was the only one which risked controversy by acknowledging
or even publicly reading the Epistle initially sent out by the
new Indiana Meeting.3 Quaker anti-slavery sentiment in London
was much stronger than among the conservative Friends of Pennsylvania
and New England, who simply rejected secessionist appeals out of
hand. In spite of the fact that the first Epistle, carried to
London by Arnold Buffum, was rejected, a second was subsequently
sent to the London Meeting for Sufferings, reiterating the position
of the seceders. This time it also listed the charges of

1. There are relatively few references to slavery in the
British Friend for the 1850's. Such comment as there was,
however, was Garrisonian. See for instance the delighted
review of the first number of the Anti-Slavery Advocate in
British Friend, 1.4.83.


3. Ibid., pp. 74-96, 209. Edgerton prints the Epistle to
London Yearly Meeting, pp. 92-93. Also reprinted in
British Friend, 30.6.43.
inconsistency and care for business interests which could be made against those now in charge of the old Meeting.

If the principle of knowing men by their fruits was adopted, the secessionists argued, then the London Yearly Meeting should uphold them, since they had demonstrated their concern for the slave by leaving their religious fellowship on his behalf.¹ In September 1844, the new Meeting made a final bid for the support of British Friends by issuing a third Address, this time directed to the individual members of London Yearly Meeting, rather than the Meeting in its corporate capacity.

The arguments used were similar to those of the earlier Epistles, with the addition of some disparaging comment on the assumption that the majority should rule the minority, even in matters of conscience.² The London response to these overtures remained negative, no doubt because of the impolicy of destroying the unity of the Society by cooperating with a secession group clearly at odds with the conservative Friends dominant on the other side of the Atlantic. In fact it is difficult to see how the most optimistic abolitionist could have expected a body now so institutionalised to shatter a unity considered valuable for Christian and social ends other than abolition, by taking the part of an obvious minority of a Meeting four thousand miles from London. This must have been even more the case, given the success of the old Indiana Meeting in arguing that the seceders wished to endanger the primitive integrity of the Society by cooperating

1. Ibid., 31.12.44; Edgerton, op.cit., pp. 304-311.
2. Ibid., pp. 311-324. British Friend, 31.12.44.
with non-Friends known to hold extraordinary ideas on religion and society. 1

Perhaps what is really surprising is that the London Yearly Meeting did not refuse to cooperate with the Indiana seceders at once. As it was, none of the Indiana approaches produced any result. The whole matter was brought up for discussion at the 1845 Yearly Meeting, held from the 21st to the 31st of May. Avoiding any admission that the seceders were still Friends, the Meeting adopted an Address to "Those who have recently withdrawn from Indiana Yearly Meeting of Friends." It suggested, somewhat tactlessly, that the schismatic group should overcome their pride and reunite with the old Meeting. 2 Simultaneously, William Foster, Joseph Foster, George Stacey, and John Allen, all conservative Friends active in the B.F.A.S.S., were appointed as a Committee to visit Indiana as mediators. Arriving in Indiana in October, they later reported in favour of the old Meeting, in spite of complaints that they had listened only to the version of the schism put forward by its leaders. 3 Although this deputation fell far short of meeting the demands of the secessionists, its appointment does at least indicate continuing British Quaker interest in slavery. This compares favourably with the refusal of the American Meetings to have anything to do with Friends who had broken the unity of the Society to cooperate with abolitionists outside it.

1. Edgerton, op.cit., p.38. Garrisonians, however, repeatedly claimed that their principles were simply those of the early Friends. See Garrison to E. Pense, 1.6.41, Garrison Papers; H.C. Wright, William Lloyd Garrison. Letter to the Committee of the Glasgow Female Emancipation Society (Glasgow, 1842).

2. Edgerton, op.cit., p.325.

Notwithstanding the importance attached to Quaker unity on both sides of the Atlantic, a small minority of British Friends, encouraged by abolitionists of other denominations, chose a course very different from that of the London Yearly Meeting. Broadly speaking, these dissidents were men and women who had already clashed with leading British Friends on the slavery issue in 1840 and 1841, following the Garrisonian line where the Quaker-dominated B.F.A.S.S. had taken the Tappanite one. Probably there was also an element of distrust of the national organisation because of regional sympathies, on the part of Scots like the Smeal brothers. Although an orthodox Friend, William Smeal was not only a Garrisonian abolitionist, but also a confessed nonresistant. No doubt this made it easier for him to approve of the institutional anarchy implied in encouraging the Indiana abolitionists to go their way, where conservative Friends shrank from imperilling the unity of the Society. Although the first issue of the British Friend which mentioned Indiana also included one of a series of letters from Joseph Candler suggesting it was unfair to blame American Friends for indifference to slavery, its editorial note expressed pleasure that the secession had taken place on grounds of "Christian duty." Smeal's comment was supported by a letter from a respected English Friend who had emigrated to Skaneateles, James Cannings Fuller, at that time visiting England for the 1843 Anti-Slavery Convention. Fuller sneered at recent mention in the London Friend of the "peculiar difficulties" of U.S. Friends, and came out strongly

1. Smeal to Garrison, 1.2.41, in Liberator, 12.3.41.
in favour of the decisive action of the Indiana separatists.
The same issue of the British Friend carried an unusually radical letter from Joseph Sturge, which had been refused publication in the London Friend, due to its scathing attack on the refusal of American Quakers to allow meeting houses to be used for anti-slavery purposes. ¹ Smeal's next issue was even more controversial. The whole of the minutes of the Indiana secession Convention of 6th February were printed, together with a letter which members of the new Meeting had asked Fuller to set before the British public. It suggested that if the body of British Friends allowed itself to be duped by lukewarm American Quakers, "it will undoubtedly do more to impede the progress of the present Anti-Slavery enterprise, than any other act which can be accomplished by any other Society in Christendom." Smeal's editorial disclaimed any wish to be identified with either side in the Indiana schism, but pointed out a little optimistically that until the old Meeting had justified itself, British sympathies would be with the new. He called for an immediate start to official correspondence with the new Indiana Meeting. ² By this time William and Robert Smeal, and presumably a proportion of the growing readership of the British Friend, had formed their opinion in favour of the Indiana separatists at the expense of the old Meeting.

Until Smeal's attention was diverted to affairs nearer home with the controversies over the Free Church and the Evangelical

1. British Friend, 29.4.43.
2. Ibid., 31.5.43.
Alliance, the British Friend filled its columns with material calculated to show the case of the Anti-Slavery Indiana Meeting in its best light. This course was opposed to that of the London Friend, which mirrored the cautious opinions of the London Yearly Meeting and its Meeting for Sufferings. The Epistle which had been rejected by the London Yearly Meeting was reprinted for the benefit of readers of the British Friend, accompanied by an editorial ridiculing the annual Epistles of the various American Meetings because of their failure to mention that "they have done anything." Characteristically, Smeal also admitted material from the old Meeting

1. In fact the standpoint of the London Friend was less conservative than Garrisonians insisted. The difference from the British Friend was that its loyalties to Quaker unity prevented its recognition of the new Meeting, though it constantly castigated slavery and the failings of Indiana Friends in the old Meeting. See London Friend, August, 1843, which actually defended the secessions against the Philadelphia Friend of 29.4.43—"the charges there spoken of cannot have been wholly without foundation." The Friend, Oct. and Nov., 1843, was less favourable to the seceders. Private attitudes to the old Meeting were also sometimes critical. A letter to it dated 7.7.43, in London Yearly Meeting Casual Correspondence, Ms. Letterbook, Friends' House, insisted that the name of the new Meeting, by mentioning slavery, "implies a surrender on your part of the Testimony of the Society against Slavery."

2. British Friend, 30.6.43.
to his columns, but attacked it personally through his editorials.\(^1\) By November, he had made up his mind completely, and went directly against the opinions of leading British Friends by suggesting that correspondence with the Indiana Meeting should be begun, "whatever may be the treatment which they may receive from other similar bodies in America."\(^2\)

In the new year the Glasgow paper continued printing secessionist documents, together with the hostile comment of the *Free Labour Advocate*—"What a yielding up of principle to the shrine of expediency!"\(^3\) Although interest was temporarily diverted by the sensational news of the imprisonment of J.L. Brown and extended controversy over McGregor Laird's proposals for free emigration from West Africa, the July issue returned to the Indiana question by publishing letters from Osborne and Buffum themselves, attacking the sophistry of the declarations of the old Meeting. They were accused of trying to take credit for the past anti-slavery activities of those who had now seceded.\(^4\)

The second Epistle of the new Meeting to the London Yearly Meeting Meeting for Sufferings, together with its Address to the individual Friends composing London Yearly Meeting, was printed in the December number.\(^5\) From this point on, however, Smeal's interest

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1. e.g. *Ibid.*, 31.10.43, where he published a letter from the old Meeting complaining of the false information in sections from the British Friend reprinted in the *Free Labour Advocate*. For the connection between these papers during the controversy, see Edgerton, *op.cit.*, p.227.

2. *British Friend*, 30.11.43.

3. *Ibid.*, 29.2.44.


seems to have declined, although he printed letters before the 1845 Yearly Meeting suggesting that a mediating committee should be appointed to go to Indiana. Editorial feeling was in favour of the work of the committee, and seems to have remained so. If reports of its one-sided approach did reach Glasgow, no mention of them was made in the British Friend.

Although the British Friend was the principal vehicle of support for the new Indiana Meeting, its editors were by no means alone among British Friends in doubting the sincerity of the old Meeting. Their most unlikely ally was Joseph Sturge. Although a known New Organizationist, and a man close to the leadership of the London Yearly Meeting, he helped the British Friend throughout the period of the controversy with material attacking the abolitionist deficiencies of American Friends. Similar correspondence was submitted by an unidentified Friend, over the signature J.O., possibly the initials of the great banker John Gurney, though the disregard for the unity of the Society shown in some of these letters would have been uncharacteristic of him. Elizabeth Pease, too, tried to help the Smalls, although her work was severely curtailed after the death of her father. Asked to use her influence among British Friends by an Indiana separatist correspondent, she

1. Ibid., 30.4.45.
2. Ibid., 31.5.45, 30.8.45, 31.10.45.
3. Ibid., 29.4.43, 29.2.44, 30.4.45.
4. Ibid., 31.5.44, 29.6.44, 30.9.44, 30.4.45.
passed on one of his letters to the *British Friend* with a covering letter calling for sympathy with the new Meeting.¹

In Ireland, too, Webb predictably dissented from those who refused to recognise the Anti-Slavery Meeting. For once he joined Sturge in attacking the various American Yearly Meetings through the *British Friend*.² By this time, perhaps because of the combination of many other factors with the slavery issue, he had resigned his membership in the Society of Friends, officially over its behaviour over Indiana. After he and Allen had been asked to use their influence in favour of the separatists, he wrote bitterly that his correspondent

"... poor dear innocent man.... could not have written to worse people unless he had written to me alone. Richard is a good Friend & has some character to lose, I am a gone man - being suspected to be a Unitarian and a heretic of the worst stamp......[British Friends] will be led by the nose and what better could be hoped for whilst George Stacey and Josiah Foster are their Moses and Aaron.... I gave up all sects since the London Yearly Meeting have eschewed the Indiana separatists (who took their advice and were true to the slave) and for the sake of a hollow unity & a respect to dead rules preferred the mob of formalists and hypocrites constituting the old Indiana Yearly Meeting.³"

The separation from Indiana Yearly Meeting gave rise to the least important of the three controversies of the 1840's over the

1. H. Wickersham to E. Pease, 18.10.43, Garrison Papers; Wickersham to E. Pease, 30.1.44, *ibid.*; *British Friend*, 30.11.43.

2. *Ibid.*, 29.6.44.

relationship between the British churches and the slave system. In spite of their disproportionate importance in the anti-slavery movement, the Quakers were relatively few in number. Again, their tendency to settle internal differences by themselves meant that the Indiana controversy was never publicised in the same way as the controversies over their policy of the Free Church of Scotland and the Evangelical Alliance. In the last resort, too, those who differed from the London Yearly Meeting in this case were a very small minority of a very small denomination. Nevertheless, the Indiana controversy sheds some interesting light on the role of the British churches in the American anti-slavery movement. First, the behaviour of both groups in Indiana indicates the great importance attached by Americans to British approval of their actions over slavery. Secondly, setting the case of Sturge aside, those who challenged the London leadership over Indiana were abolitionists who had already done so in 1840 and 1841, although in that case they had been doing so as rivals of the B.F.A.S.S. rather than as dissident elements within the Society of Friends. Thirdly and most important, the Indiana controversy showed that where Garrisonians in Britain were prepared to ignore the problem of unity within and between the churches, moderate abolitionists who were also church leaders saw the preservation of this unity as a consideration which might and should dictate the way in which anti-slavery principles were to be advanced. Thus the London Yearly Meeting had seen unity within the Atlantic community of Quakers as being of first importance, when the Garrisonians who wished to recognise the separatists had been prepared to ignore the effect of taking this radical abolitionist
standpoint upon their Society. These three trends — hunger of Americans for British approval of what they did over slavery, the use of slavery as an issue on which to pin old rivalries, and the tendency of Garrisonians to set abolition before the maintenance of church unity — dominated the behaviour of the British churches on the slavery issue up to the Civil War. More clearly than in the case of the Indiana Secession, these trends are demonstrated in the more complex public controversies over the Free Church of Scotland and the Evangelical Alliance.

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The implication of the Free Church of Scotland in the quarrels of the anti-slavery movement immediately followed the Disruption of 1843, which marked its secession from the Church of Scotland. The history of the emergence of the evangelical group within the latter, and of the "Ten Year's Conflict" and the final schism of 1843 has not yet been fully written. The motives which led the Evangelicals to break away from the Establishment are still very much open to debate. Given the social conservatism which their leaders linked with a distrust of the patronage system in the

1. W.O. Henderson, Heritage, a Study of the Disruption (Edinburgh, 1958), is a modern contribution written in somewhat general terms. See also T. Brown, Annals of the Disruption (3 Vols., Edinburgh, 1876-1877). The full verdict on the motives behind the Disruption will be dependent on a series of studies of individual congregations or at least individual cities. For the events of 1843 at national level, the best source is the Edinburgh Witness for that year, especially May - June. The pamphlet literature is enormous, going right back to the second decade of the century. A partial modern study of this early phase of the controversy is J.W. Craven, 'Andrew Thomson (1779-1831), Leader of the Evangelical Revival in Scotland'.
old church, the most persuasive explanation is that until
the very last minute the future leaders of the Free Church
were confident enough of their own strength to feel they would
be able to retain control of the Establishment on their own
terms. They were sharply opposed to the Voluntaries, and
remained in a state of veiled antagonism towards the Voluntary
denominations. Whatever the real reasons for the Disruption,
it left the new Free Church of Scotland without church buildings
or means of livelihood for its ministers. The first General
Assembly of the Free Church authorised the establishment of a
"Sustentation Fund" to make good the losses of ministers' salaries.
It was to be administered from Edinburgh, but made up of contributions
from individual congregations - incidentally by no means voluntary
and of funds raised by canvassing outside Scotland. The most

1. Chalmers, for instance, was an arch-conservative on almost
every political issue, including his wish to retain political
power for the Church. See Wright, Scottish Chartism, p.116;
Although he had published one pamphlet on slavery, this only
suggested a scheme of gradual emancipation, by which the
property rights of the masters were to be left undamaged -
A Few Thoughts on the Abolition of Colonial Slavery, originally
published as an introduction to Clarkson's Thoughts on the
Necessity of Improving the Condition of the Slaves in the British
Colonies, with a View to their Ultimate Emancipation (1825), reprinted
in Chalmers, Works, XII, 399-408.

2. London Patriot, 1.10.40, 22.5.43. This paper's only satisfaction
at the Disruption sprang from the way in which it showed the
futility of the establishment principle - London Patriot,
29.5.43. See also J. Macnaughton, The Free Church and American
Slavery, Slanders against the Free Church Not and Answered, in a
Speech, Delivered at the South Church Socire, Paisley,
April, 1846 (Paisley, 1846), p.7.

3. A.A. Maclaren, 'Presbyterianism and the Working Class in a
Mid-Nineteenth Century City,' in S.H.L., XLVI, 1947, pp.126-130.
promising area to begin collection was clearly America. The Scottish Presbyterian Church was already admired by Presbyterians in the U.S.A. After the Disruption, the Free Church appeared to have given up its funds, property, livelihood and status for the anti-patronage principles on which primitive Presbyterianism had been founded. It also appeared to have embraced the voluntary principle which was the basis of American church government, although nothing was further from the minds of Chalmers and other Free Church leaders. To capitalise on the approval of American Presbyterians, a Commission was appointed to tour the U.S.A. raising money for the Sustentation Fund. The Commissioners selected were the Rev. Dr. Burns of Paisley, the Rev. Dr. Cunningham of Edinburgh, the Rev. George Lewis of Ormiston, Thomas Chalmers' son the Rev. William Chalmers, and the Dundee merchant Robert Ferguson. Their efforts were moderately successful, to the tune of some three

1. T. Smyth, The Claims of the Free Church of Scotland to the Sympathy and Assistance of American Christians (N.Y. & London, 1844), reprinted in Works (Columbia, S.C., 1908), III, 482-506; Deliverance of Synod of New York and New Jersey, printed in Witness, 14.2.44. The same assumption was made by American abolitionists, as in Letter of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society to the Commissioners of the Free Church of Scotland (Edinburgh, 1844), p.4.

thousand pounds,1 much of it raised among slaveholding Old
School Presbyterians in the South.

Abolitionists without any interest in the economic
survival of the Free Church responded sharply to this betrayal
of the anti-slavery movement. The result was a controversy
matched for bitterness in nineteenth century Scottish history
only by the Disruption itself. A great deal of research on the
enormous body of pamphlet and newspaper sources for the 'Send
Back the Money Campaign' has already been done by Professor G.A.
Shepperson.2 Like the Indiana controversy, the Free Church
shows the anxiety of American abolitionists to have British
denominations stick to firm anti-slavery principles. Again,
during the two years of the controversy, the elements in Scotland
which disliked the Free Church, from radical Voluntaries to the
conservative rump of the Church of Scotland, adopted extreme anti-
slavery principles as a weapon to settle old scores with the Free
Church. Again, the Free Church itself obviously took the standpoint
it did because of a natural wish for institutional survival.

Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, Held in Edinburgh,
in May, 1844 (Edinburgh, 1844), pp.64ff.; G. Lewis,
Impressions of America and the American Churches (Edinburgh, 1845),
passim.

2. 'Frederick Douglass and Scotland', J.N.E., XXXIII, 1953;
'The Free Church and American Slavery,' S.H.R., 1951;
'Thomas Chalmers, the Free Church of Scotland and the South,'
J.S.R., XVII, 1951. See also his general comment on this
kind of situation in 'Writings in Scottish-American History;
a Brief Survey,' in W.M.Q., 3rd Ser., XI, 1954, p.173, where
he suggests that "one of [Scotland's] favourite games [was]
the use of events in the New World to bring into focus its
own situation in the Old." The present account simply expands
on that of Professor Shepperson through the use of American sources.
American and British Garrisonians were not prepared to admit this as an excuse for setting back the anti-slavery movement. Finally, the 'Send Back the Money' campaign was one of the few junctures at which abolitionists enlisted British working class help. The visiting Garrisonians, especially Frederick Douglass, specifically set out to use the general public of Edinburgh, Dundee, and other Scottish cities against the Free Church.

The Commissioners set out for America in the autumn of 1843. They toured America extensively. Their reception was generally good, and they were even presented to President Tyler - himself a slaveholder - while in Washington. During the mission it appears that Lewis, the leader of the Commission, at least made no attempt to avoid discussion on slavery. In his retrospective account of the travels of the deputation, his chapters on each southern city included unfavourable comment on the cruelty and debasing effects of the system. On the return voyage from Boston to Liverpool, he and the other Commissioners got up a petition against the exclusion of a Haitian Negro from the cabin deck, only to be foiled by a counter-petition calling for the admission of the ship's cook to the saloon. "The jest,....... was not relished by the passengers." Lewis' final chapter, summarizing the condition of the American churches, argued forcefully that their main shortcoming was their refusal to act over slavery. Indeed his

1. Lewis, Impressions of America and the American Churches, p.78.
3. Ibid., p.391.
4. Ibid., p.415.
stand was so unequivocal that the Free Church’s critics were later able to compile a series of extracts demonstrating the inconsistency between the deputation’s awareness of Presbyterian failings and acceptance of slaveholders’ money.1 Actually a great deal of concern over slavery was expressed during the 1844 General Assembly, after the return of the Commissioners. A committee was appointed to consider approaching American Presbyterians in this direction. When it reported at the next Assembly, however, external abolitionist pressure had made members anything but receptive to reminders of their anti-slavery duty.2

British and American abolitionists without Free Church connections were quick to see the effect of the acceptance of slaveholding money by a denomination with such great international prestige. This was all the more so at a time of near equilibrium between the forces for and against slavery, which produced abnormal sensitivity to overseas opinion.3 In the early stages of the controversy, disapproval of the use of Southern money for religious purposes was a feeling in which Old and New Organisation abolitionists could join. In fact the first attack on the Free Church was launched by the Tappanite American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. Their Letter to the Free Church was forwarded to Scoble by Lewis Tappan, and subsequently circulated as a separate tract in Scotland. He described the position of the Free Church as “a monstrous error,..... tending to

1. G. Lewis, Slavery and Slaveholders in the United States of America (Edinburgh, 1840).
paralyze [sic] the efforts of Christian abolitionists in this country.¹ Tappan's sensitivity to British church policies was symptomatic of the importance which American abolitionists as a whole set upon the standpoint of the Free Church. His New Organisation allies in this country quickly responded to the appeal for assistance. The Reporter reprinted and commanded the A.F.A.S.S. Letter at the first opportunity, and went on to harry the Free Church continuously until the summer of 1846, when the B.F.A.S.S. itself issued an Address to its General Assembly.² After this point the Broad Street Committee became increasingly alarmed at the excessive vigour with which Garrison and his fellows were attacking church institutions in Scotland. During the first phase of the controversy, however, it temporarily swallowed its distrust of extremist abolitionists. The activities of the Old Organisation G.E.S. were fully covered in the Reporter, as were those of individual Garrisonian orators like Thompson or Douglass.³


2. The Reporter, which printed the A.F.A.S.S. Letter on 15.5.44, followed this on 1.7.44 with the B.F.A.S.S.'s own Address to the Free Church. This had been adopted at a committee meeting on 16.5.46, entered in B.F.A.S.S. Minute Books, II. See also A.S.R., 16,10.44, 11.12.44, 25,12.44, 3.1.44, 22.1.44, 11.6.45, 1.6.46, 1.10.46, 1.6.47, 1.7.47, 1.11.47.

3. Ibid., 21.8.44, 1.6.46, 1.10.46.
After all, this was a splendid test case for church behaviour on slavery. It was only as hysteria in Scotland mounted that the British and Foreign Society withdrew into its usual hostility towards the Garrisonians.

The conviction that it was essential for the Free Church to change its position was by no means confined to the New Organisation. For instance Gerrit Smith, at this time uncommitted to either of the national Anti-Slavery Societies, also considered that the decision of the Free Church to accept Southern money had been a "great error." Among Garrison's personal following, the attack on the Free Church was more bitter. Garrison himself was to choose the autumn of 1846 for his third visit to this country. Aided by Henry C. Wright, Frederick Douglass, James N. Buffum, and their British ally George Thompson, he personally led the 'Send Back the Money Campaign' at its most exciting stage. He was actually invited to come to Scotland for this purpose by the Glasgow Emancipation Society. The bulk of the lecturing work in Scotland was actually done by Douglass, Wright, and Thompson, but Garrison set enough emphasis on the Scottish situation to tour extensively

1. Smith to T. Clarkson, 1.1.45, in A.S.R., 5.2.45.

2. Thomas, The Liberator, p.339, deduces that Garrison "manufactured" a reason for a British visit out of the Free Church issue. c.f. P. Foner, Frederick Douglass (2nd Edition, New York, 1964), p.67; Merrill, Against Wind and Tide, pp.108-109. The decision to invite Garrison to this country was made at a G.E.S. Committee in April, and the formal suggestion of a visit made in a resolution proposed by Thompson at an anti-Free Church meeting the next day. See Minutes for 20.4.46, 21.4.46, G.E.S. Minute Books, III. Garrison gave extensive coverage to these G.E.S. meetings in Liberator, 29.5.46.
there in September and October. This was in spite of the fact that he had become involved in England in organizing the new Anti-Slavery League, in lecturing pro-slavery divines at the World's Temperance Convention, and in castigating the Evangelical Alliance. Indeed the despatches from Henry C. Wright he printed in the Liberator had made Garrison's attitude to the Free Church obvious long before his visit began.

Garrisonian abolitionist societies in this country, like the B.F.A.S.S., were quick to respond to the call for pressure on the Free Church. Obviously Glasgow and Edinburgh were the two cities in which abolitionists came to be most concerned with the controversy. From 1844 to 1847, the former was the most active in anti-Free Church activities. Although the Garrisonian Edinburgh Ladies' Emancipation Society was to play an important part in helping American abolitionist visitors to Scotland, the more conservative gentlemen's Edinburgh Emancipation Society was hamstrung by an awkward Free Church membership, and actually refused to cooperate with the G.E.S. in organizing meetings to attack the Free Church during 1846. In the Glasgow Society the situation was different. A small group of Free Church committee members first tried to cooperate with the Society in attacking the American


2. For an account of Wright's role as an effective foreign correspondent of the Liberator during this period, see Morrill, op.cit., p.183 & p.353, n.3. Many of Wright's letters are preserved in the B.P.L.

3. W. Welsh to M.W. Chapman, 25.4.44, Weston Papers; Minute for 10.4.46, G.E.S. Minute Books, IV.
Presbyterian churches, and then either left the G.E.S. or continued resistance within the Free Church, in at least one case ruining a promising career to do so.\textsuperscript{1} The Glasgow efforts to attack the Free Church were enthusiastic enough to bring the G.E.S., to a state of near bankruptcy, which left it in a state of enforced inactivity from 1847 until 1853.\textsuperscript{2} The last stages of the controversy also saw the national Scottish organisation of the more radical elements within the Free Church as the Free Church Anti-Slavery Society, aimed at changing the Church's standpoint on slavery from within.

In the Glasgow Emancipation Society, always the focus of opposition to the Free Church, 1844 paradoxically saw continuing cooperation with abolitionist Free Church members. At the A.G.M. on August 1st, the Rev. Dr. Burns of Paisley, newly returned from his visit to America with the Commissioners, spoke in favour of resolutions against cooperation with American churches implicated in slaveholding. Although he did caution that "he did not think they would give back the money", his position was respectably anti-slavery - "he believed that if the Free Church deputation were called upon to go over to America again, they would find it their duty to assume a much higher position in regard to the matter. (Cheers)."\textsuperscript{3}

\begin{enumerate}
\item That of the Rev. Mr. MacBeth, who was eventually ejected from the Free Church ministry for supposed immorality. See \textit{A Real Statement of the Secret and Concluding Debate in the Assembly in Mr. MacBeth's Case, by a Lover of Justice and a Member of the Free Church} (Bridgesheet, Glasgow, 1849). See also below, pp. 243\textsuperscript{1}, 328, 329\textsuperscript{1}, 331.
\item Smeall to Chamerovzow, 10.4.53, Bod. Brit. Exp. Mss. S.13, C32/52. G.E.S. Minute Books, IV, indicates that the G.E.S. was unable to meet from 23.8.47 until 9.5.48.
\item Minutes for 8.8.44, G.E.S. Minute Books, III; G.E.S. Reports, 1844, pp.18-22.
\end{enumerate}
Burns and the Free Church were subsequently attacked from the floor of the meeting, most significantly by the Rev. Dr. John Ritchie of the United Secession Church, a Voluntary denomination with old grievances against the Evangelicals. Nevertheless, Burns' refusal to be pushed into a pro-slavery position by his opponents, indicates the extent to which individual Free Church leaders were prepared to go to meet abolitionist criticism. Again, at this stage the speakers of the G.E.S. avoided giving the impression of a vendetta against the Free Church. This same Anniversary Meeting was attended by Elizur Wright. Like all American abolitionists, he was anxious to point out the importance of the British churches giving a good example on slavery. Yet he actually proposed a resolution expressing satisfaction that the attention of the Free Church had been drawn to the whole matter.\(^1\) Previous to this, the G.E.S. Committee had appointed a delegation to question Dr. Burns at a public lecture he had given on his American tour. They later reported a little sheepishly that his abolitionist principles seemed "perfectly sound."\(^2\) Another Free Church minister who continued cooperation with the G.E.S. even after 1844 was the Rev. Dr. M. Willis, who maintained his attendance at committee meetings until 1846.\(^3\) Later he became President of the

1. Ibid.
2. Entries for 1.7.44, 1.8.44, G.E.S. Minute Books, III.
3. The latest minute referring to his attendance at a committee meeting is one for 10.6.46, G.E.S. Minute Books, IV. Willis afterwards emigrated to Canada, where he became a leading abolitionist and Moderator of the Canadian Presbyterian Church.
Free Church Anti-Slavery Society, and put forward the ultra-
abolitionist position from within the Free Presbytery of Glasgow. ¹
Another Glasgow Free Church minister who continued his anti-
slavery work, although he was not on the G.E.S. Committee,
was the Rev. James MacBeth, also subsequently an official of the
Free Church Anti-Slavery Society and the man who was victimised
by the General Assembly for its activities. ² The cases of MacBeth
and Willis, however, are typical. By the end of 1844 it had
become impossible for most Free Church ministers to work alongside
the ultra-abolitionists. At this point, the Glasgow Society
embarked upon a course of much more specific antagonism towards
the Free Church. Its next Anniversary was given over to an
attempt by Henry C. Wright to link condemnation of the Free Church
with a demand for the dissolution of the American Union. ³ By this
time Smeal, Murray, and the other Garrisonian Committee members,
egged on by their American contacts, had called a series of public
meetings specifically to criticised Free Church policy. The result

1. Strictures on the Proceedings of the Last General Assembly
   of the Free Church of Scotland, regarding Communion with
   the Slaveholding Churches of America, Respectfully
   Addressed to the Office-Bearers and Members of that Church
   (Edinburgh, 1847), p.1; A.S.S., 2.11.46; Glasgow Argus,
   21.11.46, offprint in Small Donation.

2. MacBeth also published No Fellowship with Slaveholders:
   a Calm Review of the Debate on Slavery in the Free Assembly
   of 1846 (Edinburgh, 1846). For comment on the charges of
   immorality later made against him in the Free Synod of Glasgow
   and the Assembly see A Real Statement of the Secret and
   Concluding Debate, etc.

3. Minute for 1.8.45, G.E.S. Minute Books, III.
was to open the door to alliance with elements normally without interest in abolition, but more than happy to use a foreign issue of this sort as a convenient handle to beat an old rival. The later stages of the campaign against the Free Church tended to attract individuals and groups indulging the old grievances of the years leading up to 1843 by plunging into what still appeared, on the surface, to be a controversy over slavery.

The work of the Free Church commissioners had first been brought to the notice of the G.E.S. in March, 1844, at a Public Meeting to discuss the imprisonment of John L. Brown, in Charleston, for helping the attempted escape of his slave mistress. During the discussion, the Rev. George Jeffrey, a Committee member who was a minister of the United Secession Church, resolved that the Free Church should "acquit themselves as becomes Christians and Scotchmen," and send back the money. This resolution was probably not sponsored by the committee, since there is no previous mention of it in the minutes. Jeffrey undoubtedly had a personal grudge against the Free Church. However, the Secretaries acted on the instructions of this public meeting and forwarded the Jeffrey resolutions to the Free Presbytery of Glasgow and the General Assembly. A fortnight later, Smeal and Murray wrote to the Rev. Dr. Henry Grey, then Moderator of the Free Church, insisting with some brusqueness that

1. Minute for 14.3.44, ibid.

2. George Jeffrey [sic], The Pro-Slavery Character of the American Churches, and the Sin of Holding Christian Communion with them, etc.

3. Minute for 25.3.44, G.E.S. Minute Books, III.
a reply should be sent them by return.\textsuperscript{1} Grey's eventual reply assured them that the question of slaveholders' money would be taken up at the next General Assembly. Nevertheless, they migrated to Edinburgh in May to distribute five hundred copies of the A.F.A.S.S. Letter to the Commissioners of the Free Church of Scotland outside the Assembly's meeting place in the Carbonmills. Failing to find any mention of the Free Church's intentions in the press reports of the Assembly, they renewed the correspondence with Grey, who wrote encouragingly that slavery in the Southern States was "the most melancholy.... feature.... of their Religious Profession."\textsuperscript{2} The full report of the General Assembly did in fact mention the setting up of a sub-committee to consider the whole question of communion with slaveholders.\textsuperscript{3} Relations between the Free Church and the G.E.S. thus returned to relative harmony.

The G.E.S. adopted the more decisive policy of holding public meetings attacking the Free Church on receiving news of the deliverance of the Commission of the Free Church on the slavery issue, supporting findings of the May sub-committee. Its equivocal report had been accepted by the Commission, and forwarded to the American Presbyterian churches. Although the report insisted that "There is no question here as to the heinous sin involved in the institution of American slavery," it negated this by refusing to accept that slaveholding was "per se an insuperable barrier to the enjoyment of Christian privileges."\textsuperscript{4}

1. Smeal and Murray to Grey, 30.3.44, in G.E.S. Minute Books, III. The copy in the Minutes is endorsed "No reply, however, came to hand."


This was the very principle Garrisonian abolitionists were convinced the British churches had to uphold. The Glasgow committee therefore decided to hold a public meeting criticising the Free Church position as soon as the Deliverance reached them. ¹ The meeting held in the City Hall the next day shows the extent to which Scottish Voluntaries, responding to the earlier hostility of Free Church ministers, were prepared to unite in attacking them on the slavery issue. ² Of the six speakers, one was Henry C. Wright, and another the Rev. Dr. Willis. The remaining four were all ministers of denominations which/come under heavy attack from Chalmers and his colleagues in the past - the Rev. Drs. Ritchie and Jeffrey of the United Secession Church; the Rev. Dr. Bates of the Reformed Presbyterian Church; and the Rev. G.S. Ingram, a Congregationalist. Of these four, only Jeffrey had previously been associated with the G.E.S. It is thus reasonable to argue that the others had suddenly become enthusiastic abolitionists because doing so in this case coincided with their hostility to the Free Church. This willingness to use the slavery issue to attack the Free Church, for reasons which actually had little to do with slavery, dominated the controversy for the next three years.

Until the spring of 1846, the G.E.S. continued its efforts to persuade the Free Church to return its Southern funds. ³ Meanwhile, Wright managed to persuade the Committee to help spread his ultra-Garrisonian views on the dissolution of the American Union. Actually original Glasgow interest in this doctrine probably arose

1. Minute for 17.10.44, G.E.S. Minute Books, III.


3. Minutes for 10.2.45, 17.3.45, G.E.S. Minute Books, III,
from close contacts with Garrison himself, and with the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society - the Reports of which are still preserved in the Mitchell Library. Indeed the adjourned Anniversary of 1844, in spite of the visit of the relatively conservative Elizur Wright, had resolved to send its congratulations to the American Anti-Slavery Society on adopting the principle of "NO UNION WITH SLAVEHOLDERS." By the next year, however, Wright had induced the Committee to commit itself to the anti-union position in its own right. At: the 1845 Anniversary, he introduced a series of resolutions with a preamble explaining that the American constitution and courts explicitly permitted slavery and the internal slave trade. He went on to propose "That it is the duty of the friends of liberty & equal rights in Great Britain and throughout the world to combine, & by Christian, peaceful, & bloodless means, to seek the Dissolution of the American Union as the gigantic enemy of Freedom and the Rights of Man." Wright had apparently lost his sense of proportion in putting forward these resolutions in conjunction with his attack on the Free Church. The news of Scottish support for such sentiments could only intensify the existing American antagonism against abolitionists. As Governor Hammond of South Carolina put it, "if vociferation is to carry the question of religion, the North and possibly the Scotch have it." 

1. G.E.S. Reports, 1844, p.26; Minute for 2.8.44, G.E.S. Minute Books, III.
2. Minute for 1.8.45, ibid.
Wright's use of the G.E.S. as a platform for his ideas marks the beginning of the phase in which the Free Church controversy was dominated by visiting abolitionists. Just as Scots used the slavery issue to attack the Free Church, these visitors were to use the Scottish situation as an opportunity to put forward propaganda against both the pro-slavery party and rival anti-slavery factions. Wright was doing just this in seeking backing from Scottish abolitionists antagonistic to the Free Church for disunion principles which had nothing to do with it. Soon afterwards, Garrison, Douglass, Buffum, and Thompson appeared in Scotland with similar intentions. Certainly they wished to ensure that the practice of receiving money from slaveholders was appropriately pilloried. But they intended to do this in a way which would strengthen Old Organisation abolitionists at the expense of their rivals. It is significant that when Garrison first met the G.E.S. Committee in the Eagle Temperance Hotel in September, the discussion took lines which reassured them that their decision to support the American Anti-Slavery Society had been "perfectly sound and consistent." ¹

The tendency to use the Scottish situation for American purposes is clearest in Wright's work, if only because he spent longer in Scotland than the other visitors. He had trained as a minister at Andover Theological Seminary after a short and discontented spell as an apprentice hatter. In 1833, however, he left his church at West Newbury due to a growing conviction of the corruption implied in the institution of a paid ministry. He spent the rest of his

¹ Minute for 21.9.46, G.E.S. Minute Books, IV.
life working in the anti-war and anti-slavery movements.

By the time he was sent to England as the agent of the New England Nonresistance Society in September 1842, he was already vying with his close friend Garrison in the extremism of his comments on the 'extraneous issues.' At least one abolitionist considered his and not Garrison's heresies to be at fault as the split between the factions in the American movement grew. ¹

Before coming to Glasgow, the enthusiasm with which he took up the continental Sunday during the European tour he recorded in Six Months at Graefenberg had caused much critical comment. ²

He quickly won the friendship of Smeal and Murray. At the end of 1845, he astonished Scotland with the publication of his pamphlet The Dissolution of the American Union Demanded by Justice and Humanity. ³ In 1846, his anti-Sabbath views were presented to the public in a violent letter to the conservative committee of the

1. Phelps to Whittier, 17, 8, 37, Phelps Papers, B.P.L.; Whittier to S. & A. Grimke, 14, 8, 37, in Barnes and Dumond, (eds.), Weld-Grimke Letters, I, 423; Weld to S. & A. Grimke, 15, 8, 37, 10, 10, 37, ibid., I, 426, 454-456; Birney to L. Teppan, 23, 8, 37, ibid., (ed.), Letters of J.G. Birney, I, 418; There is an excellent short sketch of Wright and his influence on Garrison in Morrill, op. cit., pp. 184-186. For an example of his radicalism, see H.C. Wright, Christian Church; Anti-Slavery and Nonresistance Applied to Church Organisations (Boston, 1841).


3. The Dissolution of the American Union Demanded by Justice and Humanity, as the Incurable Enemy of Liberty, with a Letter to Rev. Drs. Chalmers, Cunningham, and Candlish, on Christian Fellowship with Slaveholders, and a Letter to the Members of the Free Church Recommending them to Send Back the Money (Glasgow, 1845).
Edinburgh Emancipation Society. ¹ His use of foreign controversies to publicise his views in this way was not confined to Scotland. By 1847 he was playing the Meeting for Sufferings of the Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends in Ireland for their acceptance of Southern money for famine relief. ² However, Wright's putting forward the extremist ideas he felt were connected with the anti-slavery cause by no means alienated all the British abolitionists with whom he worked. Elizabeth Pease, for instance, commended his work at an early stage in his visit. ³ Scottish and Irish Garrisonians at first encouraged him enough to believe that "they see with anointed eyes." ⁴ In 1844 Scotland must have seemed a most promising field for him. Later it became all the more attractive, partly because of the nature of the Free Church affair itself, but partly also because of the convenience of the O.E.S. as a platform for ultraist opinions aimed at the clergy as a whole. Its more enthusiastic supporters gave him a more favourable reception than he could have hoped for among any group of British middle-class abolitionists.

1. H.C. Wright, First Day Sabbath not of Divine Appointment, etc.

2. H.C. Wright, Slaveholders or Playactors, which are the Greater Sinners? To Joseph Brierly, Jonathan Pim, James Perry, Richard Allen, Henry Russell, and Others, the Central Relief Committee of the Society of Friends in Ireland (Dublin, 1847). c.f. the comparative moderation of Garrison to Webb, 1.7.47, Garrison Papers.

3. E. Pease to Garrison, 17.6.43, Garrison Papers; E. Pease to A.W. Weston, 27.1.44, Weston Papers. c.f. E. Pease to W. Phillips, 29.4.42, Garrison Papers, in which she expresses fears for the effects of his extremism.

reformers outside Dublin. ¹

The other abolitionist visitors of 1846 shared Wright's tendency to preach anti-slavery in the form endorsed by their own faction in America. Douglass, for instance, showed enough sensitivity to local opinion not to flout it as Wright had done, if indeed he would have wished to do so in the first place. Although still connected with the Garrisonian movement, his conduct during his 1845-46 visit shows a willingness to cooperate with Garrison's enemies which looks forward to the bitter quarrels between the two men in the 1850's. Unlike Wright, his enthusiastic attacks on the Free Church at least concentrated on the slavery issue. Douglass had left America for Liverpool in August, 1845, along with James N. Buffum and 'The Hutchisons', the Negro singing group. He began his tour with a highly successful series of lectures in Ireland. Although Douglass attached himself to Father Mathew's temperance movement, he avoided controversy over the more volatile issues of nonresistance, women's rights, and the Sabbath. He was lionised even by the conservative New Organisationists in Belfast. ² The only city in which he failed was Waterford, where the population had been suspicious of Negroes ever since Moses Roper had turned up to lecture them in a state of intoxication. ³

Indeed Maria Weston Chapman wrote Webb cautioning him against his

1. C. Paton to M.W. Chapman, 2, 11, 45, 17, 11, 46, both Weston Papers.
3. Webb to M.W. Chapman, 12, 10, 45, Garrison Papers.
possible defection to the B.F.A.S.S. Since Webb's forthright
response was to show Douglass her letter, the result was an
unpleasant deterioration of relations between the two men. 1
In fact Douglass seems to have been the only one of Webb's
many abolitionist contacts whom he came to dislike. His personal
feelings were no doubt influenced by difficulties over the printing
of the Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, which his firm
was currently handling. 2 Several years later he wrote that
Douglass "outhorods all the New Organisation Herods in bitterness,
extravagence, and malignity." 3 Even in 1846, Douglass did not
accept the ultraist position that there should be no cooperation
with the allies of the American and Foreign Society. This was
made evident by his reception in Belfast, and confirmed in May, 1846,
by his accepting an invitation to speak at a meeting organised by
the B.F.A.S.S. 4 For Garrison or Wright to have done this in the
mid-forties would have been inconceivable. Again, Douglass' agreement that British sympathisers should collect money during his
visit to buy his freedom, implied a recognition of slaveholders'
property rights which horrified Wright and others.¹

Douglass' growing tendency to disagree with other Garrisonians was equally evident in his campaigning against the Free Church. Even while in Ulster, he began to attack the course of the British churches, especially the Presbyterians, in relation to America. In Cork he had already criticised the Methodists, which attracted other denominations, including the local Church of England members, to the movement.² In the north, however, where the Presbyterian Church of Ireland was strong, his exposure of the Free Church was malapropos, and marred his otherwise favourable reception.³ By the summer of 1846, in fact, anti-abolitionist citizens of Belfast were displaying themselves in sadly racist colours by placarding the city with notices inscribed "SEND BACK THE NIGGER."⁴ Years later, Ulster abolitionists still complained that it had been impossible to raise any anti-slavery enthusiasm since the attack of Douglass and his colleagues on the Free Church, though of course this referred largely to their activities in Scotland.⁵

1. Foner, Douglass, pp. 72-73, nn. 23-25; Quarles, Douglass, pp. 51-52; L. Mott to Webb, 21.2.47, Garrison Papers, c.f. Garrison to E. Pease, 1.4.47, ibid.


By late 1846, Douglass’ interest had been thoroughly aroused by letters and reports from Glasgow. What is significant about his response to these is that he initially refused to come to Scotland because of his distaste for working with Wright. After receiving the G.E.S. invitation to work in Scotland, he wrote that he intended to go to Scotland to work with Buffum, but that he did not wish to be in the position of accompanying Wright. He pointed out that he was "by no means" in agreement with Wright "as to the importance of discussing in this country the disunion question." He also differed from Wright on the general point of associating the 'extraneous issues' with the anti-slavery cause. "Friend Wright", he wrote, "has created against himself prejudices [sic] which I as an abolitionist do not feel myself called upon to withstand.....I think my duty calls me strictly to the question of slavery." The inference was obvious.

Douglass’ growing sense of the politics would increasingly hold him back from identification with the miscellaneous set of reforms tacked onto abolitionism by the Garrisonians. His resentment of Wright’s course looks forward to his career in the fifties. He then split away from the Garrison camp and devoted himself to preaching specifically anti-slavery views, tinged with hopes for political action, from his base in the Rochester Anti-Slavery Society in upstate New York. In 1846, his behaviour in Scotland was markedly

1. The G.E.S. Committee invited Douglass to Glasgow in October — minute for 17.10.45, G.E.S. Minute Books, III.

2. Douglass to Webb, 10.11.45, Garrison Papers.
different from that of Garrison and Wright, though his final breach with their group was yet to come.\(^1\) In the winter of 1845 and 1846, however, the rancour of the long quarrel between Douglass and Garrison was still in the future. His suspicion of Wright notwithstanding, Douglass had met the Glasgow Emancipation Society Committee and begun personal campaigning in Scotland by the end of January.\(^2\)

If Douglass distrusted the extremism of Wright, the same may be said of his travelling companion J.N. Buffum. Buffum, much less flamboyant than the other orators of 1846, was a Quaker carpenter from Massachusetts, who had accumulated a modest private fortune.\(^3\) He had sailed with Douglass on the Cambria, and later accompanied him on much of his travelling in Ireland and Scotland. In spite of his lack of education and occasional gauche ness, he made a much better impression on Webb than the more arrogant Douglass.\(^4\) Although always overshadowed while in Scotland by Douglass and Thompson, the position he took on the anti-slavery

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1. See Foner, Douglass, pp. 136-154; Quarles, Douglass, pp. 70-79. The Douglass/Garrison split was by far the bitterest in the fragmented history of the anti-slavery movement. A typically vindictive Garrisonian onslaught on Douglass, unusual for its levelheaded writer, is S. May (Jr.) to S.J. May (of Syracuse), 4.4.55, May Papers. Garrison was still denouncing Douglass in the relative mellowness of 1860, as in Garrison to S.J. May, 23.9.60, Garrison Papers. Thompson remained friendly with Douglass throughout his life. See A.S.R., April, 1860.

2. Douglass to Webb, 30.1.46, Garrison Papers; Douglass to F. Jackson, 29.1.46, ibid.

3. Quarles, Douglass, p. 33.

divisions was theirs rather than Wright's. Although respectful
to more heterodox abolitionists throughout the campaign, he
did not go on record at any point as supporting the issues which
Wright insisted on dragging before the unreceptive Scottish public.¹

The same was true of Thompson, whose Garrisonian sympathies
did not affect his understanding of what was possible in this
country.² By late 1845, he was taking an active interest in
the Free Church controversy, and combining agitation against it
with raising money by lecturing on his recent visit to India.³
For the period from 1843 to 1845, Thompson's career was dominated
by his need to make money as paid speechmaker for his Indian
client, the Rajah of Sattarah, and thereafter as an apolitical
lecturer on India.⁴ In 1846, however, he was drawn fully back
into the more congenial freelance campaigning of the Free Church
controversy,

Thompson first expressed his disapproval of the conduct of
the Free Church in the autumn of 1845, and from then on appears

1. A typical matter-of-fact supporting speech by him is in
Free Church Alliance with Manstealer. Send Back the Money.
Great Anti-Slavery Meeting in the City Hall, Glasgow, Containing
Speeches Delivered by Messrs. Wright, Douglass, and Buffum,
from America, and by George Thompson, Esq., of London (Glasgow,
1846), pp. 24-29.

2. Thompson had now returned from his Indian visit, which
is fully described in G.E.S. Reports, 1843, appendices,
p. 44-68, and in the files of the British Friend for 1843.

3. For instance in Glasgow, May, 1846. These lectures were
not held as Society ones, but as public affairs charging
an admission fee for Thompson's pocket. See Minute for
10.4.46, G.E.S. Minute Books, IV.

4. Thompson's Indian lectures were given as a course of five or
six evening performances in most major British towns. They were
published in several editions, the commonest of which is Five
Lectures on British India..... Delivered in the Friends' Meeting
House, Manchester (Manchester, 1845).
to have done what he could to encourage the Glasgow Emancipation Society. However, he shrank from Wright's universal reform ideas. This is not surprising in that Thompson was a professional agitator who had to remain acceptable as an employee to leaders of the more conservative reform campaigns. In 1845 he was still retained by the Rajah of Sattarah and a faction of the East India Court of Proprietors, and had recently been employed by the doctrinally conservative businessman of the Anti-Corn Law League.

To put forward sentiments of Wright's sort would have been to ruin his livelihood. To quote the gentlemanly E.S. Abdy, who admittedly hated him, "when he boasts of his generosity and disinterestedness, he wishes his hearers to forget that he has a retaining fee in his pocket." At a less cynical level, Thompson was also sensitive to the traditionalist prejudices of the Scottish clergy and the congregations under their control. Although at first he became friendly with Wright, he soon began to balk at the violence of his attacks on Scottish ministers as a group. By August, 1845, he was writing of Wright's recent attack on Dr. Wardlaw that "it was undeserved, and unmitigatedly bad." Like Douglass and Buffum, his own tendency in 1846 was to avoid offending Scots in general by attacking their

1. Thompson to Wright, 23.7.45, Garrison Papers.
3. The first preserved interchange between them is Thompson to Wright, 25.11.35, Garrison Papers. After his return from India, Thompson at first did all he could to help Wright, including inviting him to his home - Thompson to Wright, 22.1.45, 23.5.45, Garrison Papers. The letter of 23.5.45 is cited in Foner, Douglass, p. 66.
basic assumptions on the ministry and the Sabbath. This
difference did not extend to a refusal to cooperate with Wright.
Nevertheless, from his arrival in May, 1846 onwards, his speeches
were aimed at the Free Church standpoint on slaveholders' money,
not at a generalised exposure of the corruption of organised
churches. Again, like Douglass, he was still not adverse to
cooperation with the New Organisation B.F.A.S.S., and attended
the meetings held in his honour in May - indeed he had been used
as an intermediary in inviting Douglass to them in the first place.¹

In Scotland at least, a relative mellowness of this sort is even
apparent in Garrison's own 1846 work. Although he had been invited
to Britain by the G.E.S. in its first flush of enthusiasm over the
controversy, exciting developments in England soon after his arrival
meant that his attention was partly diverted from the Scottish situation.
When he arrived in Liverpool on July 31st, he was not met by the
officials of the Glasgow Society but by Wright and Webb. They
travelled to London immediately to be reunited with Thompson.²
Garrison's first public appearance was at the World's Temperance
Convention on August 4th, where he helped Douglass in his onslaught
on its American delegates for their connection with churches condoning
slavery and slaveholding.³ A little later, Thompson and he began
the work of organising the short-lived Anti-Slavery League as a
national Old Organisation counterweight to the B.F.A.S.S. Its

1. Foner, Douglass, p. 66.

2. Morrill, op.cit., pp. 190-191; Garrison to H.B. Garrison,
various dates beginning 25.7.46, Garrison Papers.

3. Morrill, op.cit., p. 192; Foner, Douglass, pp. 67-69;
Quarles, Douglass, pp. 46-47; Douglass, By Bondage and My
Freedom, pp. 381-382.
inaugural meeting condemned the standpoint of the Free Church as well as that of the Evangelical Alliance, but beyond this Garrison devoted little attention to the Scottish controversy before he went north to Glasgow on September 18th. Indeed, as Merrill points out, he tended to avoid public meetings wherever possible, with the intention of spending as much as possible of his time in England widening his circle of contacts. Among his new friends were the moral force Chartists Henry Vincent and John Lovett. Vincent had attended a Glasgow meeting attacking the Free Church in the previous year, and was actually present at the first meeting of the League. Garrison was probably aware that his association with Chartists might cost him support in more orthodox abolitionist circles. After being received well at a meeting of moral suasion Chartists in the National Hall in London, he noted that "this will probably alienate some 'good society folks' from me, but no matter, I know that the cause of my enslaved countrymen cannot possibly be injured by my advocacy of the rights of all men, or by my opposition to all tyranny." Like Collins in 1841, he was prepared to enlist British political extremists as his allies in the anti-slavery movement, irrespective of the British or American


responses to his doing so. Six weeks later the Bristol Unitarian
J. B. Estlin, who had nothing but good wishes for him, wrote
angrily that in view of the likely upper middle class response,
"Henry Vincent was by no means a choice person for Mr. G. to
fraternize with." ¹

Indeed the whole of Garrison's visit, in and out of Scotland,
was marked by his linking the downfall of slavery with other
reforms. Although he and his American friends merely considered
this connection consistent, its results were disastrous. ² The two
issues of the conduct of the Evangelical Alliance and the Free
Church thus became hopelessly involved with British disapproval
of the other causes which Garrison, in his American role of universal
reformer, attached to them. Again, both issues were distorted by
Garrison's plan of using all his public meetings to help gain support
for the Anti-Slavery League. The implied - and often overt - tension
between the League and the Tappanite British and Foreign Society
also tended to the destruction of what flimsy unity there may have
been among British abolitionists in their attitude to church
relationships with America. Together with Garrison's pan-reformist
ideas the League must have repelled many conservative abolitionists
with Broad Street sympathies but otherwise anxious to express their
disapproval of the Free Church and the Evangelical Alliance.

Looking at Garrison's visit retrospectively, the perceptive Estlin

1. Estlin to May, 110.46, May Papers.

2. Ibid.
remarked that the League could not survive Garrison's tendency "to mix himself up unnecessarily with vexed English questions, under some sort of quixotic notion.... that the more unpopular he made himself with the middle classes of society in this country, the more he should promote the A.S. cause."  

For Garrison, the campaigns against the Free Church and the Evangelical Alliance, the 'extraneous issues', and the support of the Anti-Slavery League were one and the same thing. Exclusively Garrisonian in support, the League's organisation had been worked out at a series of meetings at the various London lodgings of Garrison, Wright, Thompson, Estlin, Webb, James Houghton, and Richard Allen. It was first publicly launched on August 17th at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, characteristically at a public meeting to discuss the position of the Evangelical Alliance. Thompson became its president, and Vincent was present along with most of the regular British Garrisonians, but neither this meeting nor later ones produced support from the kind of abolitionists who would have made the League fashionable. Its best known leader was Thompson, but even this was a mixed blessing. In Estlin's words, "he is looked on as a sort of adventurer, trading by his wits in any cause open to him.... in a word he carries no moral influence with him."  

1. Estlin to May, 2.11.46, ibid.  
2. Estlin to May, 1.9.46, ibid.  
4. Estlin to May, 2.11.46, loc.cit.  
5. Estlin to May, 1.9.46, loc.cit. See also Temperley, op.cit., p. 301.
Naturally enough Broad Street remained aloof from the League. The first notice of its activities in the Reporter was not hostile, but was covered by an editorial remarking that the B.P.A.S.S. would continue to support the American and Foreign Society as "more legitimately expressing their views than any other organisation in the United States." In the following month the Reporter was pushed into defending the British and Foreign Society against accusations that it had "assailed Mr. Garrison," made at the increasingly hostile meetings of the League and its auxiliaries. Thompson's bitterness over this editorial indicates the extent to which the League's leaders saw themselves as being in a position of direct antagonism to the Broad Street Committee.

Garrison's energy during his tour of the provinces went towards providing the League with a network of auxiliary societies. He moved from London to Bristol on August 24th. Until mid-September, he spent his time holding meetings in the main English cities, to denounce the Evangelical Alliance and call for support for the League. What followed was his first visit to Scotland, where he was the guest

1. A.S.R., 1.10.46.
2. Ibid., 2.11.46.
3. Thompson to Webb, 16.11.46, Weston Papers,
of the radical Andrew Paton. Apart from speaking in favour of the League in Glasgow and Edinburgh, he attempted to provide it with auxiliaries in Greenock and Paisley. At the end of the month he moved to Dublin, but returned to England in time for a great mass meeting in Manchester on October 10th. His second visit to Scotland lasted from October 20th until the 20th, when he crossed to Ireland again for meetings in Belfast and Dublin. He returned to Liverpool at the beginning of November, and sailed on the Cambria on the 4th, after attending a public breakfast at which Douglass, Wright, Buffum, and most of the leading British Garrisonians were present. At each meeting in this scrambled month of campaigning, the search for support for the League was combined with the attack on the Evangelical Alliance. In the case of the meetings held in Scotland, the situation was even more complicated. Garrison was determined to combine the Free Church issue with his drive to gain as much support as possible for the new national organisation he had set up.

The Scottish events of 1846, then, were seriously affected by the tendency of visiting abolitionists to use the Free Church


2. Garrison's complete schedule from the Manchester meeting until his departure is set out in Thompson to Webb, 13.10.46, Garrison Papers, and in part in Garrison to H.B. Garrison, 17.9.46, loc.cit. See also Garrison to E. Pease, 12.10.46, Garrison Papers.
controversy to put forward their own particular brand of anti-slavery principles. Douglass, Buffum, Garrison, Wright, and Thompson were not by any means agreed on raising other issues in the agitation over the specific issue of slaveholding contributions to church funds. This together with the enthusiasm of the Free Church's local rivals for attacking it on abolitionist grounds is the most interesting aspect of the Scottish agitation of 1846.

Excitement over the Southern money rose to a peak in the summer of 1846. Wright, who remained active in Scotland throughout this period, was temporarily joined by Douglass and Buffum in January and April. In May all three joined with Thompson in a concerted attack on the Free Church throughout Scotland, in the hope that a show of abolitionist force before and during the General Assembly would force it to reconsider its attitude to slaveholders' contributions. Indeed, there had been a great deal of interest in slavery at the 1845 Assembly. In 1846, however, the slave question was one of overriding importance. Two complete days of the Assembly were set aside to debate overtures on the slavery question. The published account of these days' proceedings runs to more than fifty pages.


The 1846 General Assembly was seen by all parties as being crucial. Early in May, Douglass wrote that its imminent opening made "this the time, and Scotland the place for all my efforts." ¹ Thompson felt that a situation had now emerged where the Assembly faced the alternatives of sending back the money or splitting the Free Church. ² By May, 1846, the abolitionist agitation of the past few months presented it with the most serious crisis of the first three years of its life.

From the outset, the Free Church's critics aimed at forcing it to return the funds it had gathered, as an example to American Christians. Failing this, they would do everything in their power to destroy the Church's position as the leading evangelical denomination in Scotland, either through playing on the existing distrust of other Scottish churches, or attempting to destroy unity within the Free Church itself. Abolitionist attacks continued in 1846 in spite of the apparently adequate anti-slavery content of the letters sent to America by the 1845 Assembly.³ Again, Wright began to ally with its old enemies, as well as combining his criticisms with the expression of his own unorthodox views. Although he had published anti-Free Church material earlier

2. Thompson to Scoble, 14.5.46, ibid., C22/61. See also Thompson to Wright, 7.5.46, Garrison Papers.
3. Although Tappanite abolitionists were quite satisfied with the report of the Committee of the 1845 Assembly. See A.S.R., 11.6.45.
in 1845, this had been confined to an exposure of the abuses of the slave system which acceptance of southern money was calculated to encourage. 1 Even when taking a Garrisonian standpoint, his early writing was defensive rather than being a positive attempt to link the Free Church affair with the 'extraneous issues.' 2 After the G.E.S. activities of August, 1845, however, the Free Church's responsiveness to abolitionist persuasion was considerably lower than it had been in the past. 3

Wright remained in Glasgow for some time after his remarkable denunciation of the American Union at the 1845 G.E.S. Anniversary. It was agreed on October 17th that Douglass and Thompson should be invited to speak in Glasgow at future meetings against the Free Church. 4 Wright's influence must have been great by this time. When the Committee next met, it agreed to give its sanction to a pamphlet he had prepared during July and August, originally as a series of letters to the Glasgow Argus. 5 It firmly linked the attack on the Free Church with the most

1. H.C. Wright, American Slavery Proved to be Theft and Robbery, which no Circumstances can Justify or Palliate, with Remarks on the Speeches of the Rev. Drs. Cunningham and Candlish before the Free Presbytery of Edinburgh (Edinburgh, 1845).

2. William Lloyd Garrison, Letter to the Committee of the Glasgow Female Anti-Slavery Society (Glasgow, 1845).

3. See above, pp. 283, 287.

4. Minute for 17.10.45, G.E.S. Minute Books, IV.

5. Minute for 5.11.45, ibid. The pamphlet was published as The Dissolution of the American Union Demanded by Justice and Humanity, etc.
advanced American ideas on nonresistance and disunionism. The first eight letters printed argued that the only solution to the pro-slavery character of the Constitution for those Americans not connected with slavery was withdrawal from a corrupt Union. The duty of British abolitionists was to give them all the assistance in their power.¹ The anarchistic conclusion to be drawn from these arguments must have been alarming enough to conservatives - "when our obligations as members of a particular nation conflict with our duties as members of the human family, the former cease."² Two further letters set Wright's ideas in a Scottish context. The first concluded dramatically with the Rev. Dr. Duncan's then well-known apothegm - "Is every Free Church to have a SLAVE-STONE in it?"³ The second argued that if the slave money was retained the Church would never again be able to give a serious testimony against slavery. By implication, however, this sensible criticism was linked with the less orthodox sentiments of the earlier part of the pamphlet. Neither level of argument was thus likely to be effective, especially since Scottish radicals had been accustomed to see the Constitution as a model of political perfection. They must have been somewhat bewildered at suddenly being assured of its total corruption. The publication of the Dissolution of

the American Union with the blessing of the O.E.S. meant that it

1. Ibid., pp. 3-5.
2. Ibid., p. 4.
3. Ibid., pp. 39-40.
was committed to the ideas put forward by Wright, and to the tactless way in which he set about trying to reverse the Free Church's policy. Indeed this pamphlet seems mild when compared with some of Wright's productions in 1846, 1847, and thereafter. However, together with the resolutions of August 1st, it must have done much to reassure Free Church members in the belief that their critics were irresponsible fanatics. Even someone as sympathetic to Wright's aims as J.B. Estlin became suspicious of his attacks on the Scottish clergy and his agitation of the 'extraneous issues' by the beginning of 1846.1 Among Free Church members, contempt for Wright's fanaticism increased throughout the year, as he and his colleagues became more extreme, and were joined by local figures with little interest in abolition beyond using it to indulge their hostility towards the Free Church.

During the second week of January, Wright was joined in Glasgow by Douglass and Buffum. In spite of Douglass' earlier refusal to involve himself in the issues raised by Wright,2 all three abolitionists were received by the G.E.S. Committee on January 12th.3 A meeting had already been advertised for the 18th, and it was agreed that other meetings should be held before Douglass and Buffum moved on to Perth on the 19th. Since none of these meetings was ever entered in the Minutes, it may

1. Estlin to May, 29.1.46, May Papers.
2. Douglass to Webb, 10.11.45, Garrison Papers.
3. Minute for 12.1.46, G.E.S. Minute Books, IV.
be inferred that Douglass did not rely on the Emancipation Committee, already associated with Wright's heresies, to organise his meetings. He preferred to act independently, and cover costs through the sales of the Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, which was providing his only income at this time. Although Douglass and Buffum remained in Scotland throughout the spring and summer of 1846, apart from a short visit to London for the benevolent society anniversaries in the latter half of May, much of their work was done independently. Douglass himself gained greatly in stature during this period, and without crippling abolitionist efforts through extremism in the way Wright had done. This did not prevent his being attacked for the very views from which he had tried to disassociate himself. Even at this point the Free Church was defending itself by exposing the unorthodox religious views of its opponents.

After the Glasgow meetings Buffum and Douglass travelled north to lecture at Perth, Dundee, Montrose, Arbroath, Aberdeen, and a number of improbably small market towns. Dundee Free Church members were quick to attack the religious character of all three

1. The Narrative was currently being reprinted by Webb, to the accompaniment of considerable animosity between the parties. See Webb to M.W. Chapman, 26.2.46, 16.5.46, Weston Papers; Douglass to Webb, 16.4.46, 20.4.46, Garrison Papers. The first edition was Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself (Boston, A.S. Office, 1845).

2. Foner, Douglass, p. 75; G.C. Taylor, op.cit., pp. 85-86. Douglass' growing stature was most obvious in his Scottish work, where he showed such enormous personal initiative in organising the population against the Free Church. See below, pp. 332-3, also Shepperson, J.N.H., XXXVIII, 1953, p. 317.
American visitors. An editorial of the evangelical Northern Warder, and speeches at the Free Presbytery of Dundee reported in the Dundee Courier suggested that the criticisms made by Wright, Douglass, and Buffum could be ignored because of their known religious irresponsibility. 1

The G.E.S. Committee’s optimistic response was to publish and circulate testimonials to the character of the three men. 2

Nevertheless, attacks of this kind continued. At its April meeting, the Free Synod of Angus and Mearns adopted an overture to the General Assembly demanding that the Church should continue in "the course on which it has already entered, in relation to the churches in the United States." 3 The principal speaker, the Rev. Mr. William Nixon of Montrose, referred to the infidelity of American abolitionists and their representatives in this country. 4 Even more bitterly, he denounced the inconsistency of their allies among the Voluntaries, who had previously held the American churches up to example as being the most Christian in the world, and now demanded a breach of relations with them over slavery. 5 This was to be the stock defence of the Free Church throughout the summer. Great capital could be made out

1. Northern Warder, 12.2.46 was reprinted as a pamphlet, in Central Library, Dundee. See also The Free Church and Slavery... a Series of Papers from the Dundee Courier (Dundee, 1846).

2. Minute for 20.2.46, G.E.S. Minute Books, IV. The testimonials were reprinted in G.E.S. Reports, 1846, p. 7.

3. Relation of the Free Church to the American Churches; Speeches Delivered in the Free Synod of Angus and Mearns, on Tuesday, 28th April, 1846 (Dundee, 1846), p. 3.

4. Ibid., pp. 3, 19.

5. Ibid., pp. 5-9.
of the suspect views of the abolitionists and the inconsistency of the Voluntary ministers who joined them.

Douglass spent most of the first three months of the year touring the Scottish provinces. He then returned to Glasgow for a mass meeting against the Free Church in April. Greatly warmed by the enthusiasm of his welcome, he developed a tendency to project his knowledge of Scottish history against the struggles of his own race. He enthused that Scotland had "not a hill that is not associated with some fierce and bloody conflict between liberty and slavery." Again, he found the Scots lacking in colour prejudice, if anything showing an inverted bias against poor Buffum for his unexciting whiteness. He wrote that "it is quite an advantage to be a 'nigger' here. I find I am hardly black enough for British taste, but by keeping my hair as woolly as possible I make out to pass for at least a half negro at any rate." The farthest north he travelled was Aberdeen, where he held three meetings early in March. A series of meetings at Montrose, Arbroath, and Perth on the way south was followed in Dundee by one of the largest gatherings of this period. This met in the chapel of the well-known littérateur, the Rev. Dr. George Gilfillan, significantly enough an Independent whose Voluntary sympathies must have inclined him to take full advantage of any issue which would leave the Free

1. Douglass to F. Jackson, 29.1.46, Garrison Papers.

2. Douglass to Webb, 2.3.46, ibid.
The Voluntaries and the Church of Scotland alike seized on this heavensent issue for attacking their old enemy, and paying old scores. An abolitionist broadsheet reprinted from the Fifeshire Journal in May includes the aside that Free Church ministers had striven to rob servant girls of the hard-won money that ought to have gone for ribbons and gum-flowers, and washerwomen of their savings-bank accumulations - and all to reward them for their disinterested contempt of lucre. We all know the blasphemy, the prostitution of Scripture, the pious frauds which [they] have resorted to for this base end."

Douglass boasted that he had organised the apprentices of Dundee to run through the streets shouting 'Send back the money!' and that if the Free Church had known it would be mocked so, it would never have accepted the funds in the first place. All he had done, however, was unite existing opponents of the Free Church over the convenient foreign issue of slavery.

At the Free Synod of April, Nixon laid the principal blame for the furore over the money at the door of the Voluntaries. Equally


2. Fifeshire Journal [of 7th & 14th May, 1846] Send Back the Money (Brodsheet, Dundee, 1846).

3. Douglass to F. Jackson, loc.cit., reprinted in Foner, Life and Writings of Douglass, I, 136; Douglass to Webb, 10.2.46, Garrison Papers, reprinted in Foner, op.cit., I, 133.
conspicuous, he thought, were

"a few upholders of the Establishment who mistake themselves for gentlemen, and who are full of the venom engendered in their corrupt natures by local, religious, controversies, small burgh politics, a wretched education, and generally unhealthful social habits, as well as by an intense hatred of evangelical truth and vital godliness... these 'gentlemen' may be seen associated with the younger and worse-conditioned of our mechanics, in hounding on, in his fierce and unprincipled assaults upon us, any miserable adventurer who hires himself to the work." 1

This form of controversy appeared in several of the smaller Scottish towns during 1846. In Montrose the result of Douglass' visit was the publication in the Montrose Standard of a burlesque letter, in dialect, which was appended to a poem entitled 'The Boy Tammy's Meditations,' Tammy being Dr. Chalmers. The most cutting stanza had him musing that

"I've played money a queer pliskie, I trow, in my day;
I've belauber't Dissenters - weel, weel, let that gae;
I've run aft free my Granny, but I've stained my fair name;
And I'll never ha'e peace till that siller's sent hame." 2

This allusion to Chalmers' previous castigation of the Voluntaries is obvious enough. Even within so small a town as Montrose, however, the Free Church did not go without defenders. Mr. Nixon's onslaught on the abolitionists has already been mentioned, and in the next year the much-loved Rev. Dr. James Dick published a definitive collection of Scriptural citations to prove the

1. Relation of the Free Church to the American Churches, pp. 3, 4-12. Nixon's sneers at the Voluntaries 'link up' with his reputation as one of their bitterest critics. He later wrote Free Church Principles as Opposed to Voluntaryism (Aberdeen, 1859).

correctness of the Free Church's position. In Aberdeen, too, local publications added to the controversy, as in the case of the dignified pamphlet published by 'Humanus'.

The local press, however, tended to ignore the abolitionists in its current excitement over Corn Law Repeal. Even Douglass' visit in March was ignored by the Aberdeen Herald, though it was briefly and favourably reported in the anti-Free Church Aberdeen Journal.

The smaller Scottish towns produced more pamphlets of their own as the year went on. After Douglass and Wright toured south-west Scotland in April, one of the most effective defences of the Free Church was published in Paisley by the Rev. James Macnaughton. Macnaughton pointed to exactly the same Voluntary inconsistencies as Mr. Nixon of Montrose. Appended to the pamphlet was an interchange of correspondence between Macnaughton and an elder of the local Secession Church who had asked him to meet either Wright or the Rev. Patrick Brewster of the Established Abbey Church. He flatly refused to see Wright, and wrote cruelly of Brewster that "it is not a little ludicrous to find you, the elder of a Secession Church, setting forward as a champion of freedom, the minister of a

1. *In favour of the Free Church and also of the Abolition Cause*.

2. *An Appeal to the Members of the Free Church on the Subject of Fellowship with Slaveholders, by Humanus* (Aberdeen, 1846).

3. *Aberdeen Journal, 11.3.46*.

4. *J. Macnaughton, The Free Church and American Slavery, Slanders, etc*.

church which you designate as enslaved, and bondaged, and erastianised." 1 Although a little unfair to Brewster, whose strange career had previously involved him in many reform causes, this comment characterised the response of the Free Church to the bizarre alliance which faced it. A rather different attitude within the Free Church, though one which later commanded substantial support at national level, was put forward in another local pamphlet published at Linlithgow in June. 2 The anonymous author actually commended denominations like the Baptists and the United Secession Church, who were "going the way of the times" by breaking relations with unsatisfactory Southern churches. 3 On the other hand, he criticised Thompson's trying to dictate to the Free Church, while he pointed out that the American visitors' sending street urchins crying "Send back the money!" after Scotland's most respected clergymen would harden

1. Ibid., p. 8.

2. Should the Free Church Hold Fellowship with Slavoholders? and, should the Money lately Received from Slave-holding Churches be Sent Back?...... by a Member of the Free Church (Linlithgow, 1846).

3. Ibid., p. 5. Northern and southern Baptists had formed separate Missionary Associations in 1845, while the United Secession Synod at Glasgow resolved on May 8th that a Memorial to the American churches should be drawn up, after overtures from Kirkcaldy, Glasgow, Porth, Dundee, Selkirk, and Gala. This was adopted as Memorial and Remonstrance Respecting Slavery, to the Churches of the United States of America, by the Synod of the United Secession Church (Glasgow, 1846). The Rev. G. Jeffrey and the Rev. Dr. J. Ritchie were both on the committee which drew this up. See also Deliverance of the Reformed Presbytery of Edinburgh on American Slavery and Church Fellowship with Slavoholders (Edinburgh, 1845). In July, 1847, the Reformed Presbyterian Church as a whole made capital out of the continued attack on the Free Church, by agreeing to compose a similar remonstrance, published as An Expostulation with those Christians and Christian Churches in the United States of America, that are implicated in the Sin of Slavoholding, by a Committee of the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Scotland (Glasgow, 1848).
the Assembly against changing its course. His own criticism of Church leadership was that the Assembly had not given enough attention to the subject, and that Dr. Cunningham was wrong in arguing that it was possible to become a slaveholder "innocently."  

The most entertaining local controversy connected with the agitation, however, arose in Hawick because of Wright's enthusiasm for the temperance movement. Wright's superlative tactlessness had once horrified even the Garrisonian Mrs. Child into writing that "he appears to me as little calculated to do good, as almost any person they could select," an opinion which his Hawick visit amply bore out. Accustomed to denouncing all those not committed to cold water abstinence as 'tipplers' and 'drunkards', he soon alarmed more cautious abolitionists by referring to ministers of the Free Church in these terms.

In May or June, his carlessness or malice towards the Free Church leaders in Hawick led to his having to apologise for statements made about them in the Liberator. Correspondence over the whole affair was reprinted from the Border Watch and the Northern Warder by the Deacon's Court of the Hawick Free Church as "a striking illustration of Messrs. Wright and Co.'s veracity."  

1. Should the Free Church Hold Fellowship with Slaveholders?, pp. 8-9.
2. Ibid., pp. 15-17.
5. Agitation against the Free Church. Acknowledged Slander by H.C. Wright against the Ministers, Elders, and Congregation at Hawick (Glasgow, 1846).
Along with his despatches to the Liberator, Wright had forwarded a letter from a Hawick currier, Robert Michie. Among other indiscretions, it referred to the "tippling habits" of the local minister, and generally to "a tippling church and ministry," 1 Michie, with no recollection of making such statements, was forced by his Deacons' Court to demand satisfaction. Wright was finally forced to write that he now found "with grief and astonishment.... that my own running notes, apart from your letter entirely, are by the printers inserted as part of your letter." 2 The pamphlet concluded with some justice that it was on Wright's back that "the heaviest load of obloquy should rest." 3 He came out of the Hawick affair very badly. Three months later Glasgow abolitionists tried to repair the damage done by reprinting the Glasgow Argus account of Dr. Smyth of Charleston's withdrawal of some incautious statements he had made about the character of Douglass. 4 But this could not cancel the proven irresponsibility with which Wright had handled the accusations against the Free Church in Hawick.

1. Liberator, 15.5.40.
2. Wright to Michie, 6.6.40, Agitation against the Free Church, p. 9.
3. Ibid., p. 9.
4. "Acknowledged Slander" Again! Free Church Assembly and Slavery Contrasted with the Irish Assembly and Slavery, and "Acknowledged Slander" against Mr. Frederick Douglass, by the Rev. Dr. Smyth of Charleston (Glasgow, 1846), pp. 11-12.
Although the provincial literature on the Free Church is characteristic of the whole controversy, the bulk of the polemical pamphlets published appeared in Edinburgh and Glasgow. On a national level, the example set in smaller towns was followed by Voluntaries and the Establishment, who made all the capital they could out of the lapse of their common rival. Again, the Free Church fell back on pointing to the inconsistencies of Scottish critics and the heresies of their American allies. As for the three Americans themselves, their work was still characterised by the brilliant oratory and organisation of Douglass and the fanaticism of Wright. Immediately before the Assembly, the latter assured the Free Church that

"You sold your Saviour for £3000!!
You betrayed the world's Redeemer into the hands of slave-breeders and slave-traders for money!!....... You insist that those who breed and rear men for the market as brute beasts, are one with Christ, a part of His body, have His mind, are partakers of His nature, and that Christ is one with them!!!!.... Christ repudiates the manstealing confederacy into which you would bring him.... You have.... betrayed Christ into the hands of His deadly enemies." 1

Wright was to continue speaking and writing in this vein.

Late in April, in good time for the General Assembly, Douglass, Buffum, and he were joined in Scotland by Thompson. In September the party of visiting abolitionists became complete with Garrison's arrival. His tour of northern Scottish towns ended the work of

1. The Free Church and her Accusers in the Question at Issue.
A Letter from George Thompson, Esq., to Henry C. Wright; and one from Henry C. Wright to Ministers and Members of the Free Church of Scotland (Glasgow, 1846), pp. 10, 12.
the Americans, although agitation continued fruitlessly into 1847 and beyond.

Abolitionist efforts in Glasgow and Edinburgh were geared to putting maximum pressure on the Free Church General Assembly at the end of May. These efforts were largely those of the Americans and the G.E.S., since the male Edinburgh Emancipation Society tended to lose interest in the attack on the Free Church in proportion to Wright's growing extremism. Their refusal to work with the G.E.S. during the 1845 Assembly has already been noted, but at first they too did their best to influence the Free Church in their own way. Their Secretary, John Dunlop, had corresponded with Chalmers in 1844, and was the first to suggest republishing the works of Andrew Thomson against the Free Church, a plan later adopted by the Christian News office in Glasgow.¹

A tract published in 1845 by Dr. Greville also took pains to point obliquely to the short-comings of the American churches.²

Again, both Dunlop and Edward Cruickshank, a relative of Alexander Cruickshank now prominent on the E.E.S. Committee, reported


Edinburgh activities to Broad Street throughout the 1845 Assembly. Early in 1846 Dunlop published his collection of articles from the *Christian Investigator* on the conduct of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, which was germane to the Free Church affair. By 1846, however, the E.E.S. had become largely inactive. It again refused to cooperate with the G.E.S. at the time of the Assembly. Its contribution was simply to continue correspondence with Broad Street. The attempt to form a Scottish Anti-Slavery Society based on Edinburgh to replace it was unsuccessful. The 'Send Back the Money' agitation thus took the form of large meetings organised by the local Society in Glasgow, together with Edinburgh rallies whenever the visiting abolitionists were in the city. Activity there was naturally highest in May, immediately before the Assembly, though Douglass and Thompson spent part of the month in London. In Edinburgh, what local assistance they got came from the small Garrisonian Edinburgh Ladies' Emancipation Society. Unlike the male Society, it harboured


2. *American Slavery; Organic Sins*, etc.

3. G.E.S. Reports, 1846, p. 7; Minute for 10.4.46, G.E.S. Minute Books, IV.


5. G.E.S. Reports, 1846, p. 7. The Society had no permanent organisation, although Douglass campaigned as its 'agent'. See Quarles, *Douglass*, p. 50.

the Free Church to the extent of its power. As late as the 1847 Assembly it was still trying to encourage remonstrances with the Assembly. 1

The Glasgow Emancipation Society had published a pamphlet of its own against the Free Church in 1845, apart from the ones by Wright which it sponsored. Like Dunlop's reprinted Christian Investigator articles it attacked the compromise 1845 Report of the American Board of Commissioners. Unlike Dunlop, however, Murray and Smeal went on to make a specific exposure of the extent to which the position of the Free Church leaders encouraged the theory of organic sins. 2 By 1846, however, they were attacking the Free Church more directly. The first mass meeting of the year was held in April 21st, when Thompson was in Glasgow on a brief visit and Wright, Douglass and Buffum had returned from their tours round the smaller Scottish towns. It adopted resolutions in favour of the Birmingham Evangelical Alliance Committee's recent decision to exclude slaveholders,

1. Report of the Edinburgh Ladies' Emancipation Society.... Passed at their Annual Meeting, Held May 27th, 1846, with an Appendix Containing their Remonstrance to the Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland (Edinburgh, 1846), pp. 6-7; Annual Report of the Edinburgh Ladies' Emancipation Society. With a Supplement Relating to the Proceedings in the Free Church General Assembly, on the 29th of May Last; Adopted by their Annual Meeting.... 3rd of June, 1847 (Edinburgh, 1847), pp. 14-21. The E.L.E.S. Remonstrance, printed ibid., pp. 12-13, was submitted on April 1st. Their Circular, "To the Anti-Slavery Societies and the Friends of the Slave throughout Britain", dated 4.3.47, was frankly ridiculed by Candlish at the 1847 Assembly - Proceedings of the 1847 General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, held at Edinburgh, May, 1847 (Edinburgh, 1847), pp. 234-236.

2. The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions and the Rev. Dr. Chalmers on Christian Fellowship with Slaveholders: an Address to Christians of All Denominations, but Especially to Members of the Free Church of Scotland (Glasgow, 1846).
and against the Free Church. Thompson presented the plan of inviting Garrison to this country to join in the Scottish campaign.¹

The proceedings of this rally were published by the Society, in the Argus and in pamphlet form, as well as being spread all over the pages of the Liberator when the Thompson invitation reached Boston.²

The memorial of the meeting to the Assembly was printed and circulated as a separate pamphlet.³

After this meeting, G.E.S. activities were suspended to give way to work in Edinburgh preparatory to the meeting of the General Assembly. On their arrival on the evening of 27th April, with no encouragement from the E.E.S., the visiting abolitionists organised meetings for themselves in the Voluntary Secession Church in Rose Street.⁴ They were then welcomed in the Waterloo Rooms by a meeting of the Ladies' Society. Probably out of deference to the pro-Free Church sympathies of some of the Committee members, the resolutions passed did not refer specifically to the Church itself.⁵ It was only at the end of May, that the Annual Meeting of the Ladies' Society adopted a remonstrance to the Free Church demanding that it should

1. Minutes for 20.4.46, 21.4.46, G.E.S. Minute Books, IV.

2. Liberator, 29.5.46; Extract from Glasgow Argus, n.d., in Aberdeen Journal, 29.4.46; Free Church Alliance with Mannstealers. Send back the Money. Great Anti-Slavery Meeting in the City Hall, Glasgow (Glasgow, 1846).

3. Memorial of the Glasgow Emancipation Society, in Public Meeting Assembled, to the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, regarding Christian Fellowship with Slaveholders, and Imploiring them to Send Back the Money (Glasgow, 1846).

4. A summary account of the first Edinburgh meetings is printed in Free Church Alliance with Mannstealers, pp. 45ff.

cease to hold fellowship with slaveholders. ¹ The 1846 Report later committed the Society to an anti-Free Church position, as did Circular of March 4th, 1847, the Remonstrance of April 1st, and above all the polemical supplement to the 1847 Report. ² The Society probably lost some of its local support due to this even firmer alignment with the Garrisonians. Among Scoble's correspondence in Rhodes' House there survives a slightly pathetic letter from Louisa Cruickshank asking for help in combating the Garrisonian leaders of the Society, and their accusations against other abolitionists. She hoped that "thou will be able and kindly willing to give us a satisfactory explanation." ³

Meanwhile Thompson and his friends remained in Edinburgh throughout the first part of May, before Douglass and he went to London. ⁴ Even there they continued the attack on the Free Church. At a meeting to receive Douglass in Finsbury Chapel, with Sturges in the Chair, a resolution was placed at the end of the agenda demanding that the money be sent back. ⁵ Thompson at least was still confident of success. While in London he wrote pointedly to Wright that "We must be high-toned, temperate, and resolute: and by persuasion we shall triumph." ⁶ Unfortunately

¹. Ibid., p. 6.
⁴. Aberdeen Journal, 13.5.46.
⁶. Thompson to Wright, 14.5.46, Garrison Papers.
his advice to be "temperate" was not accepted. While Douglass and he were flirting with the New Organisation in London, Wright set about making his opinions on the Sabbath known to the whole of Scotland. After the E.E.S. had refused him all help due to his unsatisfactory religious opinions, he had produced his pamphlet defining and defending his opinions on the Sabbath. Wright's hints at anti-Sabbatarian opinions in *Six Months in Gracenoberg* had dismayed even William Smaal eighteen months before. Stated boldly under the provocative title *First Day Sabbath Not of Divine Appointment*, they must have struck the conservative Scottish clergy, whose social position depended largely on the observance of Sunday, as anarchical. When Thompson and Douglass returned to Scotland by the overnight mail on May 24th, they had to face a Free Church ministry who now had Wright's views comprehensively set before them to increase their revulsion for the Garrisonians and provide them with splendid polemical ammunition.

It was under this handicap that the four visiting speakers began their series of Edinburgh rallies in the last week of May, before and during the opening of the Assembly. The A.G.H. of the Ladies' Society was held on the 27th of May, and mass meetings organised in the Music Hall on the 25th and 29th, and on the 2nd and 4th of June running parallel with the meetings of the Assembly. When the

2. *First Day Sabbath not of Divine Appointment*, etc., *passim*. 
account of all these activities was published Douglass did not have his name put to the pamphlet, or his speeches printed in it, though he had been active in Edinburgh throughout the period. He may have felt that Thompson and Wright's extremism had already brought the abolition movement into sufficient disrepute. Indeed much of the content of Thompson's Music Hall Speeches was defensive. Soon before his return to Edinburgh the Rev. Andrew Cameron had published his brilliant Letter to Mr. George Thompson, which turned the tables by ignoring the charges against his Church, and concentrating on the weaknesses in the position of Wright and Thompson themselves. After exposing the inaccuracy of their claim that other churches did not maintain contacts with the United States, he showed the past admiration of their Voluntary allies for the American churches. He went on to show the apparently willful falsehood of some of their statements on Dr. Candlish and the Free Church's American deputation. His most telling sections, however, concentrated on lowering the stature of his opponents as reputable witnesses. Thompson, he suggested, was guilty either of defending the opinions of Garrison and Wright on the Sabbath, or of sharing them himself. As for nonresistance, he accused both men "of holding views which... would necessitate the excommunication... of almost every professing


2. A. Cameron, The Free Church and her Accusers in the Matter of American Slavery: being a Letter to Mr. George Thompson Regarding his Recent Appearances in this City (Edinburgh, 1846). Note that this pamphlet was published in at least five editions, the earlier ones being published anonymously under the pseudonym 'A Free Churchman.'

3. Ibid., pp. 11-24.

4. Ibid., pp. 24-27.
Christian in this country," since Wright was known to consider all soldiers, policemen, and magistrates, as well as those who employ them and organise the State, as murderers. Cameron concluded "that you and your colleague are altogether undeserving of public confidence." He closed with a series of crushing and unanswerable "Queries" on the points raised earlier. The most snobbish asked whether Thompson was aware that the Rev. Dr. Ritchie had received his D.D. "from a log-college in the Western States" which held communion with slaveholders, and whether Ritchie should therefore "send back the degree." Cattiness apart, however, most of Cameron's arguments were unanswerable, given the opinions already made known by Wright and connived at by Thompson. Thompson delivered full speeches at two consecutive major meetings to try to refute Cameron's accusations. Although he was able to correct him on two specific points of fact, he could only dismiss Wright's all-important heretical views as being "a red herring."

Cameron's pamphlet was the most effective example of Free Church anti-abolitionist propaganda. During May, the same arguments were used elsewhere. The Witness, for instance, had now moved from its comparative responsiveness to abolitionist pleas in 1844 and 1845,

1. Ibid., pp. 29-31.
2. Ibid., pp. 33-34.
3. Similar points to Cameron's were made in A Letter to the Managers of the Rose Street Secession and College Street Relief Churches, Denouncing their Conduct for Admitting Infidels and Sabbath Breakers to Slander the Free Church (Edinburgh, 1848), though this also squeaked at the Free Church and was probably written by a member of the Establishment trying to make capital out of the affair by attacking the evangelicals and Free Church alike.
4. Thompson & Wright, The Free Church.... and American Slavery, pp. 7-34.
5. Ibid., p. 32.
to bitter opposition to the irresponsibility of its critics.

By the beginning of July, indeed, it had moved into an effectively pro-slavery position. The same change of opinion is apparent in the sentiment displayed by the Free Church leaders at the 1846 Assembly. They were now prepared to ridicule the activities of the anti-slavery societies. By the time the Assembly debated slavery on May 30th, it was faced with several addresses from Anti-Slavery associations and meetings, as well as the physical presence of Thompson and Douglass. The Moderator had also been presented with an Address from the 'Inhabitants of Edinburgh, or perhaps those inhabitants with past grudges against the Free Church, adopted at the Music Hall meeting of the previous evening. Set against these communications, the Assembly had to debate the overture from the Synod of Angus and Mearns introduced in April by the Rev. Mr. Nixon. A counter-petition from the Dundee area, presumably organised by Douglass, asked that fellowship with the offensive American churches should be broken, as did an overture from the Free Synods of Sutherland and Caithness.

It was agreed that since the external petitions had not passed

1. Witness, 8.7.46. c.f. ibid., 25.12.44. An article from the former issue was reprinted as Letter on American Slavery, Addressed to the Editor of the Witness, 8th July, 1846, by an American (Edinburgh, 1846). Signed S.E.M., this may have been written by the Rev. Sidney E. Morse, Congregationalist minister from New York, who was currently in Britain for the Evangelical Alliance meetings. It was strongly nativist (p.12).


3. Address Adopted at a Public Meeting of the Inhabitants of Edinburgh, Convened in the Music Hall, to the Rev. the Moderator and Members of the General Assembly of the Free Church (Edinburgh, 1846).

through the Assembly Committee on Bills, they could not be presented. Debate therefore began with the speech of the Rev. Dr. Candlish in support of the Report of the Standing Committee on Correspondence with American churches appointed at the previous Assembly. \(^{1}\) Candlish spoke brilliantly. He enlisted his audience's known anti-Voluntary sympathies by remarking that those who were in favour of a breach of fellowship had ignored the interdependent duties of church and state - 
"It seems to me that they have run to an extreme form of voluntarism." \(^{2}\) He actually argued along abolitionist lines, but equivocally remarked that as far as the question of whether the slaveholder could help his sins was concerned, "The 'onus probandi' lies with the slaveholder." \(^{3}\) The only reply to this speech was an unsupported attempt by the minister of Laurieston Free Church, Glasgow, the Rev. Mr. James MacBeth, to resolve that slaveholders and churches accepting them into communion should be excluded from fellowship. He used the same arguments as those of his later pamphlets, contrasting Free Church opposition to an Erastian establishment in this country and its subservience

1. Ibid., pp. 13-23. Part of this speech was printed to demonstrate Candlish's strong abolition feeling in W. Wilson, Memorials of Robert Smith Candlish, D.D. (London, 1880), pp. 378-382. He was attacked bitterly in Toronto Banner, 3.7.46, and in "Acknowledged Slander Again!", pp. 3-3.


3. Ibid., p.28.
to the more sinister Erastianism of the Southern clergy. ¹
During his speech, the leading conservative abolitionists
in the Assembly, Drs. Candlish and Cunningham among them,
ostentatiously ignored the proceedings around them, Candlish
for one making his point by reading his copy of the Witness.
With no further support forthcoming for MacBeth's motion, the
Report of Candlish's committee, in effect suggesting that policy
should continue as before, was accepted. On the Monday, the
Assembly also approved of the Letter composed by the Committee
in accordance with the recommendations of their Report. It
stressed points of agreement with Americans, but went on to exhort
them to work for the alteration of harsh laws on slaveholding.
It remarked somewhat naively that no Christian could consider
his slave as such, whatever their respective standing might be
in the eyes of the law. ²

However, clear the Letter might make the Free Church's
disapproval of slavery, it was quite innocuous. It fell for

1. Ibid., pp. 30ff. MacBeth had already published one extremely
learned pamphlet, The Church and the Slaveholder; or, Light
and Darkness: an Attempt to Prove, from the Word of God and
from Reason, that to Hold Property in Man is Wholly Destrutute
of Divine Warrant, is a Flagrant Crime, and Demands Excommunication.
Earnestly and Respectfully Addressed to the Members of the
Approaching Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland (Edinburgh, 1845).
This took the advanced ground of suggesting that the spirit of
New Testament revelation had superseded the Old Testament, and
was received with delight in A.S.R., 11.6.45. After the 1846
Assembly MacBeth published his No Fellowship with Slaveholders:
a Calm Review of the Debate on Slavery, etc. Subsequently he became
a vice-president of the Free Church A.S.S. In 1849 he was charged
with immorality in the Free Synod of Glasgow and Ayr and in the
General Assembly. The broadsheet, A real Statement of the Secret
and Concluding Debate in Mr. MacBeth's Case, suggests that the
charges had been trumped up against him as a punishment for his part
in the 'Send Back the Money' affair.

short of meeting demands that it should symbolise a complete breach of fellowship with slaveholders by sending back the funds from the south. The reasons for refusing to go thus far were several. First, the actual 'Black Dollars' could not practicably be separated from other currency in the Church's College Fund and Sustentation Fund. Secondly, even if this had been possible, it was out of the question for the Free Church to surrender any money at all, far less divert possible future contributions, at this critical juncture in its financial history. Thirdly, it was unthinkable that the Free Church, which was so generously provided with enemies at home among the Voluntaries and the old Establishment, should add to its problems by alienating the few friends it possessed abroad. Finally, in terms of institutional prestige, especially thus early in its life, the Free Church leaders cannot seriously have considered climbing down over a foreign issue which had been skilfully capitalised by enemies whom they had good reason to suppose could not have cared less about American slavery.

The logic of the situation, then, made Free Church intransigence likely. This was greatly increased by the methods and attitudes of the abolitionists themselves. Free Church leaders had once been relatively receptive to suggestions that their standpoint was at fault. By 1846 only the occasional isolated individual like James MacBeth was willing to brook any criticism of the moderate abolitionist position taken by the Assembly. By this point the agitation had hardened Free Church attitudes in three ways. First, the alliance with Voluntary clergymen bred suspicion of abolitionist motives. Secondly, the extremism of men like Wright produced fear of the distasteful social consequences which might arise from encouraging abolitionist efforts.
There is however a third factor, perhaps most interesting of all as far as Scottish history is concerned. Before 1846, only John Anderson Collins had deliberately set out to enlist non-middle class elements as allies in his struggle against a middle class faction of the movement. The American visitors during the Free Church controversy, who were also Garrisonians, set out to do exactly the same. The effect on a Church whose leaders firmly believed in keeping the lower orders out of decision-making in religious and benevolent enterprises can hardly have been to increase their faith in the Old Organisation, which they already knew to be responsible for dangerous religious and social ideas. In this light, the later vendetta against MacBeth may have had nothing to do with his being an ultra-abolitionist. It is more likely to have resulted from his distrust of the top-heavy system of church government through the Assembly. As early as May, 1845, he had written that

"our people themselves will not permit a great principle to be abjured, without claiming to be heard, congregation by congregation. An appeal to the people, in high and special emergencies, is part of the Presbytery. It is, perhaps, certain, that a wrong decision by the Assembly, instead of ending this matter, will only begin it." 2

After the arrival of the Americans, there had been sinister indications that the enemies of the Free Church were intent on

1. See for instance Cameron, A Letter to George Thompson, pp. 24-31. Striking illustrations of the conservatism of Free Church government are given in A. A. Maclaren, S.H.R., XLVI, passim.

2. J. MacBeth, The Church and the Slaveholder: or, Light and Darkness, p. 36.
whipping up the working class against the clergy. Wright soon won the reputation of wishing to spread anti-slavery ideas among the 'people'. He was also known to have worked with Vincent, the moral force Chartist, and on one occasion appeared with him in Glasgow. His preaching of nonresistant views in Edinburgh shocked even a committed abolitionist like Dunlop. Garrison began to behave with similar indiscretion as soon as he arrived in this country. Like Wright, he fraternised with Vincent and Lovett, and managed to persuade both to support the Anti-Slavery League. The implication must have been obvious to conservative Church members. No doubt they felt even more strongly than a Unitarian like Estlin that Garrison had set out to antagonise the middle classes. Ironically enough, the activities of the gentler Frederick Douglass may have been the ones which created the worst impression. It was he who marshalled the apprentices and young men of Dundee, Edinburgh, and Glasgow, to parade the streets demanding the return of the money, an apparent Scottish approximation to the urban mob of the continental revolutions. Nixon cannot have been alone when he sneered nervously at the abolitionist alliance with "the..... more ill-conditioned portion of our mechanics."  

1. C. Paton to M.W. Chapman, 2.11.45, Weston Papers.  
2. Minute for 1.8.45, G.E.S. Minute Books, IV. This was the meeting at which Wright first preached disunion views.  
3. Dunlop to A. Phelps, 16.6.46, Phelps Papers.  
4. Estlin to May, 2.11.46, May Papers. See above, pp.  
5. Relation of the Free Church to the American Churches, p.3.
The best indication of the extent to which the abolitionists aimed at marshalling those socially oppressed by the Free Church is the substantial ballad literature left behind by the controversy. It was Douglass who became most involved in enlisting the working classes against the Free Church. The Establishment was also prepared to use the issue to play on distrust of the Free Church's practice of extorting as much as possible from its poorest members. For instance, the Ballad 

"The Auld Ane's the best o' them, Kate, 
Altho' muckle ill they've put till her; 
Ye have only to pay for your seat, 
An' they ask for nae mair o' your siller." ¹

The same point was made in another ballad entitled My Faith, We'll Keep the Money. ² Again, at least one working class ballad took the standpoint that the money should neither be sent back, nor used by the Free Church, but distributed among the poor. ³

There is no question, however, of all the ballads and broadsheets published being opposed to the Free Church. At least one verse drama parody of the relation between Thompson and Douglass showed

1. Free Kirk and the Siller (Edinburgh, May, 1846), copy in Bodleian.

2. My Faith, We'll Keep the Money (Edinburgh, May, 1846), copy in Bodleian. Note that during the Disruption the Establishment had often used dialect forms, as in the much circulated tract A Crack About the Kirk for Càntra Folk (Various editions, 1843).

3. Oh, Don't Send the Money Back Again (Edinburgh, n.d.), copy in Bodleian.
awareness of the unprincipled way in which the Establishment was using the issue against the Free Church, and sneered at Thompson as a professional agitator. He was portrayed as musing that:

"I've trimmed my sail in many a tack,
But Douglas [sic], my imported black,
And this of 'Send the money back,'
The best perhaps;
They'll fill my pockets in a crack,
th' Established chaps."

Douglass was depicted along the preconceived lines of the Sambo stereotype:

"Ah! Massa Thompson, what you tink?
I heard do sound of money's clink,
So widoub noise I in did slink."

Thompson ended by giving Douglass, "pale with rage," twenty of the fifty pounds he had collected. He was further satirised in a squib of higher quality than the others, published as The Yankee Looking Glass, or "Measure for Measure," Containing a Report of the Speeches delivered at the Disorderly Meeting held on Friday Last, in the Music Hall, with a Letter from Tomkins to his Friends in Affliction in Edinburgh. Full of parodied Shakespearian imagery and phrases, it was possibly aimed at a student audience. "Mr. Vright" was reported to have said that "All shades of opinion should join me - Socinians, Infidels, Mahometans, Jews, Christians - the more the merrier." Poor gentle "Buffem" began his speech by shouting that

1. Send Back the Money - A New Version (Edinburgh, 1846), copy in Bodleian.

2. May, 1846, copy in Bodleian.
"As I'm property-man to the deputation, I'll show you some
of our Yankee jewellery." He closed by reading a letter from
"Mr. Tomkins." It satirised Thompson as an egocentric buffoon.
He began, "My Dear Sir, I am a tower of strength.... when I ope
my mouth, no dog barks," and went on to report the Finsbury Park
meeting:

"Chalmy and Blackie ran a race,
Chalmy fell and broke his face,
Quo' Blackie I have won the race,
And the sow's tail till him yet,
And the sow's tail till him yet,
And the sow's tail to Chalmy.

My Dear Sir - Forgive this ebullition of my joy." He closed
by exhorting his Edinburgh allies to continue their efforts -
"let the collar and tawse be exhibited every night, not forgetting
the Doctor's bare back, - it pleases the Voluntaries. Their
rancorous spirit towards the Free Church will make them swallow
anything."

Apart from ballad writers and satirists, the Free Church also
had to face attack from poets aiming their more 'dignified' productions
at the anglicised sectors of the Scottish middle class. A
characteristic one began by eulogising the early Free Church, but
continued:

"Now, alas! her bright morn has been covered with gloom,
And the voice of the slave issues forth from the tomb,
On the wings of the tempest it sweeps o'er the sea,
And in anguish arraigns thee, thou Fair and thou Free.

Stilted Victoriana of this sort had none of the strength of the
dialect ballads written against the Free Church or the parodies aimed

1. The Sighs of the Slave in the Free Church of Scotland -
A Poem (Edinburgh, 1846), copies in Bodleian and Aberdeen
University Libraries. See also 'Send Back the Money,' in
Anti-Slavery Songs (Edinburgh, 1846).
at its attackers. The most effective ballad of all was an adaptation of the traditional *My Son David* used extensively by Douglass. 1 In the printed broadsheet *The Kirk and her Boy Tammy* the ballad was presented as a piece of dramatic action, which had been the intention of the original. Chalmers was shown being interrogated by "Mother Kirk" on the effect of Douglass' appeal, and replying:

"Do merciful! An' say nae mair, my kind mammy;
Ye'll drive me headlong tae despair, my kind mammy;
'Send back the --" Oh! it canna be;
Ye're gyte' that would destroy, ye see,
The Kirk's Infallibility
Ca' canny - Oh! Ca' canny!"

Informed by Mother Kirk that

"There's aye some crotchet in your views;
Ye'll stain my robes - ye'll toom my pews -
They're flockin' back to Granny!"

and startled by the arrival of Douglass, Tammy flees from the scene, leaving Douglass and Mother Kirk cordially shaking hands.

No such rapprochement between the Free Kirk and the abolitionists ever took place. The decision of the 1846 Assembly showed that Free Church policy was to remain unchanged. Nevertheless, abolitionist agitation continued into the second half of 1847.

After the 1846 Assembly, on the 6th of June, Thompson was presented with the Freedom of the City by the anti-Free Church element in the Town Council. 2 Thompson's being made a Freeman was not, however, enough to protect him from criticism. In granting him the Freedom, the Provost had made it clear that he was doing so principally because


"we cannot forget your valuable services in advancing the cause of commercial emancipation." At a meeting on the 16th, however, Councillor Lothian, a Free Church member, pointed out that it had previously been agreed that this honour should not be conferred on those giving rise to religious strife in the community. He added spitefully that "I do not know that the circumstance of a man being hired to conduct a public discussion marks him out for any particular reward." The Freedom could not be withdrawn from Thompson, but regulations were set up to prevent its being conferred in future except through the Provost's committee. Meanwhile, outside the Town Council, debate was continuing. Two relatively learned pamphlets appeared soon after the end of the Assembly, criticising its course but nevertheless apparently written by students of the New College, the Free Church theological college of which the Rev. Dr. Cunningham was principal. Their publication hints at the uneasiness felt among the Church's younger intellectuals at the position taken by the 1846 Assembly. Professor Shepperson has already pointed to the animated correspondence between the New College Missionary Association and the students of Princeton Theological Seminary over the slavery issue, which shows a disagreement between the students and the Church's leaders. The two pamphlets

1. Review of the Proceedings of a Minority of the Town Council of Edinburgh, in Presenting the Freedom of the City to Mr. George Thompson, being a Report of the Speeches Delivered at a Subsequent Meeting of that Body (Edinburgh, 1846), pp. 2, 7, 10.

2. Slavery in the Gentile Churches During the Apostolic Age, and the Present Duty of the Free Church of Scotland, Especially Addressed to the Students of the Free Church of Scotland, by a Fellow-Student (Edinburgh, 1846); Five Minutes Review of the Scriptural Argument in Favour of Fellowship with Slaveholders (Edinburgh, 1846).

3. Shepperson, J.B.H., XVII.
of June differ sharply not only from the Assembly Deliverance, but also from the personal position of Dr. Chalmers, elucidated in a letter to the Witness in the previous year. MacBeth's second pamphlet was also published at this time. There was thus plenty of dissent left inside the Free Church as well as outside it after the 1846 Assembly.

Between this time and the 1847 Assembly, the controversy was extended by the visit of Garrison in the autumn, and the formation of the so-called Free Church Anti-Slavery Society early in the following year. Garrison's visit was much less exciting than might have been expected. By the time he arrived the Free Church had effectively shown that it would not respond to outside pressures. There may also have been a reaction into relative apathy after the exciting anti-slavery events of the summer. Finally, Garrison himself, with characteristic unpredictability, spent much of his short visit denouncing the Evangelical Alliance and its Scottish supporters, and trying to whip up support for the new League. By the time he came to Scotland, he had already brought himself into disrepute by the company he kept. He reported to his wife that Unitarianism was as odious in Britain as infidelity in the U.S.A., and remarked blandly that "thus far, those who have most zealously espoused my mission have been the Unitarians." His Scottish visit was very much a sideshow, divided into two by the demands of campaigning against the Evangelical Alliance in the Midlands.

1. This was partly reprinted and scathingly dealt with in A.S.B., 23.5.45, in an article later reprinted as a tract entitled Dr. Chalmers' Letter on Christian Fellowship with Slaveholders (Edinburgh, 1845). British Friend, 31.5.45, dismissed the Chalmers Letter as "a miserable tissue of inconclusive sophistry."

2. Garrison to H.B. Garrison, 10.9.46, Garrison Papers.
He travelled to Glasgow on the night of the 18th of September, and developed a sore throat during the harrowing night journey north. Finding he could not use the City Hall until the 30th, he planned to fill in time lecturing in Paisley, Greenock, Edinburgh, and Dundee until then, before proceeding to Belfast, although he later cancelled his plan of going to Ireland in favour of spending time in towns like Manchester, Rochdale, and Darlington.

He returned to Scotland for a meeting on October 20th at which 'the ladies of Edinburgh' presented him with a silver tea service – the one which later caused enough difficulty in the Customs at Boston for Garrison to become an ardent free trader overnight. On the 22nd he managed to raise an inexplicable audience of between six and eight hundred at Kirkcaldy, before moving on to Dundee. By the 25th he was in Perth, by this time, not surprisingly, quite exhausted. His planned visit to Aberdeen had to be cancelled because Douglass and he could only get outside seats on the night coach.

Garrison's Scottish visit actually caused less sensation than that of less prominent abolitionists earlier in the year. The Free Church affair was now less important to him than the promotion of the Anti-Slavery League, whatever the terms of his original invitation to Scotland.

Nevertheless, Garrison's September and October visits no doubt did much to keep anti-slavery interest alive until 1847. Certainly

1. Garrison to Wright, 21.9.46, ibid.
2. Garrison to Wright, 23.9.46; Garrison to Webb, 25.9.46, 30.9.46; Garrison to E. Pease, 12.10.46 – all Garrison Papers; G.E.S. Reports, 1846, pp. 9-10; Minute for 30.9.46, G.E.S. Minute Books, IV.
4. Garrison to E. Pease, 25.10.46, ibid.
the G.E.S. seems to have been most encouraged by the rallies at
which Garrison appeared on September 30th and October 23th, although
its financial problems were now overwhelming. 1 Edinburgh Ladies' 
Emancipation Society activities continued vigorously in the new
year. Again, several months after Garrison's visit, the Free
Church Anti-Slavery Society was founded in May, 1847. It was by
no means a Garrisonian abolition society, and was strongly endorsed
by John Wigham, the prominent Edinburgh New Organisationist. 2 Its
ladies' secretary, Anna Burn Murdoch, complained to Scoble of the
tendency to identify the Society's work with that of the Garrisonians. 3
Subsequently, the Reporter strongly commended its work in preparation
for the Assembly. 4 What the editor in Broad Street did not realise
was that although the Free Church Anti-Slavery Society had disassociated
itself from the distasteful ideas of the Garrisonians, it had not
broken the alliance with the Free Church's denominational enemies.
Although the Society's Committee, headed by Willis and MacDeth, was
composed of Free Church members, there was little further support
for it within the Church. After the 1847 Assembly a Society pamphlet
complained that since only two of the seven hundred Free Church ministers
"were found faithful to the cause of justice and humanity," it had been
essential to find support elsewhere. 5 The real driving power came

1. Minutes for 30.9.46, 28.10.46, G.E.S. Minute Books, IV.
2. Minute for 23.5.47, D.F.A.S.S. Minute Books, II.
3. A. Burn Murdoch to Scoble, 1.6.47, 25.5.47, Bod. Brit. Emp. Mss.8.18,
   C20/27, C20/26.
4. A.S.B., 1.6.47.
5. Strictures on the Proceedings of the Last General Assembly
   of the Free Church of Scotland, Regarding Communion with the
   Slaveholding Churches of America, Respectfully Addressed to the
   Office-Bearers and Members of that Church (Edinburgh, 1847), p. 9.
from the ministers of the Dissenters and the Establishment, who
wrote series of colourful pamphlets published by the Society.
The only exceptions were the vigorous Address to the Office-
Bearers and Members of the Free Church, written before the
Assembly, and the Strictures subsequently published to criticise
its proceedings. ¹ Beyond this, all its pamphlets were produced
by clergymen with known grievances against the Free Church.

One was written by George Gilfillan, the Dundee Congregationalist,
another by George Jeffrey, the minister of Lothian Road Secession
Church, in Glasgow. ² The Rev. Dr. David Young, an Establishment
minister of Perth, contributed a pamphlet dogmatically entitled
Slavery Forbidden by the Word of God. ³ Finally, the Society
published a lecture by the Rev. Isaac Nelson of the Presbyterian
Church of Ireland, which had already projected its tensions with
the Free Church by issuing a strong remonstrance with the American
churches and refusing to admit Chalmers' friend the Rev. Dr. Smyth

1. An Address to the Office-Bearers and Members of the Free Church
   of Scotland, on her Present Connexion with the Slaveholding
   Churches of America, from the Committee of the Free Church
   Anti-Slavery Society (Edinburgh, 1847).

2. G. Gilfillan, The Debasing and Demoralising Influence of Slavery
   on All and on Everything Connected with it. A Lecture... Delivered
   at the Request of the Free Church Anti-Slavery Society (Edinburgh,
   1847); G. Jeffrey, The Pro-Slavery Character of the American
   Churches, and the Sin of Holding Christian Communion with them.
   A Lecture..... Delivered at the Request of the Free Church Anti-
   Slavery Society (Edinburgh, 1847).

3. D. Young, Slavery Forbidden by the Word of God. A Lecture
   ...... Delivered at the Request of the Free Church Anti-Slavery
   Society (Edinburgh, 1847).
of Charleston to its 1846 General Assembly. 1 With allies of this sort, the Free Church Anti-Slavery Society could hardly expect to overcome the distrust of abolitionists bred by the cooperation between Garrisonians and Voluntaries.

The outcome of the whole 'Send Back the Money' agitation was thus a defeat for the abolitionists. By the time of the 1847 Assembly, Garrison and Douglass had returned to America, while Wright was occupied in denouncing the Society of Friends in Ireland for receiving Southern money to distribute as famine relief. 2

Yet the remaining local opposition must have seemed odious enough. The activities of the Free Church Society were overtly treasonable, while the continued struggle of the Edinburgh Ladies' Emancipation Society was an outside force which could be safely ignored, as the sneers made at them by Candlish during the Assembly indicate. The F.C.A.S.S. petition to the Assembly he characterised as farcical, if only because it had only produced 1871 signatures. He went on to read long sections of the Edinburgh Ladies' Society circulars, to the great amusement of the Assembly. He closed by taking the opportunity of sneering at the motive behind the Irish Assembly's recent abolitionist enthusiasm. 3

The Rev. Dr. Cunningham, who

1. I. Nelson, Slavery Supported by the American Churches, and Countenanced by Recent Proceedings in the Free Church of Scotland.... a Lecture Delivered at the Request of the Free Church Anti-Slavery Society [Edinburgh, 1847]. The Letter from the Irish Assembly was signed and sent 11.6.46, after some interchanges printed in "Acknowledged Slander" Again!, pp.8-11.

2. Garrison left as arranged early in November, and Douglass at the beginning of April. It was at this time that Wright published his extraordinary Slaveholders or Playactors, complaining because the Friends Relief Committee had refused money collected in the Queen's Theatre, London, and accepted that from the South.

3. Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Free Church.... May, 1847, pp.264-268. Candlish was attacked for this speech in A.S.R., 1.7.47.
followed Candlish, maintained that the whole agitation had been "an ingenious device of Satan to injure the Church." ¹

Finally, it was resolved that the Assembly "find it inexpedient to pronounce any judgement in the matter involved in the petitions." ²

Although the unpleasantness of the whole affair was resurrected in the arguments over John Knox's House, and in MacBeth's 1849 trial, the matter ended here.³ There was no mention of the funds from the South in the 1849 Assembly.

In retrospect, the effects of the campaign against the Free Church disappointed abolitionists. Their efforts had failed to make this venerated Scottish denomination set the required example of religious breach with slaveholders. Indeed, the fact that the Free Church leaders had specifically refused to end communication with the churches in the South, must have enormously strengthened the pro-slavery elements in all the American denominations. If there was any positive result, it was that the disgruntled Free Church ministers MacBeth and Willis, subsequently emigrated to Canada to continue their abolitionist work there.

It has also been suggested that the Rev. Dr. William King, later the organiser of the Elgin Settlement, decided to engage in this work due to stirrings of conscience over the Free Church affair.⁴

¹. Ibid., pp. 272-273.
². Ibid., p. 277.
effects on the abolition movement within Scotland were even worse. The G.E.S. held several meetings in 1847, but the load of debts from its publishing activities curtailed agitation until 1851. In Ulster, the bitterness left over by the controversy made it impossible to raise any abolitionist enthusiasm until at least 1833. In Edinburgh, the men's Emancipation Society seems to have collapsed under the strain of losing its Free Church membership. As for the Edinburgh Ladies' Emancipation Society, it remained alive up to the Civil War and beyond.

However, Wright was remembered in Edinburgh, for better or worse, and the Ladies' Society suffered along with his other adherents from the growing vehemence of his articles in the Liberator. They reported to Boston that his writings were the root cause of their woefully small local contributions to the Bazaar. On the other hand, Miss Wigham herself retained her bitterness towards the Free Church leaders. In 1853 she was writing about the time when they had had to choose between "the anti-Christian conduct of Drs. Candlish and Cunningham and... the fruits of


3. Its last known meeting was one against African emigration, reported in A.S.R., 1.6.47.

Christianity from stigmatized infidels." ¹ By the following year, she was suspicious of a Free Church plot to collect more slave money. ² Throughout the fifties, the tendency among Scottish Garrisonians was to distrust both New Organisationists and the clergy who had betrayed the movement in 1844. ³

The most important aspect of the Free Church controversy, however, is not its results. More than any other incident in the history of the British anti-slavery movement after 1833, it emphasises the extent to which sections of the middle classes here were prepared to use the foreign issue of American slavery in domestic quarrels. Thus the Free Church was opposed by a bizarre alliance of Voluntaries, Residuaries, and Garrisonian abolitionists. Of these opponents, only the last were primarily interested in the welfare of the American slave. The other two groups were avenging themselves for the secession of 1843 and the constant opposition of the Evangelicals to Dissenters before and since the Disruption. The use of the slavery issue in this way is not unusual during the period, indeed it is characteristic. What makes the Free Church affair especially significant is the wealth of printed material it produced, the direct involvement of American abolitionists, and the ease of studying its development due to the neat denominational rivalries of Victorian Scotland.

2. E. Wigham to Chamerovzow, 15,5.54, ibid., C37/64.
3. See below, pp. 369ff.
In this light, the study of the 'Send Back the Money' campaign is central to the history of the Scottish effort against American slavery.

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Neither the Indiana secession nor the Free Church affair gave much comfort to abolitionists, who finally had to accept that the churches they were attacking intended to treat relations with America in their own way. In the case of the Evangelical Alliance, they were more successful. Dedicated to ecumenical cooperation though not union between the 'evangelical denominations', in Britain, Europe, and America, the Alliance would have been subject to internal stresses anyway, including as it did all English and Scottish sects, Establishment or dissenting, except the Catholics, Unitarians and Friends.¹ The exclusion of the Friends, who dominated the Broad Street Committee, and the Unitarians, who later provided much of the rank-and-file strength

of the provincial Garrisonian societies, meant that the Alliance set off with two groups of enemies. Both had enough interest in the slavery issue to pinpoint any abolitionist shortcomings and use them as a basis for criticism. The result was that when the Alliance began to show signs of indifference towards slavery, it was attacked enthusiastically by a peculiar alliance of Old and New Organisation abolitionists. Treated more tactfully than the Free Church, the British branch of the Alliance finally mustered internal support for lecturing the Americans on their abolitionist duties. As a result, the original intention of having a homogeneous body to unite the evangelical efforts of the Atlantic churches was abandoned. The final compromise of having autonomous 'branches' in Britain, Europe, and America, to avoid clashes over slavery, made the Alliance as originally envisaged unworkable. To this limited extent, its abolitionist critics were successful in forcing its British members to make their anti-slavery position clear.

1. Miss Taylor has demonstrated the importance of Unitarians in the Garrisonian movement, op. cit., p. 30. See also Webb to Gay, 25.12.49, Gay Papers. This was especially significant since the Unitarians, like the Friends, maintained unusually close contacts with their counterparts in America. The Friends, however, were completely opposed to them doctrinally, which is significant because of the strength of Quakers at Broad Street. From 1839-1868, 32 out of 68 committee members were Friends, and the proportion of active ones was even higher. See Temperley, op. cit., p. 50.

The original plan evolved by the British leaders of the new Evangelical Alliance at the Liverpool Conference on Christian Union in October, 1845, had been to hold its World Convention in London in the summer of 1846. By March, however, the D.F.A.S.S. Committee had become suspicious of Alliance intentions as regards communion with Southern churches tolerating slaveholding. This sentiment was certainly linked with the annoyance of Quaker members at its "disposition to lengthen the creeds and shorten the commandments." Thus the former were so strict as to exclude Friends, and the latter so lax as to encourage slaveholding.

Sturge felt strongly enough over this to write publicly and at length to the Congregationalist the Rev. John Angell James, one of the moving spirits behind the Alliance, questioning the decision to exclude all those denying orthodox views on the Sabbath and water baptism. Outside Quaker abolitionist circles, the Alliance was criticised for having assumed "a much narrower basis than Christianity," that of orthodox Calvinist theology.

Whatever the real reasons for attacking the Evangelical Alliance, the Broad Street New Organisationists were among the first to do so on the slavery issue. The April Reporter called for the exclusion on the slavery issue. The April Reporter called for the exclusion

1. Ibid., pp. 374-376.

2. London Inquirer, 8.9.46. Philip and Theodore; or, a Dialogue on the Evangelical Alliance (London, 1846), too: anarchistic position that the sectarian spirit could only be overcome by seeking Christ individually. This may be compared with the more moderate doubts about over-stringent doctrinal tests for admission, as in Evangelical Alliance. A Scriptural Principle and a Practical Object for the Evangelical Alliance, by a Member of the Scottish Divisional Committee (London, 1846), pp. 9-12.
of all connected with slavery from the World's Convention proposed for June. Meanwhile, the Glasgow Society was also enquiring into the intentions of the proposed Alliance. Perhaps impelled by the Quakerism of Smeal and the vigorous anticlericalism of men like Andrew Paton and Wright, the Committee agreed as early as November, 1845, that the Secretaries should try to find out what standpoint the successor of the Liverpool Conference was to take on slavery. Their letter to the provisional committees of the Alliance was published in pamphlet form early in 1846, though there is no mention in the Minutes of this having been authorised by the Committee. This argued that the way to force the U.S. churches to end slavery was through the censure of denying them Christian communion. It pointed out that James himself had suggested such a complete break of fellowship during the 1843 World's Convention. At the same time, the writing of Dunlop on 'organic sins' was implicitly denouncing the form of relationship which the Alliance was likely to slip into.

In fact the Rev. Dr. James himself enjoyed a substantial reputation as an abolitionist. Apart from his speeches at the

2. Minute for 5.11.45, G.E.S. Minute Books, IV.
3. The Evangelical Alliance. Will Slaveholders be Admitted to Membership in it? Letter to the Rev. John Angell James, D.D., the Rev. Dr. King, the Rev. Dr. Candlish (Glasgow, 1846), p.3 and passim.
4. Dunlop, Organic Sins, etc., passim.
World's Convention, he had been one of the earliest supporters of universal emancipation, and had been eulogised by the Liberator for his attitude to church fellowship.\(^1\) It was perhaps because of his influence that the Birmingham division of the provisional Alliance committee responded so well to abolitionist pressure. At a meeting on March 31st it resolved not to admit those "guilty of holding men as slaves."

Unfortunately abolitionists were not likely to be content with the exclusion of those who actually held slaves. In any case, the invitations to the summer conference had already been issued, delegates had been appointed, and in some cases had actually sailed.\(^2\) Nevertheless, the Birmingham resolution was at first well received by abolitionists.\(^3\) On the other hand, the Birmingham resolution was ambiguous, and adopted too late.

When Garrison, Douglass, and Thompson, joined forces in London, they were faced with a situation where the British branch had shown signs of wishing to reject those in communion with slaveholders, but had given no guarantee that it would do so.

Indeed the visiting abolitionists clashed with the American members of the Alliance before the World's Convention assembled in mid-August. Douglass' onslaught on the American delegation at the World's Temperance Convention in London involved him in an

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1. Richard, Joseph Sturgo, pp. 176-177; Liberator, 10.4.40, 11.9.40.
3. Minute for 21.4.46, G.E.S. Minute Books, IV.
acrimonious debate with the Rev. Dr. Samuel Cox of Brooklyn, later the most intransigent of the pro-slavery party in the Alliance. The Anti-Slavery League founded by Garrison and Thompson a week later, at once committed itself to opposing any connection between the Evangelical Alliance and American churches tolerating slavery. At one of its meetings the moderate Rev. Dr. Kirk of Boston himself appeared, probably to indicate his acceptance of reasoned abolition principles - "but he found the atmosphere too warm for him, and left the room." 3

When the Alliance Convention met on August 19th, it also had a vocal group of abolitionists among its own members. Among them were the Rev. J.H. Hinton, Baptist editor of the Anti-Slavery Reporter, Isaac Nelson of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland, James Standfield, secretary of the Belfast Anti-Slavery Society, and Thomas Farmer, the professional shorthand reporter who had long been associated with the anti-slavery movement. Another member was Sir Culling Eardley Smith of the Aborigines' Protection Society, an anti-Catholic and later chairman of the Central anti-Naymooth Committee. The proceedings continued peacefully

1. Foner, Douglass, pp. 67-69; Quarles, Douglass, pp. 46-47; Douglass, My Bondage and my Freedom, pp. 83-89. Cox subsequently reported to the New York Evangelist, complaining bitterly about the conduct of the "coloured abolition agitator and ultrist." Douglass wrote his reply to this on 30th October, for the Liberator, both letters being reprinted as Correspondence between the Rev. Samuel H. Cox, D.D., of Brooklyn, L.I., and Frederick Douglass (New York, 1846).


The explosion came during the morning session of the 28th, when the constitution and final terms of membership were being drawn up. At this juncture Hinton rose to propose an amendment to the First Clause, on membership—

"That in the First Clause, after the words 'those persons,' the words 'not being Slaveholders,' be inserted." Apart from more polite objections he argued simply against the admission of man-stealers, classed by the 1794 American General Assembly as "sinners of the first mark," to a Christian Union. 

After this, Sir Culling Eardley Smith, from the Chair, pointedly suggested thanking God for granting the grace "which had enabled Brethren to ... listen in silence to statements which had just been made." 

Dr. James promptly suggested the appointment of a Committee on slavery as a ground of membership. After long and confused debate, the last speech of the morning—which actually ended at 5 p.m.—was given by the Rev. Dr. Smyth of Charleston. He argued that introduction of the subject of slavery was inexpedient as involving the Alliance in political questions, as well as the problems of organisation and discipline of individual churches.


3. Ibid., pp. 304-309.
The debate continued in the evening session, when Dr. Wardlaw briefly argued against removing the meliorating influence of Christianity by denying communion to slaveholders, for which he was later greatly complimented in the Edinburgh Witness. ¹ Finally, it was agreed that the whole problem should be referred to a large committee including Drs. Cox, Patten, and Beecher, of the American party, but also Hinton, Nelson, and Standfield. ² Dr. F.A. Cox of Hackney was to be Chairman.

Eventually this Committee submitted a resolution of "confidence, that no Branch will admit to Membership slaveholders, who, by their own fault, continue in that position, retaining their fellow-men in slavery, from regard to their own interests." ³ The obvious loopholes in this rubric were at once attacked by Isaac Nelson. After much opposition from the floor, he was permitted to suggest an amendment, seconded by Standfield, "That, whereas it is impossible for the Conference to legislate for particular cases or exceptions, no Slaveholders be admitted to any Branch of the Alliance." Finally, the original motion of the Committee was carried all but unanimously. ⁴ During the morning session of Monday 31st, however, the Rev. Dr. Olin, Methodist delegate from Middletown, added to the confusion by insisting that

1. Ibid., pp. 322-325; Witness, 2.9.46.
3. Ibid., p. 371.
4. Ibid., pp. 372-385.
in America the Resolution would make them "the scorn of the Papist and the Universalist. All the low feelings of the country will be raised against us. Its patriotism, its nationalism, will be regarded as assailed." 1 Almost all the speakers took the side of the Americans until Hinton again rose to point out that if Saturday's motion had been one to exclude them, any motion to overrule it was one to exclude British abolitionists. 2 He threatened to walk out of the meeting, and was immediately backed up by Dr. Wardlaw, who stressed that they had already conceded much by admitting the possibility of exceptional cases of pious slaveholders in the loopholes to Saturday's resolution. It was then resolved to refer the whole matter to the same Committee. 3 Next day, they submitted a Report indicating that since the detailed arrangements for the Alliance in each country could not be settled, "it is expedient to defer the final and complete organization of the General Alliance.... till another General Conference." They went on to recommend that the Alliance should be divided into six divisions, namely the U.K.; U.S.A.; British North America; France, Belgium, and French Switzerland; North Germany; Southern Germany and German Switzerland. A new division,

1. Ibid., pp. 386ff., 390.
2. Ibid., pp. 422-425.
3. Ibid., p. 432.
the West Indies, was later added to this list. An attempt by
the Rev. Isaac Nelson to move a resolution binding all Branches
to exclude slaveholders was squashed, and after the most
acrimonious debate of the whole Conference, the Report was
adopted. In effect, the insistence of abolitionist members
on committing the Alliance as a whole to a critical position
on slavery had destroyed the hope of total union. The American
branch of the Alliance would now be autonomous. But at least
the American churches had been denied British clerical support
for their compromises on slavery.

The abolitionist response to these deliberations was sharply
divided. New Organisation supporters in this country were
well content with the negative triumph of preventing the emergence
of an Alliance committed in principle to the acceptance of slave-
holders and their apologists as Christians. Hinton himself eventually
spoke in favour of adopting the Report which recommended the
setting up of autonomous branches for this reason. The Broad
Street Committee seems to have shared this attitude. The September
Reporter, which went to press over the weekend, was suspicious of
the loopholes in the compromise Committee resolution of the Saturday.
Subsequent issues expressed pleasure at the exclusion of the slave-
holders from the British branch. The Committee meetings of the
D.F.A.S.S. indicated greater approval of the collapse of the

1. Ibid., pp. 436-450.

2. A.S.R., 1.9.46, 1.10.46, 2.11.46, 1.12.46.
Alliance plans. In mid-September it agreed that the terms of the final Report meant the effective exclusion of slaveholders, though subsequent meetings worked to adopt an Address to ensure continuing correct action from the British branch.\(^1\)

By and large, the B.F.A.S.S. seems to have been content with preventing the Alliance from uniting in a general organisation committing all members to acceptance of slaveholders.

The attitude of more extreme abolitionists was very different. The Reporter's criticism was nothing like as violent as that of the Garrisonians. They continued to hold mass meetings against the Alliance throughout September and October. They were aided by substantial press support. The London Patriot diverged from its usual alignment with Broad Street, perhaps because of Garrison's new friendship with its editor Josiah Conder.\(^2\) In the same way, Garrison's acquaintanceship with the Rev. Edward Miall, editor of the Nonconformist, produced at least one article in favour of the Old Organisation position on the Alliance.\(^3\) To Garrison's followers, the acceptance of even a federal connection with the American branch of the Alliance implied condoning slavery. This was the position taken at his various meetings in the provinces and London. Occasionally one of the Garrisonian leaders would have to rush to hold a meeting in some

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1. Minutes for 13.9.46, 30.10.46, 2.11.46, B.F.A.S.S. Minute Books, II.
2. London Patriot, 3.9.46, 17.9.46; Merrill, op.cit., p.194.
3. Cutting from Nonconformist, 23.9.46, in Thompson Scrapbooks, VI. Note that Miall was close to the Chartist movement — Norman, op.cit., p. 40n.
English town to counteract the effect of rallies held by sympathisers of the Alliance, as in Norwich. The most successful gathering was undoubtedly that of September 14th, in Exeter Hall, to which an audience of six thousand were attracted. A disproportionate amount of attention was given to the provinces, however, as was usual in Garrisonian campaigns. Apart from Scotland, most of the substantial towns in the Midlands and North Country were visited, apart from Garrison's and Douglass' trip to the West Country at the end of August. They were particularly successful in denouncing the Alliance in Bristol, where the local anti-slavery society was almost exclusively composed of Unitarians and Friends, and its activist members were Unitarian. In later years, Mary Estlin remembered their meetings as rekindling the serious Garrisonian abolition movement in Bristol. In Exeter, too, the town's most helpful abolitionist was the Unitarian Rev. John Bishop. It is debatable whether the touring of the Garrisonians

1. Great Anti-Slavery Meeting at Norwich, 2nd October, 1846, when the Proceedings of the Evangelical Alliance in Connection with American Slavery, were reviewed in the Speech of George Thompson, Esq. (Norwich, reprinted from Norwich Advertiser, 1846).

2. Garrison to H.B. Garrison, 17.9.46, loc. cit.; Patriot, 17.9.46.

3. See the itineraries in Garrison to H.B. Garrison, 17.9.46, Thompson to Webb, 13.10.46, both Garrison Papers.

had much effect on public opinion vis-à-vis the Alliance, which was more closely echoed by the Editor of the Great Western Local Chronicle who regarded "the sweeping denunciations of the slaveholders..... as intemperate and illiberal." 1

Wright was still publishing his most inflammatory material against the Alliance in Liverpool during the farewell meetings for Garrison early in November. 2 Though the British Alliance agreed to exclude slaveholders, it is likely that this was out of deference to the views of men like Hinton, Wardlaw, and Nelson, and not a reaction to external abolitionists pressure.

Garrison himself considered that his agitation against the Evangelical Alliance had been an unqualified success. 3 In fact this estimate was wildly inaccurate. First, the religious public had only partly disavowed slavery. They had not made any attempt to prevent American churches treating slaveholding as they wished, and would continue to cooperate with them as an Alliance through the federal structure. All they had done was harm the unity of the Alliance, to clear their own consciences. As the editor of The Watchman assured abolitionist evangelicals, they could now be assured that a member of the

1. Cutting from Great Western Local Chronicle, 10.10.40, in Thompson Scrapbooks, VI - this referred specifically to a meeting held in Broadmind Chapel on the 7th, by Estlin and Thompson.

2. Two of his broadsheets are preserved in Columbia University Library. They are American Slavery. Two Letters from Henry C. Wright to the Liverpool Mercury, respecting the Rev. Drs. Cox and Olin, and American Hanstealers, and Rev. Drs. Cox and Leifchild and American Hanstealers, (both Liverpool, 1846).

Alliance "will be in no wise implicated in [slavery], and
his conscience, however sensitive, may be at rest, so far
as his individual responsibility is concerned."  
Again, 
the American Branch of the Alliance, though much weakened as
as body, continued in its own way. Perhaps it was even closed
to abolitionist argument by the resentment of foreign interference
of which Dr. Olin had spoken. In any case, the conduct of
British evangelical leaders probably arose from internal influences
and was quite unconnected with external pressure from the
Garrisonians and their allies among the denominations excluded
from the Alliance. Garrison's triumph over the Evangelical
Alliance was thus a hollow one.

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The aggregate yield of the campaign to commit the British
churches to non-communion with slaveholders was disappointing.
Certainly isolated bodies like the Secession Church and the
Reformed Presbyterian Church changed their standpoint on the issue
during these years. But it is likely that they were doing so
because of a wish to emphasize their hostility to less enlightened
denominational enemies. On the other hand, at least the slavery
issue was kept constantly before the public eye. The commotion
created by men like Thompson and Douglass was good press. It
attracted extensive coverage even at a time of absorption in the

1. Cutting from The Watchman, 2.9.46, in Thompson Scrapbooks, VI.
Thompson had underlined this passage heavily.

2. A.S.R., 1.6.47.
campaign for free trade. Nevertheless, even the Anti-Slavery
League lost impetus after Garrison's return as excitement over
the Alliance and the Free Church died down, and Thompson returned
to his usual political activities. In January Estlin wrote that
due to the lack of respectable leaders, or indeed any leaders,
it "gets on but little." Beyond this, the visits of the
relatively dignified Douglass were later to be remembered as the
root of new abolition movements in several cities. But his work
was counterbalanced by Wright's instinct for flouting the
prejudices of the middle class public. In Scotland at least,
the Garrisonian movement was less strong after the agitation against
the churches had died down than it had been even after the disaster
of the 1841 schisms.

Once again, the real historical interest of the study of
British Garrisonianism in the 1840's does not lie in its effects
on either side of the Atlantic. The dominant issue which interested
abolitionists in this period was the relationship between the churches
and slavery. Differences over this abolitionist conundrum came
to be inextricably involved with the existing rivalries and schisms
among British Christians. The abolitionists themselves continued
to differ along the Old and New Organisation lines of 1841. In
turn they chose allies who were prepared to join in their agitation
against various sections of the churches. Thus provincial Friends
attacked metropolitan Friends over Indiana, Voluntaries and Residuraries

1. Estlin to May, 2.11.46, 12.1.47, May Papers.
attacked the Free Church in the Scottish controversy, while Friends and Unitarians attacked the Evangelical Alliance from outside, aided internally by Baptists like Hinton already at odds with the predominantly Calvinist leadership. In each controversy some anti-slavery progress was made, as one side tried to emphasize its abolitionist virtue at the expense of the other. Meanwhile the two main factions within the anti-slavery movement continued to quarrel over their different methods. Occasionally they would reinforce their differences by reference to the points at issue between the denominations or sects with whom they allied, for abolitionist reasons or their own strictly religious ones. The very general picture of tension between extremist provincial abolitionists allied to American visitors, and their more conservative rivals in the national organisation, was still applicable. All these processes are characteristic of the history of the British anti-slavery movement as a whole. At no time, however, do they appear more clearly than in the 1840's.
CHAPTER VII

THE FIFTIES; BRITISH ABOLITIONISTS, THE GREAT EXHIBITION, AND OLD CALABAR.

The issues which concerned British abolitionists in the fifties were essentially those of the forties. Chronic squabbling still weakened the movement. Indeed aggregate support during this period fell as a result. Only the modified abolitionism of Harriet Beecher Stowe was able to capture the enthusiasm which the complex arguments of the old anti-slavery societies had lost. The main theme of the decade was the hardening of the rivalries between Old and New Organisation. Their disagreements were often channelled into controversy over the great issue of the relationship between the churches in Britain and America. The difference between the moderate appeals of Broad Street and the extreme anti-clericalism of the Garrisonians still reflected their attitudes to the three major church crises of the forties. This became evident in the two new controversies over church policy which arose after 1850 - the national one over the reception of clerical visitors to the Great Exhibition, and the Scottish one over the conduct of the missions of the United Presbyterian Church in Old Calabar.

British abolitionists still agreed that it was their duty to criticise the American churches for their failure to take adequate action on slavery. This was their principal role, on which they had been repeatedly briefed by the leaders of the

1. See below, C. IX, passim.
American movement. At the 1840 World's Convention George Bradburn had assured the audience that if by British help "we could only get the 17,000 ministers in our land...right...it would give the monster slavery a blow, that would send him staggering to his own place." Exactly the same attitude to the importance of pressure on the American churches was taken in the 1850's. In 1854, for instance, the Garrisonian visitor Parker Pillsbury wrote to the sympathetic Leeds Mercury calling on the British press to remonstrate with the American clergy over the "appalling unanimity" of their support for the Fugitive Law. British abolitionists responded in their own way to these pleas for assistance. The controversies of the forties had demonstrated how much they differed over the approach to the church question, but this did not result in the problem being shelved. Both the Broad Street Reporter, now a monthly, and the new organ of the British Garrisonians, the Anti-Slavery Advocate, continually criticised the American churches. Both demanded that British churches should make this criticism known through their institutional contacts with the other side of the Atlantic. Though the two periodicals varied in the extremism of their attacks, they were united in the importance they attached to the subject. In August, 1850, for instance, the Reporter complained at length of the resolution of the New School Presbyterian General Assembly that "the holding of our fellow men in slavery, except in

1. e.g. Phillips to O. Johnson, n.d., in Liberator, 24.7.40.


3. Leeds Mercury, 8.7.54.
those cases where it is unavoidable by the laws of the State, the
obligations of guardianship, or the demands of humanity, is an offence
in the proper import of that term as used in the Book of Discipline."
The Reporter naturally felt that this rubric provided too many loopholes
for the slaveholder. It insisted that "the burden of showing the
existence of such circumstances rests upon him [the slaveholder]."

The Anti-Slavery Advocate, too, attacked the American churches from
the time of its foundation in 1852 onwards. Indeed one of its
regular features was a front page article dealing with a different
American denomination or benevolent organisation each month, outlining
its general history and its previous attitudes to slavery, and in
most cases pointing to the shortcomings of its present standpoint.  

As the fifties opened, the issue of communion was again drawn
to the attention of the British public because of the Great Exhibition
of 1851. It was rightly assumed by abolitionists that large numbers
of Americans would visit the country for the Exhibition. Again,
an unusually large number of American clergymen were expected to
combine business with pleasure by attending the May Anniversary
meetings of the British benevolent societies while in London for the
Exhibition, or vice versa. It was therefore urgent for abolitionists
to insist that churches and benevolent societies should refuse
communion or fellowship to all Americans connected with churches whose
standpoint on slavery was unsatisfactory. The Broad Street Committee
spent some time discussing what measures should be taken to influence
visiting Americans. Subsequently it printed ten thousand copies of

1. A.S.R., 1.8.50. See also ibid., 1.5.51, 2.6.51, 1.9.51,
1.4.53, 2.5.53, 1.11.54, 1.3.57, 1.5.60.

2. This feature continued from October, 1852, to August, 1854, with
a few exceptions in times of current excitement.
an Address to Christian at the Great Exhibition, prepared by Samuel Bowley of Gloucester. This was not only aimed at American visitors, but outlined the correct conduct to be observed towards them by British abolitionists. Effective testimony must be borne against slavery in all dealings with them, especially through the churches. Subsequently the B.F.A.S.S. held a soiree to remonstrate with visitors from the U.S.A., and carefully followed the proceedings other religious and benevolent bodies were taking to mark the Exhibition.

In fact the Broad Street Committee was less alone in its standpoint than it liked to imagine. Later in the year the Bristol and Clifton Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society, now under the Garrisonian leadership of Mary Estlin, carefully outlined its local activities to demonstrate how little of the abolitionist success at the Great Exhibition had resulted from the efforts of Broad Street. An appeal to visiting Americans printed in the Morning Advertiser during February had produced no response from the national society. The Bristol committee accordingly resolved to ask city ministers going to the May meetings to consider action.

1. Minutes for 7.3.51, 4.4.51, 21.4.51, 2.5.51, D.F.A.S.S. Minute Books, III. The same technique was later used against Latin-American slave traders expected to visit the 1862 Industrial Exhibition. See España y el tráfico de negros, observaciones que dirige la Sociedad Británica y extranjera contra la esclavitud a los señores Españoles (London, 1862), cited in A. Corwin, Spain and the Abolition of Slavery in Cuba, 1817-1886 (Austin, 1963), p.144.

2. A.S.B., 1.5.51.

3. Ibid., 2.6.51.

against American clergymen who had not denounced the Fugitive Slave Law. This was circulated among thirty-two local dissenting ministers. A similar resolution was passed at a gathering on April 9th to receive the fugitive couple William and Ellen Crafts. Subsequently these resolutions were sent to fifty-three anti-slavery associations, many religious bodies, and a hundred and twenty-three dissenting ministers known to be going to the May meetings, together with a broadsheet entitled Clerical Teachings on American Slavery. Although Broad Street claimed that its appeal of April 21st produced appropriate resolutions from the Congregational Union, the Baptist Union, the Evangelical Alliance, and others, the Bristol Report pointed out that most of them had been passed before the circular was printed in the Reporter on May 1st. Certainly the Special Report was correct in arguing that the B.F.A.S.S. had not been alone in campaigning for the Negro at the Great Exhibition. Apart from the Bristol Society, the Newcastle free produce lenders had devoted the April issue of their little periodical The Slave to outlining recommended treatment of American visitors. In its turn, The Slave was only writing in support of an article in the British Banner for March 5th. Its orders were to "Tell the slave-holder his faults faithfully; and if he hear us not, then place him under the ban of social excommunication."

1. Clerical Teachings on American Slavery (broadsheet, Bristol, 1851); copy in Garrison Papers.


3. The Slave, April, 1851.
The Great Exhibition marked one of the successes gained by British abolitionists in their campaign for a strong clerical testimony against slavery. Individual denominations and institutions had been active, making known their disapproval of American apologists for slavery. The Bristol and Gloucestershire Congregational Union, for instance, agreed not to admit any American ministers to their pulpits unless they first avowed their hatred of slavery. By June, the Reporter was able to print a substantial list of dissenting congregations and religious bodies which had taken action. It was hinted that this sample was only given "by way of illustration of the reception likely to be accorded to Americans visiting England for the Great Exhibition." Distrust of visitors was also shown by larger religious and benevolent bodies. The Temperance Demonstration Committee, for instance, resolved

"not to welcome...to any conference which may be held on the subject of temperance, any minister of religion, or other gentleman, whatever his reputation in his own country, who hesitates to avow his abhorrence of slavery, and his earnest desire for its abolition, or who acts under the influence of the unnatural prejudice against the coloured portion of the population."

This resolution must have seemed ironic to American ministers who had wondered whether temperance principles should be made a test of fellowship in the organisation of the Evangelical Alliance five years before. The Sunday School Union, too, devoted part

3. Ibid.
of the proceedings at its anniversary on May 8th to recording its "utter abhorrence" of slavery. Perhaps the greatest triumph was the action of the Congregational Union of England and Wales. The Scottish division of the Congregational Union, probably because of the influence of the Rev. Greville Ewing and Dr. Ralph Wardlaw of the G.E.S., had remonstrated with American congregationalists as early as 1840. In 1851 the issue of slavery was again raised at the national May meeting. In its debate on slavery the American Negro leader Henry Highland Garnet, demanded abolitionist action over the Great Exhibition. His reward was the adoption of a resolution that slaveholding "creates, in the judgment of this Union, an insuperable barrier to Christian fellowship with them on the part of all who reverence the authority of God." No mention was made of those connected with slavery other than the slaveholders themselves. However, this position was a substantial advance on the Scottish Remonstrance of 1840, when persuasion alone had been suggested and no mention made of sanctions against Southerners or their apologists. The same was true of the response of the British branch of the Evangelical Alliance, which was prompted by the Great Exhibition to abandon its 1846 compromise position. The project of a world Alliance in one organisation had been shelved by 1851, and the British division was now able to take the same attitude as


the Congregational Union - "Resolved...that slaveholders shall not be admissible as visitors to the proposed Conference."\(^1\)

Nevertheless, the shortcomings of this ruling were demonstrated when the 1851 Conference of the Alliance met in August. The prescription of slaveholders did not exclude their sympathisers. When the Old School Presbyterian the Rev. Dr. Baird, of New York, rose to report on the state of the Alliance in the U.S.A., he began a bitter debate by explaining that since the British criticisms in 1846, remonstrances on slavery had been "a deplorable failure." He attributed the Alliance's inadequate progress solely to the slavery question. The whole matter was finally referred to a committee. A week later it recommended hopefully that in future intercourse between the two countries, "all uncharitable actions and expressions be avoided."\(^2\)

Elements within the British division of the Evangelical Alliance had again raised the slavery issue to create much ill-feeling between themselves and the Alliance in the U.S.A. In this and other organisations, abolitionist sympathisers had completely avoided welcoming American visitors who might be connected with slavery.

Abolitionists were thus successful in bringing potential American opponents into disrepute at the time of the Great Exhibition. They were less so over the second Church/slavery

1. Ibid., 2.6.51.

controversy of the 1850's. This concerned the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland, and its missions in Old Calabar. In 1854 Scottish abolitionists discovered that Calabar society depended largely on slavery. The converts which U.P. missionaries were enthusiastically making were slaveholders without the slightest intention of abandoning their bondsmen. Slavery in Old Calabar was not analogous to that of the U.S.A., but abolitionist spokesmen were less interested in the slaves in the Delta than in the repercussions of missionary activities in America. They began to argue that the reception of slaveholders into communion in one area implied acceptance of the practice of doing so elsewhere. In effect, their conclusion was that if the U.P. missions accepted converts without persuading them to liberate their slaves first, they would encourage churches in the American South to continue sanctioning slavery by granting communion to slaveholders.

Scottish arguments over Old Calabar showed all the characteristics of the great church controversies of the previous decade. Dissident elements within the Church quickly leagued with its enemies in other denominations to attack its standpoint on slavery. Again, since the New Organisation leaders in Glasgow had a high proportion of U.P. members, the attack on the Church by the Garrisonians re-exposed many of the internal tensions in the anti-slavery movement. Although it attracted little attention outside Scotland, the Old Calabar affair is another excellent test case of the way in which abolitionists responded to the problems of church relations with America.

The key figure in the abolitionist denunciation of the U.P. Church was the Rev. Dr. William Lillie of Edinburgh. Not previously involved in the anti-slavery movement, or at least in its controversial divisions, he remained poised between the Garrisonians and their opponents throughout the incident. Although cooperating with his Church's more extreme opponents, like Eliza and Jane Wigham, he maintained a close liaison with the Reporter and later became a close friend of Lewis Tappan. 1

The illusion of cooperation between the two factions was maintained by the improvement in relations between them since the resignation of John Scoble from his post as B.F.A.S.S. Secretary in 1834. Since 1840 Garrisonians had been denouncing Scoble as the man who had duped the Broad Street philanthropists into ignoring the corruption of the American and Foreign Society. 2 Thompson, for instance, tried to guard against the effects of Scoble's 1851 Canadian trip by writing that Garrison should "expose him unsparingly...His malignity can do no more harm [; ] his pretended friendship.....would bring a disgrace and a curse"


2. Their accusations may have sprung from awareness of Scoble's extraordinary conservatism on the race issue. After painting his composite portrait of the 1840 Convention, Benjamin Haydon recollected that when he wished to place Scoble together with Thompson and a Negro delegate, "He sophisticated immediately on the propriety of placing the Negro in the background." B. Haydon, Life, Letters, and Table Talk, cited in E. B. Dykes, The Negro in English Romantic Thought (Washington, 1912), p.153.
upon us. As early as 1841, Webb felt that the Broad Street Committee had been "led astray" by Scoble. Ten years later, J. B. Estlin was still complaining of the harm done to good men by the process of "Scobleizing," and of "the shameful injustice systematically perpetrated for years against Mr. Garrison by Jos. Sturge & John Scoble." Probably Scoble's success in turning the B.F.A.S.S. against Garrison was partly due to the structure of the national benevolent societies, where paid secretaries were given unlimited power due to the recurrent absence of their committee. In either case, Scoble finally resigned to go off to permanent work in the Dawn settlement in Ontario. His replacement as Secretary at Broad Street was Louis Alexis Chamorovzow, a man much more acceptable to the Garrisonians. Apart from remodelling the

1. Thompson to A.W. Weston, 15.8.51, Weston Papers. The Garrisonian case against Scoble is best summed up in E. Quincy, An Examination of the Charges of Mr. John Scoble and Mr. Lewis Tappan against the American Anti-Slavery Society (Dublin, 1852). The manuscript of this pamphlet is preserved in the B.P.L.

2. Webb to Collins, 24.3.41, Garrison Papers.

3. Estlin to M. W. Chapman, 3.4.52, Weston Papers.


5. For an account of Scoble's subsequent quarrels with Josiah Henson, see W. H. & J. H. Pease, Black Utopia, pp. 77-81.
Reporter, he devotedly set about trying to heal the division in the British movement. American abolitionists remained suspicious. Mrs. Chapman, characteristically scenting conspiracy, was convinced that Chamorovzow was a tool of the B.F.A.S.S. clique, while Parker Pillsbury pummed that "I see no hope of any but a Cham.union." Only Sarah Pugh, closely under Mary Estlin's influence, gave Chamorovzow credit for his intentions, and called for an end to the cavilling against him. Among British abolitionists, however, Chamorovzow's initial reception was much better. Mary Estlin in particular was enthusiastic about Scoble's replacement, and she and her father entertained him regularly at their lodgings throughout their usual spring visit to London. Even Webb approved of Chamorovzow's plans to convert the B.F.A.S.S. Committee, though he had little hope for their success. By the end of 1853, however, open conflict between Pillsbury and Chamorovzow, which came to a head at the General Anti-Slavery Conference of November 1854, had made real unity impossible. But relations between Bristol and London remained somewhat better for the rest of the decade. This and the uncommitted position taken by Dr. Lillie partly disguised the tensions between abolitionists involved in the Old Calabar controversy.

2. S. Pugh to S. May, Jr., 3.10.54, Garrison Papers.
3. M. Estlin to A. W. Weston, 4.3.53, Weston Papers; Pillsbury to Garrison, 5.10.54, Garrison Papers.
5. See below, pp. 457-462.
In October, 1854, Dr. Lillie first drew abolitionist attention to the Old Calabar missions in a letter to Chamorovzow. He explained that he wished to stir up feeling within the Church against the lines on which the Nigerian missions were being run, and asked that the case should be fully reported in the next Reporter. The November issue actually carried a second letter from Lillie, denouncing an article in the October Missionary Record which stated that the Old Calabar mission only required local slaveholders to sign a declaration of intention to treat their slaves well before admitting them to communion. He explained that the Church had previously rejected contacts with suspect U.S. churches. The conduct of their missionaries would bring forward ten thousand Southerners to sign a declaration similar to the one made in Old Calabar, send money to the mission there, "and, in doing so...rightly judge that they have made a capital investment for the interests of slavery." Lillie's accusations must have caused some excitement in Scotland. The U.P. Church, though small, had not so far fallen behind the other Scottish denominations in its position on slavery, while the Relief Secession and Original Secession churches which formed it in 1847 had previously led the Voluntary agitation against the Free Church on the slavery issue. Indeed it had been sufficiently involved in the abolitionist movement to send Henry Highland Garnet to Jamaica as one of its missionaries after his Scottish tour as a free produce agent in 1852.

2. A.S.R, 1.11.54.
3. The Slave, July, 1852.
body of Christian opinion held that differing attitudes to slavery should not be allowed to create disunity in missionary activities abroad. This had been the attitude of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions before its division in 1846, and at least one pamphlet had been published in America specifically to argue that slavery was irrelevant to the conversion of the heathen.¹

The controversy within the A.B.C.F.M. in 1845 and 1846 had largely revolved round the reception to be given to slaveholding when it was found entrenched by custom in heathen societies, though the attitudes to the controversy were formed by the relation of the parties involved to slavery at home. The lines of the arguments over Lillie's exposures had already been laid down in the American controversies of the previous decade. By the beginning of 1855, Eliza Wigham reported that "we are quite in an excited state here about the United Presbyterians and their Calabar converts," and looked forward to the storm expected to break out at the U.P. Synod in May.²

1. S. Williston, Slavery not a Scriptural Ground of Division in Efforts for the Salvation of the Heathen (New York, 1844). This position was attacked by A. Phelps, Address to the Friends of Evangelical Missions, in Syracuse Liberty Intelligencer, 26.2.46, reprinted in Scotland in [J. Dunlop], American Anti-Slavery Conventions, etc., pp. 11-40. Dunlop attacked the A.B.C.F.M. in American Slavery. Organic Sins, passim.

Just as the Free Church Assembly had done in 1846, the United Presbyterian Synod of 1855 made no concession to the abolitionists. It testified to its horror of slavery and maintained its old policy. The similarity in its response to abolitionist pressure is most significant, since the U.P Church had been formed by the amalgamation of the two denominations previously most active in assailing the Free Church for its inadequate testimony against slavery, the Relief Secession and United Secession Churches.¹ In 1846, as Voluntaries, they had been prepared to attack a denominational rival. In 1855, they allowed their institutional loyalty to their Church to prevent them from joining abolitionists of other church loyalties in their criticisms. W. H. Lillie was the only exception to this tendency, and it quickly emerged at the 1855 Synod that he was not influential enough to produce any change in policy in Old Calabar.² Perhaps remembering the anti-Free Church outcry from the Secession and Relief Churches in 1846, Lillie wrote of the Synod decision as a "compromise of Anti-Slavery principle - by a denomination which had hitherto borne a consistent testimony against admitting Slaveholders to Christian fellowship." The incident confirmed his suspicion that the leaders of the British churches "are quite ready to sacrifice their Anti-Slavery principles, for the sake of standing well, with their 'American


2. United Presbyterian Record, June, 1855.
Brethren. No might have added that the U.P. Church also wished to stand well with its Old Calabar converts. The attempt to connect the spread of Christianity there with the destruction of African slavery would have brought all missionary efforts to a halt. This would have been doubly serious when missions were not only an end in themselves, but also an essential outlet for the surplus manpower in the clerical profession. The U.P. Church, because of its composite origins, controlled five theological colleges, with an annual enrolment of twenty-nine students, all destined for employment in a denomination consisting of little more than four hundred congregations. Indeed overcrowding at the top was a factor in most Scottish denominations at this stage. It was perhaps because of an understanding of this implication of the adoption of the ultra-abolitionist standpoint on missions that the bulk of the Scottish press, by Lillie's account, remained "dumb." The only exception was the Edinburgh News, the conservative organ of the Church of Scotland, which had had few excess ministers since the Disruption, and naturally accepted a chance of denouncing the Voluntaries. In the following year, Lillie was also able to persuade the Glasgow Chronicle, a paper which had been critical of abolitionist activities since changing hands in 1839, to print some of his correspondence against the U.P. Church and its ally.


Apart from these isolated newspapers, the abolitionists and Dr. Lillie, carried on their agitation alone. At first both Old and New Organisations cooperated, as in the early stages of the Free Church controversy in 1845. Mrs. Kynoch of Edinburgh was speaking for abolitionists of all shades of opinion, other than U.P. ones, when she wrote that the May Synod had "acted shamefully" over Old Calabar. New Organisation abolitionists were first to denounce the U.P. Church, through the columns of the Reporter. Indeed Lewis Tappan himself had written Lillie at length insisting on the importance of the precedents being set by the Church.

Tappan had received information from Lillie, together with a copy of his pamphlet on the question of communion with slaveholders in relation to the U.P. missions. He pointed out in reply that the American Missionary Association mission at Kaw-Mendi, originally the Mendi Mission begun by the unfortunate Amistad captives, had been operating for some fifteen years on the principle of refusing communion to all slaveholders and slave-traders. He then outlined the efforts of the Rev. John J. Fee and others at setting up churches in Kentucky and North Carolina on the principle of denying communion to slaveholders. His conclusion was a

1. Lillie to Editor of Glasgow Chronicle, 27.3.56, reprinted in A.S.R., 1.11.56. From April, 1838, until the demise of the Argus in 1847, the G.E.S. published its proceedings there rather than in the Chronicle - Minute for 10.4.38, G.E.S. Minute Books, II. The Chronicle's friendly editor, David Prentice, had died in October, 1837, and a memorial to his services was adopted by the Committee - Minute for 31.10.1837, ibid.


3. Lillie to Tappan, 14.2.55, 23.2.55, Tappan Papers. The pamphlet has not been traced.
directive for the British churches in relation to slavery -

"Nothing... will have so beneficial [an] effect on the consciences and hearts of slaveholders, who are Christians, as denying them church privileges until they free themselves from all complicity with slavery and slaveholding.... Let not the United Pres. Chh. of Scotland weaken our hands and obstruct our usefulness by a contrary practice."¹

As for the adverse decision in May, Tappan later wrote that it had "filled the hearts of thousands of anti-slavery people in this country with anguish."² Some of his New Organisation counterparts in Britain, however, did their best to put pressure on the United Presbyterian Church. Although the Broad Street Committee did not discuss the Calabar incident, much interest was shown by Chamerovzow himself. Like Scoble, he was very much in control of the Society's affairs. After printing Lillie's letter in the November Reporter,³ his next issue did not mention the U, P. Church. However, most of its space was devoted to denouncing the Rev. Cuthbert Young, the agent of the A.B.C.F.M. in this country.⁴ Since the main point under criticism was the Board's policy of admitting Indian slaveholders to its Choctaw Mission, the line of the Reporter on foreign missions and its implications for Old Calabar were clear. The paper's interest in the activities of Lillie and the Scottish abolitionists was

1. L. Tappan to W. Lillie, 16.3.53, Letterbooks, IX, Tappan Papers.
3. Ibid., 1.11.54.
4. Ibid., 1.12.54.
maintained into 1856, when the Reporter temporarily joined the Garrisonians to attack the Glasgow New Association for the Abolition of Slavery, which had a high enough membership of U.P. ministers and sufficient native conservatism to have endorsed the decision of the 1855 Synod. ¹

Probably because the new Glasgow Association was in the hands of U.P. ministers tonguetied by their own Church loyalties, the initiative within Scotland in the Old Calabar controversy remained with the Garrisonians. The E.E.S. had been largely inactive for several years, and no New Organisation society was effective until the formation of the New Edinburgh Anti-Slavery Association on June 20th, 1854. From the outset, Garrisonians considered it too sectarian, and its aims too general. ² Its committee contained many of the members of the old Emancipation Society, including Edward Cruickshank, Henry Wigham, Dr. Greville, and the Rev. James Ballantyne. At least two Free Church leaders, the Rev. Drs. Duncan and Candlish, also joined its committee, as did Dr. Lillie of the U.P. Church. Duncan McLaren, the Provost of the city, became its president. Its aim was stated to be immediate emancipation and it was to consist of "all persons, without distinction of creed, country, or complexion," who agreed on this principle. ³ Notwithstanding this apparently liberal constitution, the Advocate objected to the failure to mention the

1. Ibid., 1.5.56, 1.11.56.
2. Anti-Slavery Advocate, August, 1854. This conveys a full account of the proceedings at its inaugural in Scottish Press, 23.6.54.
American Garrisonians, and concluded that "A society hampered at its outset by dislikes, jealousies, and bigotry, can never labour with much heartiness and efficiency." It was certainly the case that the new society made no effort to denounce the U.P. Church during the next two years. The probable reason for this was that the Free Church ministers who had halfheartedly returned to the anti-slavery movement, however enthusiastic they felt about discrediting Voluntaries, could not afford to hamstring their own church's foreign missions by setting a precedent of opposition to the conversion of slaveholders.

The formation of this New Organisation successor to the E.E.S. did not materially affect the Scottish situation since it not only sporadically and was little heard of for the rest of the decade. The more permanent addition to the conservative Scottish anti-slavery societies in this period was the so-called Edinburgh Ladies' New Anti-Slavery Association, founded by Douglass' agent Miss Julia Griffiths in the spring of 1856. Committed to support of Frederick Douglass' Paper and the Rochester Bazaar, it held exactly the same position between Old and New Organisation as the Rochester Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society. Just as Douglass' followers were most hostile to Garrison in America, however, the Edinburgh Ladies' New Association was more directly in rivalry with the Scottish Garrisonians than with Broad Street. A society founded by

1. Anti-Slavery Advocate, August 1854.

Julia Griffiths in Scotland had to compete directly for produce to send to the Rochester Bazaar, with the Garrisonian ladies' societies which already sent their sewing, basketwork, and other knickknacks to Mrs. Chapman's Boston Bazaar.\(^1\) Competition of this sort was to continue until 1859, when Mrs. Chapman unaccountably and offensively announced that anti-slavery bazaars had outlived their usefulness, and directed that all Scottish goods collected should be sent to Mrs. Mott's Philadelphia Bazaar, rather than allowing them to fall into Douglass' Anti-Garrisonian hands.\(^2\) However, the now Edinburgh society took no part in the Old Calabar controversy. Eliza Wigham once wrote bitterly of Julia Griffiths that "she has acted on the prejudices of thoroughly conscientious religious people to so great an extent that they are forming a Christian Anti-Slavery Society in Edinburgh and leaving on the left hand our poor Society which truly has been innocent enough." As for its membership, she reported that it was "principally" from the U.P. Church. The ladies involved "to prove their Anti-Slavery have formed their Soc'y to help Julia."\(^3\)


2. M. W. Chapman to M. Estlin, 3.3.58, Estlin Papers, B.P.L.; May to Webb, 13.4.58, May Papers; Note the bitter resentment at this in E. Wigham to May, 16.4.58, ibid.

3. E. Wigham to May, 4.4.56, ibid.
She enclosed a copy of a note from Lillie making the same suggestion. On another occasion she mentioned that its members were largely U.P., "with the addition of some Free Church ladies who are glad to show anti-slavery in opposition to a troublesome association like ours."¹ Neither the new ladies' association nor the new Men's society in Edinburgh thus joined Lillie's campaign. As for the New Organisation in Glasgow, this was even less likely to stir. It was now represented by the Glasgow New Association for the Abolition of Slavery, which had been formed by J.W.C. Pennington in 1850 as a body working in opposition to the atrophied but still Garrisonian G.E.S. With male and female branches working in close cooperation, its main aim was to contribute to the Bazaar held in aid of the New York Vigilance Committee.² Its membership was dominated by Voluntary ministers who had joined in the Free Church agitation, but distrusted the Garrisonian views of the G.E.S. Unlike the new Edinburgh Society, it throve greatly, especially through inviting Mrs. Stowe to visit this country.³ By 1853 the Glasgow New Female Association for the Abolition of Slavery alone claimed receipts of £711:10:6, almost four times the figure for the old Emancipation Society, and five times that of the G.F.A.S.S.⁴ On the other hand

1. E. Wigham to Chamerovzow, 3.5.56, Bod. Brit. Emp. MSS. 18, C37/75.
2. Smeal to Chamerovzow, 16.4.53, ibid., C36/52; Bristol Special Report, pp. 23-26; A.S.R., 2.5.53.
4. A.S.R., 2.5.53
hand, the U.P. membership of the New Association made it unwilling to quarrel over Old Calabar. Its 1835 Report specifically endorsed the decision of the May Synod.¹ This was not surprising considering its Committee consisted mainly of U.P. ministers "who are bound as an A.S. Association to endorse their own acts as a Mission Board."² Since the Female New Association in Glasgow was firmly under male control, New Organizationists there remained as silent over Old Calabar as their Edinburgh counterparts. The difficulties created by the church affiliation of members made it impossible for Scottish Tappanites to take the lead suggested by the Reporter and Tappan himself, and remonstrate forcibly with the U.P. Church.

The wholehearted Scottish attack on the United Presbyterians thus came from the Scottish Garrisonians. They too were spurred on by the exposures of their national newspaper, the Anti-Slavery Advocate. Edited by Richard D. Webb and supported by funds from John Bishop Estlin and Wilson Armistead, the Quaker philanthropist of Leeds, it was quick to respond to Lillie's accusations. It may be assumed that Lillie was not in direct correspondence with Webb, since their letters would otherwise have been preserved with the Garrison Papers in Boston. The Advocate nevertheless greeted the news of the May Synod with an article entitled "A Delicate Question Respecting Slavery at Calabar."³ Webb reported that slavery was universal at Calabar, and that it was "impossible" to emancipate.

1. Ibid., 1.11.56.
2. E. Wigham to Chamerovzow, 3.5.56, loc.cit.
3. Anti-Slavery Advocate, June, 1835.
The Rev. Alexander Somerville had explained to the Synod that once converts pledged their belief that all men were equal in the sight of God, and that they would regard those placed under them as servants rather than property, they effectively ceased to be slaveholders; the slaves became a sort of de facto hired labourer. Although Webb wrote that he did not "feel competent to decide on the niceties of the case," the Advocate strongly commended "the godly jealousy shown by some members in their watchfulness to keep their body free from contamination." Finally, it warned against the "danger in giving slavery the slightest foothold in the church." Later the Advocate was stirred to stronger opposition to the U.P. Church by the revelation of its connection with the New Organisation in Glasgow and Edinburgh. The other active British Garrisonian paper showed less interest in the Old Calabar controversy. The British Friend, oddly enough, made no mention of the U.P. Church at all, although Smeal spent the years from 1854 to 1856 complaining about the conduct of the Glasgow New Association in other respects. Perhaps this was because the U.E.B. was now so weak that any public protest was impossible. Its last report had been issued in 1851. In 1853 Smeal had little to tell Chamerovzow about its activities apart from its popular 'Uncle Tom Penny Offering' rally and the continual attempts to have it "altogether swamped by those of

1. Ibid., May, 1856.
new views.¹ Although G.E.S. activity continued sporadically until after the Civil War, the Society was in no position to repeat its action against the Free Church over delinquencies of the U.P.'s in 1852. As for the English Garrisonians, national leaders like Thompson and Armistead were absorbed in the project of founding a new national society in the form of the Manchester Anti-Slavery Union.² Again, the extremist group in Bristol were temporarily hamstrung in 1855 by the death of J. B. Estlin.³ For various reasons, then, the attention devoted to the United Presbyterian Church by Garrisonians, even in Scotland, was not great. What there was was concentrated on the Edinburgh Ladies' Emancipation Society, led by Eliza Wigham, later assisted by Webb. Even its reaction fully demonstrates the tension between Old and New Organisation abolitionists created by crises of this sort.

Although personally Garrisonian, Eliza and Jane Wigham had reacted well to Chamerovzow's initial efforts to bring the provincial societies back into alignment with the B.F.A.S.S.

1. Smeal to Chamerovzow, 16.4.53, Bod.Brit.Emp.Mss.S.18, C36/52. After a slight revival from 1851-1854, the G.E.S. began to suffer from the counter-attraction offered by the Glasgow New Association, which it had decided to ignore at a committee meeting on 26.4.52, minuted in G.E.S. Minute Books, IV. Vol. IV of the Minute Books contains no reference to Old Calabar, although only one meeting was held in 1855, and none thereafter until 1859.


After first meeting him Eliza wrote that "I hope that our understanding somewhat of our relative positions may assist us in working more effectively for the good cause." From this point onwards, she corresponded regularly with him about the work of the E.L.E.S. By 1855 she was even asking him for an article on the Boston Bazaar in the Reporter on the grounds that "whatever may be said of it or its supporters it is a grand national demonstration which commands attention from friends and foes." A compromise position must have been all the more attractive because of the difficulties of allaying local distrust of pure Garrisonian abolition. The E.L.E.S. had a substantial membership less catholic in reform tastes than their Boston allies, and both Eliza and Jane Wigham constantly complained of the damage done to their support by the Liberator. Jane Wigham once explained that the hardest part of their labour was meeting the objections made against the American Society. She was sure that Garrison

"cannot be aware of the injury he is doing the cause of Religion and humanity, by inserting the writings of Foster, Barker, Pillsbury and H. C. Wright regarding the Holy Scriptures...I wish if thou hast any influence with W.L.O. thou would advise him to leave the bible alone - If all acted to its instructions there would neither be war nor slavery...It is a sad mistake to mix up anything with anti-slavery action that has such a tendency to alienate its true friends." 3


2. E. Wigham to Chamerovzow, 14.7.53, ibid., C37/70.

3. J. Wigham to A. W. Weston, 18.11.52, Weston Papers. See also E. Wigham to M. Estlin, 28.4.53, ibid.; J. Wigham to A.W. Weston, 9.11.53, ibid.
The conservatism of Scottish attitudes to revelation and clerical status made it difficult to raise wide support for the men behind the Liberator. It was certainly because of this genuine difficulty that the Edinburgh Ladies' Society decided to stop sending its annual box to the Boston Bazaar in 1850.¹ Eliza Wigham herself wrote that this had arisen from "a progressive feeling of dissatisfaction... respecting the religious arguments of the American abolitionists."² At the beginning of August, the Edinburgh Ladies adopted a series of Expressions of Sentiment on the American abolitionists. Three main criticisms were made here. First, sentiments considered derogatory to the character of the Bible had been put forward on the anti-slavery platform. Secondly, leading members of the American Society had expressed principles "infidel in their opinion, and blasphemous against God." Thirdly, "by holding such sentiments, we could not expect the blessing of God to rest upon our efforts."³ Accordingly, it was agreed that the sending of a box by the Society should be ended, though individual members might continue to make their contributions through the box organised in Glasgow by Catherine Paton of the Garrisonian Glasgow Female Anti-Slavery Society.

1. c.f. Paton to Garrison, 7.2.51, Garrison Papers, which accuses the Wighams of having been influenced by the Richardson family of Newcastle.

2. E. Wigham to M. Estlin, 13.9.50, Estlin Papers, B.P.L.

3. Minute of E.L.E.S. for 1.8.50, and Expressions of Sentiment Tendered by Members of the Edinburgh Ladies' Emancipation Society & the Meeting of Committee, copies in Westton Papers. Although reports were published by the Society during this period, these have perished along with the minutes. Events have to be reconstructed from correspondence.
The latter was the course followed by Eliza Wigham. She shared the distrist of the anti-Bible heresies but argued that this need not mean stopping contributions.1 Perhaps because of a gentle letter from Miss Weston pointing out that all Bazaar money went to the support of the Anti-Slavery Standard, which was a very far cry from the Liberator,2 contributions gradually picked up again over the remaining eight years of the Bazaar's existence. Nevertheless, the whole incident is indicative of the difficulties which faced the Garrisonians in Edinburgh in the fifties, and the necessity to "mollify" the conservative committee.3 A favourable response to Chamerovzow's overtures was thus the obvious one for the leaders of the Ladies' Society to make.

When the Old Calabar controversy developed, Miss Wigham was still corresponding with Chamerovzow, and with Lillie gave him the material for the Reporter's coverage of the Scottish situation. However, the behaviour of the New Organisation societies, in Glasgow and Edinburgh, soon pushed her into a more familiar standpoint of opposition to the allies of Garrison's enemies among the Scottish clergy. This did not necessarily negate Edinburgh cooperation with Chamerovzow, but strikingly shows the depth of rivalry between Old and New Organisation abolitionists within Scotland.

1. E. Wigham to A. W. Weston, 30.3.50, Weston Papers.
   An identical position is taken in A. W. Weston to M. Estlin, 7.9.50, Estlin Papers, B.P.L.

2. A. W. Weston to E. Wigham, 15.9.50, copy, Weston Papers.

3. M. Estlin to A. W. Weston, 8.5.51, Ibid.
In March, 1855, an "Edinburgh New Ladies' Anti-Slavery Association" was founded under the patronage of Miss Julia Griffiths.¹ According to Eliza Wigham she had approached the old Ladies' Society for contributions, and had been refused "because our little funds could not afford it." She had therefore formed a "more Christian" Association to "punish" them by drawing away "the sincere among us who are more jealous for orthodoxy than for the slave."² Although she mildly stated that "we intend to maintain no hostile relation,"³ the emergence of the new Ladies' Association embittered her sufficiently to notice its connection with the U.P. Church. No doubt it was partly from chagrin at Julia Griffiths coup against the Garrisonians that she wrote to Chamerovzow and May denouncing this connection.⁴

The effect of the Glasgow New Association's apathy over Old Calabar was similar. The female New Anti-Slavery Association had been founded in 1850 by Pennington and the male one in 1852, to the annoyance of the G.E.S., which he had simultaneously tried to conciliate.⁵ It may well be that his organising a new society

1. A.S.R., May, 1856. Miss Griffiths was a Newcastle abolitionist who had emigrated specially to help Douglass. For an account of her relationship with Douglass see Foner, Douglass, pp. 87-92; Quarles, Douglass, pp. 97-95, 103-107.
3. E. Wigham to Chamerovzow, 18.4.56, loc.cit.
4. Ibid.; E. Wigham to May, 4.4.56, loc.cit.
was a reaction to the G.B.S. refusal to contribute money towards purchasing his freedom, which would have gone quite outside the orthodoxy of Garrisonian abolition. The bitterness left behind from Pennington's conduct had been accentuated by the success of the Ladies New Association in inviting Mrs. Stowe to this country in 1853, although the less ambitious Emancipation Society had opened local 'Stoweite' proceedings in the previous November, when it had held an enormous rally in launch the 'Uncle Tom Penny Offering' in the city. It was perhaps because of the prestige thus gained by the New Association, that Glasgow Garrisonians had such difficulty in raising support thereafter. But although the G.B.S. was too weak to attack the U.P. Church, this did not prevent the more flourishing Edinburgh Ladies' Society from linking the wrongs done to the Garrisonians by the Glasgow New Association with its apathy over Old Calabar. Their hostility must have been increased since Pennington's influence ensured that any American contributions made by the Glasgow New Association were to go to the New York Vigilance Committee. American Garrisonians saw this as a New Organisation clique carrying out piecemeal benevolence to avoid facing the fact that slavery could only be overthrown through a breach of

1. Minute for 18.2.52, G.E.S. Minute Books, IV.

2. Shepperson suggests that this increased tension between the two bodies, S.H.R., 1953, p. 44. See also Smeal to Chamerovzow, 16.4.53, loc. cit.; Smeal to Garrison, 2.3.53, Garrison Papers; Minutes for 9.11.52, 10.11.52, 15.2.53, G.E.S. Minute Books, IV.
connections with the South.¹

After the May Synod decision, the New Association made no attempt to condemn the U.P. Church. On the contrary, its Annual Report, published in the spring of 1856, seems to have justified the suggestions made at the Synod that the way to win over the slaveholder from his opinions was to indoctrinate him from within the church, incidentally exactly the position taken by the Free Church in 1846.² At the end of March Lillie himself had prolonged the controversy by writing to the Glasgow Chronicle about the American effects of the U.P. decision. He gave extracts from one of Tappan's letters to prove that the pro-slavery churches "hail it as evidence of a new light having dawned on the United Presbyterian Church," while abolitionists felt "as soldiers when a standard-bearer fainteth."³ Richard D. Webb reprinted this letter in the Advocate together with his own criticisms of the U.P. Church and a long denunciation of the New Associations in Glasgow and Edinburgh.⁴ Meanwhile, Eliza Wigham had also

1. Printed circular Appeal of the New Glasgow Ladies' Anti-Slavery Association provisional committee, May, 1850, Weston Papers. For Garrisonian criticism of this support for the Vigilance Committee, see Maria Weston Chapman to the Glasgow Female Seceders (printed circular, 8.6.50, Paris).

2. No copy of the Report appears to survive in a major British library. Its controversial sections are most conveniently condensed in A.S.R., 1.5.56.

3. Lillie to Editor of Glasgow Chronicle, 27.3.54, loc.cit.

written to Chamerovzow asking him to insert a copy of the Chronicle letter.¹ Finding that the May Reporter contained no mention of Calabar, she wrote more brusquely a month later to find out why this was so, especially since the letter must certainly have arrived in time and would have been "very useful" since the U.P. Synod for 1856 was to meet in a few days time.² She appeared to have lost hope of converting the Glasgow Tappanites, but at least felt that Lillie's letter would have "rebuked [their] shallow opinion." It is possible that Chamerovzow had simply omitted the letter due to a crush of copy, since Miss Wigham's April letter comes after her May one in the Chamerovzow letter files, perhaps suggesting that it remained in the printer's hands with Lillie's press clipping until after the second letter arrived. In either case, Chamerovzow finally found room to print what Miss Wigham had asked for in November. Although not including Lillie's letter, the May Reporter had commented on the support for the action of the U.P. Church in its review of the Annual Report of the Glasgow New Association.³ The November issue, however, went further, printing the complete text of Lillie's March Glasgow Chronicle letter, including an extract from the indubitably pro-slavery New York Observer lauding the action

1. E. Wigham to Chamerovzow, 18.4.56, loc.cit.
2. E. Wigham to Chamerovzow, 3.5.56, loc.cit.
3. A.S.R., 1.5.56.
of the U.P. Church, and the extract from Tappan's letter on the
general bad effects of its refusal to change mission policy.¹
The implied condemnation of the Glasgow New Association by the
Reporter was obvious enough.

Miss Wigham's efforts over Old Calabar thus had the peculiar
result of enlisting the help of a conservative English abolitionist
against his own ally in Glasgow. Beyond this, however, the
effect of her own and Dr. Lillie's agitation against the United
Presbyterian Church was slight. As a smaller denomination its
shortcomings, unlike those of the Free Church, had not seemed
important enough to attract American visitors. Again, the
nature of the U.P.'s 'pro-slavery' action was such that ministers
of rival denominations would have been hamstrung in using the
Old Calabar issue to launch an attack on it. Doing so would
have created precedents likely to make their own missionary
enterprises unworkable. Few Scottish churches received financial
assistance from Charleston, but all sent their younger divines
to missions in slave-ridden heathen societies. For these
reasons, the direct importance of the U.P. agitation is small.
The Old Calabar mission continued as it had done in the past,
and no abolitionist criticism of its policy on the admission of
slaveholders was heard after 1856.

Nevertheless, the Calabar controversy showed all the
characteristics of the greater crises over slavery and the
churches in the previous decade. The clergy of the U.P. Church,

¹. Ibid., 1.11.56.
for reasons of institutional loyalty, took a standpoint on communion with slaveholders completely opposed to the one they had championed as Secession and Relief Secession ministers in 1846. Again, close contacts with the church under criticism muffled opposition from the New Associations in Glasgow and Edinburgh, just as the old E.E.S. had remained lukewarm in 1846, and the B.F.A.S.S. had remained silent over Indiana. Finally, the abolitionist rivals of the anti-slavery societies which remained quiescent over Old Calabar, were quick to point this out to pay off old scores and press home an advantage against enemies within the movement. It was doubtless for this reason that Eliza Wigham and the Advocate, defensive over the emergence of frankly anti-Garrisonian societies in both the main Scottish cities, used the Old Calabar affair to demonstrate the venality of their opponents. Interestingly enough, the main ally they enlisted, due to the change of leadership and intentions at Broad Street, was the Secretary of the B.F.A.S.S. But it was only in this last respect that the Calabar controversy was atypical. As in the forties, the characteristics of a dispute of this sort were the use of the anti-slavery issue as ammunition in church rivalries, and the use of the church issue as ammunition in anti-slavery rivalries. The Scottish arguments over the

1. Of known E.E.S. Committee members in 1846, at least Ziegler and Tod were Free Church members. The composition of the Committee also meant that many of its members moved and had acquaintances in professional circles, where the Free Church was extremely strong.
organisation of one West African mission have little long term importance, but the way in which these arguments were used provides another example of the importance of church relations with slavery in the British abolition movement.
CHAPTER VIII

NEW ALLIES FOR THE SCOTTISH GARRISONIANS, AND
THE SURVIVAL OF ABOLITIONIST DISUNITY

Unfortunately the British Garrisonians of the fifties did not confine their squabbles to controversy over the relation between slavery and the churches. As the decade opened, support for the anti-slavery societies was declining, and they were faced with new and more virulent forms of racism. Yet abolitionist leaders dissipated the movement's energies through constant exchange of accusations over the old quarrels of 1841. Chamorovzov's task in trying to patch up such bitter disagreements was a thankless one. His chance of success was all the lower because the schisms gradually became even more involved than they had been in the forties. The division between the Old and New Organisation was complicated by the launching of new anti-slavery societies in the provincial cities. Garrisonians in Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Dublin found new allies in Bristol, Leeds, and elsewhere in the North and West Country. On the other hand, they were faced with bitter rivalry from new anti-Garrison bodies in Edinburgh and Glasgow. The rivalries between Garrisonians and their opponents retained enough momentum to be continued as an end in themselves. They survived locally, as well as along the lines of tension between provinces and metropolis. The new development was that support for Garrison was no longer by any means confined to Scotland and Ireland.

The main theme of the history of the anti-slavery movement in the fifties was still one of discord. The grievances felt were basically those of the previous decade. Garrisonians still referred to their Broad Street opponents as the stealers of the Emancipator and the wreckers of the 1840 Convention. The B.F.A.S.S. and its sympathisers still countered by trying to expose the Old Organisation as subscribers to female equality, infidelity, and practical anarchy. As late as 1852 Webb set Quincy's version of the Emancipator transfer before the British public. He informed them that Scoble's guidance had reduced the B.F.A.S.S. to "an exclusive, un'influential corporation." 1

When Pennington's Glasgow New Ladies' Anti-Slavery Association was founded in 1850, its first action was to explain that rival Garrisonian abolition societies were committed to Wright's alarming ideas on the Sabbath, the Christian ministry, and the authority of Scripture. Their Appeal astutely played on Scottish fears of becoming besmirched with unorthodoxy by pointing out that the "infidel American abolitionists" entail on all in this country who cooperate with them, no small share both of the odium and the responsibility which attach to their irreligious views." 2 Webb pointed out in return that the American Society had nothing to do with the peculiar views of its individual members, or indeed the


management of the Liberator. 1 Mrs. Chapman, enjoying her literary exile in Paris but no doubt glad to return to writing Garrisonian polemic, more cruelly pointed out that the American and Foreign Society was now "morally dead," and majestically assured the "Glasgow Female Seceders" that

"for the slave's sake we shall most heartily forgive the injury already done, if you do but aid us with all speed in the removal of its evil consequences... You have been in the wrong. Do not hesitate to say so, and you will be in the right again." 2

Indeed, harmless though the opinions of eight unknown Glasgow ladies may seem, the influential and scholarly John Bishop Estlin of Bristol rushed to publish a full-length pamphlet refuting their assertions. He also insisted that the American Society "is opposed to slavery, and to slavery alone. It makes no attack upon Christianity, nor upon any denomination of Christians, nor upon the sabbath, the Ministry, or the rights of any human beings." 3

Although Estlin, Webb, and Mrs. Chapman were all at pains to disassociate themselves from the heresies of Wright, nevertheless, the Glasgow Ladies' New Association made great capital out of the fears of heresy played on in their 1850 Circular, to an extent where they and the later gentleman's New Association virtually put the old Garrisonian G.E.S. out of business. These arguments were characteristic of the interchanges between British Old and New Organisation


2. Maria Weston Chapman to the Glasgow Female Seceders, circular, Paris, 8.6.50.

3. Reply to a Circular Issued by the Glasgow Association for the Abolition of Slavery, Recommending a Discontinuance of British Support for the Boston Anti-Slavery Bazaar (Paris, 1850), p.4.
abolitionists throughout the fifties. These interchanges ran along lines laid down as early as 1841 in this country, even earlier in the U.S.A. They indicated the difficulty of making good the differences between the Tappanite national society in London and its Garrisonian rivals in the provinces.

In spite of the tensions within the movement, the fifties saw short-lived attempts by each side to reunite the Garrisonian and anti-Garrisonian societies in purpose if not in organization. In 1833, English Old Organization leaders attempted to form a united national society in the Manchester Anti-Slavery Union. It was to have the attraction of a largely provincial leadership combined with the advantage of catering for all shades of anti-slavery opinion. At the same time, Chamorovzow was endeavouring to allay the Garrisonian hatred built up against his predecessor John Scoble. He opened the pages of the Reporter to Garrisonian societies and individuals, and invited them to cooperate in any schemes afoot at Broad Street. Perhaps the impulse towards reunification resulted on both sides from the national decline in enthusiasm for anti-slavery, except in the romantic form preached by Mrs. Stowe.¹ Disunity was an expensive luxury at a time when support for the anti-slavery societies as a whole was falling off. Nevertheless, the grievances and suspicions of twelve years proved too much to make either plan workable. Chamorovzow's intentions of reconciliation were finally snubbed by American extremists without any inkling of the difficulty of taking a strictly Garrisonian

¹ See below, G. VF, passim.
standpoint in Britain. The Manchester Union quickly collapsed due to the failure of its organisers to produce any compromise appealing to both sides. The disunity of the British anti-slavery societies continued to hamstring their efforts. Only the shared experience of horror at the Civil War they had helped to cause partly reunited them in organising British contributions to Freedmen's Aid.¹

The failure to save the anti-slavery movement from its own disintegrative tendencies was linked with new factors making for disunity. In the 1840's there had only been one national society run on New Organisation lines, competing with rival Garrisonian bodies in Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Dublin. By 1847, the situation was further simplified by the near collapse of the Glasgow Emancipation Society after its efforts during the Free Church controversy.² During the early fifties, however, the pattern of abolitionist schisms developed greater complexity than before. New disagreements were introduced by the emergence of a vocal free produce movement and the reflection of Douglass' brand of anti-slavery in the thirteen Associations founded by Julia Griffiths. Beyond this, the G.E.S. revived slightly after 1851, but it was now opposed by active male and female New Associations, partly in alignment with Broad Street.


Similar bodies were founded to threaten the Edinburgh Ladies' Emancipation Society. However, Scottish and Irish Garrisonians were now joined by a number of small but active groups of sympathisers in the English provinces. In Bridgeport, for instance, the Unitarian pastor S.A. Steinthal began to work energetically in favour of the American Society. A more important recruit to the British Old Organisation was the great Quaker philanthropist from Leeds, Wilson Armistead. His local society was the Leeds Young Men's A.S.S. His wealth gave its publications a distinction which would otherwise have been out of the question. His capital was also behind the foundation of the Anti-Slavery Advocate, the new Garrisonian monthly edited from Dublin by Webb. Perhaps above all, the structure of the British anti-slavery societies was changed by the emergence of a new focal point for Garrisonian ideas in the Bristol and Clifton Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society. It was completely dominated by J.B. Estlin's daughter Mary and largely Unitarian in membership. From the time it broke away from the B.F.A.S.S. in 1851, it replaced the Glasgow Society as the main ally of the Dublin group in opposition to Broad Street.

John Bishop Estlin, the most influential figure among Bristol abolitionists, enjoyed a national reputation as a pioneer ophthalmologist. He seems to have been deeply respected in the city, perhaps partly because of his father's influential position as Unitarian minister of Lewin's Head Chapel.¹ The Rev. Dr. Estlin's

¹ Unless otherwise stated, the following information on Estlin is taken from W. James, Memoir of John Bishop Estlin.
circle had included many of the luminaries of the time, Priestly, Coleridge, and Southey among them. His son was educated at Bristol Infirmary, Guy's, The Royal College of Surgeons, and Edinburgh University, before returning to Bristol in 1812 to found and manage its first ophthalmic dispensary. His work here made him famous among the poor from the surrounding districts, mainly because of his operations for cataract.

Within the city, Estlin soon became involved in many general reform organisations. He was a founder of the Bristol Institute, and was also active in support of the Bristol Mechanics' Institute and the local Asylum for the Blind, as well as the city's movements for ragged schools, domestic missions, and temperance. Above all, Estlin came to be involved in the abolition movement, especially after a health trip to St. Vincent in the winter of 1832-33 gave him personal insight into the condition of a typical slave population. His interest in American slavery seems to have begun after meeting Samuel May, Jr., of Leicester when he visited the Western Unitarian Association in 1843. These two men formed a close friendship which was maintained through a monthly exchange of letters until Estlin's death in 1855, incidentally caused by a stroke suffered while conducting an anti-slavery meeting in his house. Estlin's short but widely circulated American Slavery was

1. Samuel May should not be confused with his cousin S. J. May, of Syracuse, who visited Britain in 1859. References throughout this thesis are to the former, unless initials are given.

a work which fully supported the Garrisonians with whom he was kept in touch by May, though it avoided attacking the B.P.A.S.S. in this country.\textsuperscript{1} He wrote apologetically that "Sturge is looked upon here... as such a violent uncompromising, meddlesome, attacker of Slavery in every form or place, that your charge of his being lukewarm... would be unintelligible."\textsuperscript{2}

From 1831 onwards, partially retired from medical work, he devoted his time to spreading proper Garrisonian ideas throughout Britain.\textsuperscript{3} It was with this in mind that he set about organising the publication of the national Anti-Slavery Advocate, as well as continually welcoming Garrisonian visitors and encouraging them to preach against Broad Street. He also tried to put pressure on British Unitarians to testify as a Church against American slavery. The reasons for Estlin's enthusiastic support for Garrison are obscure. At the simplest level, he may have been moved by his friendship with Samuel May. On the other hand, it may be significant that Estlin came from Bristol, a city with strong local traditions which may have made him all the more resentful of dictation from London. More important, he and his associates were staunch and influential Unitarians, members of a denomination regarded with suspicion by the orthodox English


2. Estlin to M.W. Chapman, 23.3.46, Weston Papers.

3. W. James, \textit{op.cit.}, P. 16.
churches. They were particularly suspect to the conservative Friends who were in a majority in the Broad Street Committee, and who must have seen a dangerous similarity between Unitarianism and the views of the Hicksites. It was natural that Unitarians like Estlin should cooperate with the American faction of abolitionists who welcomed them irrespective of their opinions, rather than with a British national society whose leadership regarded them with abhorrence. Whether or not Estlin's anti-slavery loyalties were connected with his unorthodox religious beliefs, after 1850 the British Garrisonian movement gained incalculably from his support. He did not share all the opinions of American extremists. Mary Estlin once wrote that when she read him the American papers "He goes to sleep over Mr. H.C. Wright's letters, wh. is a great comfort to me as I can skip the greater part without detection." Nevertheless, whatever his doubts about men like Wright, he was wholehearted in support of their work for the anti-slavery movement. The glowing terms of his obituary in the Advocate are a measure of his importance to the Garrisonian party.

In no area was Estlin more active than in supporting his daughter Mary's work in the Bristol and Clifton Ladies' Anti-Slavery

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1. Webb to H.W. Chapman, 29.2.44, Garrison Papers. See also above, pp. 152, 165.
Society. Mary Estlin was an only child, from a short marriage which had ended with her mother's death in 1823. ¹ She never married and remained close to her father during the last years of his life. The relationship between them may have become closer after a narrow escape in 1846, when Mary had mistakenly tried to "cure" her father of a "dysenteric attack" with laudanum instead of rhubarb draft.² Her interest in American slavery seems to have begun in her teens, after reading the Reports of the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society and examining the Liberator forwarded to Estlin by May.³ At this stage she began collecting for the Boston Bazaar, and annually entertaining Bristol abolitionists to see the Bazaar contributions before they were sent off. Enthusiasm for the Garrisonians must have been kept alive in Bristol by the meetings held in 1840 by Douglass and Garrison, in spite of old Mr. Estlin's alarm at the latter's tactlessness.⁴ Garrison actually stayed with the Estliins, though he noted sadly of his host's wealthy friends that "so much formality and selectness takes all the warmth out of us."⁵

1. W. James, op.cit., p. 9.
2. Estlin to May, 29.1.46, May Papers.
4. Foner, Douglass, p. 70; Webb to Phillips, 1.9.46, Weston Papers; M. Estlin to M.W. Chapman, 1.9.46, ibid.; Mary Carpenter to Garrison, 3.9.46, Garrison Papers. For Estlin's criticisms of Garrison, see above, pp. 299-300.
5. Webb to Phillips, 1.9.46, loc.cit.; Garrison to Wright, 29.8.46, Garrison Papers.
After Garrison came Douglass, and the Estlin's attempt to form a Bristol auxiliary to the Anti-Slavery League. In spite of the disappointment of the League's collapse, Estlin and his daughter continued working on the Garrisonian side of the abolition movement. For the rest of the decade, their main activity apart from continuous correspondence with their American friends, was the collection of contributions for the Boston Bazaar. In this, Mary was aided by several ladies who were later to join her in 'old organising' the Bristol and Clifton Ladies' Society. Most important was Mary Carpenter, the daughter of a leading West Country Unitarian minister.

Apart from the work of Miss Estlin and her friends, however, the movement in Bristol seems to have weakened by the late forties. The Bristol and Clifton Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society had been founded in September, 1840, as a B.F.A.S.S. Auxiliary. At this stage the society was subservient to Broad Street, and was to remain so until the visit of Douglass and Garrison. They called for local contributions to the Boston Bazaar, so far made by Miss Estlin alone, as a private individual. Thereafter, with the Anti-Slavery League under discussion, the Bristol committee

1. Estlin to May, 12.1.47, May Papers; Estlin to May, 2.11.46, ibid.
3. Bristol Special Report, pp. 5-7; Minute for 11.9.40, Bristol and Clifton Anti-Slavery Society Minute Books, Estlin Papers, Dr. Williams' Library.
4. c.f. Mrs. G. Armstrong to May, 16.2.46, May Papers.
wrote to Scoble asking whether he thought they could consistently join the new League and also retain their connection with the B.F.A.S.S. Since Scoble ignored this enquiry, they wrote again in the summer of 1847 to have an advertisement for the Boston Bazaar put in the Reporter. This was refused without further explanation. When the Bristol Ladies had the opportunity of meeting Scoble personally, he loftily assured them that the American Society was only supported by "individuals whose religious opinions were not orthodox." The result of this proscription of the Garrisonians, given the fact that there was no concrete way of helping the A.F.A.S.S., was that the Bristol and Clifton Society was "left destitute of any field for anti-slavery labour."1 During the period of frustration and inactivity which followed, the Society switched its loyalty to the Garrisonians. The visits of William Wells Brown and William and Ellen Crafts in 1850 and 1851 prompted the Committee to "study the history of the cause from the outset." Subsequently they gained a more balanced view by subscribing to the Anti-Slavery Standard and Frederick Douglass' North Star.2 It may be assumed, however, that the Society's new openness to Garrisonian ideas arose from increased activity on the part of the Estlins, especially Mary, from 1850 onwards. The Crafts originally visited Bristol as their personal guests. Brown was later to become one of the abolitionists Estlin most admired, to the extent

of considering him as a possible editor of the new Anti-Slavery Advocate. They must have been only too glad to use Scoble's snubs as a way of turning the complacent local abolitionists against Broad Street. On February 13th, 1851, the Bristol and Clifton Ladies' Committee resolved that they sympathized with the objects of the American Society, and would send annual contributions to its Boston Bazaar. A fortnight later they decided to ask the Garrisonian Brown and the Crafts to the city as their official guests, to hold a great rally against pro-slavery visitors to the Great Exhibition. By this time, they had become fully committed to the Garrisonian faction.

The change in the Bristol Society was almost wholly due to the work of Mary Estlin and a few helpers. She had the most unpromising material to work with. Up to 1846, the Society had been "more a nominal than an active one." Thereafter Estlin repeatedly complained of the difficulties of carrying on serious anti-slavery work in Bristol's conservative atmosphere. The local Friends he thought particularly ignorant and close to Broad Street. On one occasion he prophesied (wrongly) that Douglass would fail in his visit to Bristol due to Quaker suspicion.

1. D. Quarles, 'Ministers without Portfolio,' J.N.H., XXXIX, 1954, p. 30; Estlin to W. Chapman, 27.7.52, Estlin Papers, B.P.L.
2. Bristol Special Report, p. 15; Minutes for 13.2.51, 27.3.51, in Bristol and Clifton.... Minute Book.
of his Garrisonian connections. Nevertheless, early in 1850 Mary Estlin energetically got about 'old organising' the little Ladies' Society. Probably due to the intercession of her friend Mary Carpenter, she was placed on the Committee only a week before the commitment of the Society to support for the A.A.S.S. By February she was writing of the revolution under way "in a lifeless thing in this town called a Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society." Mary Carpenter had always been on its committee, together with Mrs. Armstrong, wife of the Unitarian minister Dr. George Armstrong. Spurred on by Mary Estlin, they had spread a great deal of literature on the Garrisonian abolitionists. They specially stressed the Glasgow controversy over the defamatory circular issued by the Ladies' New Association there. The result had been the Bristol resolutions of the 13th in favour of the American Society. The gradual change in the Bristol Society's attitude went on throughout 1851. On April 9th its great meeting for the Crafts and William Wells Brown was held, and they remained in Bristol at least until early May.

1. Estlin to May, 7.11.45, May Papers; Estlin to Webb, 13.11.45, Weston Papers.
2. Minute for 6.2.46, Bristol and Clifton.... Minute Book.
4. Estlin to A.W. Weston, 1.3.51, ibid.
5. Estlin to E. Wigham, 3.5.51, ibid.
Meanwhile, Estlin and his daughter were also working in Unitarian circles to arrange a testimony against American slavery for the benefit of visitors to the Great Exhibition. The Bristol and Clifton Society also bombarded West Country ministers of all denominations with their resolutions and other propaganda on communion with slaveholders. Their most interesting publication was the broadsheet *Clerical Teachings on American Slavery*, a compendium of apparently pro-slavery quotations from leading American divines. The implied implications of the denominations to which these men belonged involved an anti-clericalism which would have been unthinkable for B.P.A.S.S. supporters. Within the Bristol Society, where the four activist leaders, Miss Estlin, Miss Fanny Tribe, Miss Carpenter, and Mrs. Armstrong were all Unitarians, the greatest support for the Society's new radicalism came from Baptists and Congregationalists. Incidentally these were denominations which were to testify collectively against slavery during the course of the Great Exhibition. The Unitarians themselves were particularly active as a denomination at this time. Approached by the Bristol and Clifton Society, the Western Unitarian Christian Union meeting at Bridgwater on April 22nd, had moved that

1. *Bristol Special Report*, pp. 16-20; *Minute for 27.3.51, Bristol and Clifton... Minute Book*; Estlin to E. Wigham, 3.5.51, loc. cit. See also above, pp. 365-366.

2. *Clerical Teachings on American Slavery*, Selected from *American Publications* (Bristol, broadsheet, 1851), copy in B.P.L.

3. M. Estlin to A.W. Weston, 8.5.51, Weston Papers.
discussion of slavery was irrelevant. The Lewin's Land Society in Bristol at once passed resolutions thanking Estlin's friends the Rev. W. James and the Rev. George Armstrong for refusing to admit slaveholders' apologists to their pulpits. The British and Foreign Unitarian Association were asked to make the same decision at their coming anniversary. After this suggestion was rejected, Estlin persuaded a substantial number of Garrisonian Unitarians to meet in London to discuss the connection between Unitarianism and slavery. 1 W. H. Ashurst was present, as was the Rev. Dr. Hutton of London, but the greatest Garrisonian force came from West Country Unitarians. The most important were Estlin himself, Rev. George Armstrong, and Rev. R. L. Carpenter, all of Bristol. Another was the Rev. Francis Bishop of Bridgewater, a close personal friend of the Estlin family and later a Garrisonian leader of some importance. Among the audience were five visitors from America. Brown appeared, as he did at most abolitionist functions to which he had access. Another guest was Susan Cabot, the Boston Garrisonian then living in London with Mrs. Eliza Lee Pollen, the close friend of Lady Byron and widow of the Harvard biologist. Most significant, however, was the presence of Mrs. Chapman and her

sisters Caroline and Emma Weston, who were visiting Britain before beginning a spell of literary freelancing in Paris. In this company, the influential Unitarians present agreed to send copies of their resolutions against the Fugitive Slave Law to Samuel May of Leicester, and to express their support for the Boston Bazaar. If Unitarians in general were not prepared to support Garrisonian abolitionism, a respectable section of them were.

It was perhaps because of this that Mary Estlin had so much success in converting her Society to her own way of thinking. More important, however, was the fact that she was prepared to educate her abolitionist pupils slowly, rather than alarming them by an early display of extremism. As late as October she wrote that what needed to be done was "dumbing Anti-Slavery alphabets and grammars into raw beginners." But her "dumbing" was always done tactfully, with a sensible understanding of what was possible in this country. In response to Mrs. Chapman's unrealistic attack on Eliza Wigham for her "betrayal" of the cause in allowing Brown and Pennington to speak on the same platform in Edinburgh, she explained that methods of partial conciliation were the ones most suited to attacking the New Organisation in this country. If Eliza Wigham

2. M. Estlin to E. Weston, 15.10.51, Estlin Papers, B.P.L.
was to be discounted, so too were she and her father.\(^1\)

On another occasion she stressed the virtue of making haste slowly - "I have an instinctive recoiling from every manifestation of... [the Spirit of New Organisation]..... still I have no hope of extinguishing it here by starting with the violent measures you prescribe." \(^2\) Mary Estlin's confessed aim was simply to prepare the ground for the visit of Mrs. Chapman in the autumn of 1831.\(^3\) This was more than achieved by the success in converting the Bristol and Clifton Ladies' Society during the spring and summer.

After her visit to Bristol, Mrs. Chapman fancied that the church bells of the city were ringing "Sturge is done." \(^4\) Her satisfaction at the growing disrepute of the New Organisation was not entirely misplaced. She and her sisters were first received by the Bristol Ladies' Committee on September 11th. On this occasion they simply spoke for the 'fidelity' of Garrison. At a second meeting they denounced a letter from Sturge in favour of the American and Foreign Society. Mrs. Chapman then resurrected all the accusations of 1839-1841,

1. M. Estlin to C. Weston, 3.6.51, ibid.
2. M. Estlin to A.W. Weston, 3.5.51, Weston Papers.
3. M. Estlin to A.W. Weston, 13.2.51, ibid.
4. M.W. Chapman to M. Estlin, 7.9.51, Estlin Papers, B.P.L.
making a great deal of the Emancipator transfer and the "dishonesty" of Lewis Tappan. She concluded by blithely assuring the Committee that all abolitionists were united in the American Society, and that their opponents were a "harmless" remnant made into "instruments of mischief" by the patronage of the B.P.A.S.S. At a third meeting on the 28th, before their departure, Mrs. Chapman outlined the Garrisonian interpretation of the schisms of 1840 in fuller detail. She finally reminded the company that their real duty was to "disabuse the public" over the claims of Broad Street.¹

These exposures, although one-sided, had the desired effect. It must have been difficult to resist the combined personal charm of Mrs. Chapman and Miss Estlin in a body as small as the Bristol and Clifton Committee. Again, Miss Estlin had already subjected members to gradual but prolonged indoctrination with Garrisonian ideas. Bristol was also still excited over a firmly Old Organisation rally held there at the beginning of the month by George Thompson and the visiting Baptist preacher from Kentucky, the Rev. Edward Matthews.²

Finally, Mrs. Chapman must have been helped, as other Garrisonian leaders had been in the past, by provincial distrust of the


2. Bristol Special Report, pp. 31-32. Mathews was in this country collecting funds for the abolitionist American Baptist Free Mission Society.
centralised national benevolent societies. Later one of Miss Estlin's friends described the Bristol and Clifton split as arising from the fact that "the London Society have treated the provincials as they almost invariably do. Vide Brit[ish] & For[eign] Schools - Home and Colonial Infant Schools - etc, etc, etc." ¹ This kind of attitude must have given Mrs. Chapman a fine chance to convince her hearers that the metropolitan anti-slavery society was not, after all, entitled to their obedience or support.

At a farewell meeting for the three American ladies on October 2nd, the Bristol and Clifton Committee further resolved its sympathy and support for the American Society. They went on to discuss separation from the national society, which was now accepted as necessary. Mrs. Tribe brought forward a statement and resolutions on separation which she was asked to revise for the next full meeting of the Society.² The Society was now to form a separate anti-slavery body. A series of accusations were made against Broad Street, mainly concerning its systematic denigration of Garrison. These resolutions were adopted in mid-November at a meeting in the vestry of Bridge Street Unitarian Chapel.³ News of this abolitionist declaration of independence was sent to Scoble, the national press, and anti-slavery societies throughout the

1. S.H. Dawson to M. Estlin, 6.10.52, Weston Papers.
2. Minute for 2.10.51, Bristol and Clifton... Minute Book.
country. Only Dublin, Glasgow, and the Manchester Ladies' Anti-Slavery Association replied in friendly terms. In April of the next year, Mrs. Tribe became its President and Miss Estlin its Corresponding Secretary, and the transition to a fully committed Garrisonian body was complete.2 By January of 1853, Miss Estlin could write proudly that the members "have long since finished their education & some have outstripped their teacher, ..... It is pleasant to have no anxiety about them." 3

Unlike the authorities at Broad Street Miss Estlin's aim was to make anti-slavery work as active and interesting as possible. From the beginning of 1852 onwards, the Society published more than any comparable organisation in Britain. Its most important work was the long Special Report of the Bristol and Clifton Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society, which outlined its history, described the work of the American Garrisonians in the most favourable light, and justified the breach from the B.F.A.S.S. with a Statement of the Reasons of its Separation from the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. 4 It concluded that since the Society was not directly attached to any American body, its energy would be best expanded "in diffusing anti-slavery

1. Minutes for 19.2.52, 4.3.52, ibid.
2. Minute for 8.4.52, ibid. The process of division is fully described in Bristol Special Report, pp. 32-38.
4. Published in London, July, 1852.
truth, [and] in removing obstacles to its progress." 1

This had no doubt been the reason for the Society's earlier full-length publication in April, an onslaught on the British Banner for its disapproval of the Garrisonians as heretics. 2

This was also a general compendium of information which could be circulated nationally to counteract the conservative smear campaign against the Garrisonians. To a lesser extent, the same was true of a pamphlet written for a Bristol readership by Edmund Quincy. 3 Addressed to the editor of the Bristol Examiner, Quincy had written it from his home in Dedham.

Although refuting Scoble's specific charges that the American Society had changed in character through developing an "infidel tendency," this also doubled as a piece of Garrisonian propaganda for general circulation.

Exactly the same wish to spread as much correct anti-slavery information as possible was behind the British initiative in launching the Anti-Slavery Advocate in 1852. Its assumption was that if the public were given accurate facts they would


3. E. Quincy, An Examination of the Charges, etc. Quincy was attacking the same work by Scoble as Webb in The National Anti-Slavery Societies in England and the United States, or, Strictures, etc. No surviving copy of Scoble's pamphlet has been traced, though it was certainly published and circulated in this country, possibly privately.
automatically move over to the support of the Garrisonian party. The foundation of the Advocate was by no means the work of the Bristol Society. The plans for its emergence were laid in November, 1852 by old Mr. Estlin himself. The editorship and publication were taken over by Webb in Dublin. Financial support also came from Estlin's own pocket at the outset, and later more munificently from Wilson Armistead of Leeds. Nevertheless, many of the ladies in Bristol, led by Mary Estlin, took part in administration, and even wrote for the early issues during the winter of 1852-53. Since the Advocate was a national paper, this must have given them a sense of participation they had never enjoyed while auxiliary to the British and Foreign Society. Again, they helped and were helped throughout this period by a genuine American abolitionist - Lucretia Mott's close friend Sarah Pugh, the Unitarian from Philadelphia who was travelling in Europe with Abby Kimber and was to begin her life-long connection with

1. W. James, op.cit., p. 17. Plans for the Advocate were under discussion throughout the summer - E. Mitchell to ?, 30.8.52, Weston Papers; Estlin to N.W. Chapman, 2.7.52, Estlin Papers, B.P.L.; Webb to C. Weston, 10.9.52, Weston Papers; Bristol Special Report, p. 33.

2. S. Pugh to Webb, 14.12.52, Garrison Papers; S. Pugh to M. Estlin, 14.12.52, Estlin Papers, Dr. Williams' Library.

3. The Advocate quickly collected American subscribers, and by 1853 its British circulation included a sale of 200 copies in Glasgow alone. May to Webb, 11.11.52, May Papers; Snod to M. Estlin, 17.5.53, Weston Papers.
Mary Estlin by spending this winter as her chief assistant.\footnote{419.}
An abolitionist of some experience, she had appeared as one of the rejected female delegates at the 1840 World's Convention.\footnote{2.} Apart from working with Miss Pugh on the Advocate, the Committee also remained absorbed in work for the Boston Bazaar.\footnote{3.} As in the other female abolitionist societies of the 1830's, bazaar work was the largest single activity of the Bristol Society. The superbly produced Anti-Slavery Album which Mary Carpenter sent to Boston as early as 1848 is an example of the painstaking work which went into the making up of the annual box for Mrs. Chapman.\footnote{4.} Since the anti-slavery movement was always a way of consuming the ample spare time of middle class Victorian ladies, the attraction of working for a good cause in this way is obvious. The American and Foreign Society, with which the B.F.A.S.S. corresponded,

1. She first arrived in Bristol in August, after meeting the Eatlins previously in Dublin, and decided to stay there for the winter a month later. S. Pugh to C. Weston, 27.8.52, Weston Papers; S. Pugh to Webb, 25.9.52, Garrison Papers; entry for 21.10.52, Bristol and Clifton Minute Book. By Dec. 31st she was writing to Mary from Leeds that 1852 had been a noteworthy year, "if only that it has associated me with your own self" – S. Pugh to M. Estlin, 31.12.52, Estlin Papers, Dr. Williams' Library.


4. Miss Carpenter's Anti-Slavery Album has recently been acquired by the B.F.I. Her work on it is mentioned by Estlin in Estlin to May, 2.10.48, May Papers.
ran no bazaar. The Bristol and Clifton Society, once it
turned its back on Broad Street, thus had tangible
activities to offer its members.

Miss Estlin's Society was always committed to support
of Garrison after 1833, even more so after the visit of the
sensitive and tactful Philadelphia abolitionist J. Miller
McKim in September of that year. Close contacts with
other British Garrisonians like R.D. Webb, Elizabeth Pease
Nichol, and Jane Wigham, had a similar effect. They
frequently visited Miss Estlin, and took the opportunity of
attending the Society's committee meetings to discuss whatever
was currently happening on the anti-slavery scene. However,
this is not to say that the Bristol and Clifton Society
remained closed to suggestions for reuniting the abolition
movement. Both Estlin and his daughter were less fanatical
Garrisonians than the leaders of the American movement. Late
in his life Estlin wrote that the Advocate was intended to
"make people Garrisonians without letting them know they are
such until they are thoroughly inoculated." To a degree this
summarises the relatively calm Bristol attitude to the spread
of anti-slavery ideas.

1. Minute for 30.9.53, Bristol and Clifton.... Minute Book;
   H. Estlin to Mrs. J.H. McKim, 11.6.53, Hay Collection,
   Cornell University; S.A. Steinthal to McKim, 1.10.53,
   J. Miller McKim Papers, N.Y. Public Library.

2. e.g. Minutes for 12.5.54, 18.4.55, Bristol and Clifton
   ... Minute Book.

Edinburgh, initially accepted Chamorrozwzow's attempts to restore the abolitionist unanimity of the 1830's, and ensured that the local society did the same. Like other Garrisonians, however, Bristol abolitionists took Pillsbury's side in his vendetta against Chamorovzow. The result was Estlin's resignation from the B.F.A.S.S., after the publication of a damaging open letter on its continuing shortcomings.

Though Estlin died three weeks later, nothing more was heard of plans for a renewal of contacts between Bristol and Broad Street. Thus although the Bristol and Clifton Society showed itself open to talk of unity, it remained staunchly Garrisonian. Its conversion by Mary Estlin, in fact, was the most significant development in the history of the Garrisonian movement throughout the decade.

The emergence of the Society as a strong Garrisonian organisation was all the more important because of its influence in spreading its own form of anti-slavery ideas in other West Country towns. The Estlins and their followers were closely in touch with Webb's group in Dublin and the Wigham family in Edinburgh, but their most important contacts were with abolitionists in the cities of Liverpool and Bridgewater. Garrisonian


2. See below, pp. 461-463.

visitors to Liverpool were regularly entertained by its Unitarian pastor the Rev. Francis Bishop, who had begun his work as a minister in the West Country town of Exeter. He had tried to organise an Exeter auxiliary to the ill-fated Anti-Slavery League in 1846. By 1850 he was working in Liverpool as a missionary among the poor, keeping in close contact with Mary Estlin. He warned her that he was having great difficulties in making abolitionist converts because of the general abhorrence of the heresies connected with it by Wright, whose conduct he personally distrusted. He found that Liverpool abolitionists were conservative, and that they were afraid to compromise their orthodoxy by supporting the American Society. At least, however, he managed to organise a small annual Liverpool contribution to the Boston Bazaar. After a trip to the U.S.A. in 1852 he returned to England as one of the most radical Garrisonian spokesmen in Britain. During McKim's visit he managed to organise a Liverpool public meeting for him. But he was never able to get up any permanent anti-slavery organisation in the city.

1. Garrison to H.C. Wright, 26.8.46, Garrison Papers.
2. Bishop to M. Estlin, 30.9.50, 4.10.50, Estlin Papers, D.P.L.
4. F. Bishop to McKim, 1.10.53, Garrison Papers.
Even in the year when contributions should have been increased by the excitement over McKim's visit, Bishop had to write to Garrison apologising for the smallness of the Bazaar box and explaining that it was cause for rejoicing to have Liverpool with any place at all in the list of contributors. 1 Pillsbury's visit in the following year brought out Bishop's Garrisonian sympathies much more clearly. At the 1834 General Anti-Slavery Conference organised by Chamorovzow to try to heal the divisions in the movement, he vociferously seconded Pillsbury's attempts to wreck the gathering by complaining of previous Broad Street crimes against the Old Organisation. 2 His speech and Pillsbury's were missed out of the Proceedings of the Convention published later in the year, much to the rage of the Advocate. 3 By this time, Bishop was nationally known for his Garrisonian sympathies. The peculiar difficulty of opposing conservative Liverpool abolitionists like the Croppers and the Rathbones meant that he never had a local Old Organisation society at his command. Nevertheless, his work gives further proof of the close ties between Unitarian and Garrisonian thought, and also of the great influence of the Estlin family in the West of England.

2. Anti-Slavery Advocate, January, 1855; Bishop to W. Estlin, 30,11.54, Garrison Papers; Bishop to Garrison, 9,12.54, ibid.
3. Anti-Slavery Advocate, May, 1855.
Much more significant than Bishop's lone support for the Garrisonians was the work of another West Country Unitarian minister, the Rev. S.A. Steinthal of Bridgewater. Unlike Bishop, Steinthal was directly converted to the Old Organisation by the Estlins, who occasionally came to visit one of Mary's uncles Bagehot near Taunton, a short distance from his parish.¹ Steinthal fits into the pattern of West Country opposition to the B.F.A.S.S. which had begun with the secession of the delegates from Bath and Devizes in 1843, during the crisis over the sugar duties.² The raw material with which he had to work was more promising than that which faced Bishop in Liverpool. Sympathy for Garrison had been reported among Baptists in Bridgewater in 1840, and contributions were sent to the Boston Bazaar at least then and the year after.³

In May, 1853, Steinthal began to preach to his own congregation on the duty of testifying to American Unitarians against slavery. This sermon was subsequently published and circulated as a pamphlet.⁴ A few months later, McKim's tour through the West Country, largely mapped out by the Estlins, gave Steinthal

4. S.A. Steinthal, American Slavery. A Sermon, preached at Christ Church Chapel, Bridgewater, on Sunday, May the First, 1853 (Bridgewater, 1853).
wider scope. His original intention had been to hold a rally at which McKim and the Kentucky Baptist the Rev. Edward Mathews would appear together, but in the event Mathews spoke independently on September 1st to an audience of a thousand Sabbath school scholars, followed by an adult meeting. Steinthal was hopeful that his work would do good, since the local Baptist Church was at that time without a pastor, and he would have the opportunity of using its pulpit. 1

McKim was then able to speak at a public meeting on September 26th. 2 Both meetings had been held with the knowledge and support of the old anti-slavery society. However, the most outstanding result of McKim's visit was its remodelling as a new and fully Garrisonian society. Steinthal himself came to Bristol to report on the foundation of this new society in mid-November. He was introduced to Garrisonians there with the glowing approval of Sarah Pugh's friend Emma Mitchell. 3

It was at this point that Mary Estlin began to exert pressure on Steinthal by bombarding him with Garrisonian newspapers and pamphlets. 4 The result was that when the new

1. E. Mathews to ?, 2.9.53, Weston Papers; Steinthal to M. Estlin, 8.8.53, ibid.


Bridgewater society was asked to join the B.F.A.S.S., it refused, like the Bristol one, to do so. The test of Chamarovzow's sincerity, Steinthal thought, would come at the conferences planned for the next two years.1 Meanwhile, he began to indoctrinate the woefully ignorant Bridgewater members, many of whom did not know there were differences between abolitionists, and all of whom had been "hoodwinked" by the B.F.A.S.S.2 By the autumn of 1854, he appears to have been satisfied that the local society was appropriately Old Organised. He appeared as their representative at the conference of the Garrisonian Manchester Anti-Slavery League which had seceded from the short-lived Anti-Slavery Union.3 Like Estlin, however, he was completely disillusioned with Chamarovzow's attempts at unity by the fracas of the 1854 General Anti-Slavery Conference - though he himself had missed the Conference through illness.4 The result was his resignation of all connection with the B.F.A.S.S. He simply wrote that it was no longer possible for him to cooperate with a society which was prepared to suppress news of the work of

1. Ibid.
2. Steinthal to May, 7.11.53, May Papers.
3. Anti-Slavery Advocate, August, 1854.
Garrison, for the sake of the less important work of the French, Dutch, and German abolitionists. From this point on, the Bridgewater Society continued working as an independent anti-slavery association supporting the American Society and its Bazaar. It lapsed into obscurity, however, when Steinthal moved to Liverpool to begin work there as a Unitarian missionary, incidentally taking the post previously held by Bishop. The remarkable similarity between its history and that of the Bristol Society was no accident. It arose partly from shared Unitarian domination, and partly from shared West Country origins which bred distrust of a national benevolent society based on London. Above all, however, it leads back to the remarkable personal influence of the Estlin family over abolitionists who shared this religion and background.

The influence of the Estlins was not restricted to the West Country. They were also involved in organising abolitionist activities in Leeds, the other important growth-point for Garrisonian ideas during this decade. Although the Lupton family, their most important contacts in Leeds, actually were Unitarians, Leeds abolitionists were by no means all drawn from one denomination. Notwithstanding the anti-slavery conservatism which afflicted London Quaker leaders, the most important figure in Leeds was Wilson Armistead, a wealthy local mustard miller belonging to the Society of Friends. After his conversion to the Garrisonian movement Leeds abolitionists began to distribute tracts on a scale

1. Steinthal to Chamerovzow, 4.4.55, ibid., C36/101.
which constituted a new experiment in the British anti-slavery movement. No serious attempt had previously been made to make working class converts. ¹ Estlin was typical among British abolitionists in his assumption that the

"lower, & lower-middle classes have not sufficient personal influence to induce them to take it [abolition] up warmly, & if they did, they would do little or no good. It is not the kitchens & workshops that need Anti-Slavery agitation for America’s sake, but the drawing rooms and the salons of the wealthy, & the libraries of the learned." ²

This was completely at odds with the plans of Armistead, whose schemes to flood Britain with the magical figure of half a million simple anti-slavery tracts implied a new willingness to accept literate working men as allies in the movement. ³ The same was true of his support for F.W. Chesson’s Manchester Anti-Slavery Watchman, which began its short career by announcing that its object was to communicate with the people of the surrounding manufacturing districts. ⁴

¹ An exception is the radical broadsheet distributed to Irish emigrants by the Hibernian Anti-Slavery Society and preserved as Bod. Brit. Emp. Mss.S.18, Ci/32. C. Griffith to Scofield, 4.7.46, Ibid., Ci7/03, suggests that Welsh abolitionists tried to influence emigrants in the same way, though they wrote in their own language. Except for extremists like Collins, even schoolchildren were more popular material to work with than workmen. See N. Ireland to McKim, 30.10.53, 26.4.60, May Collection, Cornell University.

² Estlin to May, 1.10.46, May Papers.

³ Complete sets of these tracts were published in book form as Five Hundred Thousand Strokes for Freedom (Leeds, 1833).

⁴ Anti-Slavery Watchman, November, 1853. See also Chesson to H. Estlin, 18.9.53, May Collection, Cornell University.
Nevertheless, Armistead's enthusiasm for proselytizing the working classes never made him forget the importance of converting his own social equals. An accomplished scholar of extraordinarily wide reading, he contributed extensively to propaganda aimed at the middle classes. In 1834 he produced one longish pamphlet of this sort, a compendium of comment against slavery and the slave trade by respected thinkers of the past and present.¹ He had already made a collection of stories of individual Negroes who had attained eminence in one walk of life or another. This constituted an attempt to demonstrate the improvability of the Negro once and for all, and was the theme of his earlier full-length book, A Tribute for the Negro.² Armistead was also willing to try more novel methods in winning middle class converts to abolition. He had a thick volume of amazingly stilted poetry dealing with the wrongs of the slave published as a supplement to the Leeds Anti-Slavery Tracts.³ Again, at one point he tried to convince other abolitionists that funds could be raised by lithographing abolitionist autographs and selling them at inflated prices.⁴


4. Armistead to C. Summer, 8.11.54, Houghton Library, Harvard University.
More sustained were his efforts to gain support for endowing an annual prize essay on slavery. By 1837, he was issuing a companion to the *Five Thousand Strokes for Freedom* in a new series of Leeds Juvenile Anti-Slavery Tracts. Armistead's plans were not only remarkable for the attention he paid to the working classes, but also for the ingenuity with which he worked to hold the interest of other sections of the public.

Nevertheless, support for the Garrisonians had existed in Leeds since the mid-forties. The most interesting local leaders were the Lupton family, Unitarians closely in touch with the Estlins of Bristol. Garrison and his friends had tried to form an auxiliary to the Anti-Slavery League in Leeds in 1840, and from then until the 1850's Harriet Lupton and her father Joseph Lupton, who described himself as a "stuff merchant", had been the most important Garrisonian contacts in the city.

Throughout this period, an annual box was organised by Mrs. Lupton to send to the Boston Bazaar. At the beginning of the decade, enthusiasm in Leeds was increased by indignation against the Compromise of 1850 and the Fugitive Slave Law. By 1853, Mary Estlin

2. Ibid., 1.4.57.
4. Lupton to May, 11.7.51, May Papers.
could advise McKim that Leeds was "the most hopeful place for your planting a stronghold just at this season." 1

In this same year, Joseph Lupton reported to May that support for the movement had expanded greatly because of the large number of recent visits from American abolitionists. 2 Ward had lectured in Leeds that week, while interest had also been stimulated by earlier visits from McKim and Mrs. Stowe's party. Sarah Pugh worked in Leeds for several weeks during the winter of 1852 to 1853. It was she who provided the link between Mary Estlin, and the growing group of Leeds Garrisonians. Her early work for the Advocate, in December 1852, was done while she and old Mr. Estlin stayed with the Luptons at Headingley, outside Leeds. 3 The ladies who formed the Leeds Bazaar Committee did not find Garrisonian loyalties inconsistent with an admiration for Mrs. Stowe, and their interest was currently being taken up with gathering signatures in support of the Stafford House Address inspired by her work. Miss Pugh spent her time in Leeds assisting them in this, on the grounds that she did not think Sturge and Gurney could do any positive harm by being behind the Address. 4 Harriet Lupton and her mother were the most


2. Lupton to May, 12.10.53, May Papers.

3. S. Pugh to M. Estlin, 14.12.52, Estlin Papers, Dr. Williams' Library. Mary Estlin was currently visiting Dublin.

4. S. Pugh to M. Estlin, 15.12.52, Estlin Papers, Dr. Williams' Library.
important of her allies, but new names which she thought important were those of Mrs. Wilson Armistead and Mrs. Wicksteed, the wife of the local Unitarian minister. Perhaps the most influential was Mrs. Edward Baines, the wife of the well-known editor of the Leeds Mercury, who later delighted abolitionists and enraged nativist Americans by publishing an Address to American editors on the iniquity of the Fugitive Slave Law. His conclusion was one which lay at the basis of most Garrisonian thought — "Christianity must conquer Slavery or Slavery will conquer Christianity." In 1852 his wife seems to have been recognised as the most important female abolitionist in Leeds. She was in the chair at the meeting of sixty ladies organised by Mrs. Lupton and Miss Pugh to launch the Stafford House Address. Two months later, Miss Pugh reported a meeting to form a regular Anti-Slavery Association.

The composition of this new Association was extraordinary. It was the only British anti-slavery body to adopt the full Garrisonian principle of having an association for abolitionists of both sexes, governed by a similarly 'promiscuous' committee.

1. Leeds Mercury, 1.7.54. A.S.R., 2.10.54, noted that Baines' Address was to be reprinted with Armistead's comments in the Leeds Anti-Slavery Tracts; a copy is preserved in the Widener Library. Pillsbury greeted Baines' writing with a rapt letter of thanks — Pillsbury to Baines, 5.7.54, Leeds Mercury, 8.7.54. See also Pillsbury to ?, 8.7.54, Manchester Examiner, 19.7.54.

2. S. Pugh to M. Estlin, 24.12.52, Estlin Papers, Dr. Williams' Library.

3. S. Pugh to M. Estlin, 22.2.53, ibid.
A copy of the prospectus of the Leeds Association has been preserved in the May Collection at Cornell, fortunately with manuscript notes, probably Lupton's, on the professions and church loyalties of the Committee members. Armistead was President, and Joseph Lupton Vice-President; Harriet Lupton was one of the Secretaries, and a Mrs. Guest, wife of an Independent minister, the other; the Treasurer was Mrs. Hamilton Richardson, married to a local Baptist lawyer. Among the Committee members were a large number of clergymen, of several denominations; one was the Rev. William Sinclair, described as "the principal Evangelical clergyman of Leeds." The others were the Rev. Thomas Sturgeon, also an Evangelical, the Rev. William Guest, "a very orthodox Independent," and the Rev. James Walcot, a Baptist. The other gentlemen on the Committee were Dr. F.W. Irvine, a "homeopathic doctor," and Mr. Hamilton Richardson, the Baptist. Baines himself did not serve on the Committee, although his wife did. The remaining lady members were Mrs. Lupton and Mrs. Walcot; a Mrs. Brewer, who was married to another of Leeds' Baptist ministers; Mrs. Coxen, an Independent widow; Mrs. Naylor, a high church lawyer's wife; Mrs. Ward of the established church, also married to a lawyer; and a Mrs. Scholefield, who was described as the wife of a stuff merchant without mention of denomination, but who

1. Prospectus of Leeds Anti-Slavery Association, 22.2.53, May Collection, Cornell University Library.
was probably a Unitarian. Perhaps it was because of the enormous difficulty of ever reaching unanimity among such a varied group, that Arnistead's main abolitionist schemes eventually had to be executed through the later Leeds Young Men's Anti-Slavery Society.

Anti-slavery feeling in Leeds was increased throughout the year by the visits of other American abolitionists. Mrs. Stowe's reception was doubtless the greatest. But the most important in Garrisonian terms was that of McKim, who lectured in Leeds in September before embarking with Sarah Pugh and Susan Cabot for an extremely stormy autumn passage home in the following month. Meanwhile, the Rev. Charles Wicksteed came out in support of the radical abolitionists. Perhaps sensitive to arguments that in industrial Leeds at least, charity should begin at home, he stressed that most provincial abolitionists were also well known as leaders in domestic philanthropy. Wicksteed's advice was to support the 'Stoweite' Stafford House Address. Nevertheless, he also came out in favour of the Bazaar work which had previously been done only by Mrs. Lupton, her daughter,

1. Lupton to May, 12,10,53, May Papers.

2. S. Pugh to M. Estlin, 23,10,53, Estlin Papers, Dr. Williams' Library.


and the handful of other female Garrisonians in Leeds.\textsuperscript{1}

By the time Wicksteed's work was in circulation, early in January, 1853, plans for the formation of the Leeds Anti-Slavery Association must have been well advanced. Armistead's project for mass circulation of tracts was far enough on to be advertised, at a price of £3-10/- for fifty copies of each tract.\textsuperscript{2}

Later in the year, Richard D. Webb, delighted at Armistead's suggestion of reprinting a recent speech of Garrison's as one of the Tracts, expressed great surprise at his being so liberal.\textsuperscript{3} Armistead was by no means an inevitable Garrisonian. It is therefore not surprising that in his first efforts to aid the movement nationally, he worked through Broad Street. By April, 1853, perhaps impressed by the new format of the \textit{Reporter}, he was writing Chamarovzow to explain his reasons for embarking on the Tract scheme, and ask for the name and support of the B.F.A.S.S. in their distribution.\textsuperscript{4} He explained that since Scoble had discouraged his plans for cheap publications, he had begun producing eighty or ninety tracts on his own responsibility. He also told Chamarovzow of the formation of the new independent Leeds Association

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1} Ibid., p. 18.
\item \textsuperscript{2} Ibid., pp. 20-24.
\item \textsuperscript{3} Webb to M. Estlin, 23.7.53, Weston Papers.
\item \textsuperscript{4} Armistead to Chamarovzow, 7.4.53, Bod. Brit. Emp. Ms. S.18., C27/49.
\end{itemize}
because of the feeling that something must be done during this period. Yet he still wrote cordially, and subsequently sent sets of the Tracts for review in the Reporter. 1 In return for coverage in the Reporter, he made personal efforts to boost its circulation in Leeds. All who subscribed half a crown to the new Association received the Advocate free. Five shillings also entitled them to copies of the Reporter. Since the Association's foundation, the local circulation of the latter had thus gone up by thirty copies. 2

This curious plan to step up the circulation of two mutually opposed journals was characteristic of Armistead's assumption, really foreign to zealots on both wings of the movement, that all forms of abolitionist activity were contributing in their way towards the overthrow of slavery. When the Tracts were finally issued, the Advocate in turn printed a eulogy of his work on Five Thousand Strokes for Freedom -

"There is a man in Leeds, and his name is Wilson Armistead. He is a member of the Society of Friends. There is another of the same society in Bristol... whose name is Joseph Eaton... In the volumes before us we have evidence that what Joseph Eaton has done for the temperance cause in England is here attempted - for he is not a rich man - by Wilson Armistead for the abolition of slavery." 3

The response of the Manchester Anti-Slavery Watchman was similar. 4


2. Armistead to Chamarovzow, 9, 9, 53, ibid., C27/51.

3. Anti-Slavery Advocate, October, 1853.

Initially Armistead's plans were well received by both wings of the movement, while he aimed at conciliating both. In November 1853, he even sent the Leeds Bazaar Box to Garrison with a request that he should forward similar contributions to the rival Philadelphia one, and, even more naively, the Douglass' hated Rochester one. 1 As late as mid-1854, Armistead was able to air his plans for an anti-slavery essay in the Reporter, which went on in October to compliment abolitionists in Leeds by reprinting Baines' Leeds Mercury Address in full. 2 Armistead's plan was still to encourage British abolitionists to work in unity wherever possible. When prevented from attending Chamerovzow's 1854 Convention by the illness of a relative, he wrote with admirable detachment that the movement's greatest difficulty was "a lack of cordiality and sympathy with one another." It should be accepted that although there were "different modes of operation yet all may tend towards the promotion of the same great end." 3

As in the case of Estlin, Steinthal, and Bishop, what broke down Armistead's willingness to cooperate with the Broad Street Committee was his discontent at the way this same Convention was run. He was greatly offended at the way in which his letter of advice

1. Armistead to Garrison, 11.11.53, Garrison Papers.

2. A.S.R., 1.6.54, 1.10.54.

to the Convention was disregarded. After calling for united action, it deplored the lack of cooperation between anti-slavery societies and "the American abolitionists who have long been so nobly bearing the burden and heat of the day." By going on to defend them from the charge of infidelity, he made it clear that he had the Garrisonians in mind. He insisted that it was essential to unite with them. The real infidels were the Doctors of Divinity who supported slavery, "who bring the Bible to support such wickedness." He went on to mention the schemes for tract circulation and prize essays, and finally to call for abstinence from slave produce. Since the article he held most important was cotton, and the B.P.A.S.S. had consistently shrunk from calling for a ban on the slave cotton on which Lancashire depended, Armistead's manifesto would have been embarrassing to Broad Street quite apart from its endorsement of the Garrisonians. It was certainly not read out at the Convention. Armistead's chagrin at this slight was great, the more especially, as he plaintively wrote, since "it was purposely not long, and legibly copied." From this point on, there is little evidence of cooperation with Broad Street on the part of Armistead and other Leeds abolitionists, though the Reporter did give the Juvenile Anti-Slavery Tracts favourable reviews on their appearance in 1857.

1. Ibid.
As in the case of Bridgwater and Bristol, the spell of good relations between Chamerovzow's remodelled B.F.A.S.S. and Leeds Garrisonians came to an end in response to the obvious New Organisation character of the 1854 Convention.\(^1\) For the rest of the decade, Armistead worked independently. Perhaps his most important period of activity centred round Pillsbury's second Leeds visit in December, 1855.\(^2\) Armistead's personal contribution to the movement during this period was the planning of his own highly scholarly abolitionist works, which showed an appreciation of the existence of the Negro race as an entity with collective historical traditions, much beyond that of his generation. A Tribute for the Negro remains the most important, though it is interesting that unlike the Tracts, it was published by Armistead in an edition much too expensive to circulate among the generality of abolitionists. He continued organising publications on the Negro and abolition until the end of the decade.

Much of Armistead's importance in the Garrisonian movement of the fifties lies in the stress he laid on unity between the various factions of abolitionists. Like Chamerovzow, his hope was that the schisms of 1841 might be healed. Certainly the new

1. See below, pp. 458-463.

decade saw the emergence of new Garrisonian bodies in Leeds, Bridgewater, and Bristol, and the creation of Tappanite societies in Glasgow and Edinburgh. However, attempts were also being made to check the disintegrative tendencies which the British movement shared with the American one. Chamerovzow’s plans have already been described. The second of Garrisonian project for reunifying the movement, went along the entirely different lines of organizing a new national anti-slavery movement to break Broad Street’s claimed monopoly of abolitionist orthodoxy in the country. At the same time, however, it was hoped to induce B.P.A.S.S. members and all other abolitionists to cooperate on a platform wide enough to accommodate all shades of opinion. This plan, like Chamerovzow’s, failed completely. The desire for unity is illustrated by the attempt to found the Manchester Anti-Slavery League, but this attempt was quite unsuccessful. The 1841 schisms had now reached a point where disagreements were irreconcilable, with the best of intentions.

The leading figures in the formation of the 1854 Manchester League were Thompson and his son-in-law Frederick W. Cherson. Thompson had returned from his 1850-51 trip reinforced in his sympathy for the Garrisonians. He had quickly lost his seat at Tower Hamlets. He then plunged back into the anti-slavery movement until his financial difficulties drove him into taking a post in a dubious and ill-fated Indian commercial house.¹ Their efforts

¹. See below, pp. 464-465. Thompson’s 1850 visit is less important than his 1834 one, and cannot be examined here due to lack of space and surplus of evidence.
in organising the League arose out of the disintegration of the Manchester Union [Anti-Slavery] Society, a multi-factional but local body founded in the autumn of 1833. The most active figures in its formation had been Sturge, Chamorovzow, and Thompson, as usual willing to cooperate with British New Organisation leaders at times when the sides were not at odds over any specific issue. At this stage, the Union made no attempt to take an independent national role, and remained formally an auxiliary of the B.F.A.S.S. 1 Partly because of this, and partly because it had been founded with the help of Rev. Frederick Hemming, an American Wesleyan understood to be an agent of the A.F.A.S.S., Chesson at least was doubtful about the wisdom of becoming connected with the Manchester Union, although it was avowedly unsectarian. 2 On the other hand, the influence of Chamorovzow and Thompson ensured that the Union was by no means closed to Garrisonians. Chesson finally did give his support to the new Manchester Society. He also used Union funds to publish his little paper, the Anti-Slavery Watchman, until its short life ended with his own and his father-in-law's resignations. After the Union's meetings were over, and its constitution had been drawn up to be presented to a first public rally on November 24th Chesson wrote approvingly of its terms. 3 At this same meeting on the 24th, he


2. Ibid., Oct., 1853. Hemming was actually agent for the American Missionary Association, but had agreed to accept funds on Tappan's behalf if these actually came his way - A.S.R., May, 1854.

became its Secretary.  

It was not long, however, before the Union Anti-Slavery Society began to split into its component parts. Chesson made no secret of his strong Garrisonian sympathies. When the first number of the Watchman came out in November in preparation for the Union inaugural of the 24th, it was uncompromisingly Old Organised, and gave no hint of the interest in reunification shown by Chavrovzow at the preliminary meeting of the previous month. 2 Although this meeting, held in October 18th in the Friends' Meeting House, was briefly reported, most of the paper's thirty pages was given over purely to Garrisonian propaganda. The first page heading carried a quotation from Thompson, The leader promised that the Watchman would "carefully exhibit [the] dark treachery [of the churches] to Christ", and expose the falsity of their cry of infidelity. It would also denounce all sectarianism within the anti-slavery movement, and attack any "man who refuses to cooperate with another in the overthrow of the monstrous curse of slavery..... because they hold different opinion on certain theological points." The very next article, naming names, assured readers that Garrison was "a moral and intellectual giant in the contest with the iron-hearted tyrants of the coloured race." The tone of the Anti-Slavery Watchman was the same in each of its two remaining issues. 3

1. Anti-Slavery Advocate, Feb., 1854.
3. Ibid., Dec., Jan., 1853.
Even Eliza Wigham, always sympathetic to those who hoped for unity, wrote to her new friend Chamerovzow that "I quite like Chesson, but I think his zeal sometimes oversteps prudence." ¹

Apart from the recognised difficulty of accommodating Chesson, however, the new Union also failed to attract support from some of the most influential Garrisonians in the country. There is no mention of its existence in any of J.B. Estlin or Mary Estlin's letters, probably because the old man was at this time recovering from a serious illness. More significantly, the G.B.S., at this stage enjoying a temporary revival, was less than cordial to the new Society. The Committee had been prepared to meet Chamerovzow during his autumn visit to Scotland.² After Chesson had written giving information on the proceedings in Manchester, however, they met on December 20th to discuss a reply prepared by Professor Nichol, now the husband of Elizabeth Pease.³ Nichol's Address, which was finally adopted, accepted Chesson's claim that the ground of the Union should be "broad, clear, and unmistakeable." It went on to examine the Manchester constitution, noting the inconsistency of its retaining the status


². Minute for 17.10.53, G.B.S. Minute Books, IV. Actually Chamerovzow did not appear at this meeting, due to being detained in Edinburgh after misunderstanding information given him by Eliza Wigham. See E. Wigham to Chamerovzow, 13.11.53, loc. cit.

of a B.F.A.S.S. auxiliary and yet reserving the right to "special and independent action." Broad Street's past policy had been such as to lose it the leadership of the cause. It had repudiated British India action, and rejected the influence of America by throwing its only effective anti-slavery agency overboard. Again, during the sugar duties crisis, it had tried to commit British abolitionists to "restricted commerce." Finally, Nichol was suspicious of the fact that although the Union constitution opened membership to all sects, it made no mention of the "irreligious," or those who might be considered to belong to "no sect." Experience showed that this kind of phrasing had provided a loophole for the orthodox in the past. This document creates the suspicion that it was impossible to win in conciliating committed Garrisonians. But it also gives an indication of the failure of the Manchester Union to find the ground of compromise which its broadly-based constitution was aiming for. At the same time its troubles with Chesson were leading rapidly to the disruption of the Society.

The third and last issue of the Anti-Slavery Watchman had the unpleasant task of reporting the collapse of the Union Anti-Slavery Society under the strain of trying to accommodate both the views of Chesson and those of Broad Street sympathisers. The issue which was discussed at a series of meetings in December, and which finally produced Chesson's resignation as Secretary on

1. Anti-Slavery Watchman, Jan., 1854.
January 6th, was the appointment of the Rev. Frederick Hemming as its agent. He was elected by the casting vote of the Chair, after debate over his prejudices against Garrison. Subsequently he turned on his critics by making specific charges against Chesson, whom he claimed had personally attacked him in the Advocate and the Watchman, although he was not an agent of the A.F.A.S.S. At the same time, he admitted holding the opinion that Garrison was an infidel. The meeting was closed before Chesson could make any reply, and the final result was his resignation, followed soon after by Thompson's. With these resignations the Manchester Union effectively collapsed. Nothing more was seen of the flamboyant little Watchman.

With a frankness which would have been totally foreign to his predecessor, Chamberovszow had a full account of the schism in Manchester inserted in the Reporter, with a list of the names of the seceding minority. He concluded characteristically that "we deeply regret this rupture, believing that division among abolitionists... tends to strengthen the hands of the slave power."

The same issue of the Reporter included a notice that a "North of England Anti-Slavery and India Reform League" had just been formed, in Manchester. Later referred to simply as the Manchester Anti-Slavery League, this took the place of the Union Anti-Slavery Society. It was constituted by Manchester and other Garrisonian leaders as an independent organisation to counterbalance the

1. Ibid.; Chesson to Webb, 16.1.54, printed in Anti-Slavery Advocate, Feb., 1854.

2. A.S.R., 1.3.54.
B.F.A.S.S. nationally. It was also hoped its appeal would be wide enough to act as a force for unity in the increasingly fragmented movement. Garrisonians undoubtedly shared some of Chamerovzow's wish to be done with old rivalries. Even the American McKim considered Chasson had been too impulsive in the controversy over the Watchman, the foundation of which he thought had been not only "very ill-advised" but "entirely un-advised," 1 Miss Pugh wrote unhappily of "the poor 'Happy Family' at Manchester - scattered to the four winds of heaven." 2 Mary Estlin, too, referred to the collapse of the Union Society, unmistakably regretfully, as "the Manchester muddle." 3

Chasson actually began to work for the new League immediately after his resignation, and reported that it was "in embryo" as early as mid-January. 4 Miss Estlin was pessimistic about its chances of success, and prophesied that it would fall to pieces "for want of a soul in the three kingdoms qualified to take the helm." 5 Chasson described the proposed League as aiming to "originate a movement in the manufacturing districts," and unite friends of the American society throughout the country. 6 He spent most of the summer working to organise a national Conference to

1. McKim to Webb, 8.1.54, Garrison Papers.
2. S. Pugh to Webb, 24.2.54, Garrison Papers.
3. M. Estlin to E. Weston, 18.1.54, Estlin Papers, B.P.L.
5. M. Estlin to E. Weston, 16.1.54, loc.cit.
be held in Manchester under the League's auspices, in August.¹

The avowed aim of the Manchester Conference was to work towards restoring unity in the movement, and it was wholeheartedly supported and attended on this ground by Armistead. Nevertheless, even the long suffering Chamorovzow suspected with some justice that it was being organised as a Garrisonian plot to subvert the national Conference planned by the B.F.A.S.S. for November. He had received several bewildered letters showing that the abolitionist public saw the Manchester Conference as having been got up in opposition to his own. He personally feared that it had been arranged to give Pillsbury and his friends "the opportunity of abusing the Broad St. Committee, openly, as they have done privately." Many of those whom they wished to attract to the cause would have supported one Conference, but would now be deterred by the presence of "two Richmonds in the field."² Although Mary Estlin replied that the aims of the two Conferences were not mutually exclusive, and that all the leading lights of the Manchester League - Cheson, Estlin, and the Rev. Dr. Guthrie - were in favour of union, Chamorovzow remained unconvinced.³

The Broad Street Secretary's fears were only too well based. Although Chamorovzow was fair enough to cover the Manchester


2. Chamorovzow to M. Estlin, 24.7.54, Garrison Papers.

3. M. Estlin to Chamorovzow, 31.7.54, (copy), Garrison Papers; Chamorovzow to M. Estlin, 1.8.54, ibid.
Conference in the *Reporter*, it was attended by many Garrisonian celebrities, including Pillsbury, Bishop, Steinthal, and Armistead.¹ The delegates resolved initially that the Conference should be composed of all those believing that slaveholding was a sin, irrespective of sex, sect, or party. They then went on to debate five topics – the result of the 1833 Emancipation Act, the Nebraska Bill, "the charges preferred against the American abolitionists," the movement for the dissolution of the American Union, and British cooperation with America. The last three topics were discussed in such terms as to give rise to a violent controversy on Sabbath observance in the *Scottish Press*. With a fine blindness to Scottish distrust of Unitarians, Pillsbury had presented it with comments from S.J. May defending American abolitionist rallies held on Sundays.² In spite of this and other disagreements, however, Chesson was convinced that the Conference had been a huge success at the expense of the D.P.A.S. He wrote delightedly to May that its activities "were, I trust, the commencement of a new era of revival... for the long protracted Anti-Slavery cause in this country."³


³. Chesson to May, 23.8.54, May Papers.
After November he expected they would be able to found a national organisation, "unless an extraordinary light should dawn on New Broad Street." Steinthal was less optimistic, but felt that good had been done in spreading information, and especially in bringing the American Society "prominently before the public." ¹

Unfortunately the Manchester League ran into overwhelming difficulties even before Charnorovzow's November conference. Like the old Anti-Slavery League, it lacked the foresight to create a permanent national organisation and the funds to maintain one. Pillsbury, its only prominent American supporter, was too far gone in the characteristic informality of a millennial reformer to think in these terms. British adherents of national status like Thompson, Bishop, and Steinthal soon returned to their homes and left the League to its own devices. The only prominent person connected with it who remained in Manchester was Cheson. With a wife to provide for it was impossible for him to work permanently for an organisation which had no income and paid no salaries. Soon after this he continued his career as a journalist by joining with Thompson to float their ill-fated paper, The Empire. ² Lack of money was the League's main bugbear. Without funds in the first instance, it was impossible to found a newspaper, pay lecturers and agents to form auxiliaries, or

1. Steinthal to May, 17.3.51, ibid.

2. Most of Cheson's articles in The Empire are preserved in Thompson Scrapbooks, VII. Cheson subsequently became paid Secretary of the Aborigines' Protection Society.
provide salaries for permanent officials. Without these benefits, there was no hope of acquiring any funds in the future. The only two men in England with Garrisonian sympathies and the knowledge, administrative ability, and above all money to set the League on its feet nationally were Estlin and Armistead. Both apparently wished the venture well, but one was failing in health, while the other was absorbed in his schemes for cheap abolitionist publications. In any case they were less closed to considering Chamaróvzow's plans for unity than a psychotic like Pillsbury or a tactless enthusiast like Chesson. As Mary Estlin had prophesied, the League suffered dismally from lack of sound leadership. It was in a precarious state by mid-November. Although the bitterness created by Pillsbury's presence in Manchester had abated, and he apparently had no other reason for shunning Chamaróvzow's Conference, Chesson was forced to write that he could not attend it because the League was too heavily in debt to pay the expenses of a representative. Although he finally raised money to attend the B.P.A.S.S. Conference, as delegate for both Manchester League and Manchester Conference, this was the last official act of either. The attempt to give both national status had been premature, and perhaps made even more difficult by the

2. Chesson to Chamaróvzow, 29.11.54, ibid., C29/07.
acrimony shown by Pillsbury to all non-Garrisonians. Chesson's letters to Chamarovzow returned to cordial terms after Pillsbury left Manchester, as the League declined. The attempt to set up a united national organisation separate from the B.P.A.S.S. failed. Having two Richards in the national field was simply not practical. But at least the events in Manchester made it clear that Garrisonians shared the basic desire to consolidate national anti-slavery energies, even if this involved making limited concessions to the other side.

Chamarovzow's plans for reunification of the movement failed for very different reasons. Like Chesson, his hopes were finally shattered after an attempt to organise a national Conference in the autumn of 1854. He encountered great difficulties in the intransigence of Garrisonian opponents, especially American ones currently visiting this country. British Garrisonians, left to themselves, might have been glad to respond to his overtures, as the reactions of Mary Estlin, Eliza Wigham, Armistead, and Estlin to his early changes in the working of the Broad Street machinery indicate. Even the now thoroughly radical Bristol and Clifton Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society sent him a resolution approving of his work. In fact British Garrisonians had to have poor Chamarovzow's 'hypocrisy' demonstrated to them by American visitors whose advice they were unfortunately too prone to take.

1. Ibid.

2. Minute Book, 21, 4.53, Bristol and Clifton... Minute Book.
It is easy to see why American Garrisonians were so quick to misunderstand the changes made by Chamarovzow. Unaccustomed to thinking in national terms, in spite of the names of the American and American and Foreign Societies, they did not make allowances for the latitude given to professional secretaries of the national British benevolent societies. Without any day to day supervision from their employers, they were able to put forward many of their own ideas as those of the Society, and in effect turn it in whichever direction they thought best. The tendency of committee members not residing in London to receive information through their Secretary, meant that his control over propaganda gave him the power to maintain the policy he selected. Monthly or quarterly committee meetings, again because of the power of Secretaries to select information, were not necessarily an effective check on their power. The same was even true of Anniversary Meetings, where the membership of a Society seldom did more than approve of the actions of the Committee, whose ideas and plans were frequently those of the Secretary. In this sense there was doubtless some literal truth in the accusation that Scoble had "duped" the B.F.A.S.S. leaders.\(^1\) The corollary missed by American Garrisonians was that if Scoble could deceive the Committee it was fair to assume that Chamarovzow could undeceive them. The evident change in the national society's attitudes from 1853 onwards was not another manifestation of New Organisation hypocrisy.

1. e.g. Estlin to M.W. Chapman, 23.5.51, Weston Papers.
The case was simply one where the businessmen in charge of the D.F.A.S.S. were again taking the short-cut of accepting the views of the man in charge of the day to day running of the Society. The change in its policies may have arisen from intellectual laziness. But it should not have been dismissed as a new plot to gull the philanthropic public. It was because they realised this that British Garrisonians responded to Chamarovzow's overtures. It was because their American friends failed to realise this that these overtures failed to reunite the movement. Pillsbury was thinking within the mistaken assumptions of all American Garrisonians when he wrote retrospectively that

"what they could not affect in Broad Street through the lies & slanders of Scoblo, they meant now to achieve through the spacious & smoothfaced diplomacy of Chamarovzow - but the utter ruin of our reputation in this country & the alienation of our few remaining friends & coadjutors was the object sought [,.] beyond all controversy." 1

The vindictiveness of Pillsbury dogged Chamarovzow's efforts throughout the second year of his Secretaryship. He had sailed from Boston in January, and was enthusiastically welcomed by the March Advocate. 2 Among the least tactful of the American Garrisonians, second only to Wright in his red-hot anticlericalism,

1. Pillsbury to May, 2.2.55, May Papers. See also May to Webb, 25.10.54, ibid.

he was predisposed to distrust Chamorovzow's plans for unity. 1 
His stay in Britain was complicated by his suffering from severe psychological disorder. Even Mary Estlin commented on "the diseased way in which his mind fastens upon erroneous views of a subject," 2 Evidently a manic depressive, Pillsbury swung backwards and forwards between periods of normalcy and spells when his hatred of other abolitionists made any kind of working compromise or even sane debate impossible. James Russell Lowell cast him in the Letters from Boston as an Old Testament prophet -

"a terrible denouncer he
Old Sinai hums unquenchably
Upon his lips; he might well be a
Not blazing soul from fierce Judea,
Habakkuk, Ezra, or Hosea." 3

The demands of prophethood made any form of dialogue with the Beast impossible. During 1854, Pillsbury's rancour eroded and finally destroyed much of the emerging goodwill between Chamorovzow and the British Garrisonians.

Pillsbury's attitude to plans for unity was made clear in his response to Chamorovzow's invitation to attend the B.F.A.S.S.

1. Pillsbury had first become prominent as a colleague of Rogers in New Hampshire, and later did much of his itinerant lecturing as the companion of the extremist Stephen Foster.


Anulvoronry in May. Previous to this he had done little active work, due to becoming ill during an early visit to Dublin. On being approached by Chamarovzow, he refused to attend without reason, although Brown and Thompson did in fact appear. Subsequently he ridiculed the invitation in a letter written to May for publication in the Liberator. He claimed that he had known nothing of the D.F.A.S.S. Secretary, and that his invitation "appeared a farce - a mere make-believe - & I thought it was generally so regarded." Chamarovzow's account was more destructive to Pillsbury's reputation for civility. Long before the A.G.U., he had asked him to visit his at home. The invitation was cordially accepted, although the party subsequently had to be cancelled due to Thompson's being unable to come. Meanwhile, Pillsbury had begun attacking him in the press. He rejected the invitation to the Anniversary on the published grounds that "he regarded it as an insult." Finally, he did come to the meeting, although he steadfastly refused invitations to speak. As Chamarovzow complained to Miss Estlin, it was difficult to know how to please her friends. He had tried to oblige those who complained of McKim's not being invited to the previous anniversary by issuing the invitation to Pillsbury, only to find that he appeared to take credit for his refusal. Miss Estlin meanwhile arranged for him to meet Mrs.

1. Webb to May, 8.3.54, May Papers.
2. Pillsbury to May, 2.6.54, ibid.
3. Chamarovzow to M. Estlin, 24.7.54, Garrison Papers.
Chapman and her entourage in Paris. On visiting her there the previous year, Sarah Pugh had found her without any confidence in the change of Secretaryship and policy at Broad Street.¹

A year later, news reached her that Mrs. Chapman was about to "deal with" Chamerovzow, and convince him "that this loving harmony which he fondly hoped... [for].... is a thing impossible."² Nevertheless, there is no doubt that Miss Estlin saw the meeting in Paris as a way of exposing Chamerovzow to unadulterated Old Organisation abolitionism. Mrs. Chapman, unlike Pillsbury, seems to have been uncharacteristically pleasant to Chamerovzow.³ On the other hand, her personal attitudes were little affected. Although she had found Chamerovzow himself well-disposed, she still felt that Garrisonian power as a group arose from "staying snubbed." She hoped he would soon realise he was being used "as a tool."⁴ For Pillsbury, however, the fact of an interview having been given by the much-adulated Mrs. Chapman was enough to increase his hatred for Chamerovzow and breed distrust of the Estlins, who had first conciliated him. He complained that Chamerovzow never gave Garrisonian introductions to the Sturges and Alexanders of his own Executive Committee, but could still ask for letters "to our most distinguished personages and fancies himself

1. S. Pugh to M. Estlin, 28.6.33, Estlin Papers, Dr. Williams' Library.
2. S. Pugh to M. Estlin, 28.8.54, ibid.
3. C. Weston to M. Estlin, 20.8.54; Chamerovzow to M. Estlin, 24.8.54, both Garrison Papers, misplaced in 1855 file.
quite good enough to associate with them."  

By the time the question of attending the November Conference arose, Pillsbury was thus thoroughly at odds with Chamerovzow. In fact it was somewhat out of character for him to go to the Conference at all. He only did so because English friends had insisted that "my course gave our foes great advantage." He had actually attended as a witness, but found that "the enemy" had numerical strength, with the added advantage of having Thompson "fast in their fangs." He therefore felt obliged to help the few Garrisonians who were trying to "stem the torrent," by speaking in justification of the maligned abolitionists in the U.S.A. Although Pillsbury's account of the Convention was biased, it certainly was predominantly New Organization. The quiet dropping of Wilson Armistead's letter of advice has already been mentioned. Mrs. Chapman wrote anxiously to Garrison that it was being organised as part of a wider plot to tamper with the loyalties of their supporters in Britain. On the other hand, Chamerovzow does appear to have made an honest effort to attract Garrisonian delegates, though these efforts produced less real return than they deserved. Armistead and Steinhthal were unable to make the trip to London, though both sent letters of advice. Steinhthal suggested that

1. Pillsbury to Garrison, 5.10.54, ibid.
the basis for admission should be made as wide as possible, and that even George Jacob Holyoake, the atheist, should be seated if he applied for a place. Mary Estlin and her father also missed from the Conference, probably because of a disinclination to risk Mr. Estlin's precarious health by making the trip to London in the uncertain travelling conditions of the winter. Again, although both the G.E.S. and the E.L.E.S. chose delegates, they were not themselves leading Garrisonians but, with the exception of Professor Nichol, simply prominent local figures who happened to be conveniently in London at the appropriate time. The outcome of Chamerovzow's effort to reunite the movement through the 1854 Conference was modest. The only radical British Garrisonians who attended were Nichol and Bishop, accompanied by an undecided Thompson, Samuel R. Ward, and the disgruntled Millsbury. The last, if his subsequent behaviour is any guide, approached the Conference with the formed intention of wrecking it.

The General Anti-Slavery Conference of November, 1854, was a considerably less grand affair than its predecessors of 1840 and 1843. Although it took over a year to arrange, the Conference had first been mooted and approved at a preliminary meeting held

2. Smeal to Chamerovzow, 18.11.54, Bod. Brit. Emp. Mss. S.18, C36/00; E. Wigham to Chamerovzow, 27.11.54, ibid., C160/20. Minute for 15.11.54, G.E.S. Minute Books, IV.
in Edinburgh, probably as a concession to provincial distrust of the London-dominated national Society, after the Peace Conference there in October of the previous year. The small scale of the 1854 Conference indicates the decline in national support for the movement since 1840. Nevertheless, it might have contributed favourably to public interest if it had not been for the dissension caused by Pillsbury. He was now thoroughly embittered and morbidly convinced that nothing but good could arise from an all-out attack on the D.F.A.S.S. and the religious bodies with which it was connected — certainly a defensible viewpoint, but not one likely to increase public support for the abolitionist movement in this country. Although Pillsbury was later prepared to admit that the Conference had been called "on very catholic grounds," he took an early opportunity to demand that the Conference give a specific endorsement of the American Society. He was soon deserted even by Bishop, Thompson, and Ward, who decided not to support his call for a resolution endorsing the American Society after being assured that the absence of one did not imply hostility to it. All accepted the new D.F.A.S.S. position of general support for American abolitionist efforts explained by Duncan McLaren of Edinburgh, Pillsbury, nevertheless, rose in the afternoon of the first day to continue his demand for

1. Minutes for 19.8.53, 5.10.53, 4.11.53, 7.4.54, 4.8.54, 6.10.54, 20.10.54, 17.11.54, 27.11.54, D.F.A.S.S. Minute Books, III.


commitment to cooperation with the A.A.S.S. Later he presented the meeting with an account of the Indiana secession, and an exposure of the failure of the British and Foreign Society's deputation to expose the conduct of the old Yearly Meeting. The outburst of Quakerly indignation at what was in effect a denunciation of London Yearly Meeting in front of a gathering containing a high proportion of its members, was so great that Pillsbury was squashed from the Chair by John Cropper of Liverpool, himself a Friend, and incidentally a local opponent of Francis Bishop. After the closing session, an observer noted that Pillsbury disappeared into the crowd, but that Bishop remained to chat with members of the Committee. Bishop personally thought that the whole Conference would do a great deal of good. Nevertheless, the recurrence of open squabbling revealed that even Chamerovzow's dogged work for reunification could do nothing to heal the splits of the previous decade. The effect was all the more harmful, since the average British reformer, could hardly understand an attack on the Society of Friends, whose members were known to be foremost in the good causes of the day, national and local. Pillsbury's

1. Ibid. The deputation was actually one from the London Yearly Meeting although all its members were prominently connected with the B.F.A.S.S.


3. Bishop to Garrison, 30.11.54, loc.cit.
speeches did nothing to win support for his own faction, though they did not imply that any of his hearers would increase their sympathy for the Quakers or for the D.F.A. S.

In turn, the Garrisonian response to the eventual harsh treatment of Pillsbury at the Conference brought the brief honeymoon of cooperation with Chamorovzow to an end. Perhaps had always been slight, the hope of bringing about a reconciliation. Even a year before the debacle produced by Pillsbury's behaviour at the 1834 Conference, there had been indications that Broad Street still regarded Garrisonians as the second-class citizens of abolition. In the case of the soirée organised to receive Mrs. Stowe, for instance, Mc Kin, Brown, Sarah Pugh, Mr. and Mrs. Crafts and Thompson were given invitations but pointedly seated at the back of the hall where their presence could cause no embarrassment.¹ The snubbing of Pillsbury at the 1854 Convention, however much he may have gone out of his way to provoke it, must have finally made it clear that all expectations of healing the schisms were illusory. The January Advocate remarked that its hopes for the change in Broad Street leadership had now been "totally disappointed." As for the accusation that Pillsbury had irresponsibly upset the harmony of the Conference, Webb scathingly pointed out that the movement "is a real struggle with the powers of evil, and not an intellectual Turkish bath for the promotion and indulgence of pleasing states of tranquillity."²

1. S. Pugh to Webb, 23.5.53, Garrison Papers.
Pillsbury himself concluded that the course of the Convention proved that Chamorovzow's cordiality had simply been another New Organisation conspiracy to further the vendetta against the Garrisonians. 1 His British allies were less melodramatic in their interpretation, but equally disillusioned with Chamorovzow and his employers. Richard Webb had now lost all faith in the B.F.A.S.S. 2 After a period of indecision, Steinthal simply resigned his connection with London, taking his Bridgewater group with him, because of the failure of the Conference to testify for Garrison. 3 Estlin similarly resigned from the B.F.A.S.S. on seeing that the published pamphlet account of the November Conference omitted the speeches of Pillsbury and Bishop, the very sections of its proceedings he thought most important. 4 Quite apart from Old Organisation chagrin at the treatment of Pillsbury, at least one British Garrisonian was deeply offended by the failings of the Conference in another direction. Wilson Armistead had been unable to come to London due to the illness of a relative. Although it is conceivable that his letter of advice failed to reach London in time to be read to the Conference, it is

1. Pillsbury to May, 2.2.55, May Papers.
2. Webb to H. Estlin, 5.3.55, ibid.
4. Estlin to Chamorovzow, 21.5.55, ibid., C157/57, reprinted in Anti-Slavery Advocate, July, 1855. For further criticism of the slanted report, see Anti-Slavery Advocate, May, 1855.
not likely that the Broad Street Committee would have given it consideration.\(^1\) Certainly the Conference heard nothing of Armistead’s views.\(^2\) From this time onwards, he concentrated on putting forward his various schemes through the Leeds Young Men’s Anti-Slavery Association, and working generally in support of the Garrisonian Advocate. There is no evidence of his cooperating with the B.F.A.S.S. until 1850, when he approached it in the hope of raising funds to publish Pullen’s Blast of a Trumpet in Zion.\(^3\)

George Thompson was also alienated from Broad Street at the time of the 1854 Conference. After speaking at the Conference in favour of cooperation between the two camps of abolitionists, he was subsequently accused by Pillsbury of having been bribed by the New Organisation not to force a division over the American Society. It was then suggested that he had printed a falsified account of the Convention Proceedings in the Empire, in which he described himself as having eulogised Garrison and his colleagues, in a speech which other Garrisonians who had been present could not remember.\(^4\) Although the controversy over Thompson’s course at the Convention probably arose from the fantasies of Pillsbury, the


2. Armistead complained of this in Armistead to Chumanovzow, 4.12.54, ibid., C27/63.

3. Minute for 3.2.60, B.F.A.S.S. Minute Books, III.

most favourable interpretation put on his behaviour by a
Garrisonian seems to have been Anne Warren Weston's belief that
it had been that of "a foolishly generous man." This criticism
did not bring him any closer to the B.F.A.S.S. He largely
dropped out of the organised anti-slavery movement until 1859.
In the intervening period he gave up his interest in the struggling
Empire to make a second trip to India, on this occasion retained by
a textile business to investigate new forms of fibre. Due to
the failure of his firm, he completely ran out of money, and very
nearly died of "bilious fever" followed by some form of paralytic
attack. On his return, although other Garrisonians had forgotten
the imputed treason of 1854, the breach with Broad Street was no
nearer being healed. In 1859, after recovering from his stroke,
and being partly restored to prosperity by efforts made on his
behalf by Garrisonian sympathisers, he became the president of the

1. A.W. Weston to M. Estlin, 5.2.55, Estlin Papers.

2. May to Garrison, 17.1.59, Garrison Papers; Thompson
to S.H. Gay, 24.1.59, Gay Papers, Columbia U.L; Chesson to
Garrison, 16.1.56, in The Empire, 8.2.56, cutting in Thompson
Scrapbooks, II.

3. A testimonial raised for Thompson in the U.S.A. was probably
quite successful, Mrs. Chapman, for instance, personally sent
50 - M.W. Chapman to Garrison, 12.2.59, Garrison Papers. An
undated letter in the Postor Papers, American Antiquarian Society,
mentions that a testimonial to Thompson, probably this one, had
succeeded in raising $2100-$2200 - W. Phillips to A. Kelley
Postor, n.d. Although The Empire had failed for $5000, Thompson
only had $550 of debts by January, 1859 - May to Garrison, 17.1.59,
loc.cit. In 1860, too, a British Garrisonian testimonial was
organised by sympathisers in Newcastle. Their circular, To the
Friends of George Thompson, 9.8.60, Garrison Papers, succeeded in
raising another £500. See also Ellen Richardson to Garrison,
12.12.60, ibid.
London Emancipation Committee. Thompson remained first and foremost a Garrisonian, and firmly rejected overtures put out by the B.F.A.S.S. with a view to organising a joint August 1st rally. As in the case of most British Garrisonians, the 1854 Convention had been the last point at which he entertained hopes of a reconciliation between the two wings of the movement. In his last letter to Chamerovzow before the war, he threatened to complain to the B.F.A.S.S at large about his "prostitution" of his official position to malicious personal slanders at Broad Street.

This breakdown of personal relations between Thompson and Chamerovzow may act as a symbol of the failure of the British anti-slavery movement to heal the divisions of 1841. The Convention of 1854 marked the effective end of Chamerovzow's well-meaning attempts to restore unity. Indeed his hopes for reunification had been grounded in a series of over-optimistic assumptions about the British movement. Quite apart from misunderstanding the rancour carried over from the squabbles of the previous decade, he failed to understand the extent to which this rancour was intensified by the


2. Thompson to Chamerovzow, 23.7.60, ibid., C37/8.
advice of Americans with whom British abolitionists continued to correspond. Genuine misunderstanding and resentment of the 'betrayals' of the 1840's, made it difficult for American Garrisonians to see any British tendency to forget them for the sake of unity as being serious. Their repeated advice was to spurn overtures of the kind made by Chamarovzow as probable New Organisation conspiracies.

The dice were also loaded against Chamarovzow because of the growing complexity of the schisms within the anti-slavery movement. The apparent anxiety of leaders like Estlin and Armistead to have done with the constant infighting and bickering of the past, disguises the extent to which the fifties saw the emergence of challenges to B.F.A.S.S. leadership other than the Garrisonian one. In Britain as in America, this was the decade of new panaceas for the civic disease of slavery. Although Britons could not share in the growing tendency for Americans to express their attitudes to slavery through politics, they could and did react against the impotence of old-style abolitionism. In doing so, they could join in the swelling enthusiasm for the romantic negrophilia of Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, and transfer their charity to Mrs. Stowe herself or Vigilance Committees designed to aid the escaping Negroes of whom she wrote. Alternatively, they could turn to the increasingly popular movements for abstinence from slave produce or support of Negro education. In either case, support was being diverted from the older Tappanite and Garrisonian societies alike, committed as they were to the humdrum activities of petitioning ministers and spreading propaganda. Chamarovzow's efforts to unite
all British abolitionists did not fail only because of the intransigence of the Garrisonians. He also had to contend with a new situation in the anti-slavery movement. Both the B.F.A.S.S. and its old rivals now had to compete with societies presenting novel and interesting ways of carrying on abolitionist agitation.

After the Compromise of 1850, Britain was visited by numbers of American abolitionists with neither Old nor New Organisation commitments. The most influential of these was the authoress of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, whose tours encouraged an entirely new form of abolitionist enthusiasm. Its roots were emotional, and its attitudes far removed from the old rational assumptions on improbability. Apart from Mrs. Stowe, however, the strength of the old anti-slavery societies was being eroded by the work of visitors attempting to gather funds for new abolitionist agencies in the United States. Not all were primarily interested in the division between Old and New Organisation, and tended to take their standpoint on it according to the audience whom they were addressing. Such uncommitted visitors received charitable contributions which would normally have gone to the older British societies. Whether such contributions went to Mrs. Stowe's personal purse, free produce warehouses, Vigilance Committees, or manual labour schools, they represented so much money lost to societies like the C.E.S., the Bristol and Clifton Society, or the B.F.A.S.S. itself. Pillsbury was for once assessing the British scene shrewdly when he wrote bitterly that he had found "all sorts of creatures traveling: [sic] in the name of American Anti-Slavery, and picking the people's pockets for Vigilance Committees."
Canada Missions, Chaplain Funds, Coloured Schools in the West, & Coloured Churches in Canada... they are an outrage on all decency, & a scandal to the name of Anti-Slavery."  

All the causes of which Pillsbury wrote so contemptuously have a place in the history of the American movement, and all were represented in Britain during the decade before the Civil War. The N.Y. Vigilance Committee supporting the romantic work of the Underground Railroad was represented in this country by its agent the Rev. Dr. J.W.C. Pennington. Again, Vigilance Committees of other American cities, and the various schemes for helping the Negro through educational and missionary, had their claims set before the British public by a growing stream of abolitionist visitors, many of them coloured.  

1. Pillsbury to May, 5.10.54, May Papers. See also Pillsbury to Glasgow Sentinel, 9.9.54, reprinted in Anti-Slavery Advocate, October, 1854.

2. The Underground Railroad and the fight against the Fugitive Slave Law are best described in W.H. Siebert, The Underground Railroad from Slavery to Freedom (New York, 1898, reprinted, 1967). See also Litwack, North of Slavery, pp. 248-252. There is a short account of the main cases dealt with by northern vigilantes in Fill, The Crusade against Slavery, pp. 201-217. A recent study of settlement work with educational and missionary aims is W.H. & J.H. Pease, Black Utopias. For Mrs. Stowe's attitudes to these causes, see below, p.510.

3. Pennington had visited Britain in 1843 as agent for the Union Missionary Society at the General Anti-Slavery Convention. He returned from 1850 to 1854 as agent of the N.Y. Vigilance Committee. For his organisation of societies in Glasgow and Edinburgh, see p.334-339 above; Taylor, 'Some American Reformers and their Influence on Reform Movements in Great Britain,' p. 85. Pennington was savagely attacked in Anti-Slavery Advocate, Sept., Oct., 1854. There is a sketch in D.A.B.

aiding the Negro who had escaped or was escaping from slavery
linked with the feverish interest in Mrs. Stowe's works, and
as such drew proportionately more support away from the old
abolitionist societies. More dangerous to them than any
of these, with the possible exception of the indefatigable
Dr. Pennington, was the work of the Mandingo Henry Highland
Garnet, who set about organising a chain of British societies
specifically committed to abstinence from slave produce.

Although this abolitionist method had been under consideration
in Britain since the eighteenth century, it had always been

1. Josiah Henson, of Dawn Institute, exploited this connection by
posing as the 'original' of Uncle Tom, a claim partly supported
by Mrs. Stowe. See Uncle Tom's Story of his Life. An Autobiography
of Josiah Henson, 1789-1877 (London, 1877, 1677, edition), pp.156-163
and passim.

2. Garnet had been an advocate of violent revolution in 1843. See
Litwack, op. cit., pp. 244-245. His British visit as a free produce
lecturer ran from 1850-53.

3. The only scholarly history of the free produce movement is R.K.
Nuernberger, The Free Produce Movement, a Quaker Protest against
Slavery (Durham, N.C., 1942), which mentions British aspects only
incidentally. This method had been urged in Britain as early as the
1780's, as the pains taken by pro-slavery writers to anor at sugar
boycotts indicate. See Slavery No Oppression: or, Some New Arguments
and Opinions against the Idea of African Liberty, Dedicated to the
Committee of the Company that Trade in Africa (London, n.d., c.1786),
pp. 24-25, 33. In the colonial emancipation campaign, it again became
fashionable. The British India Society and the African Civilization
Society were variants of the free produce idea, hoping to provide
alternative sources of cotton supply to those of America. In 1847
free produce was again forced upon the notice of British Friends by
the work of the American Quaker Samuel Rhoads (British Friend,
30.10.47), and Elihu Burritt of the peace movement. Burritt was the
author of Twenty Reasons for Total Abstinence from Slave-Labour
Produce, [Broadsheet, various editions, 1853], reprinted from Bond
of Brotherhood, July, 1853, in A.S.R., 1.8.53. Henry Bibb's
mission in 1848 kept the idea alive in Britain until Garnet's
arrival in 1850.
seen as subordinate to the work of changing the Southern social system through moral persuasion and diplomatic contacts. Although Rhoads' influence led Sturge to present the 1847 London Yearly Meeting with a memorandum on free produce, the whole plan had already come under severe criticism from both factions at the 1840 Convention, and Sturge's individualistic efforts to create supply-lines of free cotton failed. By the end of the forties, Garrisonians were still pleading that free-produce had no other end than that of attracting attention to the Negro. Although the Reporter could hardly exclude free produce from its columns, its interest was in discussing plans for finding alternative sources of cotton supply, rather than in calling for total abstinence from slave-grown raw materials and foodstuffs. The new free produce societies must have been distasteful to all the older societies. They had the unfair competitive advantage of giving their adherents the satisfaction of making genuine sacrifices for the American slave. They also drew attention to the hard fact that it was unthinkable for many of the businessmen prominent in the anti-slavery movement to set the Midlands idle by


3. A.S.R., 1.3.53, 2.5.53, 1.10.53, 1.1.57, 1.10.57, 1.3.58.
refusing to use American cotton. In 1846, the B.F.A.S.S.
had been greatly embarrassed when the free trade lobby
circulated a squib written by Cobden demonstrating the dualism
between Sturge's concern for abstaining from Latin-American
sugar and his habitually dressing in clothes made from American
yarn. The setting up of Garnet's free produce societies exposed
them to similar sneers from within the abolitionist movement.

The free produce movement gained alarming strength in the
ey early fifties, partly because of Garnet's success in gaining an
ally in the Quaker philanthropist, Mrs. Anna H. Richardson of
Newcastle, incidentally a cousin of Eliza Wigham. She and her
family came to play something similar to the role of the Estlins
among the Garrisonians, in relation to Garnet's campaign. Their
greatest achievement was the publication of a small monthly

1. J.E. Ritchie, The Life and Times of Viscount Palmerston,
(London, 1866-67), II, 743-744, quoted in E. Williams,

2. Mrs. Richardson had shown an interest in free produce rising
above the Old/New Organisation schism, although she was largely
Tappanite in sympathy, before Garnet's arrival. Although
sneered at by Estlin for her love of "ostensible" philanthropy
and bigotted hatred of the Unitarians, she had been responsible
for asking the Garrisonian Negro William Wells Brown to this
country to attract attention to the free produce cause. See
Estlin to May, 30.11.48, May Papers; Estlin to May, 30.1.49,
ibid. Mrs. Richardson was no doubt all the more suspect to
Garrisonians as a close personal friend of Julian Griffiths',
Douglass' great ally.
concentrating on free produce, *The Slave*, from 1851 to 1856. Small bodies of free produce enthusiasts gathered in most major English cities. On the other hand, the movement seems to have made little impact on Scottish abolitionists, who remained engrossed in the triangular tension between the Garrisonians and Tappanites, and J.W.C. Pennington, although Garnet held five meetings in Edinburgh and two in Glasgow in November, 1851, alone. Nevertheless, the very first issue of *The Slave* could boast that twenty-six independent 'Free-Labour Associations' had been organised in cities throughout the country. Free produce supporters spread as much printed propaganda as possible on the sin implied in using the produce of American slave labour, including cotton. Beyond talking about free produce, however, Garnet's converts set about materially implementing their principles. The best explanation of Mrs. Stowe's appeal in this country is that she offered her readers participation in America's problems, and this was an advantage enjoyed to an even greater extent by the

1. Founded as a successor to *Illustrations of American Slavery*, a monthly broadsheet full of slaveholding atrocities intended for circulation to British newspaper editors. A few individual copies survive in the B.P.L. The editorship of *The Slave* was taken over by Burritt, in January, 1855. A full issue is held in the British Museum.


3. Ibid., Jan., 1851.

4. N.W. Senior, *American Slavery: a Reprint of an Article on "Uncle Tom's Cabin," of which a portion was inserted in the 206th Number of the "Edinburgh Review", and of Mr. Sumner's Speech of the 18th and 20th of May, 1856, with a Notice of the Events which Followed that Speech* (London, 1856), pp. 32-33.
free produce societies. First, individual abolitionists gained satisfaction from their own abstinence; The Slave regularly carried lists of businesses selling free produce only. They had long been assured that if through buying such merchandise "we may not succeed in starving the monster to death,... we may reduce his strength, and render him less formidable." 1 Secondly, 'free labour' abolitionists set about the absorbing work of organising warehouses to pool and distribute raw materials from emancipated countries, the first of which was set up in Manchester in 1857. 2 This form of business doubtless gave unscrupulous entrepreneurs an opportunity to sell inferior merchandise at inflated prices. But it also gave abolitionists the satisfaction of creating something concrete which might genuinely affect the American slave system. The free produce societies could even attract businessmen without a trace of abolitionist feeling, who had become interested in opening the African territory discovered by Livingstone, as a means of removing the dependence of Lancashire on the whims of Washington. 3 The line between the free labour


2. The Slave, Jan., 1851. Attempts at organising similar warehouses in London are mentioned in A.S.R., 1.11.50, 2.5.53.

3. Mrs. Richardson herself tried to cash in on this kind of feeling in Anti-Slavery Memoranda (for Private Circulation Only) to the Friends of the Slave (Newcastle, 1860). A converted pro-slavery writer demanded support for the opening of Livingstone's discoveries in How to Abolish Slavery in America, and to Prevent a Cotton Famine in England, with Remarks upon Coolie and African Labour, by a Slave-Driver (London, 1853).
devotees and the old-style abolitionists was by no means a rigid one. Even so, most of the financial and organisational support given to free produce represented a loss to the D.F.A.S.S., and perhaps even more so to its Garrisonian opponents.

Apart from the old grievances of the 1840's, then, reunification was made more difficult by the growing support for methods of abolitionist agitation other than the traditional ones of the Tappanite and Garrisonian factions. Both these factions lost strength as new abolitionist agencies sprang up. As they proliferated it came to be more difficult to channel all forms of abolitionist activity into a common organisation. The disintegrative tendencies of the British movement were increased by the insistence of American abolitionist missionaries that their own chosen line of activity was the only true one, and that their disagreements should be made fully public. Pillsbury's scathing attacks on non-Garrisonians are an extreme case, but a fine illustration of the American abolitionist assumption that truth could not be compromised by alliances between philanthropists whose agreement over the pace, methods, and leadership of reform was not complete.

Chamorovzow was not the only British abolitionist who was castigated for his attempts to smooth over the divisions in the movement. Another example was the odium cast on Eliza Wigham for her organisation of a meeting at which Pennington, Brown, and the Crafts appeared together. This was done for the good local reasons that more citizens of Edinburgh would come to see four
ex-slaves than three or one, and that a combined rally
would avoid the public scandal of condemnation of Pennington.
Yet Miss Wigham was scathingly attacked by Andrew Paton and
Mrs. Chapman for having the temerity to connect the Old
Organisation with one who was a suspected New Organisationist
and a known agent of the Vigilance Committee. Only hurried
letters from the influential Mary Estlin saved Eliza Wigham’s
reputation in Boston. ¹ This atmosphere of mutual suspicion
gave Chamerovzow’s activities little chance of success. Even
if he had managed to accommodate both Garrisonians and Tappanites,
he could hardly have persuaded either to tolerate the new
variants of abolitionism which proliferated as the fifties
went on.

Throughout the 1850’s, then, the rivalries in the British
anti-slavery movement grew in complexity. The issues raised
by British and American abolitionists in the 1840’s were still
alive. Much attention was still devoted to ensuring that the
Protestant churches should take a satisfactorily anti-slavery
position. Again, the schisms of the forties survived the attempts
of Chamerovzow and others to reunite the movement, and were
perpetuated by the intransigence of the continuing stream of

¹. Neither Paton’s letter telling tales to Mrs. Chapman, nor
the letters of complaint written to Webb and Miss Estlin by
Mrs. Chapman or her sister, seem to be preserved. The
British letters of defence are M. Estlin to A.W. Weston,
8,5,51, Weston Papers; M. Estlin to A.W. Weston, 16,5,51,
ibid., misfiled under 1857. See also Webb to M. Estlin,
13,5,51, Estlin Papers, B.P.L.
American abolitionist visitors to this country. As for the Garrisonians, the Scottish radicals were relatively weaker and no longer alone in Britain. The apparent strength of the Old Organisation was increased by the emergence of influential new sympathisers like Estlin, Armistead, Steinthal, and Bishop, the foundation of the Anti-Slavery Advocate under the capable editorship of R.D. Webb, and the institution of sympathetic bodies like the Bristol and Clifton Ladies' Society. But the focus of Garrisonian activity was no longer on Scotland and Ireland. On the other side, the appearances suggest that the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society gained British support with the reorganisation of the B.F.A.S.S. under the dynamic Chamerovzow, and the organisation of sympathetic new bodies like the New Associations in Glasgow and Edinburgh. Finally, the whole anti-slavery situation was complicated in the fifties by the arrival of American visitors preaching new forms of anti-slavery activity, notably abstinence from slave produce. This together with the huge British enthusiasm for Mrs. Stowe and her works further demonstrates the extent to which the history of the anti-slavery movement in this country mirrors that in America, due to the extraordinarily close community of interest between the middle classes on both sides of the Atlantic. All in all, too, the superficial impression given is that this was a time of expansion in the anti-slavery movement.

All in all, the superficial impression is that the fifties were a time of prosperity or even expansion in the anti-slavery movement. Such an impression is actually illusory. It is true
that the visits of Mrs. Stowe attracted huge crowds to abolitionist rallies. It is also true that the feuds of the anti-slavery societies retained momentum. But the British and more especially Scottish contribution to the American anti-slavery movement was far less in the fifties than before. The remainder of this dissertation will argue that the 'Stowites' were divorced in background and outlook from the nonconformist reformed who had maintained their interest in American slavery since the Emancipation Act of 1833. As for the old abolitionist societies, they were actually finding it more and more difficult to carry on their work, perhaps because of the very disagreements which create the illusion of vigour.
CHAPTER IX

"TO HONOUR HER IS SMALL ANTI-SLAVERY" - HARRIET BEECHER STOWE AND THE BRITISH ARISTOCRACY.

The British anti-slavery movement of the fifties presents the paradox that while the characteristic middle class abolitionism of the previous two decades was going into decline, the country was being swept by a new form of romantic enthusiasm for the slave. Both Garrisonian and anti-Garrisonian societies, although they continued their squabbles, were suffering from seriously declining attendances by the end of the forties. Yet after the appearance of the first edition of Uncle Tom's Cabin, anti-slavery meetings were able to attract audiences as huge as those of 1833 or 1838. This new phase of the movement can readily be studied with special reference to Scotland, where Mrs. Stowe herself formed controversial friendships, and excellent documentation is available. It is clear that in Scotland as in the rest of the country, although the abolitionist societies revived slightly after the outbreak of the Civil War, they never recovered from the decline in support which is overshadowed by the enthusiasms of the 'Stoweite' period.

The growing complexity of the rivalries of the anti-slavery societies has been described in the previous chapter. However, the increase in the number of societies was not accompanied by expansion in the aggregate number of their supporters. Indeed there is no mistaking their chronic difficulty in making ends meet. In Old and New Organisations alike, the complaint was of lessened membership and funds. For instance the reduction in size of the Reporter.
is an indication of the difficulties faced by Broad Street. 1
Attendance at its A.G.M., too, was now less than it had been
in the 1840’s, except when interest was whipped up by the
attendance of Mrs. Stowe, more as a literary lion than an
abolitionist. 2 When the Reporter tried to encourage the
provincial societies by printing a series of accounts of their
history and present activities, it was only revealed that all
were finding it hard to raise money and attract audiences. 3
In northern Ireland, the New Organisation in Belfast complained
that no one would attend abolitionist meetings, and finally the
B.F.A.S.S. auxiliary there was to collapse. 4 In Dublin, in
spite of Webb’s continuing great importance for the American
movement, his helpers were few, and the Hibernian Society
had dwindled till it was represented only by the immediate
family of the Webbs and Haughtons. In Scotland, the G.E.S.
all but collapsed in the winter of 1847-48, and scarcely revived
before the Civil War. 5 Smeal’s perception of the changing interests
of the provincial Quakers for whom he and his brother wrote is

1. This change came in 1853, when a Third Series was begun.
   See also Temperley, op.cit., pp.318-321.

2. A.S.R., 1.6.52, 1.6.54, 2.6.56. c.f. Anti-Slavery Advocate,
   June, 1853.

3. A.S.R., 2.5.53, 1.7.53.

   Mss.S.18, C29/20, C29/21.

5. G.E.S. Minute Books, IV, has a negligible number of
   entries for the fifties. The Glasgow Ladies’ New
   Association did less badly, at least in 1853, when it
   sent £400 to the Vigilance Committee. – A.S.R., 2.5.53.
best expressed in the *British Friend*, which made emancipation
the issue of the day in the forties, and all but ignored it
in the fifties. In Aberdeen, it was impossible to hold any
meetings after 1850, except when Mrs. Stowe was in town. ¹
The activists of the old abolitionist societies were still
there, but their support was not. Their declining fortunes
are best exemplified in Chamerovzow’s General Convention of
1854, which was a pale imitation of the great affairs of 1840
and 1843. The enthusiasm with which the movement’s remaining
members fought among themselves is one of the many reasons for
this decline, which will be discussed in the final chapter of
this thesis. The old-style abolitionist societies continued
to reflect the rivalries among their counterparts in the States.
But they were rapidly losing in strength by the time a new
mass abolitionist movement arose in this country with the
publication of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* and the visits of Harriet
Beecher Stowe.

Mrs. Stowe’s triumph with the British public coincided
with unpromising conditions for the anti-slavery societies.
Yet her two visits to this country produced mass enthusiasm.
The press showed enormous interest in her work, while *Uncle Tom*
had unprecedented European sales. ² The explanation of her
success at such a time is that her followers came from different
backgrounds from the abolitionists of long standing in the
anti-slavery societies. With some exceptions, it also seems

C33/127. Note, however, that Miss Griffiths managed to
form a small Douglassite society there in 1857 - A.S.R.,
1.4.53.

2. J. C. Furnas, *Goodbye to Uncle Tom* (New York, 1956),
pp. 59-60.
that their attitude to the Negro differed from that of the British nonconformists who had painstakingly worked to assist American abolitionist efforts for the previous twenty years. Early in Uncle Tom Mrs. Stowe stated her preconceptions clearly in the aside that the "African is naturally patient, timid, and unenterprising."\(^1\) It was from this point that the interest of the fashionable new recruits to the British anti-slavery movement began. This is not to say that the leaders of the earlier abolitionist movement did not remain interested in the cause, or even disapprove of Mrs. Stowe, although indeed some did.\(^2\) Nevertheless, the leadership and initiative of the more popular 'Stoweite' movement was in different hands. It is difficult to imagine Mrs. Stowe's comment on the characteristics of the African in the mouth of, say, Wilson Armistead, much of whose writing had set out to show his improvability.\(^3\) Men like him certainly continued their abolitionist work.\(^4\) In Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Leeds, Garrisonian abolitionists and their opponents both worked hard to boost the total of the 'Uncle Tom Penny Offering.' But their agitation was a sideshow relative to the fashionable abolitionist entertainments organised by the aristocrats and socialites who now formed the vanguard of support for Mrs. Stowe and American emancipation. The 'Stoweite' movement was not led

1. Uncle Tom's Cabin (Edinburgh & London: Gall & Inglis: c. 1904), p.60. All references are to this edition.


3. A Tribute for the Negro, passim.

4. G. Thompson, A Lecture Delivered in the Music Hall, Store Street, Monday, Dec. 12th, 1852...Proving, by Unquestionable Evidence, the Correctness of Mrs. Stowe's Portraiture of American Slavery in her Popular Work. "Uncle Tom's Cabin"
by any of Britain's existing abolition societies, but by the ladies of Stafford House, the Duchess of Sutherland's London residence.¹

The first of Mrs. Stowe's three visits to Europe later became the subject of her part-travel, part-anecdotal *Sunny Memories of Foreign Lands.*² Her general impact on Britain has also attracted some attention from modern historians.³

Of her three visits, in 1853, 1856, and 1859, the first had the most extraordinary effect on the British anti-slavery movement. *Uncle Tom* was still a current best-seller, and Mrs. Stowe was also aided by continuing benevolent interest in the atrocities resulting from the enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Law. Her arrival in Glasgow in 1853 revived declining anti-slavery interest overnight. Her presence at the B.F.A.S.S. May Meeting of the next year attracted an unprecedented audience of six thousand.⁴ Even the Glasgow Society, which was later humiliated by the coup of the rival Glasgow Now Association for the Abolition of Slavery in having Mrs. Stowe accept its invitation to visit Britain, managed to

1. Taylor, 'Some American Reformers and their Influence on Reform Movements in Great Britain from 1830 to 1860,' p. 92.

2. H. B. Stowe, *Sunny Memories of Foreign Lands* (Various editions in one and two volumes, 1834).


raise an audience of three thousand at a meeting to discuss a testimonial to her.¹ During her early stay in Glasgow and Edinburgh, and her later time in England, Mrs. Stowe was feted by abolitionists, but also lionised in the salons of the wealthy and fashionable. Even in Glasgow, Garrisonian abolitionists later complained to Pillsbury that she had been "as inaccessible to mortals like the Patons and others who act with us, as though they had seated her on top of Olympus."² Combined with the evidence of the huge enthusiasm for Mrs. Stowe in Glasgow, the situation here also seems to have been one in which mass interest in the visitor was linked with her relationship with a closed group of socialites.

This picture is markedly different from that of the forties, when visiting American abolitionists had met rank and file supporters of relatively lower social origins, and worked side by side with them within the anti-slavery societies.

Mrs. Stowe certainly drew support from the same social groups who had helped Garrison and Wright, or Birney and Stanton, but she was also feted to a much greater extent by socially higher groups whose contacts with the nonconformist middle classes were at best sporadic.


2. Pillsbury to May, 27.4.55, May Papers.
Pillsbury's complaints also covered the veiled tension between British Garrisonians, always suspect for their heterodox ideas, and abolitionist rivals who had now taken the initiative by lionising Mrs. Stowe. In no sector of the British movement were these tensions so evident as in Scotland. In the first place, Mrs. Stowe had been invited to this country by Glasgow abolitionists. But her hosts were not the old Glasgow Emancipation Society, now in a period of relative inactivity, but the Glasgow New Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society and the Glasgow New Association for the Abolition of Slavery.¹

Thoroughly committed to opposition to the Old Organisation, the New Ladies' Association had been founded by Pennington in the previous year, had supported Garnet as a free produce agent, and later came under Douglass' influence through the agency of Julia Griffiths.² Shapperson is probably right in suggesting that Mrs. Stowe was only invited to Scotland because of the spite felt by the New Organisation for Smeal's Society. One obvious explanation of the decision to send the invitation is that the New Association ladies wished to steal the limelight from the G.E.S., which had already exploited the literary enthusiasm for Uncle Tom by holding a mass meeting to sponsor

1. A.S.R., 2.5.53.

the 'Uncle Tom Penny Offering' in the previous November. ¹

The invitation was actually sent through Wardlaw, now a
leader of the New Association. He was the clergyman whom
Collins had found the most dangerous of the Glasgow 'priests'
in the disagreements of 1851, and was in fact an arch-conservative
on all issues but slavery.² Smeal had already written to
Garrison explaining darkly that Wardlaw and the others were
using Mrs. Stowe as a pawn against the Old Organisation.
The use of her name, he thought, would convince the public
that by supporting the Vigilance Committee and the A.F.A.S.S.
they would be doing the best thing to attack slavery "in a
Christian way." They would also be deluded into believing
that helping the American Society and the Boston Bazaar would
be "to aid infidelity." He insisted that Mrs. Stowe should be
told this before her departure. Smeal enclosed the 1851
Report of the rival Association to illustrate its New Organisation
tendency.³

In spite of Smeal's warning, Mrs. Stowe's visit was very
much a triumph for the Glasgow New Association. She sailed on
March 29th, on the Canada, and stayed briefly in Liverpool
before coming north to Glasgow on April 13th. At Buchanan
Street Station she was met by the seven hundred members and

¹. G. A. Shapperson, loc. cit., p. 44. See also Smeal to Chamotte, 16.4.53, loc.cit.; Minute for 16.11.52,
G.E.S. Minute Books, IV.

². Chartist Circular, 29.5.41; Collins to Webb, 28.4.41,
Garrison Papers.

³. Smeal to Garrison, 4.3.53, ibid.
friends of the Ladies' New Association. Speaking on their behalf was Baillie William P. Paton, the conservative businessman who had resigned from the G.E.S. with the King-Wardlaw group in 1841. The Stowes were Paton's guests while in Glasgow, and were taken to the great soirée held for them on the 15th in Dr. Wardlaw's carriage. A second evening was spent at an entertainment which Mrs. Stowe described as "another soirée gotten up by the working classes." She remarked on the similarities between Scots and New Englanders, perhaps influenced by the fact that at this meeting "there was more nationality than at the other."3

Although the authoress thus had an opportunity to meet the social inferiors of the leaders of the New Organisation societies, she seems to have been carefully shielded from those of their own class who disagreed with them over abolitionist tactics. Seals did not mention having met her in his next letter to Garrison. The G.E.S. certainly had no chance to organise any Scottish entertainment of its own. The complaints later made to Pillsbury are symptomatic of an unwillingness to invite Garrisonians to the anti-slavery functions at this time.4 On her arrival, Mrs. Stowe was presented with an

1. A.S.R., 2.5.41.


3. Ibid., pp. 48-49.

4. Pillsbury to May, 27.4.55, loc.cit.
address from the Glasgow Female Anti-Slavery Society, simply
restating the Society's willingness to cooperate with all
abolitionists. Her reply was cordial though brief, and ended
by expressing admiration for Garrison and his American Society.
But there is no evidence that the Old Organisation committee
ever met Mrs. Stowe. She concluded her reply with the rider
that "I do not, in some important respects, agree in opinion
and practice with that branch of the Anti-Slavery party to which
you adhere."

If Mrs. Stowe's visit to Glasgow amply bore out Smael's
fears, her reception in Edinburgh was arranged by the
Garrisonian Ladies' Emancipation Society. The schisms in
the Edinburgh movement were always less violent than in Glasgow,
and Garrisonians like Miss Wigham had contacts with conservative
male abolitionists which made it possible for all factions to
cooperate in welcoming Mrs. Stowe. No doubt the association
with the most popular novelist of the century added to E.L.E.S.
prestige in the same way as the Glasgow events helped the
conservative ladies' organisation there. Mrs. Stowe and her
party went to Edinburgh by rail on April 18th, and spent the
next few days in the city, ironically as the guest of Smael's
sister, Mrs. Jane Wigham. She was also patronised by Provost
Duncan MacLaren, the husband of the leading Garrisonian
abolitionist Priscilla Bright MacLaren. On the 20th she was

1. These letters, dated 14.5.53 and 17.5.53 respectively,
   were reprinted in A.S.R., 1.7.53.
2. Sunny Memories, p.60.
entertain[ed] at what was described as a "temperance banquet."
The occasion was great enough for the Rev. Dtrs. Guthrie,
Alexander, Peddie, and Brown to be present, but it is noteworthy
that on this occasion the Garrisonian organisers had thought
it appropriate to invite the G.E.S. to be represented.
Smeal was recorded as one of the platform party. Mrs. Stowe
was presented with a silver salver and the first thousand
pounds of the Scottish contribution to the 'Uncle Tom Penny
Offering.' Her Edinburgh reception was overwhelmingly good,
and the initiative in arranging it remained with the old
E.L.E.S., which had been Garrisonian since the divisions of
1841. It was only two years later, during the attempts of
Julia Griffiths to organise British female support for
Frederick Douglass and the Rochester Bazaar that a new Edinburgh
Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society was founded to oppose the one
under the Wighams' domination. Until then, anti-slavery
disagreements were much less marked in Edinburgh than in
Glasgow. In 1853 it does not seem to have occurred to the
organisers of the soirée for Mrs. Stowe that the committee of
the weak but certainly anti-Garrisonian men's Emancipation
Society should not be invited to cooperate in making the

1. A.S.R., 2.5.53; Smael to M. Estlin, 17.5.53, Weston Papers;
Smael to Chamerovzow, 10.4.53, loc.cit. This soirée is
described but inaccurately dated in Sunny Memories, pp.
61-63.

2. E. Wigham to May, 4.4.56, May Papers; E. Wigham to
Chamerovzow, 3.5.56, Bod.Brit.Emp.Mss.S.18, C37/75;
E. Wigham to Chamerovzow, 18.4.56, ibid., C37/76;
Report of the Edinburgh Ladies' New Anti-Slavery
Association, for the Years 1856 and 1857 (Edinburgh, 1859);
Scottish Press, 23.6.54.
arrangements for the visit. The relative conservatism of the ladies' committee, occasionally criticised by more extreme Garrisonians, suggests that there was no reason why it should have done. Nevertheless, the Edinburgh situation was different from the Glasgow one. If any abolitionists gained prestige by the association with Mrs. Stowe, it was the Garrisonians. On the other hand, when Mrs. Stowe progressed to other Scottish cities, those who received her and made the most of her visit were New Organisationists. In Aberdeen, her host was the orthodox Friend, William Cruickshank. The group in alignment with the B.F.A.S.S. who dominated the local society took advantage of her visit to hold one of their infrequent meetings. After one night in Aberdeen, she progressed to Dundee, where she was again entertained by a solidly pro-B.F.A.S.S. society. At the meeting held for her in the city's Steeple Church, one of the noteworthy figures present was the Congregationalist littérature George Gilfillan, the friend of Emerson and Carlyle, and hero of McGonaghal. He afterwards wrote with characteristic flamboyance, that whatever "the Exeter Hall idiots" might say

1. M. Estlin to A. W. Weston, 8.5.51, Weston Papers.
2. Ibid.; A. Paton to Garrison, 7.2.51, Garrison Papers; Jana Wigham to A. W. Weston, 18.11.52, Weston Papers.
4. Sunny Memories, p. 90.
her reception in Dundee "seemed a minute of the Millenium sent before its time."¹ In these cities, unlike Edinburgh and Glasgow, the movement was not highly enough developed for rival organisations to exist side by side. Both were under the control of men cooperating with the B.F.A.S.S.

Their public support was at least temporarily increased by the association with Mrs. Stowe, whose attitude to the way in which her compromise comments on the divisions were interpreted was, to say the least, permissive.

After their night in Dundee, Mrs. Stowe and her husband paused briefly in Edinburgh before making their way south to the even more enormous audiences of London. Here again, one section of the abolitionists, the dominant B.F.A.S.S. one, captured her, and took good care that their rivals had no chance to run counter-entertainments. The Broad Street Committee first discussed arrangements for their reception of Mrs. Stowe on May 22, and adopted an Address to her two days later.² Her appearance at the Annual Meeting was marked by an unheard of attendance of six thousand. At the beginning of June a B.F.A.S.S. soirée for her made the very substantial profit of £179.³


Under the new Chamerovzow régime, the Society had made an attempt to be magnanimous to its opponents, and invited several leading Garrisonians, including Pugh, Brown, McKim, Mathews, and the Crafts, to put in an appearance at the Anniversary. The concession was more apparent than real, since all were seated pointedly at the back of the hall, when Chamerovzow was challenged over this slight at a meeting at the Estlins' lodgings, he gave no reply to Thompson's comment that "he believed the gulph [sic] that separated them to be impassable." Chamerovzow or no Chamerovzow, the B.F.A.S.S. was still inclined to use Mrs. Stowe's visit to point up its advantage over the Garrisonians. Mrs. Stowe herself seems to have been indifferent as to which side she was identified with. Perhaps remembering the intellectual acrobatics of her father's abolitionism in the thirties, she carefully avoided committing herself one way or the other. Her alliance with the B.F.A.S.S. did not prevent her from cooperating with Garrison or Miss Weston after her return to America. Nevertheless, Mrs. Stowe's visit, like that of most American abolitionists, brought out the views of her hosts in each of the towns she visited, particularly in Glasgow, but also in the other Scottish cities and in London. Given the opportunity, both factions were prepared to use her visits against those abolitionists who disagreed with them.

1. S. Pugh to Webb, 23.5.53, Garrison Papers.


This aspect of Mrs. Stowe's 1853 visit is not, however, the most significant. First, the immense popularity of her work meant that although there was friction between Garrisonians and non-Garrisonians over who was to have the privilege of entertaining her, the British public remained homogeneous in its approval of Uncle Tom and its authoress. The question was not whether lionising Mrs. Stowe was right or wrong, but who was to have the tactical advantage of acting as her host. Secondly and more important, the middle class jealousies over Mrs. Stowe's visit are less interesting than the emergence of the new and fashionable form of abolitionism inspired by Uncle Tom.

Leadership of the group of abolitionists who had the initiative in popularising Mrs. Stowe's romantic image of the Negro lay with the genteel 'Stafford House' group. Since these were drawn from the Scottish and English aristocracy, the change in background of the movement was immense. In turn, the resurgence in aristocratic interest in the slave, dormant since 1838, altered the form of working class opposition to the anti-slavery movement. Such opposition had always been apparent, particularly among the Chartists, but found new opportunities in 1853. This gives yet another example of the use of the foreign issue of American abolition to crystallise pre-existing social, political, or religious rivalries. Similar examples had arisen in 1841 and 1846. In 1853 the measure of the hostility between the aristocracy and the working classes was their different attitude to the cause of abolition, as exemplified by Mrs. Stowe.
As in the case of the Old and New organisation tensions over Mrs. Stowe's visit, no area shows the working class attitude to the aristocratic craze for abolition so clearly as Scotland. Mrs. Stowe's contacts outside the middle class had begun while she was working in Edinburgh. It was after her arrival there that she received her first letters from the Duchess of Sutherland, her future patroness, and from the Earl of Carlisle. By the time she passed through Edinburgh again on her way south, her social life, symbolically, had passed out of the sphere of the middle class Wigham family. Indeed Miss Wigham had complained even during her first visit that she had had little chance to talk to Mrs. Stowe because she was always resting or attending meetings. Although she did find time for another 'working class soirée', her second stay in Edinburgh was spent principally in calling on local landed magnates, and intellectuals who ranked as celebrities with reputations as great as her own. Sir William Hamilton of the Chair of Moral Philosophy at Edinburgh was one, George Combe, the phrenologist, another. She also called on Sir James Walker Drummond at Hawthornden, and on the Earl of Gainsborough in Edinburgh itself. Once in England,

1. This connection has already been made by Klingberg, loc. cit. The specific use of the Scottish example is the basis of Shepperson, loc. cit.

2. Sunny Memories, p. 60.

3. E. Wigham to M. Estlin, 23.4.53, Weston Papers.

4. Sunny Memories, pp. 126-7, 123.
this tendency to cultivate the rich and powerful continued.
The synopsis of the part of Sunny Memories dealing with her
activities after her short stay with Sturte on the way to
London reads like a general list of the social and intellectual
celebrities of the age. It was with this class that the
initiative in entertaining Mrs. Stowe really lay. The immense
response to the call for signatories to the Stafford House
Address depended largely on the social cachet it gained from
the names of the ladies and gentlemen who organised it.

The British working classes had always been suspicious
of the middle class reformers who dominated the anti-slavery
movement.1 This was never so true as in the time of the
Chartist movement, when abolition, even more than the Anti-Corn
Law League, was seen as an effort to distract attention from
the abuse of the domestic poor. The physical force Chartist
Peter Bussey, for instance, once contemptuously dismissed
Edward Baines’ strongly abolitionist Leeds Mercury as the
"Leeds Poison."2 In 1833, British labour sympathisers
attacked abolitionism with as much vehemence as in the
forties. The aristocracy had now moved into the cause, and
could fruitfully be attacked through it in the same way as
the middle classes had been in the past. A widely circulated
pamphlet by 'A Briton' for instance, bitterly attacked the

1. And possibly also of the Negro. See 'Eliza and her
Black Man,' (broadsheet, n.d.), Firth Collection,
Bodleian Library, copied in Appendix D.

2. Northern Star Extraordinary, 16.10.38. See also
Scottish Patriot, 23.5.40.
futility of hoping that "Uncle Tomism" could produce any
good effect in America. He sneered at the aristocratic
furor over Mrs. Stowe's visit as "one of their periodic
fits of benevolence," and went on to allude to the contrast
between the philanthropy of the Duchess of Sutherland towards
the Negro, and her treatment of the victims of the clearances —
"the case of such unfortunate white wretches.....cannot come
home to her Grace of Sutherland and the other tender
benevolents of England. Their sympathies demand something
blacker and more distant.\footnote{1} The same accusation of inconsistency
was characteristic of American pro-slavery defences against
British abolitionists, and had been fully exposed by an
expatriate British workman two years before.\footnote{2} During Mrs.
Stowe's visit, the pro-slavery response to the news of her
enthusiastic reception by British abolitionists was similar
to that of labour on this side of the Atlantic. One verse
polemic outlined conditions among the British working classes,
and went on to play on Irish suspicion of the British aristocracy
by outlining England's tyranny over "Erin's slave."\footnote{3} Another

1. The Fashionable Philanthropy of the Day: some Plain
Speaking about American Slavery — a Letter addressed to
the Stewites of England and Scotland, by a Briton.
(London, 1853), pp. 7-8, 29. C.f. Slavery Past and Present;
or, Notes on Uncle Tom's Cabin, Edited by a Lady (London, 1852).

2. W. Hogadorn, A Contrast of American and British Slavery
(New York, 1851), passim. The allied accusation that British
business involvement in producing cotton buttressed American
slavery was a common one, being repeated as late as 1855, as
in Uncle John's Cabin (Next Door to Uncle Tom's Cabin).
Containing an Answer to Pro-Slavery Men, an Answer to Others,
and an Impeachment (London, 1855).

3. The Patent Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin; or, Mrs. Stowe in England,
by a Lady in New York (New York, 1853), pp. 13, 17-29. In his Crusade
against Slavery, Filler cites similar arguments from 'British
Philanthropy and American Slavery,' De Bow's Review, n.s., 1
(1853), 253-250.
authoress pointed out more tactfully that slaves auctioned in the South were treated thus for reasons which would have made English labourers convicts.  

In spite of criticism of this sort from American sympathisers with slavery and British labour spokesmen, it was unfair to accuse Mrs. Stowe of blindness to the difficulties of the English working classes. Certainly she never penned anathemas on the structure of British society similar to those of Rogers or Collins, but she did make genuine attempts to meet what she referred to as 'working men,' however unrepresentative they may have been. However, the specific pains she took to record cases of working men who did not disapprove of abolition as being secondary to reform at home, seems to indicate an awareness of constant opposition from those who thought the opposite. Again, perhaps out of genuine lack of understanding, her account of the 1853 visit did not mention those workers who were not 'respectable,' or did not wish to be thought so in the middle class sense. The peculiar situation in Scotland at this time, where tensions between the poor and the aristocracy had been accentuated by the Clearances, actually created distrust of all those connected with Mrs. Stowe much beyond that she seems to have understood.

2. Sunny Memories, pp. 49-50, 93.
3. Ibid., pp. 50, 109.
attitudes to Mrs. Stowe's mission is an anonymous letter sent to her during her trip to Aberdeen. She had this reprinted in Sunny Memories, though not without asides which suggest a willingness to make literary capital out of its Scots dialect and its "old testifying spirit." \(^1\)

It presented Mrs. Stowe with miscellaneous prison statistics and an exposé of the defects of Scottish female and pauper education. Its most sweeping claim was the information that:

"I ken brawly ye are a curious wife, and would like to hear a' about the Scotch bodies. Weel, they are a gey ignorant, proud, drunken pack; they manage to pay ilka year for whiskey one million three hundred and forty-eight thousand pounds."

Much more important than this attempt to enlighten Mrs. Stowe over the abuses she had missed was the work of Donald McLeod, a Sutherlandshire stone-mason. His writings specifically used the Duchess' enthusiasm for the American Negro as a propaganda device to attack her harshness towards her Gaelic-speaking crofters. \(^2\) Mrs. Stowe herself eulogised the clearances as a "sublime example" of progress, and to this extent brought McLeod's attack upon herself. \(^3\) As far as the

1. 'An Old Bachelor' to H. B. Stowe, 21.4.53, dated Stonehaven, reprinted in Sunny Memories, pp. 78-80.


Scottish opponents and victims of the clearances were concerned, she could hardly have begun her account more ineptly:—

"As to those ridiculous stories about the Duchess of Sutherland, which have found their way into many of the prints in America, one has only to be here, moving in society, to see how excessively absurd they are....the Earl of Carlisle....her brother, has been a leader of the people, particularly during the time of the corn-law reformation, and she has been known to take a wide and generous interest in all these subjects....Imagine, then, what people must think when they find in respectable prints the absurd story of her turning her tenants out into the snow, and ordering the cottages to be set on fire because they would not go out."

She went on to comment on the advance of agriculture since the clearances, and examine and dismiss the charges made over the atrocities of Patrick Sellar. This whole passage of Sunny Memories, above all the innocent reference to "moving in society," must have seemed ironic to the victims of the clearances. Even outside Scotland, there is evidence of opposition to Mrs. Stowe's friend and patron. 'A Briton' has already been noticed. Again, Harriet Martineau seems to have distrusted the Duchess. Sarah Pugh for one found this out after a talk with Eliza Lee Follen, the widow of Charles Follen of Harvard and a Garrisonian sympathiser, who spent several years in England at this time, and later came to be a close personal friend of both the Duchess of Sutherland and Lady Byron.² Mrs. Follen read her

2. L. M. Child to T. Tilton, 9.9.69, Child Papers, N.Y.P.L.
a letter from Miss Martineau, "denouncing in no uncertain
terms 'the Duchess' and all her anti-slavery works."¹

McLeod's attack on the Stowe/Sutherland alliance
was more extensive and more bitter. During Mrs. Stowe's
visit, his correspondence and that of others in the Scottish
press pointed carefully to the Duchess' hypocrisy in
distinguishing between Negroes and crofters as objects of
benevolence.² After his emigration, however, he published
his Gloomy Memories, the first systematic volume-length
attack on Mrs. Stowe written by one without a stake in
upholding slavery. He threatened that although

"Doubtless the cruel dealings of the Highland
aristocracy to the downtrodden sons and
daughters of Caledonia, will find apologists,
and even at the present time they have procured
an American literary luminary, who promises well
to whitewash their foul deeds, particularly the
Sutherlandshire depopulators (of the long purse);
and endeavouring to make it appear that all the
author and others have written about the
Sutherlandshire Clearances, were malicious
accusations and groundless grievances; but she
will not get Scot free away with it."³

The first part of this book is a simple reprint of an earlier
collection of McLeod's letters to the Edinburgh Chronicle,
dealing with the history of the clearances, and first published

1. S. Pugh to M. Estlin, 10.3.53, Estlin Papers, Dr. Williams'
Library. This quotation is followed by a long passage
which is carefully obliterated, but which presumably
expands on Miss Martineau's criticisms of the Duchess.

2. Letters to Northern Ensign, 25.12.52 & n.d., reprinted
in McLeod's Gloomy Memories, pp. 105-109, 110-112;
See also Reynolds' Newspaper, 15.5.53, cited in
Klingberg, loc. cit., p. 549.

in 1841. The last hundred pages give a general description of the devastation of the Highlands by the combined effect of the clearances and the new Scottish Poor Law.¹ The remainder, however, formed a specific exposure of the fallacies in Mrs. Stowe's description of the Sutherland experiment in Letter XVII of Sunny Memories, and of the inconsistencies between the home and foreign policies of the Stafford House leaders.²

McLeod's attack on Mrs. Stowe was related purely to her alliance with the authors of the clearances and others of their social class. It had nothing to do with support for Negro slavery. "Slavery," he wrote, "is damnable, and the most disgusting word in the English or any other language." The British aristocracy, however, had no real interest in Negro slavery, since their own system of slavery was too enormously profitable. The classes which lionised Mrs. Stowe were the ones which had most bitterly opposed West Indian emancipation. In fact she had accepted their support together with the myth of their benevolence, either because she was their dupe or their paid hack.

"It is characteristic of British aristocracy," he noted, "to be the most liberal sympathisers with foreign victims of oppression, injustice, and barbarous, ungodly, laws... but....having reverse qualifications at home."³ The whole

1. Ibid., pp. 1-70, 113-212.
2. Ibid., pp. 71-112.
3. Ibid., p. 76.
burden of McLeod's writing was the illustration of the "reverse qualifications" of Mrs. Stowe's patron. As for the novelist herself, McLeod pointedly asked how the sovereigns entrusted to her had been spent on the slaves' behalf. He went on to ridicule the inconsistencies in the philanthropy of the Rev. Thomas Guthrie, who had most impressed her at the Edinburgh soirée. McLeod's explanation of her compliments to him was that like her he had been bought by the Duchess of Sutherland, his parishioner, whose gifts of "cart loads and hurly loads of dear carcasses and of fowl" made it well worth imitating her abolitionism. McLeod's finest comment was his reply to the unfortunate comment in Letter XVII of Sunny Memories that the clearances had been "an almost sublime instance of the benevolent employment of superior wealth and power in shortening the struggles of an advancing civilization." He agreed that this was "the shortest process of civilization....in the history of nations....the whole interior of the county of Sutherland....in eight years converted to a solitary wilderness." Donald McLeod's indictment was telling, and there is no evidence that either Mrs. Stowe or any other apologist ever replied to it. Indeed her attempt at whitewashing the clearances had been inept, and not one likely to be repeated. As McLeod himself pointedly wrote "for the sake of aristocratic adulation and admiration....you have exposed yourself to be

1. Ibid., pp. 82-88. The way in which the Penny Offering money was spent was never disclosed. See Furnas, op.cit., p. 54 n.; F. Wilson, Crusader in Crinoline: the Life of Harriet Beecher Stowe (New York, 1941), p. 371.

2. McLeod's Gloomy Memories, p. 91. Mrs. Stowe's comment is in Sunny Memories.
publicly chastised by an old Highland Scotch broken down stone mason.\textsuperscript{1} In fact "aristocratic adulation and admiration" dominated the reception of \textit{Uncle Tom's Cabin} and its authoress in this country. It is in this sense that the British abolition movement changed in 1853. Certainly there had been elements of aristocratic support for the anti-slavery societies before this time. The B.F.A.S.S. usually managed to have some poor accept its invitation to the May Annual Meeting, Buxton's African Civilization Society had gathered many aristocratic supporters, and the Duchess of Sutherland herself had become known as a possible patron for visiting American abolitionists as early as 1840.\textsuperscript{2} Again, some abolitionists had always lived in hope of persuading sections of the aristocracy to throw their support behind the movement. Estlin, for instance, insisted on the need for the support of the rich and powerful.\textsuperscript{3} Again, after trying to gain support for an address to the later Stafford House one, Susan Cabot noted that "There were two lists of names made out, [one of] those of whom work was expected, and the other whose names and station entitle them to consideration."\textsuperscript{4}

1. Ibid., p. 71.
3. Estlin to May, 1.10.46, May Papers.
4. S. Cabot to H. Estlin, 30.10.51, Estlin Papers, Dr. Williams'
The reception of the first English edition of *Uncle Tom*, however, was such that aristocratic support of anti-slavery activity came to be the norm rather than the exception. The Stafford House Address, as its being named after the Duchess' London residence indicated, was organised and supported by individuals whose titles and social status gave the movement a prestige it had never before enjoyed. This is not to say that the Address was not supported by the nonconformist middle classes who had always been the mainstay of British anti-slavery. Indeed it was signed by almost half a million females, few of whom would have been considered eligible for admission to Stafford House itself. Nevertheless, the text was composed on relatively conservative lines by Lord Shaftesbury. The group of signatories whose names were used to secure further signatures were drawn exclusively from backgrounds which would have been atypical of the earlier movement. It is doubtful if any of those individuals, with the exception of the Duchess of Sutherland herself, had shown more than passing interest in the Negro prior to reading *Uncle Tom*. As it was finally circulated, the Address was exclusively subscribed by females carrying titles. At the end of his *Cloud of Witnesses*, Armistead produced the trump card of the list of three duchesses, one marchioness, fifteen countesses, seven viscountesses, and seven ladies of baronets plus an "etc." who had added to the testimony of his witnesses by signing the Address.¹ This

¹ W. Armistead, A Cloud of Witnesses against Slavery, and Oppression, p. 143.
support, drawn from the wives of men with characteristically
landed interests, was far removed from the urban nonconformists
who had typically been the leaders of the British movement
since 1833. In turn, the accession of such a group of
fashionables must have done much to create further interest
in the movement among middle class groups not previously
interested in slavery but bent on imitating the aristocracy.

Only this can explain the huge support for the Stafford
House Address, since many abolitionists of much longer standing
than its aristocratic organisers were firmly opposed to its
sentiments. Certainly some were prepared to cooperate,
in spite of the gradualist ideas written into the Address
by Lord Shaftesbury. The competition of Scottish abolitionists
to help Mrs. Stowe has already been described. Even the
Garrisonians Harriet Lupton and Sarah Pugh went round from
door to door in Leeds collecting signatures, helped by
Mrs. Armistead, Mrs. Wicksteed, and Mrs. Baines.¹ Armistead
and Wicksteed themselves also did what they could to boost
support.²

Outside Leeds, however, attitudes of existing abolitionists
to the Stafford House Address were more doubtful. Thompson,
in one of his frequent fits of indecision, strongly approved of
Uncle Tom, commended the work of "the high born ladies of
Stafford House," but felt less than satisfied with their

1. S. Pugh to H. Estlin, 15.12.52, 24.12.52, loc.cit.

2. Armistead, op.cit., pp. 142-143; C. Wicksteed,
The Englishman's Duty to the Free and Enslaved American,
pp. 10-19.
Address' admission of the "dangers" of abolition. The New Organisation B.P.A.S.S. shared Thompson's doubts. An attempt was even made through the Reporter to get up support for an Address running parallel to the Stafford House one, but without the admission of the difficulties of immediate emancipation mentioned in the original text. The Slave gave its approval of the Address as a supplement to subverting slavery by boycotting its produce, but cautioned that it laid the signatories open to the accusation that they were guilty of the very things they were asking Americans to abandon. The ultra-Garrisonian Bristol and Clifton Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society, after some soul-searching, refused to cooperate at all - which must have been a difficult decision considering the excitement in British abolitionist circles at the time. Perhaps the apathy of these British Garrisonians resulted from the feelings of Mrs. Chapman. After composing a fifty page cautionary letter to Eliza Lee Follen, she had written to Mary Estlin denouncing any plans for an address which did not embody the principles of the American Society. These, she remarked, "are the only true and pure ones." The Anti-Slavery Advocate dodged the issue by avoiding any reference to the Stafford House Address.

1. Thompson, A Lecture Delivered in the Music Hall, Store Street, Dec. 13th, 1832, p. 45.
2. A.S.R., 1.1.53, 1.2.53.
3. The Slave, February, 1853.
5. M. W. Chapman to M. Estlin, 7.12.52, Estlin Papers, B.P.L.
Nevertheless, whatever abolitionists of long standing thought of the Address, it was successful in gaining the support required, in terms of raw signatures. But since it left the abolitionist leaders of the past at best divided, the conclusion must be that the real initiative behind it was coming from new groups - from the fashionable figures whose interest in the Negro had been stirred by Mrs. Stowe’s writing. This is emphatically not to say that Mrs. Stowe was without middle class support. On the contrary, even veteran leaders saw that the mass interest roused could only be beneficial if properly directed. All combined to collect the 'Uncle Tom Penny Offering,' which was the basis of Mrs. Stowe’s considerable financial success in this country. Again, although many middle class reformers were suspicious of the watered down ideas of the Stafford House Address, there were plenty of ladies from the same social background to take their place. Finally, the audiences at the soirées held for Mrs. Stowe were predominantly middle class, though their attitudes to the Negro were probably different from those of comparable meetings in the past. But whatever the social origins of the huge numbers of British 'Stoweites,' at this juncture the British anti-slavery movement was being led by new groups. The influence of Uncle Tom had been to draw aristocratic elements into the movement, and it was with them that the initiative lay during Mrs. Stowe’s 1833 visit. Nothing measures this change so much as the circles in which Mrs. Stowe moved from the time she left Edinburgh until her return to America in October. During this period, apart from her brief stay with Sturge, she moved exclusively in gentry and aristocratic circles rather than

1. Minute for 16.11.1852, G.E.S. Minute Books, IV; Sunny Memories, p.63; Minute for 28.11.1852, Bristol and Clifton ....Minute Book, Smeal to H. Estlin, 17.5.53, Weston Papers.
middle class ones, apart from the occasions when she visited literary and scientific celebrities of comparable standing to herself.\(^1\) Her range of contacts would have been unthinkable for a normal abolitionist visitor. The slanted interpretation of the clearances which McLeod later tore apart was produced by constant association with the classes who would have accepted it.

Thus Mrs. Stowe's new friends in this country came from backgrounds different from the men who had led the abolition movement in the past. There is also some evidence that the latter were suspicious of the ideas behind the Stafford House Address and the general outburst of aristocratic enthusiasm. The explanation of her success in attracting support to make up for theirs lies partly in the simplicity of her attitude to the Negro, which cut out much of the dullness which had been associated with previous abolitionist work. Not only this, but it may be that the aristocratic enthusiasm for fêting Mrs. Stowe had nothing to do with American slavery. It is difficult to challenge Senior's conclusion that "She taught us how to prove that democrats may be tyrants, that an aristocracy of caste is more oppressive than an aristocracy of station."\(^2\) No lesson could have appealed more to Stafford House.

1. Sunny Memories, Letters XIII, XIV, XVI, XVIII, XIX, XX, XXIII, XXV-XXVII, XXX.

2. Massau W. Senior, American Slavery: A Reprint of an Article on "Uncle Tom's Cabin", of which a Portion was Inserted in the 206th Number of the "Edinburgh Review" and of Mr. Sumner's Speech...with a Notice of the Events which Followed that Speech (London, 1856), pp. 38-39.
This appeal was all the greater because of the fact that Mrs. Stowe had the cachet of a literary celebrity, as the best received novelist of the century. Even a Times reviewer, who distrusted the craze for abolition, admitted that Uncle Tom "is at every railway book stall in England, and in every third traveller's hand." Certainly much of this interest was popular, as the enormous flood of popularisations, dramatisations, and even parodies of Uncle Tom on both sides of the Atlantic indicates. Reviews in the abolitionist press were overwhelmingly favourable, while most individual abolitionist thought it bound to do good. Much of the British excitement over the book must have been at least connected with the old anti-slavery movement, all the more so because of the impact of such a novel on dissenters, normally banned from reading fiction. But this hardly explains the interest on the part of the Stafford House group and the movement's new

1. The reception of Uncle Tom by the British press has been painstakingly studied in Klingborg, loc.cit., pp. 544-547, nn. 10-18.


5. Senior, op.cit., p. 36.
allies. As Mrs. Richardson wrote in The Slave, the "sensation" produced by the work was "most extraordinary."¹ The only explanation for the interest of the aristocracy in Mrs. Stowe and her work must be that the anti-slavery movement had at last produced a figure high enough in literary status to be fashionable. It was because of this, and not any preconceived attitudes to abolition, beyond the very vaguest, that Mrs. Stowe was given her taste of London salon life.

The enthusiasm for Mrs. Stowe may also be linked with changing British attitudes to the Negro. Recent work by J. C. Furnas has laid great stress on Uncle Tom's assumption of Negro inferiority, while the modern tendency is to discount Mrs. Stowe's stereotyped characters as the product of two racist assumptions.² The first of these is that the Negro is not a fully rational being, capable of improvement of the sort which the nonconformist abolitionists like Armistead and Estlin had envisaged. The second is that the Negro is childlike in characteristics, unable to reach the highest level of civilization, and dependent on the superior intellect of those of stronger racial stock. Although it is difficult to reject Furnas' textual evidence that the stereotypes of Uncle Tom can support such assumptions,³ it seems unlikely that Mrs. Stowe herself consistently adhered to them. In two directions her work elsewhere shows the opposite assumption, that the Negro is

1. The Slave, July, 1852.
3. Ibid., pp. 49, 49.
fully rational and perfectible. The first is the production of *Dred: A Tale of the Great Dismal Swamp*, one of the sub-plots of which centres on slave insurrections. At least one of its editions, too, carried a reprint of *The Confessions of Nat Turner* as an appendix.\(^1\) The second proof of Mrs. Stowe's hope of improving the Negro is the stress she intermittently laid on settlement education, much to the chagrin of Garrisonian abolitionists.\(^2\) Although the Negro school she promised her British sympathisers never materialised, and she seems to have been somewhat muddle-headed over the whole issue, she did extensive settlement work at Mandarin, Florida, during the reconstruction period.\(^3\)

The temptation to argue that the stereotypes presented by Mrs. Stowe deliberately enshrined assumptions of white supremacy, which a racist British aristocracy enthusiastically adopted, must therefore be rejected. On the other hand, it should be noted that the rise of 'Stoweite' abolitionism, and the decline of the old anti-slavery societies, coincides with a period of startling growth in anti-Negro feeling.


In the van of those who now set about deciding the rationality of the Negro were two Scots, the Edinburgh surgeon Robert Knox and the more famous Thomas Carlyle. The publication of The Nigger Question signalised a widespread British 'disillusionment with the attempts of the past half-century to improve the lot of the Negro in Africa and elsewhere. The contempt of Dickens for Mrs. Jellyby and the coffee-growing Africans of Borrioboola-Gha carried the same implication. It coincided with the rise of a scientific racism much more dangerously 'modern' than anything dreamed of by the pro-slavery apologists of 1833.

Indeed it is logical to make a connection between the increasing hostility to the Negro in Britain in the fifties, and two aspects of the 'Stoweites' enthusiasm. First, the Stafford House Address may have adopted a conservative or gradualist position because of Mrs. Stowe's admirers no longer accepting that the African was fit for freedom without a prolonged period of white tutelage. Secondly, it may be that the 'Stoweites' rejected the painstaking efforts of the old abolition societies.

1. Knox's The Races of Man was first published in 1850, its second edition in 1863 — see Curtin, The Image of Africa, pp. 377-380, which stresses the comparative popularisation of these lectures.

2. Carlyle, 'Occasional Discourse upon the Nigger Question,' Fraser's Magazine, December, 1849, reprinted as a pamphlet, London, 1853. Note the desperate responses to this in A.S.R., 1.1.50, 1.2.50, 1.3.50.

to demonstrate the rational nature of the African, because they no longer accepted that he possessed such a nature. They were no longer interested in the laboured abolitionist propaganda of the past. Perhaps the conclusion on the 'racism' of Mrs. Stowe is that because of her extraordinary lack of a consistent attitude to the Negro, the assumption of white supremacy is there in Uncle Tom for those who set out to find it, as Furnas has done. No doubt British aristocrats who had been fully exposed to Carlyle and Knox could do the same. Assuming that the Negro was inferior to the white, however, did not prevent a feeling of pity towards him which could be projected into desultory good works on his behalf. These did not involve labour of the sort connected with the old anti-slavery movement, although they could give rise to harmlessly conservative petitions like the Stafford House Address. The result was that the Duchess of Sutherland and her circle could respond to Mrs. Stowe's simple message of pity for the Negro. But this did not imply that they accepted the assumption shared by Garrisonians and Tappanites — and sometimes even by Mrs. Stowe — that pity for the Negro involved a great deal of hard work, in helping him demonstrate his potential through education, or patiently labouring to convert the world to abolitionist principles. This, together with the cachet of lionising a literary celebrity whose work supported assumptions on the corruption of American democracy, must have made Mrs. Stowe irresistible to the aristocracy.
On another level, Uncle Tom's popularity depended on new British awareness of the exciting aspects of the struggle between slavery and freedom. There had always been an element of romanticism in British attitudes to the Negro, in which the Negro was seen as being rich in the primitive virtues, but not, unfortunately, in the ability to adjust to life in settled society. By the 1850's, however, new developments had accentuated British sensitivity to the romantic aspects of the oppression implied in slavery.

Richard Wiltroth's The White Slave had already had a success in this country which was striking by any standard other than comparison with Uncle Tom, when Mrs. Stow's work was released here. Popular interest had been heightened by the Compromise of 1850, since the enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Law produced a flood of stories of heroic slave escapes to Canada - Uncle Tom was only one of many attempts, fictional, semi-fictional, or historical, to make literary capital out of stories of escapes to Canadian freedom. Indeed this kind of influence was already coming to bear on the British public well before 1850. With 1850, however, the trend was accentuated. Even the rash of escaped slaves who came to Britain would have kept the exciting aspects


2. Thompson to Webb, 10.9.52, Garrison Papers.

of American slave escapes before the British public.\(^1\) Again, the sheer sell-out of democracy implied in the Compromise impressed Britons, especially those sympathetic to the left, unfavourably. In Glasgow, news of the Compromise prompted a workers' protest meeting.\(^2\) Jonathan Darker, the North Country temperance worker, claimed to have decided against emigrating to America because of the Law.\(^3\) Writers naturally fell into the habit of using Fugitive Slave Law stories to add romantic interest to their indictments of slavery.\(^4\) "The Law," Thompson assured Bristol abolitionists, "...has turned south-eastern Pennsylvania into another Guinea coast."\(^5\) Again, the Reporter habitually filled its columns with morbid anecdotes of the operations of escapers and slave-catchers alike.\(^6\)

1. See R. Quaries, 'Ministers without Portfolio,' J.N.W XXXIX, 1954. Typical published pieces, which sold well in this country, were W. and E. Crafts, Running a Thousand Miles for Freedom (London, 1851); W. W. Brown, Three Years in Europe, or, Places I have seen and People I have Met....with a Memoir of the Author, by W. Farmer (London and Edinburgh, 1852). Later ones were E. R. Ward, Autobiography of a Fugitive Negro: his Anti-Slavery Labours in the United States, Canada, and England (London, 1855); J. Henson, Uncle Tom's Story (Various editions after 1853).


3. J. Darker to Garrison, 24.10.50, Garrison Papers.

4. G. Thompson, A Lecture Delivered in the Music Hall, Stree\(\text{e}\)\(\text{t}\)\(\text{c}\)\(\text{t}\)\(\text{o}\)\(\text{c}\)\(\text{t}\)\(\text{s}\), etc., pp. 12-33; C. Wickstead, op. cit., passim.

5. G. Thompson, Speech....Delivered at the Anti-Slavery Meeting, Broadmead, Bristol, September 4th, 1851 (Bristol, 1851), p.11.

6. A.S.R., 1.2.51, 1.3.52, 1.4.51, 1.5.51.
The Glasgow New Ladies' Association for the Abolition of Slavery under Pennington's influence, were even prompted to consider founding a new periodical called *The Anti-Slavery Record and Friend of the Fugitive.* Abolitionists of the sort who used fugitive slave propaganda had very different attitudes to those of the later admirers of Mrs. Stowe - but by using fugitive slave propaganda, it was the latter they propagated. The slave had become a simple but heroic creature fleeing romantically from his oppressors. By doing so, he was providing news which was exciting as well as being spiced with sexual or other physical atrocities. In short, fugitive slave stories were good press as well as good propaganda after 1850, and as such were extensively reported in the newspapers, without the riders on Negro perfectibility usually included by authors and editors whose interest was in abolition rather than in lurid stories bringing high circulation. Two years of bombardment with fugitive slave material presented in the most dramatic and sentimental way must have prepared the British public well for the romanticism of Mrs. Stowe's portrayal of broken Negro families.

The active abolitionists who had kept societies to attack American slavery alive throughout the thirties and forties disapproved of the *Fugitive Slave* as much as anyone else. But there are indications that in spite of their qualified approval of Uncle Tom's success in attracting thousands to the cause, they were sceptical as to whether the ideas of Mrs. Stowe and her allies

1. *Ibid.* 2.5.53
could do any long-term good to the public mind. Phillips, for instance, thought that the fuss raised by the book was nothing more than "mere sentimental excitement." The most incisive comment on the new abolitionism came from Eliza Wigham, who wrote that "Mrs. Stowe seems the general pivot of effort & I do not regret it at all, although to honour her is small anti-slavery." Other abolitionists commented on the complete ignorance of slavery and the Negro shown in the compassionate but simplistic ideas of Uncle Tom. Although Webb kept silent over any misgivings he may have had about Mrs. Stowe, the Advocate later pointedly asked why the money raised in 'Stoweite' testimonials should be given to one individual rather than spent for the cause through organisations with an established history of work for the Negro.

In fact the kind of appeal made by Harriet Beecher Stowe and the ladies of Stafford House was different from anything which had appeared in the earlier British anti-slavery movement. Before Mrs. Stowe had been heard of as anything other than one of Lyman Beecher's daughters, Stephen Foster had written to Garrison of the oratory of George Thompson that "his appeals

1. W. Phillips to E. Pease, 21.11.52, Garrison Papers.
2. E. Wigham to M. Estlin, 22.3.53, Weston Papers.
are to the understanding & the conscience, & not to the sympathies,
& hence the impression he creates will be permanent, & will not,
like that of too many popular speakers, quickly pass away.¹

This assessment of Thompson goes right to the root of the attitudes
of the nonconformist abolitionists for whom Thompson spoke.

Harriet Beecher Stowe's preconceptions on the Negro left little
room for the application of "understanding" or "conscience" to
his position. Whatever her own attitudes to African equality,
Uncle Tom itself was simply an attempt to generate romantic pity
for the Negro. The aim of the abolitionist movement Thompson
represented so well, was to apply the institutional energy of the
anti-slavery societies to the conversion of the individual. This
might be done by rational argument to prove slavery was inexpedient,
or by moral and theological argument to prove it was irreligious.
One part of the proof in each case was that the Negro was potentially
if not actually the equal of the white.² In her most famous work
at least, Mrs. Stowe omitted this last link in the equation. As
a result, Uncle Tom could only affect the movement by creating
a high enough level of pity to sweep her readers into a new thoughtless
form of abolitionism. It was because it was based on pity, and not
on the "understanding," that the old leaders had doubts about the
permanence of the 'Stoweite' movement.

1. S. S. Foster to Garrison, 31.4.510 Garrison Papers.
2. See for instance Armistead, A Tribute for the Negro, passim.
On the other hand, it was because of the simple attraction of her message of pity that Mrs. Stowe was able to raise the mass support which the old societies, partly because of their complex rivalries, could no longer attract. Again, for Stafford House, pity was a ladylike emotion, whereas the intensely felt responsibility for individual conversion implied in the old attitudes was not. Such pity may well have been connected with comfortable assumptions of race superiority. It also carried the satisfaction of buttressing anti-American ideas with the awareness that American republican tyrants oppressed the defenceless Negroes, thus exposing a flaw in democracy to the satisfaction of Mrs. Stowe's supporters. The old anti-slavery movement was rooted in admiration for American institutions; the new saw slavery as the final proof of their inadequacy. Harriet Beecher Stowe thus revolutionized the English and Scottish anti-slavery movements. She attracted new leaders to the cause, and stirred up immense popular and fashionable interest in slavery. But she only did so at the cost of abandoning the firm assumption of men like Webb, Smeal, Estlin, and Armistead, that the Negro was as rational a being as the white, prevented only by his slave environment from realizing this potential. For this reason, the 'Stoweite' enthusiasm did not mend the declining fortunes of the Old and New


2. c.f. G. Gilfillan, The Debasing and Demoralizing Influence of Slavery on All and on Everything Connected with it, pp. 2-5, and Uncle Tom's Cabin, p. 113.
Organisation anti-slavery societies. As for the Garrisonians, they fared even worse than their rivals. It was only in Edinburgh, where no Tappanite society had yet been formed, that they managed to gain the prestige of working with the authoress of Uncle Tom. Indeed Mrs. Stowe's 1853 visit fully bore out Thompson's gloomy prophecy that she would "be almost wholly in the hands...of those who have sought to depreciate and even destroy the true Anti-Slavery party in the U.S."  

The conclusion is that while post-Uncle Tom Britain had more men and women who could be loosely classified as abolitionist, it had far less who were habitually involved to the extent of regular attendance at society meetings, or even regular reading of the heavier forms of non-fictional anti-slavery propaganda. On the other hand, it would be wrong to overstress this dualism. The older anti-slavery movement was in no sense replaced by the work of the 'Stoweites,' and it is not the intention of this dissertation to suggest such a break in continuity. For one thing, the line between the two levels of abolitionism was by no means clear. No doubt many enthusiasts for Uncle Tom were inspired to join local anti-slavery societies, Garrisonian, Tappanite, or free produce, and it is certain that many of the abolitionist veterans of the forties, even Garrisonian ones, thought that the furore over Mrs. Stowe's visit would do much good., In spite of this interaction, however, what is clear

1. Thompson to A. W. Weston, 4.3.53, Weston Papers.
is that the 'Stoweite' movement did not represent a strengthening of the old Garrisonian and Tappanite societies. Anti-slavery societies of all shades of opinion, from the B.F.A.S.S. downwards, were now being seriously affected by a general loss of interest among the nonconformist public who had been their mainstay in the previous decade.

In concluding this chapter, however, it must be stressed that this decline was relative, and that the old movement survived in a truncated form up to the Civil War and indeed beyond it. The B.F.A.S.S. is still in operation at the present day, while many of the provincial societies, including several of the Garrisonian ones, were kept active by visiting American abolitionists, on whose work they had indeed depended for stimulation in the past.

The last year before the Civil War, 1860, was a vintage year for tours by American abolitionists. For instance Martin R. Delany, the Negro agent of the African Aid Company, was supported in this country by Dr. Hodgkin, once a leading supporter of Burton's African Civilization Society. He toured Scotland and the provinces trying to raise interest in the exploitation of Africa as a competitor of the slave South, after appearing in July at the International Statistical Congress in London, where
he read a paper to an audience including Prince Albert.  
Another important Negro visitor in this year was Sarah Parker Remond, the sister of Charles Remond. Less radical than her Garrisonian brother, much of her work was done under the patronage of the B.F.A.S.S., and part of her time was spent touring the Midlands with Douglass, although she had arrived in this country with testimonials from Garrison. 
Douglass' own visit suggests a slight rapprochement between the factions in Britain. Douglass was also well received by the Leeds Young Men's Anti-Slavery Society, in spite of its domination by the Garrisonian Wilson Armistead. He later toured briefly


with Thompson, who had recovered from his paralysis and recommenced anti-slavery lecturing, but had not yet fully patched up relations with the British and Foreign Society.¹

One of the most interesting things about the visits of Douglass and Miss Remond is that they tended to behave differently in conservative England and Garrisonian Scotland. Although Miss Remond was supported by the B.F.A.S.S. in England, in Edinburgh she managed to raise an audience of two thousand at a meeting organised by Eliza Wigham.² Again, although Douglass and Thompson had toured amicably enough in England, when they appeared together in Scotland, the G.E.S. encouraged Thompson to attack Douglass' current views on political abolition. The result was an unsavoury debate reminiscent of the virulence of the early 1840's, which was published in full by Thompson's London Emancipation Committee.³ This unpleasantness, however, was an isolated incident. Scotland was now atypical in its strong Garrisonian feeling. By 1860 the British movement had returned to a state of relative harmony.

1. Ibid., 2,4,60, 1,6,60; Foner, Douglass, p. 183; Anti-Slavery Advocate, June, 1860.
2. A.S.R., 1,11,60
3. Botsford, op.cit., pp. 64-85; Foner, op.cit., p. 407, n.2. The speeches were published as London Emancipation Committee, Tract No. 5 (London, 1860), which included G. Thompson, Lecture on the Constitution of the United States...Delivered in the City Hall, Glasgow, February 27th, 1860; F. Douglass, Lecture...In Reply to Mr. Thompson, Delivered in the Queens' Rooms, Glasgow, Mar. 20, 1860; G. Thompson, rejoinder...a Lecture Delivered in the City Hall, Glasgow, April 3rd, 1860. The Scottish attitude closely reflects Garrison's own continuing hatred of Douglass, as in Garrison to May, 28,9,60, Garrison Papers.
Perhaps quarrels were being shelved by British abolitionists because of a common consciousness of weakness, and a common awareness of the impending crisis in America. This impression is borne out by the conduct of the last important American visitor of 1860, the Rev. George D. Cheever of New York. The pastor of the Church of the Puritans in Union Square, New York City, he closely resembles Henry Ward Beecher in being one of the American clergymen whose name had become a household word due to his activities as an abolitionist. His 1840 to 1861 visit was produced by the objections of his fashionable congregation to the anti-slavery views which he publicised, for instance over the Harper's Ferry Raid. He finally pushed his congregation to the point of rebellion over the specific issue of the Dred Scott decision. Perhaps due to the personal nature of his cause, he was able to gain support from all British factions at one time or another, although a certain amount of friction between Old and New Organisation was produced by his presence in this country. In 1859, he was received equally well in

1. Cheever had already visited Britain in 1837. See G.E.S. Reports, 1837, pp. 129 ff. He was the author of the original temperance tract, The True History of Deacon Giles' Distillery. There is a short sketch of his life in the D.A.B.


Scotland by Garrisonians and their opponents. Even the Rev. Dr. Candlish joined with other Scottish abolitionists in welcoming her, as did his old critic Gildillan. On a national level, he appeared at the annual meeting of the Garrisonian London Emancipation Committee, and yet was fully supported by the Reporter, apart from a brief interlude when its editor was circulating rumours that the Church of the Puritans contained a Negro pew. During his second visit to Scotland in 1860, he continued to try to win over all abolitionists. His conciliatory behaviour probably did much to remove the unpleasant impression left by the interchanges of Douglass and Thompson, and thus form Scottish pro-Northern opinion for the coming war. Cheever's work


2. Annual Report of the B.F.A.S.S., 1859 (Supplement to A.S.R., 1.7.59); ibid., 2.1.60. The accusations were printed in the issue for Feb., 1860, and he was partly exonerated from them in that of March, 1860. Thompson and other Garrisonians did not consider this qualified apology sufficient, and a printed circular containing his interchanges with Cooper and Binnas of the B.F.A.S.S. is in Garrison Papers, with Thompson to Garrison, 16.11.60, scrawled on the reverse. Most significantly, the circular is headed The Following Letters are Printed for Strictly Private Circulation. See also London Emancipation Committee Resolutions, Bod. Brit. Emp. Mus. S.18, C37/7d. In spite of this quarrel, A.S.R., 1.9.60, devoted seven pages to Cheever's speech at the August Emancipation Committee meeting.

3. A.S.R., 1.11.60.

thus gives further weight to the thesis that tensions between British abolitionists had become weaker by the eve of the Civil War. At the same time, the interest which Choever created suggests that however much the institutional anti-slavery campaign had been weakened in the fifties, it had by no means disappeared.

Indeed several British abolitionist societies remained active throughout the War and even after it. After Fort Sumter ranks were closed even further, and old rivalries largely forgotten, in an attempt to organise maximum British support for the North. This is not to say that arguments between abolitionists did not take place after 1861, for instance over approval of the war among reformers strongly inclined to pacifism, or over the simpler question of whether the North should be supported irrespective of its early attitude to slavery. But these were not the quarrels of earlier decades, and they were not virulent enough to hamstring abolitionist activity, perhaps partly because of Phillips' lack of contacts in this country.

What is certain, however, is that the liberal middle classes were solidly opposed to the Confederacy. Their opinion was habitually channelled through the old anti-slavery societies and a series of auxiliaries depending on the London Union and Emancipation Committee, incidentally dominated by Thompson.


The thesis that the British provinces were most active in the fight against American slavery is borne out by the great revival of the G.E.S. and the E.L.E.S., both of which eventually became large local Freedmen's Aid Societies. This was also the period when the flow of reformers across the Atlantic began to go in the opposite direction. Thompson made his last trip in 1864. Next year he accompanied Garrison into the South and was received in the White House by Lincoln. Miss Estlin visited America after the War to be reunited with her friend Miss Pugh. Webb toured the country in 1868, only to spend most of his time abroad in a Detroit hospital recovering from injuries he had received in a railroad accident. As for support for the North outside the body of abolitionists enthusiastic enough to organise themselves into societies, it has been noted that although the Liberator cited large numbers of British newspaper attacks on the Confederacy during the early part of the War, the greater part of these were provincial. Organised abolitionist activities survived or even expanded during the Reconstruction period, when Britain came to provide a substantial sector of support for the Freedmen's Aid movement.

1. G.E.S. Minute Books, IV, shows a return to relatively frequent meetings of the Society after 1861. The activity of the E.L.E.S. during the War, and its bad reaction to the pacifist Garrison coming out in favour of the War, is described in Botsford, op.cit., pp. 549 ff. The G.E.S. accepted his change of position more readily.


3. E. D. Adams, op.cit., I, 47.

4. C. Bolt, 'British Attitudes to Reconstruction in America,' passim.
Although the history of this movement in Scotland has still to be studied, it seems that the tradition of disproportionately strong Scottish interest in the Negro was maintained.\(^1\) In an exact reflection of American developments, the enthusiasm over the success of the abolitionist movement meant that the old schisms of the forties and fifties were quietly forgotten or replaced by the new and less disruptive issues described above. In 1867, it was possible for Garrison to be welcomed tumultuously in Britain by all abolitionists, Old Organisation, New Organisation, and 'Stoweite.'\(^2\) A year later Eliza Wigham could write a history of the movement which completely ignored the question of disunity.\(^3\) The anti-slavery movement survived into the postwar period, but it did so without the rancour and backbiting which had characterized its earlier history.

Although the history of the British abolitionists during the period of Civil War and Reconstruction does not fall within the scope of this study, it indicates that the abolitionist societies by no means collapsed in the fifties. Yet the third decade of their work for universal emancipation was by far the most frustrating, and the one in which their support was lowest. Neither the constant growth of new and schismatic anti-slavery societies, nor the public excitement over Mrs. Stowe,

\(^1\) Edinburgh University M.Litt, thesis in progress on 'Scottish Attitudes to Reconstruction,' by H. Finnie.

\(^2\) Proceedings at a Breakfast to Receive William Lloyd Garrison (London, 1867), passim.

\(^3\) E. Wigham, The Anti-Slavery Cause in America and its Martyrs.
can disguise their difficulties. Perhaps dissension in the movement declined in the sixties, not simply because the final American crisis had come, but because the events of the previous decade had made it painfully clear that chronic factionalism made fruitful abolitionist activity impossible. The 'Stoweite' abolitionist movement drew its support from backgrounds different from those of the old anti-slavery leaders, and its success does not affect the conclusion that from 1830 until the Civil War the Tappanite and Garrisonian societies were languishing. Disunity had been their main difficulty since 1841, and it was at its worst in the fifties, when the movement could least afford it. Notwithstanding the superficial impression of prosperity created by the visits of Mrs. Stowe, the last full decade of British activity against American slavery shows that the old abolitionist impulse was running down. Disunity and the other factors which weakened it will be discussed in the next chapter.
CHAPTER X

IN CONCLUSION: THE FAILURE OF THE GARRISONIAN ABOLITIONISTS AND THEIR RIVALS, AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE.

The success of Mrs. Stowe in this country, then, should not be allowed to obscure the fact that after 1850 the British anti-slavery societies were falling on hard times. Their revival during the Civil War notwithstanding, 'old-style' abolitionists, whether Scottish or English, Old Organisation or New Organisation, found it more and more difficult to raise support for their activities. This chapter will suggest reasons for their growing weakness, which may be associated among other things with distrust of the ideas of the Garrisonians. Finally, it will summarise the effect and significance of the work of the Scottish and other provincial Old Organisation abolitionists during the whole period from 1830 until the Civil War.

The reasons for the declining interest in the movement as a whole are several. First it suffered from its own disunity, secondly from the unfavourable impression created by its standpoint on the sugar duties, and thirdly from public alarm at the reforms proposed by the Garrisonians in Scotland and elsewhere. Again, part of its difficulty in the fifties was that issues which had previously been live ones had now been resolved or else passed beyond British control. None of these factors, however, was as significant as the movement's failure to reach the harmony which was later forced upon it by the crisis conditions obtaining from 1861 onwards. One of the interesting aspects of the British movement is its very disunity, and the close correspondence between this disunity and that of American abolitionists - but there can
be no doubt that this characteristic provides the key to its failure. The decline of the movement in its old form in the fifties has already been pointed out by Miss Elsie I. Pilgrim in a brilliant study of the period from 1841 to 1854. Miss Pilgrim concludes that abolitionists were suffering from the fact that their own colonial controversies were over; the sugar duties had finally been removed and the West African Squadron had clearly survived the challenge to its methods. Although America remained interesting, neither the B.F.A.S.S. or any other body could provide the public with a clear anti-slavery purpose, or save the abolitionists from their own divided aims and loyalties.

The history of the movement throughout the fifties indeed demonstrates that it could not survive the dissipation of resources implied in constant subdivision of labour. The divisions of 1841 were bad enough, but made more complex and perpetuated over the years their effect was disastrous. Within the old framework, the organisation of an emancipation society was an expensive business and a time-consuming one. Apart from the B.F.A.S.S. itself, no British anti-slavery organisation ever employed a permanent salaried official. As for speaking duties, the appointment of paid agents for lecturing purposes had been a very occasional luxury since the feverish campaigns


2. Ibid., pp. 273 ff.
of 1833 and 1838.¹ In short, apart from the tiny secretariat at Broad Street, the work of the British movement was carried out by dedicated middle-class reformers who received no remuneration unless they were lucky enough to write profitable pamphlets, a most unlikely event in a cause where most propaganda was distributed free. Even Webb would never accept anything more than postal expenses for his work, and was often out of pocket on these because of his endearing unwillingness to keep an accurate tally of what payments he made.² Yet he contributed more to the American movement than any other British abolitionist. By the late forties he was spending all his limited spare time managing the distribution of Garrisonian periodicals in this country, editing the Advocate, and penning articles for the sophisticated Anti-Slavery Standard.³

Thompson is the only real professional who figures largely in this study. His activities were frequently interrupted due to his need to find work in whatever cause had the means to pay

1. Thompson's American agency for the G.B.S. and E.B.S. was one of the exceptions. It is significant that his 1850-51 visit was financed by himself in the hope of earning money to pay off his debts, and not supported by grass-roots contributions from the movement. See Thompson to Garrison, 3.10.50, Garrison Papers; Thompson to A. W. Weston, 26.3.51, Weston Papers. Although the G.E.S. appointed 'agents' in 1848, there is no evidence that they were actually paid.

2. Gay to Webb, 6.6.43, Garrison Papers.

him. Even his failure as reform M.P. for Tower Hamlets was widely attributed to his lack of private means and necessity for finding salaried employment.

The lack of paid officials in the old anti-slavery movement was the more serious because its methods were so much less dilatory than those of the 'Stoweites', who confined themselves to holding the occasional public meeting and passing round unexceptionable petitions at ladies' tea-parties. Each abolitionist society which aspired to an independent existence, whatever shade of opinion it catered for, had to have regular committee meetings, and command the services of an unpaid secretary prepared to carry out continuous correspondence across the Atlantic. He was also expected to draft carefully considered petitions, appeals, and resolutions to send to the

1. Thompson's fascinating range of employment deserves a full biography. At one point or another he was agent of the Agency Committee, the G.E.S., the Aborigines' Protection Society, the British India Society, the Anti-Corn Law League, and the Universal Suffrage Union. At other times he was M.P. for Tower Hamlets, legal representative for the Rajah of Sattarah, editor of the British India Advocate and The Empire, and traveller for an unidentified English textile firm in India. In 1830 he became an (unpaid) agent of the American Anti-Slavery Society, in recognition of testimonials from the U.S.A. References to all these facets of his career are given in this thesis, except for his Suffrage Union work. This is best studied through a group of tracts in Columbia University Library, G. Thompson, National Reform Tracts, Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10 (all London, 1830).

2. Webb to E. Quincy, 27.3.51, copy from private collection of Professor Merrill; M. W. Chapman to M. Estlin, 29.10.55, Estlin Papers, Dr. Williams' Library. He went to America because in debt, and returned to lose his seat. See Thompson to Garrison, 24.9.52, Garrison Papers.
proper quarters in Britain or America. Aside from this, the leaders of each society had to keep themselves familiar with the flood of detailed controversial literature on slavery and emancipation. The most obvious characteristic of the old movement, unlike the 'Stoweite' one, was that it involved a great deal of work. Since each anti-slavery society required officials able and willing to carry out this work, and since the number of such officials available was limited, the effect of repeated division of ranks could only be to leave smaller anti-slavery bodies without the means of carrying on agitation. No doubt the open disagreements between abolitionists, and their all too frequent lack of charity towards one another tended to repel a great deal of public interest. Probably this was even more so in the case of the Garrisonians, whose attacks from the left on men generally considered the most extreme of radicals must often have seemed incomprehensible. However, the practical damage done by the schisms was greater than this. Each division meant that fewer capable men were left in charge of any given society, so that it became more difficult to keep any of them running efficiently. If the societies had not lost a single member between 1850 and 1860, the probability is that the effect of the schisms in simple institutional terms would have been to reduce them to a fraction of their former strength.

Unfortunately the anti-slavery movement had to cope with other factors which added unpopularity to the working difficulties created by its disunity. Although the question of sugar protection was not an American one, it absorbed much of the attention of British abolitionists, whether Garrisonian or Tappanite, from 1840 to 1846. The subject was particularly difficult because it presented abolitionists with a distinct conflict of loyalties. They were free traders almost to a man, and shared the assumption of The League that next to protection for home-grown grain "the sugar monopoly.......is the most scandalous and oppressive." On the other hand, they could hardly fail to see that opening British markets to cheap Latin-American sugar would worsen the lot of the slave in Cuba and Brazil, and give a sharp stimulus to the Atlantic slave trade. Williams' assertion that the abolitionists remained true to their economic nature, and threw Latin-American slaves overboard to further the free trade legislation which was their primary objective, is not borne out by the detailed history of the anti-slavery societies during this period. In fact a large section of the abolitionist public,

1. The following paragraph is a condensation of Rice, 'The Anti-Slavery Interest and the Sugar Duties,' loc.cit.

2. The League, 11.11.43; ibid., 4.11.43, 9.3.44.

led by a majority wing of the B.F.A.S.S., entered into a peculiar alliance with diehard West India protectionists in an effort to keep British markets closed to slave produce. The fact that this was inconsistent with their embarrassed silence over American cotton was made much of by their opponents. The latter included men like Cobden and Bright, who were not at any time members of the institutional anti-slavery movement, as well as a substantial element within the abolitionist societies themselves. The latter used the somewhat weak argument that the only way of ending slavery was to expose it to competition with the more economic system of free labour now happily in force in the West Indies. Abolitionists of this opinion, who did not oppose the inexorable movement towards the Sugar Act of 1843, tended to be members of provincial societies, principally in the West Country. The G.E.S. showed its usual Scottish tendency towards nonconformity by adopting an improbable scheme of John Murray's. He argued in favour of having British inspectors on each plantation in Latin-America, stamping hogsheads as free or slave produce, which could then be taxed accordingly. The controversy over sugar may thus be another example of the way in which tensions within

1. All viewpoints on the subject were aired in Proceedings of the General Anti-Slavery Convention, called by the Committee of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, and held in London from Friday, June 13th, to Tuesday, June 20th, 1843 (London) 1844, pp. 127-173, condensed in A.S.R., 21.6.43. See also Pilgrim, op.cit., pp. 159-162, 166-170.

the anti-slavery movement reflect rivalries and differences of opinion between the provinces and London which had nothing to do with the Negro at all. In either case, the result of the campaign for free trade in sugar was another disastrous division of abolitionist forces. Many local societies were again split internally, quite apart from the ones which dissented from Broad Street policy. The effect on middle class confidence in the anti-slavery movement must have been severe. The class from which the movement could hope to gain future converts was overwhelmingly free trade in sentiment, as Williams correctly argues. After 1841, however, the national anti-slavery organisation, and many of its local auxiliaries, appeared in the uncomfortable and bewildering position of being allies of the West India and Tory interest in the defence of protection.

As well as the repellent effect of the B.P.A.S.S. stand on this unwanted controversy over sugar, the British anti-slavery societies declined in attractiveness due to suspicion of the views of Garrison and the American group who were supported by Scottish and Irish abolitionists like Smeal and Webb. All the evidence gathered in this study suggests that Garrisonian abolition, with its insistence on the connection between the anti-slavery cause and the alarming 'extraneous issues,' did not draw the British middle classes towards the movement but drove them away.


from it. This was certainly the case in Scotland and Ireland, and it was perhaps even more so in the less extreme reform circles of the nation at large. Some of these antagonised by Garrison and his disciples simply closed ranks round the British and Foreign Society. In other cases, however, the harm done was irreparable, since some abolitionists were sufficiently determined not to be associated with the 'extraneous issues' to break their connection with the movement altogether. An example of the former tendency was the response to Collins' mission, an instance of the latter the behaviour of the Free Church clergy after Wright's 1840 campaign. After it they dropped extensive anti-slavery agitation until the visit of their clerical colleague Dr. Cheever on the eve of the war. In British terms, the odium attached to the 'extraneous issues' was such that there must have been a general tendency to cry a plague on both houses, and fail to understand that the B.F.A.S.S. was engaged in an uphill battle to disassociate itself from Garrison. Indeed it is not likely that Broad Street would have risked the enormous institutional disadvantages of disunity by taking the stand against Collins which led to the great schism of 1841, if it had not thought that the loss of prestige caused by being associated with Garrisonian heresies would have been an even greater evil. Even as it was, in the uneducated public eye, the tendency was to assume that the B.F.A.S.S. was somehow connected with these heresies anyway, whether it liked it or not.

1. See above, pp. 524. Dr. Candlish, however, was speaking against the slave trade as early as 1851, and in response to Pennington's apparently conservative demands for the Vigilance Committee by 1834. A.S.R., 1.2.51; Anti-Slavery Advocate, August, 1854; W. Wilson, Memorials of Robert Smith Candlish, pp. 162, 189-190.
What made the 'extraneous issues' of interest to Garrison and his followers inappropriate for discussion in this country was the extraordinary conservatism of the middle classes during this period. In modern terms, most of the Garrisonian heresies have either been implemented or else appear harmless. There was no truth whatsoever in the charge that Garrison wished to overthrow the family unit; apart from his frequent outraged responses to those opponents who insisted that he did, the closeness of his own ties to wife and children are enough proof of his traditionalism in this respect. As for the unorthodox viewpoints which he did hold, his distrust of a paid ministry has been made irrelevant by the modern decline of the churches which he attacked, while his rejection of the Sabbath is no longer an issue except in the Celtic Presbyterian world. All the rights he would have given to women have been granted. His views on temperance are as much those of a minority as they ever were, but are no longer considered socially dangerous. His nonresistant ideas, the ones which horrified contemporaries most, are no nearer being implemented. But they can now be fitted into the modern framework of the widely tolerated abstract theories of the classless society and the tenets of twentieth century anarchism. They show a connection with the methods of passive resistance perfected by Gandhi and adopted by substantial
sectors of the Left in the West. 1 To Garrison's own generation, however, these ideas appeared to strike at the whole basis of middle class social control.

There are many reasons for the doubtful welcome given to Garrison's universal reform ideas in this country, many of which were fully understood by his sympathisers. A recent perceptive essay on the psychological basis of abolitionist commitment suggests that it was the firm opposition to the anti-slavery movement in America which gave its leaders their compulsion towards championing unpopular reform causes in general. 2

In Britain, where abolitionism was all but universally accepted, such opposition was not present to an extent which encouraged commitment to the whole wide front of universal reform. Atypical British areas were provincial ones, especially Scotland and Ireland, where defensive consciousness of the tensions with the metropolis may have been partly what produced substantial

1. Garrison's advanced nonresistant ideas are discussed in W. P. Garrison et al., William Lloyd Garrison, II, 144-161. His first mention of J. H. Noyes' 'no-government' ideas is in Liberator, 23.6.37. See also the summary accounts in Barnes, The Anti-Slavery Impulse, pp. 92-95; H. H. Simms, Emotion at High Tide, (Baltimore, 1860), pp. 171-174; Morrill, Against Wind and Tide, pp. 144-146, 269-270; Thomas, The Liberator, pp. 227-235. The work of Noyes, from whom most of Garrison's nonresistant ideas were taken, is summarised in Tyler, Freedom's Ferment, pp. 184-195. Garrison's association with Noyes was all the more unfortunate because of his connection with the outwardly communitistic and adulterous Oneida settlement. See C. Nordhoff, The Communist Societies of the United States, from Personal Visit and Observation (New York, 1875), pp. 259-268.

support for Garrison against more conservative abolitionists. Beyond this, there were good reasons why the British middle classes as a whole should have been suspicious of the Garrisonian reforms. Indeed British Garrisonians were well aware of this, and accordingly spent much of their time trying to shield their public from the universal reform enthusiasm of men like Collins, Rogers, Wright, and Garrison himself. Only Smeal, Murray, and Paton were extreme enough to avoid all cavilling at whatever American reform ideas were presented to them. Noyes himself could not have asked for anything more than the devastating indictment of the Union adopted at the G.E.S. Anniversary in 1845. However, the leading Garrisonians, Webb, Estlin, and Miss Wigham, from time to time advised caution in urging the 'extraneous issues' on an unresponsive British public. The morality inculcated by the churches was central to the middle class control of the working population. Estlin repeatedly argued that the institutions which were their twin pillars, the Sabbath and ministry, should not be irresponsibly attacked. Even the British Friend attacked the ideas on the Sabbath presented in Wright's Six Months at Graefenberg, although it is probable that this was due to Robert Smeal's influence rather

1. Minute for 1.8.45, G.E.S. Minute Books, III. The G.E.S. also had Wright's pamphlet, The Dissolution of the American Union Demanded by Justice and Humanity, published under its auspices.

2. Estlin to May, 29.1.46, May Papers; Estlin to May, 23.2.46, 1.10.46, ibid. The importance of the Sabbath as a way of preserving piety among the public at large is demonstrated by the fact that many Friends, who did not themselves observe the Sabbath, took a leading part in trying to preserve it. See Richard, Joseph Sturge, p. 252.
than Williams'\textsuperscript{1} As for women's rights, there is no doubt that this was the issue which was the final cause of the split in the British movement. Like the Sabbath and the ministry, the inferior position of women was part of the great complex of relationships which preserved middle class society. Elevation of women would modify the family, which was the basic unit of community life. It was for this reason that the 1840 Convention feared the "ridicule" which would result from seating female delegates.\textsuperscript{2} The word was actually used by Daniel O'Connell, often considered one of the greatest Irish Garrisonians though his political work left little time for work in anti-slavery societies.\textsuperscript{3} As for nonresistance, nothing could have appealed less to a class whose economic existence depended on the maintenance of stable legal and political conditions. Although a significant vein of nonresistant activity has been found in Britain, this depended very much on an apparently cranky minority.\textsuperscript{4} Webb could write that the dominant B.P.A.S.S. Committee were "no nonresistants and their vision is clouded by wealth and worldly importance."\textsuperscript{5}

1. \textit{British Friend}, 31.1.45, 29.2.45, 31.3.45


Again, John Dunlop of the E.E.S. published his pamphlet on the political anti-slavery movement to counteract the current Scottish impression that all abolitionists shared Wright's views on the Union. If these were the opinions held within the relatively conservative section of the anti-slavery movement, the fear and censure of nonresistance among the public at large must have been overwhelming.

Webb for one was fully aware of the loneliness of holding Garrisonian views in Britain when he wrote "I feel half my time is an ice house - the more sympathy one has with the true Garrisonians the fewer you find to agree with you." Mrs. Wigham and her stepdaughter, for their part, spent much of their anti-slavery career explaining to American Garrisonians that they had to take a moderate standpoint in Edinburgh, since discussion of the 'extraneous issues', especially the deficiencies of the clergy, would kill the local movement completely.

Garrisonians themselves were aware of the support lost by their radical views, British Tappanites made their own distaste evident by the maintenance of the schisms which are the subject of this study. Unfortunately the personal orthodoxy of these Tappanites did not prevent their being tarred with the same brush by a

1. J. Dunlop, American Anti-Slavery Conventions, etc.
2. Webb to Gay, 7.6.50, Gay Papers.
3. See above, pp. 474-475.
somewhat ignorant public. For instance the Witness insisted on blaming the D.F.A.S.S. for American universal reform theories during the 'Send Back the Money' campaign. As Fraser's introduced Carlyle's Nigger Question in December, 1849, it explained that it included

"peculiar views of the Rights of Negroes; involving, it is probable, peculiar ditto of innumerable other rights, duties, expectations, wrongs, and disappointments, much argued of, by logic and by grape-shot, in those emancipated epochs of the human mind." 2

In doing so, it was playing on the public's hazy impression that the anti-slavery movement was dedicated in toto to the series of sinister reforms actually adopted by a minority within it. One of the main reasons for the gradual weakening of the movement was the genuine horror caused among the conservative middle class by what appeared to be abolitionist attacks on the whole established order of society.

Institutional disunity and distrust of the issues raised by the anti-slavery movement, however, do not fully explain the difficulties of the fifties. The final factor working towards abolitionist weakness was a general change in the climate of opinion in relation to slavery, exemplified by what Williams somewhat loosely calls the "neo-fascism" of Thomas Carlyle. 3

1. A.S.R., 8.1.45.


Apart from new hierarchical or even racist views and their possible influence, however, abolitionists had to deal with a new situation in which the old issues which had kept them in the public eye were either dead or resolved. For one thing, it was only natural that support for the movement should decline as the chronological gap between 1833 and the present widened. Kept alive by the crisis of 1838 and the publicity given to the internal brawls of the forties over free trade and church behaviour, public interest weakened as the colonial struggles were forgotten. It may even be suggested that the movement against American slavery depended for its popularity on having roots in at least some sector of activity which directly concerned the Negro within the British dominions, or the public themselves. Miss Pilgrim argues that by 1854 all such issues had been settled, so that those concerned over the Negro in the South were left to struggle on in diminished numbers against a foreign institution which affected neither their pockets, their politics, nor their national pride.¹

The British movement had always given much of its attention to the problems of slavery and the slave trade in territories under British control, especially in the case of the B.F.A.S.S., whose resulting lack of concern over America had produced repeated Garrisonian complaints that it was only "playing at anti-slavery."²


The universal emancipation movement in this country had been one general cause with many specific issues. By 1854, only issues which concerned the British public indirectly, those of slavery in Latin-America and the U.S.A., remained. The controversy over the tariff barriers against slave sugar had been settled once and for all. It was now generally agreed that the West Africa Squadron, reformed in organisation, should continue patrolling until such time as it managed to crush the slave trade. The phantom of a new form of the slave trade emerging as 'African emigration' was one which produced desultory alarm, but did not hold abolitionist attention permanently. The horrors of the slave trade in East Africa only reawakened the British abolitionist conscience in the late seventies. The lack of anti-slavery issues was all the


2. Free emigration never again became as much of an issue as it had been during McGregor's 'toll-free bridge' campaign in the early 1840's. See A.S.R., 29.1.40, 12.2.40, 26.2.40, 11.3.40, 25.3.40, 22.4.40, 15.7.40, 4.11.40, 8.8.41. The Reporter's coverage of free emigration debates, due to consistent B.F.A.S.S. opposition to all forms of such schemes, continued throughout the forties, although the paper all but ignored it thereafter. Nevertheless, the B.F.A.S.S. still showed desultory interest, as in Minutes for 4.6.52, 10.11.52, 3.7.57, 6.7.57, B.F.A.S.S. Minute Books, III. The G.E.S. was in favour of Laird's schemes, but ignored the question in the fifties. See British Friend, 31.5.43, 30.9.43; Murray to Scoble, 12.8.43, Bod.Brit.Emp.Mss.S.18, C20/38.

3. The movement was stimulated by the discoveries of Livingstone, and two widely read books, E. F. Berlioux, The Slave Trade in Africa in 1872 (trans. and ed. J. Cooper, London, 1872), and J. Cooper, The Lost Continent, or Slavery and the Slave Trade in Africa in 1875 (London, 1875). For the outcome, see Lloyd, op. cit., pp. 187-274.
more serious because of the nature of British history during this period. It could be argued that the weakening of the anti-slavery movement reflects the growth of middle class apathy due to the state of political equipoise which characterises the mid-Victorian era. Certainly the Scottish abolitionists suffered from a reaction into apathy after the exciting events of the Disruption decade, and severe exhaustion from the 'Send Back the Money' campaign. But in fact the movement probably suffered more from the one issue which was of importance during this period. The Crimean War diverted much philanthropic attention to the peace movement, and indeed to charitable work on behalf of those who suffered from its distant campaigns.¹ It may be that the strength of British support for American abolitionism in the thirties and forties was a product of the historical accident that these were decades without involvement in any major war. The Crimea redirected attention to the problems of maintaining peace. The Quaker missions which Sturge led to the Court of St. Petersburg and the Paris Conference were symptomatic of growing interest in pacifism.²

1. E. L. Woodward, The Age of Reform (Oxford, 1933), pp. 254-255. C.f. A. Briggs, Victorian People (Penguin edition, London, 1965), pp. 65ff., which argues that the Manchester School as a whole were pro-war. This ignores its significant Quaker wing, who were supported by Bright's pacifism over the Crimea. See G. B. Smith, The Life and Speeches of the Right Honourable John Bright, M.P. (4 Vols., London, 1884), II, 235-283; H. Ausubel, John Bright, Victorian Reformer (London, 1966), pp. 65-77. The war, however, may initially have led to patriotic distrust of pacifists, thus creating greater odium against the abolitionist movement in which so many of them were involved.

2. Richard, Sturge, CCS. XXII, XXIII, passim.
Absorption in the problems raised by the War, and the settling of controversies over slavery and the slave trade as it affected British territory, would not have been so harmful to the anti-slavery societies, if it had not been for the fact that the foreign events which concerned them were moving beyond the point where they could have any rational hope of influencing them. Latin-American slavery had always been somewhat remote from the grass-roots abolitionist movement, which continually concentrated on the United States because of the close ties which are emphasised throughout this study. The abandonment of protection for free-grown sugar removed the last slim hope of starving the Catholic slaveowners into submission, although slavery and the slave trade remained a central issue in British diplomatic relations with Spain. Even the Brazilian slave trade was clearly on the way to extinction by 1853. By 1850, the North American situation had become as remote as the Cuban or Brazilian one. Even the Scottish and Irish Garrisonians, who were not likely to be troubled by the shelving of British colonial issues which they has always seen as secondary, suffered from the fact that the American situation had passed the point where it mattered what they said or did. By 1850 the American controversy had become a political one which extended far beyond the organised abolitionist movement, Garrisonian or Tappanite. Again, as westward expansion gained momentum, American concern over British attitudes must inevitably have lessened. The abolitionists had done their


work of polarising opinion over slavery, and the appeals and
remonstrances of foreigners without votes had become meaningless,
especially in the case of those who specifically rejected all
political solutions in favour of moral persuasion. This did not
prevent outbursts of sympathy for escaped slaves, and sentimental
interest among the reform dilettantes of the 'Stoweite' movement,
but it reduced the careful work of the old abolitionist societies
to impotence. The weakening of the institutional movement after
1850, in Britain as in America, is closely connected with the
new American political situation. Even if British abolitionists
had not reduced their strength through factionalism and tactless
championing of unpopular issues, they would have found it much
more difficult to keep active anti-slavery societies functioning
during the 'Stoweite' period. In terms of giving help to
American abolitionists, the years before the Civil War were ones
when there was little left for such societies to do. Scottish
abolitionists shared the problems of those in the nation as a
whole, and were left without a viable role until the emergence
of the Freedmen's Aid movement.

* * * * *

In the last resort, the question which must be asked about
the Scottish and other Garrisonian abolitionists in this country,
is whether they achieved anything. The answer is certainly
negative. The anti-slavery societies which flourished in the
thirties, quarrelled in the forties, and went into a relative
decline in the fifties, certainly influenced the American situation.
Unhappily they did so in ways which did nothing to forward the immediate but peaceful emancipation they demanded. Partly due to their difficulties as foreigners attacking an American institution, their painstaking and well-meant efforts only had the damaging effect of hardening the lines of conflict between the groups for and against slavery. It is highly doubtful whether any Americans were converted to support for abolition by British appeals on slavery, although many doubtless joined the American movement because of the realisation that the West Indies had survived emancipation without descending into anarchy. What British work did, perhaps especially in the case of the Garrisonians, was confirm Americans in opinions which they already held. There is no better example of this than Thompson’s mission of 1834-35, which assured abolitionists of British moral support, and gave pro-slavery writers splendid ammunition to use against their critics.¹ It is in this negative direction that the important effect of the British abolitionist movement lies. American abolitionists became assured that their opinions were right because of the support of the respectable British public, while their opponents were able to use the new charge of treasonable anti-slavery alliance with a foreign power in their own defence. The gulf between the two sides was thus widened, and compromise became less likely. The British anti-slavery movement from 1833 to 1860 may therefore be seen as contributing to the dangerously polarised situation which produced the Civil War.

The connection between strong pro-slavery feelings and nativist distrust of Britain was always close. This was not only so in the South itself, but also among the northern working classes, whose large Irish element and natural fear of Negro labour competition predisposed them against abolitionism. Distrust of the abolitionists because of their alliance with British reformers was also a recurrent theme in pro-slavery literature. Nothing was simpler than arguing that the British had been responsible for introducing slavery, and had now launched the abolition campaign to divide and destroy the republic. Again, it was easy to draw a contrast between well-fed Southern slaves and the starving British poor, or simply indicate (correctly) that the British misunderstood the system. These were standard arguments in pamphlet literature, and ones constantly repeated in the extracts from the pro-slavery press which Garrison triumphantly printed in the 'Refuge of Oppression' column of the Liberator. As for popular feeling, Lewis Tappan

1. There is an interesting attempt to explain American Anglophobia to the British Public in J. L. Nichols, Forty Years of American Life (2nd Ed., London, 1876), pp. 393-403. In pp. 367-367 the author had already shown his pro-slavery feelings.


once wrote that Mexico would infallibly be annexed if it became known that British abolitionists were against this.¹

Some abolitionists fully understood that British work would do harm. The Baptists Cox and Hoby were aware of American nativist distrust.² One American even shared an understanding of increased sensitivity to foreign interference in times of crisis, and advised against Thompson's proposed 1850 trip on the grounds that "The appearance of a Foreigner in the field on an occasion of peculiar excitement gives the advocates of slavery an opportunity to change the issue."³ He could not have been more right. When Thompson appeared to lecture in Springfield, Massachusetts, in February, 1851, a hostile mob hung his and John Bull's effigies side by side on the trees of the town common.⁴

Far from rejecting British help because of the strength it added to the pens and hands of the slaveocracy, American abolitionists consistently showed the conviction that British approval implied the noncompromise course they had chosen was the right one. Perhaps because of their position as a conscious minority in America, they were openly grateful for the support of allies from abroad, irrespective of the tactical harm this

¹. Tappan to Thompson, 2.12.44, Tappan Papers, Library of Congress.


³. J. Sargent to J. B. Estlin, 6.12.50, Estlin Papers, Dr. Williams' Library.

⁴. Thompson to Abby Kelley Foster, 17.2.51, Foster Papers, American Antiquarian Society.
might do their cause at home. Not only this, but they hoped against all hope that the moral power of their British friends would convert others to the movement, and therefore paraded their potentially treasonable connections in front of the public at every opportunity. In terms of financial support, the contribution of the British movement was negligible, since so many of its resources went into distribution of propaganda in Europe. This was even more the case with the Scottish societies, which were controversially orientated and in any case lacked the fund-raising potential of a national organisation like the B.F.A.S.S. Certainly the small contributions across the Atlantic by the Garrisonian Bazaars were insignificant enough for Mrs. Chapman to cast them aside without turning a hair after 1839.¹ The real importance of British support was moral, all the more so in the case of the minority of Garrisonians who had such a paucity of friends at home as to be doubly glad of those they could find in Britain. The work of the Webbs, the Wighams, the Smalls, the Patons, and the Estlins was of great emotional importance to the Old Organisation, not only because of this, but because it provided a reassurance that Garrisonian abolition was moving with the tide of history. It was because of this that they thought nativist opposition irrelevant. Pillsbury could write that "your moral influence against the awful iniquity is a voice of seven thunders in the ear of the oppressed."

¹ M. W. Chapman to E. P. Nichol, 25.1.60, Garrison Papers.
The slaveholders were at bay against the world—"Let the world's stern rebuke pursuing them"—and the work of the British Garrisonians was "coals on their troubled consciences." Unfortunately the "voice of seven thunders" from Britain never reached the slave, but it did reach those of his friends the abolitionists, and further convinced them that they should persevere in their chosen way. It also reached the ears of the oppressors, and gave them irrefutable proof that their opponents were not only in league with the Devil, but also with the English. The result of British support for American abolition was thus an increase of confidence in both of the sides which were at odds. Compromise came to be impossible. The anti-slavery movement in this country can therefore be seen as one of the innumerable factors which brought about the alignment of forces leading to secession and war.

If the effect of British abolitionist labours as a whole was negative if not destructive, it may be asked what value there can be in studying their societies, especially those of the Garrisonians. On the latter count, the question is all the more searching because, it must be stressed, the Garrisonians in the provinces, who are the subject of this dissertation, were always a minority of the movement struggling against the relative conservatism of most reformers in this country. They were fully aware of this themselves. Nevertheless, it is of great interest that this

1. Pillsbury to F. N. Tribe, 1.5.54, in Anti-Slavery Advocate, June, 1854.
minority did exist. The real importance of the study of the
British anti-slavery movement for the history of the Atlantic
community is not in fact its achievements or lack of them, but
its survival and very disunity. This disunity is best exemplified
by the tension between the minority of Garrisonian abolitionists in
Dublin, Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Bristol, and the more powerful
national organisation based on the British and Foreign Society
in London.

The study of these reformers produces one or two peripheral
conclusions which are pertinent to British history alone,
In brief, it illustrates the tendency for pressure groups in
Britain to argue out their differences in American terms.
British radicals had done this since the Revolution, in holding
the Constitution up to admiration, while their Tory opponents
pointed with horror to the unpleasant aspects of American society
as standard effects of an excess of democracy.1 The present
thesis illustrates this tendency on two levels, first on the
level of tension between provinces and metropolis, and secondly
on that of rivalries and loyalties within some of the cities
and regions where the movement flourished. The history of the
Garrisonians shows that they were concentrated in the West
Country, the North Midlands, Ireland, and Scotland. All were
areas with strong local consciousness, the least likely in Britain

1. G. D. Lillibridge, Beacon of Freedom. The Impact of
   American Democracy upon Great Britain, passim.
to accept direction from London unquestioningly. The Old Organisation was strongest of all in Scotland, where there was not only local loyalty but a tradition of historical independence, apart from certain local similarities to conditions in New England. It can be concluded that all these areas, especially Scotland, were prone to accept views which disagreed with those of the central abolitionist authorities, when the schism in the movement was presented to them. While the B.F.A.S.S. remained Tappanite, they went Garrisonian.

It may also be argued, following Miss Taylor's findings, that many of the Garrisonians in the provinces were either doctrinally unclubbable, or came from religious denominations which were peculiarly unacceptable to the highly orthodox Friends dominant at Broad Street. The result was a wish to form anti-slavery organisations of their own, and because of the facts of the division the side they took was the Garrisonian one. It was thus because of pre-existing regional tensions and religious loyalties that the national British anti-slavery movement divided as it did. Beyond this, local communities of abolitionists chose their Old and New Organisation affiliations in 1841 and thereafter because of old rivalries within their townships which had nothing to do with the anti-slavery cause. Turning this process the other way around, they would then use their disagreements as abolitionists as ammunition in controversies
over further unrelated subjects. What makes the Scottish movement so fascinating is the way in which its relatively full documentation makes this process visible. In Glasgow, the Emancipation Society divided in 1841 because one section of abolitionists had political views which allowed them to cooperate with the Chartists, and another had not. In Edinburgh and the nation at large, the 1846 crisis saw the unfortunate Free Church being harried by Voluntaries and the Establishment for reasons which were only ostensibly abolition ones. It counteracted by using New Organisation arguments against the heresies of the Garrisonians who were allied with its old Scottish enemies. By the fifties, Scottish Free Churchmen were trying to regain status by supporting Pennington and later Cheever, and using them as sticks to beat the Voluntaries of the Garrisonian societies in Glasgow and Edinburgh. The importance of this study of the Garrisonians for British history is that it sheds so much light on the way in which an American issue was used in this country to project national and local rivalries. The tension between Scotland and London, and the tension between different groups of churchmen in Scotland, could equally well be fought out in terms of loyalty to Old or New Organisation.

As regards Atlantic history, the conclusion of this study has been too often repeated to require much elaboration. It is an interesting proof of British concern for America that
an abolitionist movement flourished in this country after 1833 and even after 1838. It is even more interesting that it reduced itself to impotence through violent internal quarrels. These quarrels exactly mirrored the development of abolitionist disagreements in America itself, until they were partly resolved by the Civil War, and the mutual burying of old grievances in the substantial British Freedmen's Aid movement. Each division and sub-division of the American societies, at any given point, acquired an exact counterpart in this country after a short time-lag. The only activity which did not spread to this country was the political one, and even then Britain produced a vast band of 'Stoweites' who followed events in Washington with new interest, and hoped daily for the election of a president who would be the Negro's friend. The British and American middle classes of our own time are no closer in outlook than they were in the 1850's. It is tempting to suggest similar reasons for the choice of anti-slavery loyalties, perhaps by drawing an analogy between Bostonian distrust of New York, and Glaswegian tension with London. In either case, nothing can illustrate the presence of a genuine Anglo-American community in this period better than the fact that both sides of the Atlantic thought of slavery in the same way. When they differed among themselves, for more or less virtuous reasons, even their disagreements were identical.
This thesis on support for Garrison in Britain, especially in Scotland, then, does not argue that this support achieved any of the aims with which it set out. On the contrary, it hampered these aims by working to destroy any basis for compromise and thus producing violent emancipation through the Civil War. Few succumbed to moral persuasion, and indeed many of the evils against which the Garrisonian abolitionists worked remain with us today. What this study does suggest, however, is a remarkable closeness in outlook among the middle classes on both sides of the Atlantic, made no less real by the fact that variant viewpoints were used here for non-abolitionist reasons, just as they were in America. It was partly because of this closeness that the United States continued its rush towards secession. Perhaps Garrison himself realised that the process of persuasion on which he and his helpers in both countries had relied had gone awry, and that emancipation could only be brought by surrender to violence. Exactly twenty-five years after the day he had been mobbed in Boston by "gentlemen of property and standing" thirsty for George Thompson's blood, and sheltered by the authoritarian hand of Mayor Lyman, he wrote to McKim that

"The conflict between free institutions and slave institutions is seen and acknowledged to be irrepressible - not of men's doing but of God's ordering - and it is deepening in intensity daily.... all this is a sign that the end is rapidly approaching. Peaceably or by a bloody process, the oppressed will eventually obtain their freedom, and nothing can prevent it. Trusting that it may be achieved without the shedding of blood, I remain,

Yours, for liberty and equality for all mankind.

Wm. Lloyd Garrison."  

i.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN APPENDICES.

P. President
V.P. Vice-President
S. Secretary
T. Treasurer
C.M. Committee Member
M. Manager
D. Director
G. Governor
Ts. Trustee
Dp. Depository
**APPENDIX A.**

Philanthropic Activities of E.E.S. Committee Members, 1835.

The Committee listed is printed as that of the "Edinburgh Society for the Abolition of Negro Slavery [throughout the World]" in Oliver & Boyd's *Edinburgh Almanac or Universal Scots and Imperial Register for 1835*, p. 453. Information comes from the sections on "Charitable Institutions," "Religious and Missionary Societies," and "Miscellaneous" in the same issue of the Almanac.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name and Position in E.E.S.</th>
<th>Philanthropic Interests</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lord Moncrieff</td>
<td>P.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. Dr. Robert Gordon</td>
<td>V.P.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>M., Orphan Hospital; D., Scottish Bible Soc.; V.P., Edinburgh Assoc. in Aid of Moravian Missions; C.M., Gen. Assembly Comm. for Propagating Gospel in Foreign Parts; Edinburgh Soc. for promoting Religious Interests of Scottish Settlers in British North America; C.M., Soc., for the Sons of the Clergy; C.M., Edinburgh Soc. for the Diffusion of Information on Capital Punishments.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. Edward Craig, A.M.</td>
<td>V.P.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lord Cockburn</td>
<td>V.P.</td>
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<td>Name and Position in E.E.S.</td>
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<tr>
<td>A. Cruickshank</td>
<td>T.</td>
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<tr>
<td>R. K. Greville, LL.D.</td>
<td>S.</td>
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<tr>
<td>A. Macaulay, M.D.</td>
<td>S.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>G., George Watson’s Hospital; G., Merchant Maiden Hospital; D., Parochial Institutions for Religious Education of Children; of the Poor; C.M., Edinburgh Bible Soc.; D., Scottish Missionary Soc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>J. Ogilvy</td>
<td>S.</td>
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<td>N. Tod, W.S.</td>
<td>S.</td>
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<td>Rev. Christopher Anderson</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peter Crooks, W.S.</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
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<tr>
<td>H. D. Dickie</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
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<td>Dr. John Easton</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
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### Name and Position in E.E.S.

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<tr>
<td>Hon. H. D. Erskine</td>
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<td>J. A. Haldane</td>
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<td>Robt. Haldane, W.G.</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
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<tr>
<td>R. Ruie, M.D.</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
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<tr>
<td>A. Hutchison, S.S.C.</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. Prof. G. Paxton</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
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<td>D. Purdie</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
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<td>J. S. More, Adv.</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
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<tr>
<td>J. McAndrew, S.S.C.</td>
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<td>G. McCallum, M.D.</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
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<tr>
<td>R. Bald</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
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### Philanthropic Interests

- **R. Ruie, M.D.**: M., Charity Workhouse; Physician, Magdalen Asylum; C.M., Edinburgh Assoc. in Aid of Moravian Missions; C.M., Edinburgh Education Soc.; D., Edinburgh Soc. for Promoting Religious Interests of Scottish Settlers in British North America.
- **A. Hutchison, S.S.C.**: M., Charity Workhouse; D., Parochial Institutions for Religious Education of Children of the Poor.
- **Rev. Prof. G. Paxton**: S., Friendly Soc. of Dissenting Ministers.
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<tr>
<td>Rev. Dr. J. Ritchie</td>
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<td>T. R. Robertson</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capt. H. Rose, Gov. of Prison</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andrew Scott</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patrick Tennent, W.S.</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
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<tr>
<td>J. Wigham, Jr.</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
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APPENDIX D.

Philanthropic Activities of G.E.S. Committee Members, 1835.

The Committee list used below is entry for 23.2.35,

G.E.S. Minute Books, I. Unless footnoted otherwise, all
information is taken from D. Robertson, The Western Supplement

to [Oliver & Boyd's] Edinburgh and County Almanac of Scotland

for 1835. Unfortunately this does not list all benevolent
institutions in Glasgow, which may explain why the interlocking
of committee memberships does not appear to be as marked as

in the Edinburgh case. With reference to the strength of

Voluntaries in the G.E.S., mentioned in Chapter II, note the

number of members involved in the multi-denominational Glasgow

Voluntary Church Society.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name and Position in G.E.S.</th>
<th>Philanthropic Interests</th>
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<td>Robert Graham, Esq.</td>
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<td>Rev. Dr. Wardlaw</td>
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<td>Ts. Andersonian University;</td>
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<td>P., Glasgow Religious Tract</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Soc.; P., Glasgow Voluntary</td>
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<td>Church Soc.</td>
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<td>Anthony Wigham</td>
<td>V.P.</td>
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<td>C.M., Aberdeen Aux. Bible</td>
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<td>Rev. Dr. Kcugh</td>
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<td></td>
<td>S., Glasgow Voluntary Church</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Soc.</td>
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<td>James Johnston</td>
<td>T.</td>
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<td>C.M., Glasgow Voluntary Church</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Soc.</td>
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<td>John Murray</td>
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<td>C.M., Glasgow Voluntary Church</td>
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<td>Soc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>William Snell</td>
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<td>James Snell</td>
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1. Aberdeen Almanack, 1840.
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<tr>
<td>Rev. W. Auld</td>
<td>C.M. C.M., Glasgow Voluntary Church Soc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. C. J. Brown</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. E. Campbell</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
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<td>Rev. J. Duncan</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
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<td>Rev. J. Edwards</td>
<td>C.M. C.M., Glasgow Voluntary Church Soc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. G. Ewing</td>
<td>C.M. C.M., Glasgow Voluntary Church Soc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. G. Harvey</td>
<td>C.M. C.M., Glasgow Voluntary Church Soc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. D. King</td>
<td>C.M. C.M., Glasgow Voluntary Church Soc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. W. Lindsay</td>
<td>C.M. C.M., Glasgow Voluntary Church Soc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. P. McOwan</td>
<td>C.M. C.M., Glasgow Voluntary Church Soc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. J. MacTear</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. H. Willis</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Anderson</td>
<td>C.M. C.M., Glasgow Voluntary Church Soc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Deith</td>
<td>C.M. C.M., Glasgow Voluntary Church Soc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Brown, Jr.</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Brown</td>
<td>C.M. C.M., Glasgow Public Library; C.M., Glasgow Assoc. for Promoting Interest of Church of Scotland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name and Position in G.E.S.</td>
<td>Philanthropic Interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Connell C.H.</td>
<td>S., Glasgow Public Library.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Craig C.H.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. C. Dick C.M.</td>
<td>C.M., Glasgow Voluntary Church Soc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Ferguson C.M.</td>
<td>G., Wilson's School.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Fleming C.M.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Gallie C.M.</td>
<td>Dp., Glasgow Religious Tract Soc.; Temperance Worker.¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Kettle C.M.</td>
<td>T., Glasgow Religious Tract Soc.; Temperance Worker.²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Langlands C.M.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Lethem C.M.</td>
<td>T., Scottish Temperance Soc.; C.M., Glasgow Voluntary Church Soc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Maxwell, M.D. C.M.</td>
<td>Professional Attendant, Glasgow Lying-In Hospital.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. Muir C.M.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. McDougall C.H.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. McGeorge C.M.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. MacIntyre C.M.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. McKeand C.M.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. McIarce C.M.</td>
<td>S., Glasgow Religious Tract Soc.; C.M., Glasgow Voluntary Church Soc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. McLeod C.M.</td>
<td>C.M., Glasgow Voluntary Church Soc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. McLeod (Argyll) C.H.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Reid C.H.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name and Position in G.E.S.</th>
<th>Philanthropic Interests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R. Sanderson</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. Slater</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Smith</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. C. Smith</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Stewart</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Thomson</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Thorburn</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Watson</td>
<td>C.M., Glasgow Voluntary Church Soc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Watson</td>
<td>C.M.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Young</td>
<td>C.M., Glasgow Voluntary Church Soc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C.

Changes in G.E.S. Committee Membership, 1841.

Since resignations were not noted in G.E.S. Minute Books except for the leaders of the Society, it is not possible to give dates at which individual members resigned. Data has been gathered by comparing the lists of committee in G.E.S. Reports, 1840 and G.E.S. Reports, 1841. In the table on additions to the Committee the seventeen members who joined it at the 'Bazaar Meeting' are identified with an asterisk. Other new members appear in the list in G.E.S. Report, 1841, having been added at the Anniversary Meeting on 2.8.41.

Information on occupations has been gathered from Glasgow Post Office Directories and J. R. Anderson, (ed.), The Burgesses and Guild Brethren of Glasgow (Edinburgh, Scottish Record Society, 1935). Ministers are identified by denomination. The cases where duplication of names leaves occupation in doubt are indicated by a question mark.

I. Members who resigned from Committee.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name and Position in G.E.S.</th>
<th>Occupation or Denomination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Dr. Wardlaw</td>
<td>V.P.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Dr. Hough</td>
<td>V.P.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthony Wigham</td>
<td>V.P.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. P. Paton</td>
<td>V.P.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Wm. Brash</td>
<td>C.H.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. John Duncan</td>
<td>C.H.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name and Position in G.E.S.</td>
<td>Occupation or Denomination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. G. Ewing</td>
<td>C.M. Congregationalist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Alex. Harvey</td>
<td>C.M. Relief Secession Church.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. D. King</td>
<td>C.M. United Secession Church.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. W. Lindsay</td>
<td>C.M. Relief Secession Church.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Anderson</td>
<td>C.M. Merchant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. C. Blyth</td>
<td>C.M. Boot and Shoe maker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hugh Brown</td>
<td>C.M. Manufacturer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. C. Dick</td>
<td>C.M. Manufacturer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Fullarton</td>
<td>C.M. Publishers and Bookseller.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Gallie</td>
<td>C.M. Bookseller.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Kettle</td>
<td>C.M. Cotton Yarn Merchant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Lethen</td>
<td>C.M. Manufacturer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. McGilp:</td>
<td>C.M. ?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. McLaren</td>
<td>C.M. Accountant or Commission Merchant.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

II. Members who did not resign from Committee.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name and Position in G.E.S. (1841)</th>
<th>Occupation or Denomination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Dr. Kidston</td>
<td>V.P. United Secession Church.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Graham, Esq.</td>
<td>V.P. Tobacco Merchant and Landowner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Murray</td>
<td>S. Landowner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name and Position in G.E.S. (1841)</td>
<td>Occupation or Denomination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. W. Anderson</td>
<td>V.P. Relief Secession Church.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. W. Auld</td>
<td>C.H. Relief Secession Church.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. J. Edwards</td>
<td>C.H. Relief Secession Church.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. J. Graham</td>
<td>C.M. Original Secession Church.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Jas. MacTear</td>
<td>C.H.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. N. Willis</td>
<td>C.H. Original Burgher Secession Church.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Brodie</td>
<td>C.H. Company name only in Directory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Buchanan</td>
<td>C.H. Newspaper Editor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Connell</td>
<td>C.H. Teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Ferguson</td>
<td>C.H. Accountant or Wine Merchant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Fleming</td>
<td>C.H.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Gunn</td>
<td>C.H. Bagpipe Maker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Langlands</td>
<td>C.H. Partner in Reid, Robertson, &amp; Co.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. McKeand</td>
<td>C.H. Warehouseman.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. McLeod</td>
<td>C.H. Bookseller.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. McDougal</td>
<td>C.H. Manufacturer (?).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Mathie</td>
<td>C.H. Agent and House Factor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Maxwell</td>
<td>C.H. Medical Doctor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Reid</td>
<td>C.H. Bookseller (?).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Sanderson</td>
<td>C.H. Ship and Insurance Broker.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Stewart</td>
<td>C.H.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Thomson</td>
<td>C.H. Sewed Muslin Manufacturer.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Name and Position in G.E.S. (1841)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Occupation or Denomination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G. Watson</td>
<td>C.H. Librarian and Bookseller.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Watson</td>
<td>C.H. ?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. Watson</td>
<td>C.H. ?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. White</td>
<td>C.H. Tobacco Pipe Maker or Glass Merchant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Young</td>
<td>C.H. ?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that the names of four of the above five unidentified lay committee members appear in the Post Office Directory, with prosperous occupations, but repeated too often with the correct initial for reliable information to be given. Fleming is definitely not listed at all.

### III. Members added to the Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name and Position in G.E.S.</th>
<th>Occupation or Denomination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>J. Doumastoun, Esq., M.P.</td>
<td>V.P. Lawyer and Politician.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Oswald, Esq., M.P.</td>
<td>V.P. Landowner and Politician. Sec. of Glasgow East India Assoc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Anderson*</td>
<td>C.H. Listed in Directory without profession.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Barr*</td>
<td>C.H. Weaver.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. Brown*</td>
<td>C.H. ?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Bruce*</td>
<td>C.H. Farmer (?).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Bruce*</td>
<td>C.H. ?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Dunn*</td>
<td>C.H. Baker or Sewed Muslin Manufacturer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Leng*</td>
<td>C.H. Merchant (?).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Lochhead*</td>
<td>C.H. Wright.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. McLeod*</td>
<td>C.H. Weaver.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name and Position in G.E.S.</td>
<td>Occupation or Denomination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. McNair*</td>
<td>C.M. Merchant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Hair*</td>
<td>C.M. Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Paton*</td>
<td>C.M. Maltman (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Russell*</td>
<td>C.M. Printer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Turner, Esq., of Thrushgrove</td>
<td>C.M. Landowner and Tobacco Merchant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Ure, Esq., of Croy*</td>
<td>C.M. Landowner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Wright*</td>
<td>C.M. Provision Merchant.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX D.

Extracts from Eliza and her Black Man (Broadsheet: Disley, 16 Arthur St., Oxford St.: London, n.d.) - copy in Firth Collection, Bodleian Library.

[Eliza falls in love with a black man] -

"He's as ugly as the devil's brother,
He never had any father or brother,
And was won at a raffle without any brother."

......................................................

"Oh he gets lots of tin they say,
Sometimes eleven shillings a day,
Four times as much as an Englishman's pay,
Is given away to the black man.
They can have both women and wine,
While a poor mechanic remains behind,
For he may beg till he is blind,
And not get as much as the black man;
She could not be reclaimed of course,
He feeds her on steak and oyster sauce,
To leave his meat she'll feel the loss,
Eliza loved her black man."

[Finally Eliza was convicted of some crime, and transported.]

"She said he was her duck, oh law,
And then she kissed his dirty paw,
My belly will never get filled any more,
Eliza loved her black man."
Now she must go to Australia's shore,
To do her diggings with blacks by the score,
Have plenty of gold if she wants any more,

Have lots of meat with the black man.
Such as black puddings long and nice,
Saveloys and curried rice,
Lots of things made of spice,

And fall in love with the black man.

So mothers now must all beware,
If they get a taste I do declare,
They are struck with the head o' hair,
And bolt away with the black man!"
NOTE ON SOURCES

Most of the conclusions of this thesis have been reached from research on manuscript and pamphlet material.

The most important collection of anti-slavery manuscripts in a British Library is the holding of Rhodes House, Oxford. This includes all the preserved correspondence of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. Although the history of the B.F.A.S.S. is not the subject of this thesis, all its letters have been read in my search for Garrisonian and other complaints against its leadership, as have the relevant volumes of B.F.A.S.S. Minute Books, also in Rhodes House. More important for the history of Scottish abolitionists is the smaller holding of the Mitchell Library, Glasgow. This contains the four volumes of G.B.S. Minute Books, which are doubly important since a proportion of Emancipation Society correspondence is copied into them. A third relevant British collection is in Dr. Williams’ Library, London, which possesses the Minute Book of the Bristol and Clifton Ladies’ Anti-Slavery Society, together with a section of Miss Ketin’s letters from British and American abolitionists.

Much larger deposits of useful manuscript material have been studied in American libraries. By far the greatest is the collection of papers in Boston Public Library. This includes a startlingly large number of letters from British abolitionists, but also letters from Americans to Richard Webb, Elizabeth Pease, and J. B. Ketlin, which appear to have been sent back across the Atlantic to help Wendell P. Garrison
in writing the four-volume biography of his father. I have read through the complete files of the Garrison Papers, May Papers, Weston Papers, Phelps Papers, and Estlin Papers picking out material relevant to the thesis.

Other American Libraries have groups of letters to and from British abolitionists, especially Richard Webb. The most important material has been found in the Gay Papers, Columbia University Library; the S. J. May Collection, Cornell University Library; and the Abby Kelley Foster Papers, American Antiquarian Society. Relevant items have also been found in the Tappan Papers and Elizur Wright Papers, Library of Congress; the Channing Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society; the McKim Papers and Child Papers, New York Public Library; and the general Manuscript Collections of the New York Historical Society and the Houghton Library of Harvard University.

Unexpectedly interesting information emerged from work on broadsheets, printed circulars, and newspaper cuttings. Many of these are filed with the manuscript collections mentioned above, especially those in the Boston Public Library. Most of the ballads referred to, however, are preserved in the Bodleian Library, some in the Firth Collection. Substantial numbers of relevant newspaper cuttings and reprints are preserved in the Smeal Donation, Mitchell Library, Glasgow, and with the Estlin Papers in Dr. Williams' Library. The most important
collection of cuttings, broadsheets, and memoranda has provided
one of the most fruitful areas of research for this thesis.
This is the nineteen volume series of Scrapbooks Collected by
George Thompson and F. W. Chasser, in the Library of Congress.
The first six volumes were collected by Thompson, and shed a
great deal of light on his otherwise badly documented career.

The most important printed material for research on the
British Garrisonian abolitionists has been found in collections
of pamphlets and reports of the abolitionist societies.
Unfortunately reports are only available unevenly. A
completed set for the G.N.S. is available in the Small Donation.
For other societies, including the Edinburgh ones, fewer have
survived, although isolated copies have been discovered in
groups of general pamphlet material. The collections of such
material most widely used have been those in the Widener Library
of Harvard University; the Library of New College, Edinburgh;
the British Museum; the Small Donation, Mitchell Library;
the Thomson, King, and Herald Collections, Aberdeen University
Library; and the collection of John Rylands Library, Manchester,
studied in this case on a microfilm in the possession of
Professor Shepperson.

The number of pamphlet items consulted is too great, and
their titles too lengthy, to list in full. However, a few
have been absolutely central sources in the areas to which they
relate. For instance J. A. Collins, Right and Wrong among the
Abolitionists of the United States; or the Objects, Principles,
and Measures of the Original American Anti-Slavery Society Unchanged (Glasgow, 1841), originally made it possible to reconstruct the British divisions of 1841. Similarly, the history of the Garrisonians in Bristol would have been incomprehensible without using Miss Estlin's Special Report of the Bristol and Clifton Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society; during Eighteen Months, from January, 1851, to June, 1852; with a Statement of the Reasons of its Separation from the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery (London, 1852). An important source for Mrs. Stowe's visit, in the same way, was Donald McLeod's Memories in the Highlands of Scotland: Versus Mrs. Stowe's Sunny Memories in (England) X a Foreign Land; or A Faithful Picture of the Extirpation of the Celtic Race from the Highlands of Scotland (Toronto, 1857).

Again, occasional items of book length, but with the polemical connotations of the pamphlet, have been of great help. Such a work is W. Edgerton, A History of the Separation in the Indiana Yearly Meeting of Friends, which Took Place in the Winter of 1842 and 1843, on the Anti-Slavery Question (Cincinnati, 1856). This contains a great amount of general material on the connection between Quakers in Britain and North America.

Most of the periodicals read in the course of this study have been ones issued by the abolitionists themselves, though many press references to their work have been tracked down.
elsewhere. The journal produced most consistently during the period under review was the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Reporter. Its files from 1840 to 1860 are an essential source for the history of the B.F.A.S.S., but also have indispensable references to its Garrisonian opponents. Unfortunately the British Garrisonians did not produce a paper of their own in the forties, although there is a great deal of information about their activities in William Smeal's British Friend, published from 1843 onwards. It is far less useful in the fifties, when the periodical source used most extensively in this study has been the Anti-Slavery Advocate, a paper which set out specifically to cater for the Garrisonian abolitionists in the provinces. The Slave is another monthly which was of some use, although its natural concentration on the free produce movement at times produces distorted reporting of anti-slavery events. As for American periodical sources, the one used most extensively here has been the Liberator itself, although it had not been examined for the whole period, but only at times of special controversy, or in search of particular references. Garrison's habit of copying sections from British and American papers has revealed material which would otherwise have been missed. Among papers other than abolitionist ones, the relevant years of the Edinburgh Witness provided one of the first areas of research on the Free Church affair. The London Patriot has been used
here more widely; it was probably the newspaper closest to
the movement throughout the country, and proved extremely
useful in setting the relationship between provincial and
metropolitan abolitionists in perspective. Beyond this, a
large number of British periodicals have provided minor
references. However, as sources these are secondary to
strictly abolitionist periodicals, and no attempt has been
made to provide a thorough study of British press opinion on
American slavery.

Study in the general area of cooperation between British
and American abolitionists is facilitated by the relatively
large amount of primary material which has been reprinted.
For example, the most helpful source for the events at
the World's Anti-Slavery Convention, apart from its Proceedings,
is F. B. Tolles, (ed.), 'Slavery and the "Woman Question."
Lucretia Mott's Diary of her Visit to Great Britain to Attend
the World's Anti-Slavery Convention of 1840,' Journal of the

Four important selections of reprinted correspondence are
also available. The first is a selection of letters from
the Tappan Papers in the Library of Congress, which demonstrates
the cooperation between the 'New Organization' and the B.F.A.S.S.,
although it has little to add to the study of the provincial
abolitionists. It is published as A. H. Abel & F. J. Klingberg,
A pseudo-primary form of source which has been rewarding in the research for this dissertation is the contemporary or near-contemporary biography. Of such works, by far the most important is W. P. Garrison et al., *William Lloyd Garrison, 1805-1879. The Story of his Life Told by his Children* (4 Vols., London, 1835-1839). This contains long excerpts from manuscript...
material now in the B.P.L. Although these are somewhat cavalierly presented, and the authors tend to ignore their father's failings, this book has recently been very much underestimated. At least it does not understress the importance of Garrison's work in Britain, and it is certainly the place to begin work on any study of the Atlantic anti-slavery connection. Unfortunately the children of British abolitionists were not so generous in providing material on their parents' careers. However, there is much worthwhile material, obviously with a Tappanite bias, in H. Richard Memoirs of Joseph Sturgo (London, 1834). One biography of an Irish abolitionist, which describes the life of Webb's circle of Dublin reformers eminently well, is H. M. Wigham, A Christian Philanthropist of Dublin. A Memoir of Richard Allen (London, 1886). A number of important references have also been found in the biographies of leading Scottish churchmen, for instance W. Wilson, Memorials of Robert Smith Candlish (Edinburgh, 1830). The best biography to give general background on the Scottish reform community is J. B. Mackie, Life of Duncan Maclaren (2 vols., Edinburgh, 1888), although it is strangely useless for material on the abolitionist work of Maclaren and his wife themselves. On the other hand, an indispensable family history in studying Elizabeth Pease Nichol and her circle is J. H. Bell, British Folks and British India Fifty Years Ago. Joseph Pease and his Contemporaries (London, 1891).
As for secondary sources used, some of the most useful are unfortunately unpublished. A large number of other unpublished theses have been consulted in preparing my own dissertation. The most important of these is H. R. Temperley, 'The British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, 1839-1868,' Ph.D., Yale, 1960. This is currently being prepared for publication, and will form the standard history of the B.F.A.S.S. An excellent study of the later phase of the movement is E. I. Pilgrim, 'Anti-Slavery Sentiment in Great Britain, its Nature and Decline, 1841-1854,' Ph.D., Cambridge, 1952. As for the general connection between British and American reformers, the most interesting of the relevant Edinburgh Ph.D. theses on file is Miss G. C. Taylor, 'Some American Reformers and their Influence on Reform Movements in Great Britain, 1830-1860.' This forms a good introduction to the subject, and carefully explores the importance of regional characteristics in moulding the various reform movements with which American visitors were in contact. Other relevant unpublished material is referred to in footnotes.

Due to a series of misunderstandings, it was not possible to consult what is probably the best unpublished thesis in the whole field until after the present work was at the stage of proofing. This is 'Some Contacts between British and American Reform Movements, 1830-1860. With Special Reference to the Anti-Slavery Movement,' M.A.
Bristol, 1966, by Louis Billington. In spite of somewhat imprecise documentation, this is an incisive work which generally covers most areas of British abolitionist activity, although it only examines the Scottish and Irish societies peripherally. Mr. Billington's conclusions do not affect my own, but he has several sections which add to information in this thesis. His work has an excellent appendix on the British Free Produce movement. It also contains an exhaustive survey of British church responses to slavery in the thirties, and a fine biographical sketch of Henry C. Wright. Mr. Billington makes the interesting point that after 1840 British Garrisonian enthusiasm may have been rooted in misunderstanding of William Lloyd Garrison's weakness in America itself. General criticisms are that he underestimates the extent to which the American issue was used in standing domestic rivalries, and also misses the importance of regional distrust of the B.F.A.S.S. However, his study is to be more strongly recommended than any full-length secondary work in the field.

Printed secondary material on the subject of this dissertation is not plentiful. On the general British-American connection in the nineteenth century, the logical place to begin is with F. Thistlethwaite, America and the Atlantic Community. Anglo-American Aspects, 1790-1850 (1959, Harper edition, London, 1963). This is unlikely to be
replaced as a general study, and has been of immense help.

On the connection between Scotland and America, there is a number of fine articles by Professor G. A. Shepperson. The most general one is a brilliant essay on the sources available - 'Writings in Scottish-American History: a Brief Survey,' *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Series, xi, 1954. His more specific articles in the field are 'Frederick Douglass and Scotland,' *J.N.H.*, XXXVIII; 'The Free Church and American Slavery,' *S.H.R.*, XLI, 1931; 'Thomas Chalmers, the Free Church of Scotland, and the South,' *J.B.H.*, XVIII, 1931; and 'Harriet Beecher Stowe and Scotland,' *S.H.R.*, XLIII, 1933. Another excellent paper, surveying the work of Negro abolitionists in Scotland and England, has been published by B. Quarles, in *J.N.H.*, XXXIX, 1954, as 'Ministers without Portfolio.'

A final helpful article is H. R. Temperley, 'The British and American Abolitionists Compared,' in M. R. Duberman, (ed.), *The Anti-Slavery Vanguard* (Princeton, 1964) - a collection of essays which may be used in more general studies of abolitionism.

Apart from the above works, not much of the material published on the Anglo-American connection itself has proved helpful, beyond providing specific references. However, many of the works on British or American history have been useful, more so in the American case than the Scottish or British one. Few of the standard histories of the British anti-slavery movement take much note of the American question, since their
focus is not unnaturally on problems of race within the Empire. Nevertheless, two works in this field gave great help in studying changing British conceptions of the Negro, and in finding material on abolitionist activities other than American ones. These are G. R. Nellor, British Imperial Trusteeship, 1783-1830 (London, 1951), and P. D. Curtin, The Image of Africa (Madison, 1964). For strictly Scottish history, little is available, though a useful work has recently appeared in W. Ferguson, Scotland, 1639 to the Present (Edinburgh, 1968). Some insights into the Scottish distrust of centralization are provided by H. Hanham, 'Mid-Century Scottish Nationalism,' in R. Robson, (ed.), Ideas and Institutions of Victorian Britain (London, 1968). Many ideas on the basis of Scottish philanthropy have also been provided by the incomparable work of S. J. Saunders, Scottish Democracy, 1815-1840 (Edinburgh, 1950). Standard histories of British philanthropy, which partly tend to stress the unity of reform movements rather than their disunity, have yielded little.

However, this thesis has gained greatly from the insights of American historians. Histories of American philanthropy in the nineteenth century, though cited seldom because of their general scope, have often made the general approach to study in this country easier. The four most important works of this sort are C. S. Griffin, Their Brothers' Keepers (New Brunswick, 1960); T. L. Smith, Revivalism and Social Reform. American Protestantism on the Eve of the Civil War (New York, 1957); C.C. Cole,
The Social Ideas of the Northern Evangelists, 1826-1860 (New York, 1954); and J. R. Bodo, The Protestant Clergy and Public Issues, 1812-1848 (Princeton, 1954). A history of reform which is less original, but has been used frequently here for general reference is A. P. Tyler, Freedom's Fervent (Minneapolis, 1944).

Specialised histories of the American anti-slavery societies have also provided a certain amount of information. All the standard histories of this sort have been used at one point or another, but the most useful, because of its stress on the disruption of the movement, has been G. H. Barnes, The Anti-Slavery Impulse, 1830-1844 (New York, 1933).

L. Litwack, North of Slavery (Chicago, 1965), has given great help on Negro abolitionists. Another excellent recent study is a survey of Negro settlement experiments, W. H. & J. H. Pease, Black Utopias, Negro Communal Experiments in America (Madison, 1963). This helped greatly in the parts of this dissertation on the fifties.

Perhaps the great advantage of beginning the study of this field through secondary works on its American aspects is that so many fine biographies are available. It would be very pleasant if there were, say, a work on George Thompson of the calibre of Martin Duberman's James Russell Lowell (Boston, 1966). As it is, several American biographies have useful references to British abolitionists. Not to mention the four volume work of W. P. Garrison, two centrally important
books on Garrison are W. Merrill, *Against Wind and Tide*, William Lloyd Garrison (Cambridge, 1964), and J. L. Thomas, *The Liberator. William Lloyd Garrison* (Boston, 1964). Although my British interests have created a preference for Merrill, both are fine works. Similarly, the study of Douglass' influence in this country cannot be better begun than through the two standard modern biographies of him — P. Foner, *Frederick Douglass* (New York, 1964), and B. Quarles *Frederick Douglass* (New York, 1948). Another helpful secondary source was the small number of modern studies of the attitudes of individual American denominations to slavery. Particularly helpful were D. G. Mathews, *Slavery and Methodism. A Chapter in American Morality, 1780-1845* (Princeton, 1965), and T. E. Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America* (New Haven, 1950). The vexed problem of the relationship between the churches and slavery will be greatly clarified when more detailed studies of this sort have been produced.

Although the above Note on Sources only lists a small proportion of the books consulted for this dissertation, the general conclusion on secondary sources is that there are too few of them. However, perhaps it would be easier to write any thesis if someone else had written it first.