IRELAND AND THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST
AMERICAN SLAVERY, 1830-1860

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Summary

Black slavery received, as had all forms of chattel slavery, powerful political, economic and intellectual sanctions. This thesis examines the emergence and significance of groups in Ireland who were, however, convinced that slavery was not only financially unprofitable but morally insupportable and who became committed to the notion that slavery was a sin to be immediately and unconditionally abolished. Though primarily concerned with the campaign against American slavery, it begins with an analysis of the participation of Irish abolitionists in the campaign against West Indian slavery, their social origins, their ideas about slavery as these changed and developed, and their relations with anti-slavery groups elsewhere in Britain. After the abolition of Colonial Apprenticeship in 1838, British abolitionists began to concentrate their attentions on American slavery. At the World Anti-Slavery Convention in London in 1840 they first became aware of the divisions that had occurred in the American anti-slavery movement, and Chapter Two discusses the Irish reaction to these, and in particular the reasons for the identification of the Hibernian Anti-Slavery Society with the type of reform outlook associated with William Lloyd Garrison and the American Anti-Slavery Society. Henceforth the British abolitionist movement was split, and though Dublin became an important centre in the provincial network of support for Garrison, abolitionist groups in Cork and Belfast remained as auxiliaries to the anti-Garrisonian
British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society in London. The American abolitionists were anxious to secure aid from their British allies and the unique importance of Daniel O'Connell in the transatlantic world of anti-slavery stems not only from his advocacy of moral force and his achievements as an agitator, but from the abolitionists' belief that he alone had the stature to persuade the Irish-Americans to support the anti-slavery movement. Chapter Three examines why he involved himself in anti-slavery, to what effect and at what cost, particularly in terms of the impact of the slavery issue on the Repeal movement in Ireland and America, and the subsequent conviction shared by many Repealers that his abolitionism, in contrast to his own claims, was far from being in Ireland's best interests. The Irish Churches for their part feared that in practical terms an involvement in anti-slavery would endanger their relations with their sister Churches in America. Hence the Catholic Church in Ireland avoided any official statement at all on Black Slavery in the Southern States. As the controversies within the Repeal Association showed, moreover, slavery tended to provide a focus for domestic quarrels, and their respective positions with regard to American slavery became a matter of dispute among Protestant denominations. This situation, and the impact on it of a background of unstable organisational structures and the arrival in Ireland of abolitionists determined to elicit from the Churches a more active commitment to anti-slavery, is analysed in Chapter Four. A marked slump in Irish anti-slavery activity was but one consequence of the catastrophe
of the Irish famine. It also tested many of the ideas the Irish abolitionists held about themselves and their role as advocates of moral reform, and this is shown, in Chapter Five, in an examination of their response to Southern famine relief. There was a resurgence of support for abolitionism in the 1850's, but this was of a new kind, one from which the old areas of abolitionist support were not confident they could benefit. Chapter Six examines this new type of anti-slavery and the following two chapters discuss the consequences of this in terms of its impact on Irish anti-slavery organizations, and on the popular support given to the anti-slavery cause. This is done through an analysis of the response of three prominent Irish leaders to American slavery in the 1850's, and of the bitter divisions which characterized Irish anti-slavery in the 1850's, and which were in turn replaced, as Civil War approached, by more harmonious relations.

Ireland was of enormous interest to the American abolitionists. It provided them with some of their most important sources of British support, and, in the person of O'Connell, the single most important champion which the anti-slavery cause received outside the United States. Conditions in Ireland, the Catholic religion in Ireland, emigration from Ireland, all of these were topics explored at length in the abolitionists' correspondence. This dissertation explores the consequences of this, and as a study in the Nineteenth Century transatlantic reform world, attempts in a concluding chapter to provide some indication of both the impact of the American slavery question on Irish affairs, and the unique importance of the Irish dimension for the movement to abolish Black Slavery in the United States.
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<td>A.A.S.S.</td>
<td>American Anti-Slavery Society</td>
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<td>O'Connell Typescript</td>
<td>Typescript of collected papers of Daniel O'Connell, in possession of Professor Maurice O'Connell</td>
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Chapter One

Initial involvements: Ireland and the campaign against West Indian Slavery
Irish abolitionists, anxious to prove that their reform interests had deep roots in the Irish past, frequently claimed that there was a strong and lengthy Irish anti-slavery tradition. Daniel O'Connell, for example, declared that there had been no slavery in Ireland since the time of St. Patrick, and in his anti-slavery speeches often alluded to the Council of Armagh which in 1170 had prohibited Irish trading in English slaves. For one thousand years, he claimed, the Irish people had refused to countenance slavery, and it was the duty of every Irishman to maintain that heritage. ¹ His son, John O'Connell, also alluded proudly to this tradition when he said that the people of Dublin had petitioned against the slave-trade fifty years before any other city in Britain.² Indeed, O'Connell suggested that if the Act of Union had brought any benefits, these were that the uniformly anti-slavery sentiments of the Irish M.P.'s, irrespective of party, had enabled the more recalcitrant English to abolish the slave-trade in 1807, colonial slavery in 1833, and West Indian Apprenticeship in 1833.³

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1. Speech by O'Connell at Loyal National Repeal Association, 10/5/1843, in Freeman's Journal, 11/5/1843. The Repeal Association will be designated below as L.N.R.A.

2. Speech by John O'Connell at an anti-slavery meeting in Dublin, 11/2/1853, in Freeman's Journal, 11/2/1853.

3. Speech by O'Connell at L.N.R.A., 23/4/1844, in Nation, 27/4/1844. The Act of Union had brought 100 Irish M.P.'s to Westminster. In 1807, Wilberforce had given as one reason for the failure of his motions to abolish the slave-trade in that year, the fact that the Irish members had either been absent, or voted against him. R.I. and S. Wilberforces, The Life of William Wilberforce (5 vols., London, 1838), v.3, pp. 203, 212. In the early 1800's, the famous Irish violin-maker, John Delany, referring to the Act of Union and Wilberforce's campaign against the slave-trade, inscribed on one of his violins, "Liberty To All The White and Black." Letter from G. Stuart, in Irish Times, 30/10/1972.
Such declarations were usually made in an attempt to influence Irish-Americans on the slavery question, though O'Connell himself was convinced that a recital of the episodes in this heritage was bound also to reflect credit on Ireland's moral standing. Unlike Liverpool and other English cities which were tainted with the sin of slave-trading, O'Connell maintained that no slave-ship had entered or left an Irish port.¹ When Richard Robert Madden, in The United Irishmen, Their Life and Times (7 vols., London, 1843-1846) recalled how Thomas McCabe had reacted to a proposal that a group of Belfast merchants engage in the slave-trade by invoking the curse of God on the first man who signed the agreement, Irish abolitionists again made use of this incident as further encouragement for the Irish people to preserve their anti-slavery testimonies.²

1. National Anti-Slavery Standard (New York), 20/4/1843; letter from James Haughton, in Freeman's Journal, 29/12/1860. Such arguments moreover, gave O'Connell the opportunity of suggesting that the Irish were morally superior to the English once, in referring to the Council of Anagh's decision to prohibit Irish trading in English slaves, O'Connell expressed the wish that England would "return the compliment."

2. That such a meeting ever took place was denied by S.S. Millin, Has Haddell Cunningham, Belfast Merchant, "A Slave-Ship Projector?" (Belfast, 1926). In his introduction to Sidelights on Belfast History (Belfast, 1932), however, Millin stated that he now accepted that the meeting had taken place and that McCabe's intervention had put a stop to Haddell Cunningham's slave-trading venture. Cunningham (1729-1797) was a prominent Belfast merchant and banker. John J. Noonan, "A Social and Economic History of Belfast, 1803-1825" (Ph.D., Queen's University, Belfast, 1940), pp. 147, 75f.
From a different point of view, other abolitionists made use
of what they felt had been Ireland’s past involvement in the slave-
trade, in order to encourage the Irish to atone for this sinfulness.
Thus Thomas Drew, Episcopal Minister of Christ Church, Belfast,
recalled in 1840 that a great deal of the wealth of Belfast had been
derived from the slave-trade. Drew felt that the “cause of the slave
recommenced itself” to Irish sympathies for another reason. He
described in highly graphic detail a horrific tale of a slave-ship
that had been led to seek shelter in Belfast Lough, one hundred years
earlier. When the slaves had been brought on board for exercise, some
sought to escape, or to commit suicide, by jumping overboard. To
deter others from doing likewise the captain of the vessel had ordered
a young slave-girl to be lowered from the yard-arm into the sea, and
her body was devoured by the sharks that “invariably” followed slave-
ships. For Drew, the moral was obvious: “It was the purpose of Infinite
Wisdom, that the stain of that blood should remain upon their shores”
till the people of Belfast “roused themselves to wipe it away.”

In similar fashion, missionary societies in early nineteenth century
Ireland tended to argue that the Irish, however indirectly, had been
“ sharers of the spoil-partakers of the crime” of the slave trade.
The only way to expiate this enormity, and compensate the Negro,
was for Irishmen to support missionary activities in Africa which would
teach “not the chains of slavery, but the Liberty of the Gospel”.  

1. Report of meeting of the Belfast Auxiliary to the British and
Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, 29/12/1840, in Northern Whig
(Belfast), 31/10/1840.

2. Report of the Proceedings at a Dublin Meeting of the Hibernian
Church Missionary Society, Auxiliary to the Church Missionary
Society, for Africa and the East, held on 18th April, 1813.
(Dublin, 1813), pp. 9, 23. See also, Rev. James Ramsay, Essay
The extent of Irish involvement in the slave-trade is difficult to assess. With the increased demand for provisions in the colonies at the end of the seventeenth century, the ports of Cork, Waterford and Galway became important centres for the export of Irish salt beef and butter to the West Indies. As these trading links flourished, families such as the Blakes of Galway, settled in Barbados and Montserrat as merchants and planters. Prominent Irish families, such as the O'Conor of Galway, owned slave estates in the West Indies, while Irish merchants were actively involved in the triangular trade, with its horrible implications for captive Africans. The Minutes of the Royal African Company in 1720, for example, indicate that the Otter, captained by Thomas Foster, sailed to Cork "to take in provisions: from thence to Madeira for nine, so to Gambia, thence with Negroes for Virginia."3

In the North of Ireland, also, it was not uncommon at the end of the eighteenth century, for younger sons of prominent linen


3. Elizabeth Dunn, Documenta Illustrative of the Slave Trade to America (4 vols. New York 1865), v. 2 p. 256.
manufacturers to go to the West Indies, and there become agents for their families. Samuel Cunningham of Belfast, for example, went to Martinique and later, Antigua, in the late eighteenth century, and he established there a merchant firm which, though having to cope with the vicissitudes resulting from the wars in Europe, thrived on the increased demand for clothing for soldiers and slaves. In the course of his residence in the West Indies, Cunningham acquired a number of slaves who added considerably to the value of his estate. The Watt family of Bemerton, County Down, had also a representative in the West Indies. Samuel Watt in Barbados supervised the importation and sale of linen that had been manufactured by his uncle in Down, and also sought to establish business links between his family and merchants from Baltimore whom he met in Jamaica. His experiences in the West Indies persuaded him that Britain would be foolish to abolish the slave-trade. Writing to his brother John in Ireland (who apparently had expressed some support for the abolition movement), Samuel felt that only the established colonies would benefit from the abolition while "the southern continent and new settlements" would be thrown into decline; abolition would also increase the price of sugar and the British purchaser would thereby suffer. He argued that the slave-trade had been established by "our forefathers who were more religious than ourselves" and that it should be continued "for the sake of humanity" since, if the trade were abolished

the African princes would have no alternative but to murder those captives who were at present sold into slavery, which ensured them far better conditions than those enjoyed by the labourers and "lower order of people" in Northern Ireland. Moreover, if Britain had nothing to do with the slave-trade, the market for slaves would be supplied by American slave-traders. When, in 1807, British vessels were prohibited from engaging in the slave-trade, Watt angrily retorted that the Act was "a humane good Law, but...as the planters say, a damned impolitic one" which would be repealed as soon as Britain felt the resulting loss to her Exchequer. The abolitionists, having left the African slaves to the mercy of the princes, "have done as little for humanity as the first instigators of the trade." Branding them as hypocrites, Watt concluded, "I should like to know how often they have been bought and sold by Mr. Pitt and his successors."  

Samuel Watt's letters offer an example of how business interests could influence opinions on slavery and determine the kind of information which individuals in Ireland itself could receive on the question, though even Watt came to appreciate that slavery was not an unqualified boon, if only on a practical level, when he experienced great difficulty in selling his domestic slaves in 1825. 


While some Irishmen went to the West Indies and there traded largely in slaves,¹ and others became slaveholders in Africa,² the level of British capital investment in the slave-trade in itself suggests that it is extremely unlikely that Irish merchants and financiers would have abstained from trading in slaves. Thus, as late as 1806, vessels owned by Irish Companies were carrying slaves to Virginia and Charleston,³ and though the humanitarian commitment of the United Irishmen prevailed, as already noted, Wallace Cunningham's plans in themselves indicated the readiness of many Belfast merchants to avail themselves of the profits of the slave-trade.

There were however instances in which trading links helped to produce a framework of contacts for the humanitarian impulse, especially in the transatlantic Quaker community. In 1771, Thomas Greer (1725-1803), whose Quaker family were linen manufacturers in County Tyrone, was asked by a Philadelphia friend, John Pemberton, to enquire about a slave who, suggested Pemberton, had been owned by a Hessian merchant and wrongfully sold into slavery in America. Greer discovered that the Negro in question, one John Richison, had been owned by William McCason in New York in the 1750's. The Negro had been involved in a theft

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from McCason's premises, and had been sold in America for £30. McCason, it was discovered, "was part concerned" in a vessel which traded from Liverpool "to the Slave Coast of Africa." Pemberton in Philadelphia had espoused Richison's case, and Greer, who carried on a large export trade to America, proved anxious to help. The McCason family in Newry, however, were by no means willing to help a slave who, as they saw it, had so flagrantly betrayed them.

Despite the contribution which exports to the West Indies made to the livelihood of many Irish merchants, and notwithstanding the financial investments in the slave-trade itself, it is probable that no Irish city owed its prosperity to the slave-trade, even indirectly, on a scale comparable to Bristol or Liverpool. It was not however uncommon for ships bringing cargoes of sugar, for example, to ports such as Belfast, to have slaves on board as members of the crew.

According to the ruling of Lord Mansfield in 1772, any person who placed foot on British soil was a free citizen, and abolition societies were first organised in Belfast in order to implement this ruling by seeking to procure the freedom of those slaves who came as shiphands.

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1. There were several strange features of the Richison case. The Negro in America claimed that he had been wrongfully sold into perpetual slavery by the captain of the vessel taking him to America, and that for his part in the robbery he had been transported for seven years only. He had on several occasions appealed to McCason's relations in Newry to help secure his release. By 1772, McCason had died, and his brother-in-law informed Greer that he had not replied to these appeals, since Richison had "behaved so ill to a very humane master." At Richison's trial in Newry the judge had accepted his evidence against the main culprit though only on satisfying himself that Richison had been baptised and had therefore a proper "sense of the nature of an oath." John Pemberton to Thomas Greer, Philadelphia, 12/12/1771; letter from McCason's brother-in-law to Thomas Greer, Newry, 15/7/1772. Greer Family Correspondence. D. 10kb/314; D. 10kb/330. Public Record Office of Northern Ireland. For a discussion of the legal position of Negro slaves in Britain, see F.O. Sylven, Black Slaves in Britain (London, 1974), pp. 23-25, passim.
in visiting vessels. As late as 1843 there are instances of the Belfast abolitionists attempting to convince such slaves that they could legally claim their freedom. 

The question of Irish involvement in slavery, whether by direct investment and participation, or indirectly, through trading ventures, has a bearing not only on the development of a guilt factor in the abolitionist impulse, but also on the potential constellation of economic and social forces determining the support for, and opposition to, the anti-slavery movement. In Ireland, this opposition does not appear to have been vociferous or well-organised. Abolitionists feared the power of the West India "interest" in Cork and Belfast, yet public apathy and the feeling that the problems of Ireland itself should be


2. For an analysis of the declining influence of this group in relation to the abolition of the Slave Trade in 1807 and Colonial Slavery in 1833, see, E. Williams, Capitalism and Slavery (Chapel Hill, 1944). Williams offers a valuable corrective to those who had seen anti-slavery as an example of British humanitarianism, though the conclusion to be drawn from Roger Anstey, "Capitalism and Slavery: a Critique", in Economic History Review, 2nd. series, v. XXI, 1968, n. 2, pp. 307-320, is that anti-slavery cannot be seen exclusively as an exercise in economic self-interest, but that factors such as changing intellectual attitudes to slavery, and political manoeuvring must be considered. The benefits of such an approach are indicated in Anstey's own study, The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition, 1760-1810 (London, 1975).
given priority, were the chief obstacles they had to contend with in their anti-slavery agitation.

Those Irish abolitionists who assumed that Ireland had no past involvement in the slave-trade, ironically, failed to see that anti-slavery arguments were on occasion deployed when economic interests clashed because of this trade. Thus in 1780 when Irish sugar refining interests called the attention of the House of Commons to the importance of the triangular trade for the Irish economy, and demanded protection for their sugar, one critic, protesting against the assumption that the only commodity they could export from Africa was slaves, rebuked that ..."assured spirit of excessive commerce which, having tortured its inventive arts upon the subordinate objects of nature, did at last subject human society to its depredations, and turned the very liberty of Man to a commodity of barter." Coupled with this humanitarian appeal, however, was the more pragmatic calculation that Ireland's best interests were not furthered by the traffic in slaves which only encouraged "amongst a people immersed in the darkest barbarism, the depopulation of a fine country, and the total neglect of its inexhaustible capacity." Though motivated by a far greater concern for the slave than was the author of this pamphlet on the sugar duties, the abolitionists themselves laid


2. Thoughts on the Discontent of the People Last Year Respecting the Sugar Duties, with an Appendix (Dublin, 1781), pp. 29, 41-44.

3. See also, Observations on the Advantages which would arise to this Country from opening a Trade with the Coast of Africa; with a plan for the Same by which the Slave-Trade may be Ultimately Abolished (Dublin, 1785), in which the (anonymous) author, who claimed to have been born in Ireland, insisted that "unqualified abolition" would be disastrous for the slaves. He proposed
heavy stress on the benefits that would accrue to Ireland from the anti-slavery movement. They argued that the Irish people would have to pay less for cotton and sugar that was not produced by slave-labour, while in less materialistic terms, they emphasised that anti-slavery commitment would bring its own reward, in the increased moral standing of Ireland itself.

Appeals to the Irish anti-slavery tradition, however this was interpreted, were therefore part of a general strategic endeavour on the part of the abolitionists to promote anti-slavery sentiments in Ireland, and to influence the Irish-Americans on the slavery question. Differences between those who argued that Ireland had taken no part in slavery and those who suspected that the record was not so spotless, are best seen as being essentially tactical in nature. In the later development of Irish anti-slavery though, the question of Ireland’s complicity in the horrors of slavery would become less important than the conviction that the gravest sin was committed, not by past generations, but by men and women of the present who saw the evil of slavery yet made no effort to have it abolished.

Irish abolitionists in some instances were also disconcerted and confused by earlier statements on the slavery question. Thomas Steele, a leading supporter of O'Connell’s Repeal Movement, for example, declared that Edmund Burke had made the "loathsome" plan to establish trading centres on the African coast, and with twenty years experience as an African trader, he offered his services as agent for any Irish Company formed for the purpose. The African chieftains would be persuaded to trade in legitimate commodities, with resulting benefits to the Irish people, while this would also ensure that the slave-trade would eventually die out. The proposals resemble those advocated by T.F. Burton, and which found expression in the African Civilisation Society, and the Niger Expedition in the early 1840’s, though the author of this pamphlet seemed less concerned about the slave-trade as such than about outlining a scheme which would appeal to Irish merchants, and prove financially rewarding for himself. Observations on the Advantages, pp. 2, 4-11, 16-28.
assertion that because of the existence of slavery, the Southern States loved liberty more than those of the North. This was in fact an unsympathetic interpretation of a speech Burke had made in the House of Commons on 22/3/1776, while Steele's estimate of Burke was different from that of earlier British abolitionists, and of the Irish Quaker, Mary Leadbeater, whose poem "The Negro" was dedicated to Burke as "Freedom's Firm Friend". 

In 1772, the American Quaker, Anthony Benezet, felt that Burke might be influential in bringing the attention of Parliament to the plight of the slaves in the American colonies, while twelve years earlier Burke himself had argued that slaveholders were not fit to sit in a Parliament of free men. This might well have meant that Burke's


2. A Review of Some of the Arguments which Are Commonly Advanced against Parliamentary Interference on behalf of The Negro Slave with the Statement of Opinions which have been Expressed on that Subject by Many of our Most Distinguished Statesman (London, 1823), pp. 10-19. Poems by Mary Leadbeater (Dublin, 1808), pp. 87-93.

3. Annual Register (edited by Burke) for 1765 (London, 1766), p. 37; Anthony Benezet to Richard Slackleton, Philadelphia, 6/6/1772, in Robert Vaux, Anthony Benezet (London, 1859), pp. 25-26. Burke was extremely friendly with Richard Slackleton, and had been educated at Ballitore School, founded by Richard's father, Abraham Slackleton. Mary Leadbeater was Richard Slackleton's daughter, and was extremely proud of her father's friendship with Burke. Granville Sharp, in reply to a request from Benezet similar to the one sent to Richard Slackleton, felt that the colonies should not demean themselves by seeking the assistance of the British Parliament on the slavery issue. Sharp argued that they should only petition the King and the King's council.
would later be recalled by Irish abolitionists as a leading exponent of the Irish anti-slavery tradition, and that he was not, is perhaps explained by the book, *An Account of the European Settlements in America*, written by his cousin William Burke, and revised by Edmund Burke himself. The English abolitionist Wilson Amistead praised those sections of the book which described the cruelties perpetrated on the Negroes in the West Indies, but the work as a whole was by no means abolitionist in content.

It advocated a more humane treatment of the slaves, and urged that freedom be given to those who had earned it by their good behaviour. Religious instruction was to be provided, in order to teach the slaves "the humility, submissiveness and honesty which become their condition." Very much concerned with British trading interests, the author felt that any amelioration in the condition of the slaves would lead to a reduced death rate, and that this would be injurious to the "African trade." This trade, however, he professed to view with horror, and he admitted that any plan of amelioration, even one more radical than he had proposed, would reflect honour on the British people. The author, however, was clearly not in favour of emancipating the slave:

"I am far from extending in favour of an effeminate indulgence to those people. I know that they are stubborn and intractable for the most part, and that they must be ruled with a rod of iron. I would have them ruled, but not crushed with it."2

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Slavery was deplored primarily because it posed a threat to Britain's security interests, inasmuch as the slaves might be incited to revolt by Britain's enemies. Such sentiments, when associated with Edmund Burke's name, ensured that a later generation of abolitionists who were committed to the immediate emancipation of slavery, could never include him in their catalogue of Irish anti-slavery heroes, nor come to his defence when he was so obviously misrepresented by Steele.¹

Irish anti-slavery traditions, therefore, could be interpreted in several different ways. They were by no means as clearly defined as most nineteenth century abolitionists claimed, nor did they all present themselves in terms acceptable to these later abolitionists. On occasion, Irish critics of the abolitionists interpreted the Irish past in ways which, it was claimed, justified

¹ Anstey, The Atlantic Slave Trade, pp. 91-124, explores the implications for abolition of such eighteenth century notions as the Scottish philosopher Francis Hutcheson's theories of liberty, happiness and benevolence, which were inimical to slavery. The readiness of the Enlightenment to question the value of existing institutions was often, however, accompanied by some aversion to the possible results of change. Furthermore, men of the Enlightenment were aware that if a moral revolution could effect a change in the laws relating to the slave trade, then a change in those laws would at one step render not only illegal, but morally reprehensible, behaviour which had hitherto been acceptable. For these reasons, it was inevitable that there would be a certain ambivalence in Burke's thoughts on slavery. Thus he supported Wilberforce's notions for a total abolition of the slave trade in 1789 and 1791, but the plan for a Negro Code which he drew up in 1792 was essentially designed to regulate behaviour (of slaves and slaveholders alike), and contained such odious proposals as the compulsory marriage of healthy, young Negroes. D.B. Davis, The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution (London, 1975), p. 347, also refers to the political risks which inhibited Burke from taking an early leadership in the anti-slavery movement.
their own reluctance to condemn American slavery: thus the Nation declared in 1846 that St. Patrick appeared not to have laboured to abolish either the slave-trade or slavery.

Such differences in interpretation were, however, few, as even those who felt that American slavery need not be criticized, rarely chose to assert that the Irish people had a long history of defending slavery as an institution. 1

Of all the religious groups in Ireland, the Society of Friends could claim to have shown the greatest interest in the anti-slavery cause. It is an Irish Friend, William Edmundson, who "stands first in Britain's empire to proclaim Negro slavery a sin." 2

In 1675 Edmundson made the second of three journeys to the West Indies and America. In Barbados, after having held meetings for slaves, he was accused by a certain "priest Ramsay" of being an Irish Jesuit in disguise come to make the slaves rebel against their masters. A warrant was sent to apprehend him, and Edmundson denied the charge to the Governor. Declaring that a knowledge of Christ would alone keep the slaves from rebelling, he added that if an insurrection did take place, it would be through the slaves' own doing, in keeping the slaves in ignorance and under oppression, "giving them liberty to be common with women... and on the other hand, starve them for want of meat and clothes convenient: so giving them liberty in that which God restrained, and restraining

1. "Discussion of the Six Classes of Slavery in Ancient Ireland", in Nation, 31/10/1846.

them in that which God allowed and afforded to all men..." In Edmundson's reply to the Governor were indications that he saw religion as a vital agent of social control for the slaves, though he also expressed strong disapproval of the conduct of the slaveholders. ¹ In 1676, he told American Friends that "it would be acceptable with God...if you did consider... (the slaves') condition of perpetual slavery, and make their conditions your own, and so fulfill the law of Christ. Edmundson went on to ask how American Friends could justify Negro slavery, when they deemed it unlawful to enslave Indians.²

Explicit in the Christian tradition was the belief that subordination was the natural lot of man after the fall of Adam, while Negro slavery could be reconciled to the Golden Rule by the proviso that slaveholders treat their slaves as they would care to be treated, should they become slaves.³ Yet Edmundson argued that Negro slavery and Christian liberty were quite irreconcilable. By denying the slave food and clothes, and leaving him open to the temptation of lust, slavery encouraged evil; but it was also evil in itself,⁴ contradictory to the Law of God.

1. Journal of the Life, Travels, Sufferings of Love in the Work of The Ministry of that Worthy Elder, and Faithful servant of Jesus Christ, William Edmundson (Dulbin, 1820), pp. 102-103. The Journal was widely read among Irish Friends, particularly because Edmundson, though born in Cumberland, was prominent in the establishment of the Society in Ireland. Details of his confrontation with the Governor were copied into Mary Leadbeater's even more widely-read, Biographical Notices of Members of The Society of Friends who were Resident in Ireland (London, 1823), pp. 21-25.

2. Quoted in Drake, Quakers and Slavery, pp. 9-10.

3. These ideas and also the "silent egalitarianism" embodied in Christianity, are ably analyzed in David Brion Davis, The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture (Harmondsworth, 1975), pp. 319-337.

Irish Quakers were not alone in their failure to grasp or accept immediately the importance of Edmundson's arraignment of slavery. Samuel Neale, an Irish Friend who travelled in America, criticised American Quakers who owned slaves, solely on the grounds that "...the children's being trained up in pride and idleness, and a superiority over them (the slaves)...hinders a real growth in humility, and obstructs the good work..." His wife, Mary Neale, could not reconcile American slavery with the precepts of the Golden Rule, yet when she publicly censured Southern Friends she did not include in her catalogue of the errors they had fallen into, the fact that many kept Negro slaves. If she subordinated the sins of slaveholding to those of moral backsliding, intemperance and failure to instruct children in Quaker ways, however, her concern for the slaves led her to visit many in North Carolina, though this entailed "abundant hardships and sufferings of body."1

The ministries of Irish Friends such as the Neales ensured that Quakers in Britain could never entirely ignore the plight of the slaves, and as anti-slavery attitudes changed and developed, the notion that slavery was a sin in itself began to gain wider acceptance.2

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2. In 1761, discomfiture was made the penalty for any member of the London Yearly Meeting who was engaged in the slave-trade. Drake, Quakers and Slavery, pp. 60-62.
It was the basis of the free-produce movement which became popular among Quakers in Ireland, as elsewhere, in the 1790's. This movement argued that by refusing to partake of slave-produced goods, slavery would become unprofitable and die out. It appealed to those who were convinced that slavery was a sin which contaminated not only the slave-holder and the slave, but also those who purchased the goods produced by the slave. By purchasing only free-produced goods, the individual made a personal commitment to dissociate himself from evil.¹

In 1791-1792, Thomas Clarkson, the English abolitionist, travelled some six thousand miles in England and Wales, advocating the disuse of slave-produced West Indian sugar,² and many contemporary pamphlets discussing the same question were also printed at this time. Some of these were reprinted in Ireland, and stressed the moral responsibility of the individual to abstain from the use of slave-produce, "without consideration to the actions of others."³

³ An essay on the Slave Trade: Enumerating Its Horrors, and Stressing The Vice of Encouraging it by the Consumption of West Indian Productions, and Also Shewing the Certainty of Its Abolition by the Disuse of It by the People of Great Britain (Respectfully offered to the People of Ireland) on...Refraining from the Use of West Indian Sugar and Rum (reprinted, Dublin, 1792), pp. 1-12. See also, Thomas Wilkinson, An Appeal to England on Behalf of the Abused Africans, A Poesy (reprinted, Dublin, 1792). Wilkinson, who supported Clarkson's endeavours to abolish the slave-trade, was an English Friend, and a correspondent of the Shadforth family of Ballymore, Mary Carr, Thomas Wilkinson, A Friend of Wordsworth (London, 1905), pp. 19-21, 36-47.
Though Europeans were born into a "more improved society", Locke's concept of the mind as a tabula rasa was used to repudiate the allegation that the Africans were by nature inferior beings. These pamphlets also contained other arguments that would play a prominent part in later abolitionist thought, in particular the denial that the slaves led more comfortable lives than poor people in Great Britain.

The free-produce campaign was, however, beset by many difficulties. Its advocates were at pains to show that slave labour was less productive than free labour, and to prove that emancipation would not be detrimental to British economic interests. Yet one of the strongest criticisms they made of West Indian slavery was that the enslavement of the African was an important factor in the enslavement of the British people to rum. Their own reasoning therefore suggested that emancipation would stimulate the rum trade, and they were therefore left in the position of having to subordinate their temperance interests, albeit temporarily, to those of abolition.

The very feasibility of this campaign as a means to secure an end to slavery was soon questioned in Ireland by one James Mullala. He again refused to accept the idea that "negroes are born for slavery", or indeed that "their dispositions are narrow, treacherous, and wicked", and he cited the example of Aesop as proof that those in servile conditions could display genius.

2. Essay on the Slave Trade, pp. 6, 440.
If slaves were inferior, this was not an innate trait, but the product of their debasement in slavery. He praised "the humanity of Albania's fair daughters" in abstaining from slave-produced sugar since this would reduce the suffering of the slaves and make available money which could be given to several charitable institutions, but he felt that this alone was "inadequate to effectuate the plan" of emancipation. He appealed to the Kings (and the nations) of Europe to seek the abolition of slavery, and warned that if nothing was done, the slaves would retaliate with reprisals and massacres: they did not lack courage, only a leader such as a Spartacus or Crassus. Mullala's pamphlet is extraordinary in its criticisms of the churches and leaders in Europe for their failure to act, and in its readiness to see the justification for a bloody slave insurrection, while by using the plight of the African slave as a focus for domestic strife in Ireland, he may be said to have established a tradition that was to run through a great deal of Irish anti-slavery protest.


3. When discussing the oppression of the African slaves, he found an immediate parallel in the behaviour of those Irish Protestants whom he accused of seeking independence from England while denying all freedom to the Roman Catholics.
Mullala's criticisms of the free-produce movement as an anti-slavery instrumentality would be echoed some fifty years later by the radical Dublin abolitionist, Richard Davis Webb, though, with its concomitant notions of individual commitment and personal dissociation from sin, the basic precepts of the movement were to remain extremely popular with Irish anti-slavery groups throughout the campaign to abolish West Indian slavery. In Ireland, many Quaker families in particular stopped buying West Indian sugar. James Haughton, the Dublin abolitionist, was encouraged by his Quaker parents to abstain from slave-produce, and all his life refused to eat rice that came from South Carolina. Irish Quaker merchants in some cases also gave up trading in West Indian sugar, which involved considerable financial loss. Joseph Grubb (1766–1844), for example, had a prosperous wholesale and retail grocery business in Clonmel, County Tipperary, and in 1807 his brother John consulted John Pim in London "on the sugar business". Pim, a prominent Quaker merchant, felt that "the time is not yet fully come for those who declined dealing in West Indian sugar to resume it" but promised to inform John Grubb as soon as "a right liberty opened". It was presumably of some consolation for Joseph Grubb to be told that Pim had also "declined considerable orders for West Indian Sugar."^{1}

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1. Samuel Haughton, Memoir of James Haughton (Dublin, 1877), pp. 9, 17.
The Free-produce movement gave many Irish Friends a sense of personal involvement in the anti-slavery movement, and acting in concert with Friends in England, the Yearly Meeting of Ireland encouraged the distribution of anti-slavery literature among its members and organized petitions to Parliament on the subject.

In 1825 the Library Committee of the Yearly Meeting was given permission to procure Clarkson's History of the Abolition of the Slave Trade, and any other "approved works" on slavery, in order to provide information for those Friends who were but "imperfectly acquainted" with the plight of the slaves in the West Indies. In 1821 and 1827 the Yearly Meeting of Ireland also invited Irish Quakers to contribute donations to the Meeting for Sufferings in London, which was empowered to use the money as it saw best, "in promoting the total abolition of the Slave Trade and of Slavery, or...in improving the condition of the natives of Africa or their descendants." A petition containing 81 signatures was presented by Dublin Friends to the House of Commons in 1824 suggesting that it seemed an "obvious consequence" of the abolition of the slave-trade, to secure an amelioration of the condition of those already enslaved, and urging The House to expedite the "ultimate object of complete Emancipation...by every wise and prudent means."


2. "Minute Book of the Yearly Meeting of Ireland, 1821-1827," entries for 3/5/1821 and 3/5/1827. The amount raised in the second appeal and remitted to London in 1827 was 5125,15,10d.

3. Copy, dated 1/5/1824, in Friends' Library Dublin; letter from Yearly Meeting of Ireland to London Yearly Meeting 1824, in "Epistle Book of the Yearly Meeting of Ireland, 1822-1853".
In 1830, Irish Friends again decided to petition Parliament as they felt that West Indian slavery was not only "utterly irreconcilable with the benign spirit of the Gospel", but also impaired Britain's moral right to remonstrate with other nations involved in the slave-trade. Further petitions were sent in 1831 and 1832, declaring that the emancipation of the West Indian slaves was a Christian duty, and would promote the commercial prosperity of Britain and the peace of her colonies. Slavery was considered "as unprofitable" as it was "unjust" and was seen as a threat to the moral standing and physical well-being of slaves and slaveholders alike.

The Society of Friends was at pains to point out that these pronouncements and formal petitions were not intended to discourage anti-slavery activity among Irish Friends acting as individuals. It hoped that individual Quakers would "interest the whole population of the kingdom in this work of justice and mercy", and encouraged "active exertion" in this good work.


Some Irish Quakers acted on this exhortation and organized petitions to Parliament from their respective communities. One Quaker however, Joshua Beals from Cork, went further and declared that Irish Friends should unite with Irishmen of all denominations in the struggle to free the slave. Beals, with the co-operation of several dissenting ministers, had founded an anti-slavery society in Cork and was anxious that other Irish Quakers should, in their own districts, form similar societies. He had felt some "nicety about meddling with clergy who take pay" and had waited till he felt it safer to proceed "than to tarry longer". His horror at the plight of the slaves, and his determination to "stand clear of this very great evil" helped him to overcome his scruples, however. Indeed, he found that his anti-slavery exertions had brought him satisfaction "of a secondary nature" in that it had allowed him to work together with men who, though differing with him in religious matters, proved otherwise to be excellent men. Beals was appointed Secretary of The Cork Society, a position he felt he could hold without compromising his religious principles. He claimed that the dissenting ministers were quite satisfied at being addressed as "reverend...I do not so much as Esquire anyone." When The Cork Society was drawing up a petition to present to Parliament, the dissenting ministers were willing to have it written "in Quaker language", but Beals felt that this would give the impression that the petition only came from the Society of Friends in Cork. He arranged for Cork Friends to submit a petition of their own, and he reported that this addressed the members of the House of Lords only as Peers, without the title 'Lords Spiritual and Temporal'; he calculated that if
the petition were to be rejected only "for want of formality", the ensuing controversy might not be unprofitable to the anti-slavery cause.

Beale made efforts to establish an auxiliary society in Kerry, and to persuade the people of Brandon and Mallow to take an interest in the anti-slavery question. His main concern, however, was to try to capitalise on the Quaker philanthropic tradition by establishing Irish Friends, in the various districts of Ireland, as the nucleus for regional anti-slavery societies that would eventually persuade the whole of Ireland that West Indian slavery must be abolished. In order to succeed, he had to convince Irish Friends that they would not compromise their own religious professions by co-operating with others of different religious affiliation in the anti-slavery enterprise. He stressed that his own activities had led to no such compromise, and he went on to indicate how Irish Quakers could form, as it were, joint societies of Friends and non-Friends. Each could have its own secretary, and each could "act in the parts where both in religious practices or words differ from the other". He asked Mary Leadbeater, post-mistress in Ballitore, to invite "the dissenting minister and the man of the establishment and the popish priest" to a preparatory meeting, and each could afterwards hold a meeting of their own. Beale was disappointed that ministers of the Church of Ireland had proved slow to co-operate with him in Cork, but he added that this might not necessarily prove the case in County Kildare. He had no objection to Irish Friends uniting in one anti-slavery society with female Friends, though warned that the latter were not to sign any petitions, as
these would not be accepted by Parliament. He also proposed that several prominent Friends in Ulster should be encouraged to take up the work of anti-slavery, and he urged Quakers to go round their various districts collecting signatures for petitions; he cautioned that these were to be of respectable, if not necessarily rich persons.

To Ballitore he sent several copies of the Anti-Slavery Reporter in order to provide information about slavery and the efforts to abolish it.¹

Beale's letters give some indication of the success of his activities. He distributed one thousand circulars and though he had expected much opposition from the West India interest in Cork, he reported that many petitions had been got up in consequence of the exertions of the Cork Society. His greetings to his "Anti-Slavery brethren" in Ballitore suggest also that Friends in County Kildare responded to his appeals.

Mary Leadbeater died in 1826, and with the termination of Beale's correspondence to her, there is no further evidence to show what became of his efforts in Cork. See, 3 letters from Joshua Beale to Mary Leadbeater, dated Cork, 23/1/1826; 2/3/1826; April 1826. Friends' Library, Dublin. Extracts from the first two letters were published in Isabel Grubb, "An Anti-Slavery Enthusiast, 1826", in Journal of The Friends' Historical Society, v. XXXI, 1934, pp. 21-26.

Isabel Grubb wrote that Beale (1766-1833) was disowned by the Society of Friends at the beginning of the nineteenth century, though he remained a Quaker in spirit all his life. In 1798 Beale did marry in a Presbyterian Church in Cork, for which the usual result was disownment by the Society. (Beale Family Pedigree, Friends' Library, Dublin). However, for reasons that will be examined in Chapter Two, the Society of Friends in Ireland suffered from considerable internal divisions in the early nineteenth century, when many Quakers challenged the Society's disciplinary code. Cork Quakers, furthermore, have traditionally been seen as reluctant to accept the dictates of their Dublin brethren on matters of discipline, and it is possible that Beale in fact was not disowned for "marrying out". Beale's third letter (which is not cited by Isabel
However, Beale's efforts to show that Friends could join with others of different denominations were stated with such emphasis that they are in themselves indication of his recognition that many Irish Quakers would be reluctant to follow such a course. In his conviction that slavery in the West Indies must be abolished, he was prepared to risk incurring the criticism of the Society of Friends in Cork, and his anticipation of such sanction is shown in his last letter to Mary Leadbeater, where he remarked that, "I am not yet forbidden to meet with others". The fear of endangering their religious testimonies may have been more characteristic of the Society in Ireland than Joshua Beale's readiness to unite with men who "tho' differing in minor points of religious faith, as they call it...are united amongst themselves by a bond of Christian love".  

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1. J. Beale to Mary Leadbeater, April, 1826. In 1824, however, Quakers had co-operated with abolitionists of other religious affiliation, to form The Dublin Association for Endeavouring to Promote the Mitigation and Gradual Abolition of Slavery in the British Colonies, which also had auxiliary Societies in Cork and Waterford. The Treasurer of The Dublin Association, Samsal Bewley, was a Quaker; and of the committee of ten, four have been identified as being Quakers, while three have been identified as not being Friends. The Secretary of The Waterford Society, Joshua Strongman, was also a Quaker. Report of The Dublin Association for Endeavouring to Promote... (Dublin, 1824). The parent body of this Society was formed in London in 1823, and was extensively, though by no means exclusively, supported by Quakers. Dublin, like most other provincial cities, generally left abolitionist activity to the metropolitan African Institution, until Clarkson and Wilberforce focussed public attention on the fact that slaves in the West Indies had not benefited from the outlawing of the slave-trade in 1807. C.H. Wesley, "The Neglected Period of Emancipation in Great Britain 1807-1823", in Journal of Negro History, v. XVII (1932), pp. 156-170.
Acting as a body, however, Friends in Ireland, as already noted, continued to petition Parliament for the abolition of West Indian slavery. While the Yearly Meeting of Ireland, the Central administrative unit of the Society, was naturally most active in this field, Quakers in Cork, Belfast and Lisbon also sent in petitions in 1831. Individual Quakers such as John Grubb who settled in England in 1818, sent back reports to Ireland concerning not only the anti-slavery activities of the London Yearly Meeting, but also more general developments in anti-slavery thought. He told, for example, of Elizabeth Heyrick's pamphlet, Immediate, Not Gradual Emancipation (London, 1824), which argued against any gradualist attempt to free the slave on the ground that slavery was a sin to be immediately abolished. Grubb was sufficiently persuaded by this pamphlet to suggest that all further Quaker petitions on slavery should not use the wording "gradual, but total", since the second of these words alone would suffice. His brother Joseph in Clonmel apparently had some qualms about this since John Grubb had to declare that while he did not wish for "immediate emancipation", he suspected that the word "gradual" indicated a willingness "to sanction the continuance...of slavery for a time." 2

1. John Grubb to Joseph Grubb, Stoke Newington, 6/12/1831, S.G.D.b, n. 31. Grubb letters. Grubb felt that several petitions from various Quaker centres were less effective than a massive single petition.

In his reluctance to use the word "immediate" while at the same time disavowing the word "gradual", John Grubb was not necessarily being ingenuous. The notion of slavery as a sin had long been latent in anti-slavery thought and had explained the readiness of many to stop using slave-produced sugar. But the perception of slavery as a sin, when allied with the growing evangelical impulse, with its stress on immediate conversion and perfectibility, led in the 1820's to the concomitant conviction that this sin should be immediately abolished. This was more than an abolitionist tactic; it was, as David Brion Davis has suggested, "a shift in total outlook...to a personal commitment to make no compromise with sin".¹

Joseph Grubb's hesitation to espouse immediatism, resulted, it may be assumed, from a feeling that both slaves and slaveholders in the West Indies ought to be given time to prepare for emancipation. John Grubb's answer revealed his own awareness that there would inevitably be a time-lag between the demand for immediate emancipation, and the freeing of the slave.² He felt, however, that this consideration ought not to sway the individual from declaring that slavery was an evil that must be at once repudiated.


2. Cf. Anne C. Loveland, "Evangelicism and 'Immediate Emancipation' in American Anti-Slavery Thought", in Journal of Southern History, v. XXXII, May, 1961, n. 2, p. 188. For William Lloyd Garrison's assurances that "immediate emancipation" should not be taken to mean that the slaves would be "turned loose upon the nation without means or employment", see Liberator, 1/1/1836. Copy in Lewis Tappan Papers, Container I, Folder I. Library of Congress.
James Mallala in 1792 had argued that if steps were not taken immediately to abolish West Indian slavery, then bloody slave revolt would ensue. The immediatism of the 1820's, however, stressed the fact that unless slavery were declared immediately to be a sin then not only the abolitionist's religious principles, but his very soul, were endangered. It was this feeling that led Joshua Beale to such extraordinary efforts on behalf of the slave, to wait only until he "believed it safer to take a step than tarry longer." However, while the doctrine of immediatism was to provide the impetus for anti-slavery agitation from the mid-1820's onwards, the texts of the Irish Quaker petitions already quoted show that it was slow to be given official acceptance by the Society of Friends. It was perhaps, at least at the outset, seen as too radical a notion, and one susceptible to criticisms that the anti-slavery movement in general could only lead to bloodshed, and to the ruin of slaves and slaveholders alike. The phrase "immediate emancipation" itself indicated a new note of militancy, of demand rather than request, which many Friends whose official addresses had hitherto been usually characterised by a tone of earnest entreaty.¹

In 1824, the same year that Elisabeth Heyrick's pamphlet was published, Irish abolitionism was given further stimulus by the arrival of James Cropper, the English Quaker. Head of the firm which was Liverpool's largest importer of East Indian sugar, Cropper argued that if the sugar duties were lowered, West Indian slave-produced sugar would be unable to compete with East Indian sugar, and therefore that slavery in the West Indies would die out.

¹. Though Elisabeth Heyrick herself was a Quaker from Leiceste.
With what degree of financial disinterestedness it is difficult to say, Cropper had become convinced that the trade in East Indian sugar would illustrate the teachings of Adam Smith to the effect that the acquisition of material wealth was by no means irrecconcileable with world progress, in this instance indicated by the abolition of colonial slavery.

Cropper went to Ireland in order to seek support for his anti-protectionist theories, and there became convinced that Ireland could provide the textiles that would pay for the importation of East Indian sugar. In his view, the degradation and poverty in Ireland were, with West Indian slavery, the most obvious stains on England's record of moral progress, and the textiles industry, he argued, would not only lead to the improvement of conditions in Ireland, but, by making feasible the trade in East India sugar, also lead to the freeing of Britain's colonial slaves. He was genuinely appalled by the poverty he saw in Ireland, and if he felt sure that no Irish peasant would exchange his lot for that of the Negro slave, it was nevertheless clear to him that "in food, clothing and homes, many of them must be infinitely worse off than many of the slaves."


2. See also, West Indian Pretensions Refuted: Being an Extract from The Preface of a Work entitled The Slavery of the British West India Colonies Delineated as it Exists in Law and Practice, and Compared with the Slavery of Other Countries, Ancient and Modern, by James Stephens, Esq., (n.p.n.d.), pp. 17-19.

However, his scheme was precisely based, as he saw it, on an awareness that the cause of the Irish peasant was the cause of the slave, and therefore was the best way not only to improve the condition of both but also to enlist the support of the Irish people themselves for the anti-slavery movement.

Cropper spoke to Irish landlords and merchants about his proposals, and tried to enlist the aid of Daniel O'Connell himself. He helped to establish anti-slavery societies, and became involved in a textile mill in Limerick. Such was the misery that he witnessed in Ireland that he felt that "if the question of slavery was not so strongly connected as it is with the condition of the Irish people, I should despair of anything being done for the cause of slavery here."\(^1\) While many other abolitionists were to be confronted, indeed affronted, with the conditions of the poor in Ireland, Cropper is unique in having drawn up a scheme which he felt would espouse the twin cause of peasant and slave.\(^2\)

Cropper's proposals immediately appealed to the self-interest of Irish merchants\(^3\) and to Irish political leaders who sought to

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2. James Cropper, The Present State of Ireland with a Plan for Improving the Condition of the People (Liverpool, 1825), pp. 7-20, 26-35.

3. Cropper had always argued for a more realistic appreciation of the forces of self-interest which determined the growth and decline of slavery. J. Cropper, A Letter Addressed to the Liverpool Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery (Liverpool, 1825), p. 8.
increase employment and eradicate poverty in their country.¹

Irish Quakers, troubled by a constant tension between the acquisition of the world's riches and the compulsion to do good works, saw Cropper's proposals as indication that these could be reconciled. Cropper's theories, finally, appealed to anti-slavery societies who were anxious to refute any accusations that they were more interested in the West Indian slave than in the conditions of the Irish peasantry.

Cropper's visit did therefore have the effect of further stimulating the growth of anti-slavery feeling in Ireland. By 1826, when further petitions to Parliament were sent from Cork, Waterford and Dublin, it was felt that Ireland was beginning at last to exhibit a fixed determination to agitate for the abolition of West Indian slavery.²

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¹ Cropper declared that if there was ever a case for defending existing tariffs, or even establishing new ones, it would pertain to protection for the linen trade in Ireland. As a convinced free-trader, Cropper was unwilling to accept such duties, though he said that if Irish trade was deprived of protection, it was grossly unfair that Ireland should be expected to suffer from the protective duties on West Indian sugar. J. Cropper, The Support of Slavery Investigated (Liverpool, 1824), p. 26. In this instance Cropper was displaying, if again in the context of his commitment to free-trade, his concern for the plight of Ireland, and in a way which would be welcomed by those who complained that Irish economic and social interests were being discriminated against.

² The Christian Examiner and Church of Ireland Magazine (Dublin), v. 1, n. 10, May, 1826, p. 327.
In the same year, Mrs. Charles Orpen of Dublin was appointed as a District Treasurer of the Birmingham Female Society for the Relief of British Negro Slaves, and she became joint secretary of the Dublin Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society when it was formed in 1828. The Dublin Society, like similar societies in Bristol and Manchester, was formed "in correspondence" with the Birmingham Society, whose rules and regulations it closely adopted. Its aim was to circulate information on the nature of West Indian slavery, and to continue in operation until colonial slavery was abolished, though it was determined to avoid "needlessly offending the prejudices of the West India proprietors...and slaveholders".

It stressed that a general determination to abstain from using slave-produce was the best way of expressing an abhorrence of colonial slavery, and of bringing that slavery to an end. As

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the sugar trade declined, it argued, more food would be grown for
the slaves, and the slave population would rise, with a consequent
reduction in their value; this would encourage the slaveholders to
permit manumission, and the slave system itself would thereby become
extinct if, the Society warned, the justice of England and "the
patient submission of the slave should allow it to exist till it
died a natural death." A list was provided of nine grocers' shops
which sold East Indian sugar in Dublin, that sugar having been imported
by the Quaker wholesaler, Samuel Bewley, who had been treasurer of
the Dublin Association in 1824. It was suggested that the use of
East Indian sugar would not only give employment to British subjects
in India, but hasten the freedom of the slaves in the British West
Indian colonies.¹ Strict procedural arrangements were drawn up for
the Society,² and ladies in the provinces were encouraged to act as
District Treasurers to the parent body in Dublin.³

Every member of the society was entitled to free copies of the
Anti-Slavery Reporter, and various anti-slavery books were also available
for purchase.⁴

1. Ibid., pp. 17, 20-22. Individual purchasers were reminded of
their complicity in the horrors of slavery by the calculation
that in the production of every hundredweight of sugar, more than
three shillings of the "pecuniary value of slave life" was
destroyed.

2. Meetings were to be held every month. The subscription was five
shillings annually.

3. In 1828, there was already a District Treasurer in Sligo.
District Treasurers were asked to keep a register of all the
people in their neighbourhood who used free-produce sugar.

4. Also available were purses, workbags and household crockery
with such engraved mottoes as "Am I not a slave and a Brother".
The Friends' Library, Dublin, houses a fine collection of these.
While the Dublin Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society was the first to organise the sale of East Indian sugar in Ireland, the formation of the Dublin Negro's Friend Society, in July, 1829, reflected a growing assertiveness in British anti-slavery circles. Slavery itself was described as "originating in violence, robbery, and murder, and perpetuated in every species of injustice and wrong." The aim of the Society was "to promote the utter abolition of Negro Slavery", while the "moral enslavement" of the Negroes would also be rectified by the establishment of schools in the West Indies, and the circulation of the Sacred Scriptures there. Notions long current in Irish anti-slavery thought now received their clearest expression. Britain, it was argued, had done nothing "to atone for its sin" in enslaving the Africans, while there was an "intimate and necessary connexion" between the consumer of slave-produce, the slaveholder, and the slave-trader which made the individual consumer "the supporter and encourager" both of slavery and the slave-trade, with all their concomitant evils.

While again stating that it was his crime, not the slaveholder himself, that was deprecated, the Dublin Negro's Friend Society used far more vituperative language in its condemnation of slavery than had earlier abolitionist statements.

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1. Dr. Charles Orpen was a member of the Board of Managers of the Dublin Negro's Friend Society, while his wife remained active in the associated Dublin Ladies' Negro's Friend Society.

2. The Dublin Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society had also concerned itself with the provision of medical treatment and educational facilities for the Colonial slaves.


4. Subscriptions were to be sent to the La Touche Bank in Dublin. James Digges La Touche, as noted earlier, owned a slave-plantation in Jamaica.

5. It declared that "...all injustice, inhumanity...and oppression of the weak and defenceless—all immorality, adultery and fornication
The Dublin Negro's Friend Society retained close contacts
with, just as it had copied its organisational structure from, the
anti-slavery society in Birmingham which in 1832 still retained
District Treasurers of its own in Dublin and Killarney. ¹ As was
the case with English anti-slavery societies, however, there was as
yet no official statement of immediatism, and indeed, while it was
vociferous in its condemnation of slavery, and active in efforts to
circulate anti-slavery tracts, the Dublin Negro's Friend Society in
its early stages seemed concerned more with missionary and educational
work than with abolition as such. As with the Dublin Ladies' Anti-
Slavery Society, its members seem to have come largely from middle class
Protestant groups in Dublin, while it is significant that its Annual General
meeting was held in April of each year, on the Thursday preceding the
annual meeting of the Hibernian Bible Society. The following constituted
the Board of Managers of the Negro's Friend Society: Major Sirr, Edward
Wilson, Henry Bewley, Dr. Charles Orpen, Benjamin Glorney and Joseph
Murphy. Of these, the first four were members of the Hibernian Bible

¹---all irreligion, and debarring of men from the rest of the
Sabbath...---all forcible severing of the Divinelly instituted
relations of husband and wife...---all enslavement of children from
generation to generation---the buying and selling of MAN...are con-
trary to the spirit and power of Christinity". It is debate-
able as to what extent one dimension of the appeal of anti-slavery
in the Nineteenth century, was that it could be seen as providing
a convenient package of salacious and titillating information about
sex and violence, in an "acceptable" context.

¹ The Seventh Report of The Ladies' Negro's Friend Society for
Birmingham... (Birmingham, 1832), p. 9. The changing names of
the societies in Ireland themselves indicate the influence of
the Birmingham Society on the abolitionist movement in England.
Society. Of those whom it has been possible to identify, Sirr was the retired town-major of Dublin, Orpen was a medical doctor, and Bewley (1804-1876) was a wholesale grocer whose father, Samuel, had been active in earlier anti-slavery societies in Dublin. With the exception of Henry Bewley, Dublin Friends do not appear to have played an active part in the Negro's Friend Society. Joshua Beale's letters in 1826 had already given some indication of the reluctance of Irish Friends to join in anti-slavery activities with other denominations, while as early as 1792 Friends in Great Britain had warned that they could not co-operate with Methodists in their missions to the West Indies as these encouraged the Negroes to adopt religious forms and ceremonies unacceptable to Quakers. While Irish Friends had helped to finance Hannah Kilham's educational and missionary work in Africa in 1826, the available evidence suggests that the majority of Friends in Ireland in the late 1820's were not prepared to participate actively in an anti-slavery society with non-Quakers.

It has been suggested that "the whole complex of philanthropic societies, including anti-slavery organisations, was part of the


2. Catherine Phillips, Reasons why the People Called Quakers cannot so fully unite with the Methodists in their Missions to the Negroes in the West Indies and Africa or Freely to contribute there to (London, 1792). The Irish Methodist Conference sent delegates to a meeting of The British Negro's Friend Society in 1830. Minutes of The Irish Methodist Conferences (3 vols. Dublin, 1864-1867), v. 2, pp. 313-314. An analysis of the greater "exclusiveness" of the Irish Friends as opposed to those in England, will be provided in Chapter 2.

mechanism" by which dominant or aspiring groups in Britain sought to preserve or attain social leadership within their communities. ¹

Certainly the eighteenth century had witnessed the gradual rise of a Catholic middle class in Ireland,² but the strident tone of evangelical Protestantism which characterised the Dublin Negro's Friend Society acted as a disincentive for those middle class Roman Catholics who might otherwise have sought to increase or confirm their social status within Dublin by supporting the Society. The rhetoric of the Hibernian Bible Society at this time was very much directed against freeing the Catholics of Ireland from their enslavement to Rome,³ while the Catholic Hierarchy, and Daniel O'Connell himself, had bitterly accused the Bible Society of proselytizing. The Dublin Negro's Friend Society remained, as a result, exclusively composed of Protestants.


3. Harriet Kiernan, Secretary of The Dublin Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society, was also a member of the Hibernian Bible Society. In distributing Bibles, however, she was careful to tear out the dedication to King James "which I consider an affront to a Roman Catholic, and an obstruction in the way of their valuing the Bible." Harriet Kiernan to Sophia and Isabella (Hamilton?) n.p. [1830?]. D. 1728/9/7. Public Record Office of Northern Ireland.
Any assessment of the Society's strength and influence in Ireland must also take into account the fact that it was overwhelmingly middle-class in composition. Its advocacy of free-produce sugar was more or less irrelevant to the dietary habits of the bulk of the Irish people, Protestant and Catholic, for whose sugar of whatever origin was a rare luxury (and who might well have resented the free-produce arguments as evidence of middle-class hypocrisy).

The Dublin Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society and the Dublin Negro's Friend Society both made arrangements for the sale of East Indian sugar, on the assumption that this was free-produce. However, James Stuart, editor of The Belfast Guardian, challenged this assumption, and insisted that slavery existed in its most "extensive and execrable" form in India. Abolitionists in Ireland were horrified by such a disclosure, and sought ways in which to justify their position. One reaction was to deny that slavery existed on such a scale as Stuart had indicated, and to assert that the situation in India was the product of heathen customs which the East India Company was doing its best to alter. Stuart's statements, it was argued, were prejudicial to West Indian Emancipation, since

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1. Major Sirr, one of the Board of Managers, had played a rather notorious part in the downfall of the United Irishmen in 1798, and Robert Emmett in 1803. He retired as town-major in 1826. Dictionary of National Biography (London, 1909), v. XVIII. It is possible that "castle-Catholics" might have in other circumstances, welcomed the opportunity of engaging in "good works" with him; for the majority of the people of Dublin, however, he was an extremely unpopular figure.

2. Belfast Guardian, 24/12/1830.
they drew public attention to a situation for which Britain was not responsible.1 Stuart had prepared a convincing case,2 however, and his revelations concerning slavery in India certainly accelerated the growing disillusionment of most Irish abolitionists concerning the efficiency of the free-produce movement as an anti-slavery instrumentality.3 There could be little satisfaction for the individual conscience, if, in dissociating from the sin of West Indian slavery, the complicity in East Indian slavery was thereby underlined.

Increasingly, therefore, abolitionists in Ireland concentrated on attempts to awaken public opinion to an awareness of the evils of slavery.4 As the doctrine of immediation became more widely accepted among the abolitionists, advocates of a more gradualist approach warned of the dangers of immediate emancipation. One correspondent of the Christian Examiner suggested that the United

1. Letter from "Homo" in The Christian Examiner and Church of Ireland Magazine, v. LVIII, February, 1831, pp. 112-114; Lewis Tappan, the American Abolitionist, used East India sugar for years in the belief that it was free-produce. He was considerably vexed when the British India Society revealed the extent of slavery in India: Lewis Tappan to Gerrit Smith. New York, 29/6/1840. Smith MSS. Syracuse University.


3. Though see letter from Charles Stuart in The Christian Freeman (Belfast), v. 1, n. 2, December, 1832, pp. 66-68. The Christian Freeman was the organ of the Protestant Secession Church in Belfast.

4. See The Negro's Friend, Containing a plain Statement of Facts which have Recently occurred, descriptive of the Present State of Slavery in the West Indies (London, 1830), pp. 1-3, which discussed a letter that had appeared in the Dublin Evening Post describing the cruelties of West Indian Slavery.
States would be prepared to exploit the chaos resulting from abolition by annexing Britain’s colonies in the West Indies, and he suggested that Britain should take steps to prepare the slave for emancipation by first giving the Negroes some experience in positions of responsibility. He also suggested that the Church should increase its missionary activities in the West Indies in order to inculcate decent standards of behaviour among the Negro population. The Hibernian Negro’s Friend Society, on the other hand, denied that a slave insurrection would follow emancipation, and that the anti-slavery societies could be blamed for any slave revolt that occurred in the West Indies. Indeed, by diffusing the "salutary principles of Evangelical Christianity" through their sponsorship of missionaries, it was claimed that the anti-slavery societies had instructed the "untaught but teachable heathen... (in) ... forbearance, forgiveness, magnanimity and patience." The slaveholders were accused of standing between the slave and the Gospel, and therefore, it was argued, only immediate emancipation could prevent the slaves from seizing their freedom by force. When the campaign against

1. Letter from "A Naval Officer" in, Christian Examiner and Church of Ireland Magazine, v. LXVI, October, 1831, pp. 752-755. In 1830, clergymen of the Established Church in Ireland were encouraged to petition Parliament on the slavery question, and they were assured that they could labour in the cause without indulging in the "ostentation of public meetings". Letter from C.R.H. ibid., v. LXIV, November, 1830, p. 832.

2. This had replaced the Dublin Negro’s Friend Society in 1831, and probably reflected a desire to give the anti-slavery movement in Ireland more central direction and control. It would appear, however, that the regional Societies in Ireland retained a considerable measure of autonomy, while those in Dublin and Belfast were the largest, most prosperous and best organised.

3. A Retrospective View of West Indian Slavery. Together with its Present Aspects Submitted at a Public Meeting of The Hibernian Negro’s Friend Society to which are added Chronicles of Details
slavery entered its final phase, moreover, the Irish abolitionists insisted that there could be no justification for slavery. James Mullenala, for example, had said that Christianity "for obvious reasons, has not directly furnished us with precepts for the abolition of slavery", but The Hibernian Negro's Friend Society rejected the arguments of those who claimed that the Bible justified slavery. While the Old Testament showed that the Jews kept slaves, the abolitionists denied that there could be any comparison between this and slavery as it existed in the West Indies. Nor, they argued, was there any Biblical curse on Ham, "the ancestor of the Africans", which could be used in defence of the perpetual enslavement of the Negroes.

1. In 1830, Richard Whately drew up a plan for the gradual abolition of slavery, copies of which he sent to various abolitionists in England in 1832, but by that date most English abolitionists had renounced gradualism. E.J. Whately, Life and Correspondence of Richard Whately (2 vols. London, 1866), v. 1, pp. 84-86, 185. In 1863 Whately again offered his gradualist scheme as a solution to the problem of American slavery, though the Irish abolitionist, John Elliot Cairnes, discussed the proposals as "servile drivel". See, Richard Whately to John E. Cairnes, Dublin, 9/6/1862 n.s. 89U. Cairnes Papers, National Library of Ireland, Whately (1787-1863) was created Archbishop of Dublin in 1831.

2. Can West Indian Slavery Be Justified from Scripture? (Printed for The Hibernian Negro's Friend Society, Dublin, n.d.), p. 2. This pamphlet was largely based on a pamphlet written by Charles Stuart, Is Slavery Defensible from Scripture? (Belfast, 1831). Stuart (1783-1865) was born in Jamaica, the son of a British Army Officer. After receiving academic training in Belfast, he was commissioned (at the age of 18) as a lieutenant in the British East India Company's forces. After 13 years' service he retired on a Captain's pension and settled in Canada. In 1824, when President of a boy's Academy in Utica, New York, he met Theodore Weld, with whom he established a life-long friendship. In 1825 both Stuart and Weld were converted in Western New York State by the revival of Charles Grandison Finney, and in 1829
In the summer of 1831, the Agency Committee was formed in London, which reflected the growing dissatisfaction of a group of abolitionists with the Society for the Mitigation and Gradual abolition of Slavery. The Agency Committee, prominent in which were George Stephen and Joseph and Emmanuel Cropper, attempted to arouse widespread public interest in the slavery question.

Edward Baldwin, agent of the Hibernian Negro's Friend Society was appointed as a paid lecturer by the Agency Committee as was Captain Stuart, and the two men lectured extensively in the English midlands on the subject of West Indian slavery. The Birmingham Ladies' Negro's Friend Society also described Stuart as an agent of the Hibernian Negro's Friend Society, and although this was not an accurate description, it did reflect the important role played by Stuart in Irish anti-slavery circles. In November, 1832, the Belfast Auxiliary Anti-Slavery Society for Mitigating and Gradually


2. The Seventh Report of The Ladies' Negro's Friend Society for Birmingham... (Birmingham, 1832), p. 22.
Abolishing the State of Slavery Throughout the British Dominions, was persuaded by Stuart, in accordance with tactics worked out by the Agency Committee, to secure pledges from the Belfast candidates in the General Election, on the slavery question.

The Liberal candidates, William Sharman Crawford and R.J. Tennant, were judged to have given "satisfactory" statements supporting immediate emancipation in the West Indies, while the two Tory Party candidates, James Emerson Tennant and Arthur Chichester, were deemed to have given "unsatisfactory" replies. The Anti-Slavery Committee, having ordered two thousand copies of an address to be circulated in Belfast giving their strictures on the Tory candidates, were themselves accused of having become "a political engine, in order to forward party interest in the town of Belfast."

James Emerson Tennant maintained that the slaveholders should be compensated, and that abolition need not be carried out in such a way as to ruin the colonies, while his denunciations of the political bias of the anti-slavery society caused deep divisions in that body. Six Presbyterian ministers, and the treasurer of the Society, William McConnell, declared that they were satisfied that the Tory candidates

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1. This had been formed in September, 1830. Belfast Guardian, 20/11/1832. I have found no evidence to suggest that Stuart was instrumental in the formation of this society. Though he had been educated in Belfast, and may therefore still have had personal contacts in the city, he seems to have first become active in abolitionism in the North of Ireland in 1832.

had advocated immediate abolition, and had been thoroughly justified in showing concern about the financial prosperity of the Colonies.\footnote{Letter from "A member of the Anti-Slavery Society", in \textit{Belfast Guardian}, 20/11/1832; James Emerson Tennant to Charles Stuart, Belfast, 8/12/1832. D.923/4, Public Record Office of N.Ireland.}

The Tory members of the committee felt that the slaveholders should be compensated and, with some justification, accused the Whig members of being motivated solely by a desire to embarrass the Tory candidates: for their part, the Whig members insisted that Emerson Tennant and Chichester represented a party which was essentially inimical to the anti-slavery cause. There were no resignations from the Committee\footnote{The Rev. Henry Cooke, however, in claiming that he agreed with James Emerson Tennant's views on the slavery question, denied the statement made by the Anti-Slavery Society that he had been a member of that body. For an account of the importance of Cooke in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, see J.L. Porter, \textit{The Life and Times of Henry Cooke}, D.D. (Belfast, 1875); and for an analysis of his response to American slavery see Chapter Four, below.} though politically it was clearly divided on the issue.

No further attempt was made to secure pledges from parliamentary candidates in later elections in Belfast, largely because the important Presbyterian support had almost been lost to the Committee in 1832. An element of provincial mistrust of metropolitan control also entered into the situation, since Stuart was already resented by the Tory members as an agent of the radical London-based Agency Committee which was accused of trying to impose its radical, political and anti-slavery views on the Belfast abolitionists.\footnote{See, for example, a letter from "A Subscriber in Belfast", in \textit{the Belfast Guardian}, 7/12/1832.}

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2. The Rev. Henry Cooke, however, in claiming that he agreed with James Emerson Tennant's views on the slavery question, denied the statement made by the Anti-Slavery Society that he had been a member of that body. For an account of the importance of Cooke in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, see J.L. Porter, \textit{The Life and Times of Henry Cooke}, D.D. (Belfast, 1875); and for an analysis of his response to American slavery see Chapter Four, below.

3. See, for example, a letter from "A Subscriber in Belfast", in \textit{the Belfast Guardian}, 7/12/1832.
The controversies in Belfast, however, did little in general to disturb the close relations that existed between abolitionists in Ireland and England. Delegates from Dublin, Cork, Youghall, and Belfast, numbering ten in all, attended a meeting in London in April, 1833, to decide on the form of address to be submitted to the Government on the slavery question, and representatives from those towns were among those chosen to submit a memorial to Lord Althorp and Lord John Russell.\(^1\) William Hume of the Hibernian Negro's Friend Society was also delegated to attend a meeting held in London in July, 1833, to express the dissatisfaction of the abolitionists at the terms of the 1833 Act which abolished colonial slavery.\(^2\) The participation of the Irish delegates in these meetings indicates clearly the nature of the relationship between Irish and English abolitionists in the campaign to abolish East Indian slavery. The Irish anti-slavery societies relied heavily on those in England, particularly in Birmingham, for the supply of anti-slavery literature and advice on organizational structure.\(^3\)

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1. In Pursuance of an Address Circulated by the Metropolitan Committee on the 4th Instant, Requesting the Appointment of Delegates from the Country to Represent to the Colonial Minister the general feeling on the Subject of Negro Slavery. About 350 gentlemen attended in that Character at Exeter Hall, on Thursday, the 18th Instant... (London, 1833), p. 2.


The abolitionists in England, moreover, welcomed the presence of the Irish delegates at their meetings since this could be shown, particularly to the Government of the day, as conclusive proof that anti-slavery sentiments were uniformly held throughout the British Isles. The Irish abolitionists, indeed, often felt guilty that this relationship was too one-sided. The Hibernian Ladies' Negro's Friend Society in 1832, for example, reported how little it had been able to do to promote its object, "the utter extirpation of slavery". It had established auxiliary societies of its own in Cork and Tralee, yet confessed it could claim little "marked or distinguishing evidence of usefulness."²

The provisions of the Act of 1833 which abolished Colonial slavery, especially those which gave £20 million as compensation for the slaveholders and which stipulated that the former slaves serve a period of Apprenticeship, disappointed many abolitionists. The Belfast Anti-Slavery Society described the act as conferring "not emancipation, either total or immediate, but...a system of

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1. In Pursuance of An Address... p. 13.

2. Report of The Hibernian Ladies' Negro's Friend Society (Dublin, 1832), pp. 1-4. In 1832, £26 was sent to aid the Birmingham Ladies' Society in promoting the education of West Indian slaves. In 1833, the Birmingham Ladies' Society received £36.5.1d. from the Hibernian Ladies' Society, £10 of which was used to aid in the establishment of societies for the education of the African race. Eighth Report of the Ladies' Negro's Friend Society for Birmingham, pp. 19, 33, 51.
continued injustice and usurpation." The Belfast Christian Freeman, however, reflected the more widespread Irish reaction when it declared that slavery in the West Indies ought now to be considered doomed, and that the 1833 Act would "by its moral influence" lead to world-wide abolition.

As happened in most other abolitionist centres in the British Isles, the two most prominent Irish anti-slavery societies in Ireland, those in Dublin and Belfast, collapsed after the passing of the 1833 Act. Indignation at the provisions of the bill gave way to a widespread desire to give it a fair chance to operate. The Irish Protestant Churches had argued that the Christian religion was an indispensable factor of social control in the West Indies, and they

1. Statement of the Belfast Auxiliary Anti-Slavery Society (dated Belfast, 6/7/1833), in Christian Freeman, n. XII, October, 1833, pp. 396-398. See also, Have Slaveholders Any Right to be Compensated on Being Deprived of the Power to Steal Men's Personal Liberty? (printed for the Negro's Friend Society, Dublin, 1830), pp. 5-6. Alexander McDonnell of Belfast had proposed a plan of gradual emancipation in 1824 which included the following proposals: slaveholders would be compensated, the Crown should take possession of all the land in the West Indies, and once free, the Negro would receive a grant which he would repay in instalments; a vagrancy law would be enacted, and the treadmill introduced, to discourage the "natural laziness of the Negroes." See, Alexander McDonnell, Considerations of Negro Slavery, Illustrative of the Actual Conditions of the Negroes in Demerara... (London, 1824), and the review of this in The Belfast Magazine and Literary Journal, n. 4, May, 1825, pp. 327-338.

welcomed the formal abolition of Colonial slavery not only as an eradication of an enormous evil, but since it gave them an increased opportunity to carry out their missionary activities. The Christian Freeman, noting the vast increase in the slave population of the United States, declared that the situation in the West Indies demanded immediate attention: only if the slaves were given religious instruction and converted to Christianity could the situation in the West Indies develop peacefully.¹ Irish Methodists for their part rejoiced because the emancipation had given "providential openings in the West Indies, for increased missionary labours."² Such reactions indicated the existence of a widely-held conviction that while slavery was evil in itself, its most horrific aspect was that it had denied Christianity to the slave.³ A primary concern for the souls of the slaves, rather than for their freedom as such, had been exhibited by James Digges La Touche, the Dublin banker. Of French Huguenot extraction, La Touche had been influenced by Wesleyan Methodism in the early 1800's, and he was convinced of the necessity for "evangelising" the Negroes in the West Indies, where he himself owned a slave plantation. While many abolitionists felt that an undue stress on missionary work among the slaves would impede the anti-slavery cause by diverting attention from its principal aim of

3. In Barbados, Negroes had been prohibited from attending Quaker meetings in 1676, and from attending Methodist meetings in 1789. Richard Robert Madden, A Twelve-month's Residence in the West Indies During the Transition from Slavery to Apprenticeship (2 vols. London, 1835), v. 1. p. 39.
bringing slavery to an end, La Touche felt that the conversion of
the slaves was of paramount importance. This, he felt, would
elicit more "active labour" from the Negroes than the severest
corporal punishment, and also guarantee the safety and stability of
the West Indian islands far more than would the presence of armed
troops. Moreover, it would ameliorate the evil results which
slavery had on the slaveholders themselves.¹ Most of the
Evangelical Protestants who supported the Hibernian Negro's
Friend Society, however, saw conversion as being essentially
concomitant to emancipation,² and the instruction of the Negroes
in the Christian faith, as a prerequisite for the peaceful operation
of the Emancipation Act.³ They welcomed emancipation, which gave
the slave, not merely his freedom, but an increased opportunity

1. Contrary to many abolitionists, La Touche felt that Dr. Trew
(Rector of St. James's in the East, in Jamaica) had "hit the
nail on the head!" when he argued, in An Appeal to the Christian
Philanthropy of Great Britain and Ireland, on Behalf of
the Religious Instruction and Conversion of Three Hundred
Thousand Negro Slaves, that all progress towards the ameliora-
tion of the condition of the slaves should be based on
attempts to convert them. Urwick, La Touche, pp. 174-183.
James Digges La Touche died in 1826.

2. The idea of evangelical religion as a factor of social
control persisted long in the La Touche family. In 1859
it was hoped that the Revival in Jamaica, if temporarily
leading "the people...to parade round the island" would
"ultimately tend to make the blacks more industrious", as
it was claimed, had been the effect of the recent revival
in Ireland. J.D. La Touche to Messrs. Thompson, Hankay &
Co., Dublin, 20/9/1859. La Touche Letter Books in possession
of Allied Irish Banks, Dame Street, Dublin.

3. One Irish abolitionist felt that the missionaries in the
West Indies, by acting as "an intermediate influence"
between slaves and slave-holders, had allowed the system
of "modified slavery" (Apprenticeship) to operate relatively
peacefully. R.R. Hadden, The Island of Cuba, Its Resources,
for conversion to Christianity, and which provided a stimulus to their own missionary interests.

Other Irishmen, however, played a more specific role in the administration of the 1833 Emancipation Act. The Marquis of Sligo, for example, took up his appointment as Governor of Jamaica in April, 1831, and if he did recommend the establishment of treadmills, in his opening address to the Jamaican assembly, as a salutary mode of punishment, his governorship was characterized by well-meaning if clumsy attempts to implement the 1833 Act, often against the active opposition of the planter class. He established close contacts with the abolitionists in Britain, and was later highly praised by them as a rare example of a liberal Colonial official. Several Irishmen were also among the twenty-eight Special Magistrates appointed to supervise the operation of the Apprenticeship system. Some, such as Dr. Thompson, sometime Master of the School of Experimental Industry in Ireland, were residents of Jamaica, while others such as Henry Blake, Otway Browne, and G. Higgins were young Irishmen who had gone to seek their fortune under the Marquis of Sligo. The most notable of the Irish Special Magistrates, however, was Richard Robert Hadden, who was born in Dublin in 1798, the son of a Dublin silk merchant.


A qualified surgeon, Madden had travelled extensively in the middle east from 1824 to 1827, and, on his return to London, he became deeply involved in the growing anti-slavery movement. Madden clearly considered himself primarily a man of letters, and the prospects for future authorship seem to have been a strong determinant of all his activities. Nevertheless, his *Twelvemonth's Residence in the West Indies* is an invaluable record of life in the West Indies as a Special Magistrate. If perhaps an ancillary motive for going was to enquire into an estate in Jamaica, which he felt his family had strong legal claim to, Madden seems to have been genuinely concerned with working in the island and serving the interests of that "great question" which was "solving" itself in the West Indies.

Madden found that current caricatures of the Negro character had no basis in fact, and replied to statements that the Negroes were prone to dishonesty by asking "what weapons besides falsehood, cunning, and duplicity" the slave had to fight oppression with. It was also

1. Where he witnessed the horrors of slave-markets at first-hand, and claimed to have fallen into the hands of robbers no fewer than six times. R.R. Madden, *Travels in Turkey, Egypt, Nubia and Palestine in 1821, 1825, 1826 and 1827* (2 vols. London, 1829), v. 1, pp. 3-8, 156.

2. Thomas M. Madden (ed.), *The Memoirs (Chiefly Autobiographical)* from 1798 to 1886 of Richard Robert Madden, M.D., F.R.C.S. (London, 1891), p. 63. See also Leon Ó Broin, "R.R. Madden, Historian of the United Irishman", in *Irish University Review*, v. 2. n. 1, Spring, 1972, pp. 20-33. I should like to record my gratitude to Dr. Ó Broin, with whom I have had several conversations on the subject of Madden.

ludicrous, he added, to accuse the Negroes of indolence, without mentioning the pitiful rewards that assiduous labour would bring them. He claimed that it was a strange anomaly that the Christian Church in Europe should have considered that God had found the Negro fit for heaven before they, his fellow men, found him fit for freedom. Hadden called the Apprenticeship system "a state of modified slavery" and felt that only "complete emancipation" would secure the regeneration of the West Indies. While the missionaries had done much to cultivate the "moral improvement" of the Negroes, he was convinced that the former slaves would resist and distrust all efforts to cultivate their minds until sufficient means were taken to improve their "civil condition." One of Hadden's principal objections to the 1833 Act was that while it contained provisions allowing the Negroes to purchase their freedom on the payment of an appraised value of the Negro's services, in practice this occurred all too infrequently; he himself had been obliged to dissuade almost every applicant from applying for a valuation. "So small were their chances of success." Madden was aware that, given "the ignorance, of the Negro, and the arrogance of the brown man, and the pride and prejudice of the white", it would be difficult for a united community to develop in the West Indies, and he was at first somewhat reluctant to condemn the Apprenticeship system outright as he feared that this would give

1. Ibid., v. 1, pp. 116-112.
2. Ibid., v. 2, pp. 3-4, 302-307.
the enemies of emancipation cause to argue that if the Negroes could not be "half-liberated" with success, they could never be wholly emancipated with safety. However, he argued that the slaves should be given complete freedom. Apprenticeship afforded then too little security, and insufficient incentive to work; it also, he maintained, threatened the peace of the islands by making Negro uprisings likely in the near future.

Madden was an extremely conscientious Special Magistrate, and he became involved in a dispute with the Council of Kingston concerning his powers and responsibilities. After being physically assaulted in the streets of Kingston, he resigned in November, 1834, having found "the protection of the negro" incompatible with his own safety. In 1836, he appeared before a Select Committee of the House of Commons that had been appointed to inquire into the situation in the West Indies, and there he presented a detailed criticism of the provisions and working of the 1833 Act.

British abolitionists at this time were becoming increasingly convinced that Apprenticeship was merely slavery under a different

2. Ibid., v. 2, p. 266.
3. Ibid., v. 2, pp. 319-322, Sligo accepted Madden's resignation with regret. Burns, Emancipation and Apprenticeship, pp. 322-323.
4. Ibid., p. 336. Madden's Twelvetenth's Residence was welcomed by the abolitionists as providing evidence of the evils of Apprenticeship. See To the Right Honourable Charles Baron Glenelg, His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonial Department. The Memorial of the Anti-Slavery and Abolition Societies of the United Kingdom (London, 1835), p. 6.
name, and this was reflected in the formation, in November, 1837, of the Central Negro Emancipation Committee, which demanded that the Negroes be given their complete freedom immediately. On September 18th, 1837, the Hibernian Anti-Slavery Society was formed in Dublin to take the place of the "late" Negro's Friend Society. This demanded an immediate end to Apprenticeship, which was described as "a cruel mockery to the Slave, and a gross fraud upon the just expectations" of the British people. The Dublin abolitionists declared that while they had protested against the provisions of the 1833 Act, they had determined not to interfere with "the fair experiment of its operation" in the Colonies. However, reports from the West Indies, including the Marquis of Sligo's disclosures of the prevalence of the whipping of females, and even the planters' opposition to his less liberal successor, Sir Lionel Smith, had awakened a "deep anxiety" in Dublin, as elsewhere in Britain. 1 The members of the Hibernian Anti-Slavery Society had been confirmed in their antagonism to Apprenticeship by the visit of Joseph Sturge, Dr. Lloyd, Thomas Harvey and John Scoble to the West Indies. 2 While referring readers to Sturge's own published account of the visit, the Address summarised his findings. In Antigua, where the Negro had been freed, there was prosperity and peace. In Jamaica, however, the 1833 Act had merely resulted in the transference of

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2. In October, 1836, these four English abolitionists had left for the West Indies.
"the whip from the master to the magistrate": under a system of "brutal coercion", Negroes were subject to terrible punishments for trivial offences. The Irish people were exhorted to unite with the "thousands" labouring in England and Scotland, to give the slave his freedom and remove "the enormous guilt and evil of slavery, for ever", from the British Empire. 1

While the formation of the Hibernian Anti-Slavery Society is best seen in the context of a growing and widespread abolitionist campaign against Apprenticeship, the visit of the British abolitionist George Thompson to Ireland in the autumn of 1837, provided crucial encouragement for the reawakening of organised anti-slavery activity in Dublin. In July, 1837, Thompson wrote Edward Baldwin (later to be Secretary of the Hibernian Anti-Slavery Society) declaring his intention to visit Ireland in August, and asking Baldwin to explain to his friends in Dublin why he, Thompson, opposed the "odious scheme of apprenticeship." 2 In August, 1837, Thompson lectured in Dublin and Belfast, and succeeded in arousing public opinion in Ireland on the question. 3 Thompson's own connections with the Glasgow Emancipation Society were also useful to the Dublin abolitionists, and the Hibernian Anti-Slavery Society was quick to indicate its


3. G. Thompson to E. Baldwin, Edinburgh, 26/10/1837. Ibid., Ms. A.13.1.n. 6. Abolitionists in Cork also held meetings at this time to protest against the Apprenticeship system. See Report from the Southern Reporter, in Emancipator, (New York), 14/12/1837.
readiness to co-operate with the G.E.S. in promoting the "common cause." These contacts with Glasgow, if vitally important for the later regional affiliations in British abolitionism, were perhaps of more immediate importance in that they secured aid and encouragement for the H.A.S.S. which in its early stages was extremely short of funds.

Abolitionists from Cork, Dublin and Belfast were delegated to attend meetings of the Central Negro Emancipation Committee in London, in November and December, 1837, and following these, the H.A.S.S. was encouraged to organise petitions from the south of Ireland on the Apprenticeship issue. Richard Allen, joint secretary with Charles Orpen of the H.A.S.S., was advised to


2. In 1837, Baldwin admitted to English abolitionists that he was unable to pay for any abolitionist pamphlets that might be sent to Ireland. Iss. Brit. Exp. 6. 18. c. 2/13. In 1837, £12.7.0d. was collected for the H.A.S.S. by Friends in Mountmellick, and £13.10.0d. was raised by a collection in Dublin, to Joseph Bewley, Mountmellick, 16/11/1837; J. Doris to Joseph Bewley, Dublin, 27/9/1837. Both of these letters are contained in the W.R. Williams MSS. Friends' Library, Dublin, which is an unsorted collection of letters, mainly relating to the temperance movement in late nineteenth-century Ireland.

organise as many petitions as possible, however small, as these
would, it was calculated, be more "troublesome" and therefore more
effective.1 Allan responded by issuing an address appealing to
the people of Ireland to organise petitions from their various
congregations and districts.2 Allan declared that while little
could be expected from the Government, "United Public Opinion" could
free the slave. The petitions were to be sent either to the H.A.S.S.
or directly to the local M.P. Two large petitions, however, seem
to have been collected, in Dublin and Belfast respectively, rather
than a series of smaller ones, and this again suggests that the
anti-slavery societies in these two cities were the strongest, the
largest, and the best organised. The Dublin abolitionists also
had printed three thousand copies of a pamphlet containing extracts
from the "James Williams' Case" and the Marquis of Sligo's speech
criticising the failure of the Jamaican Assembly to carry out the
provisions of the 1833 Act, and by January, 1838, Allen reported
that the progress of the cause in Ireland looked "very encouraging."3

1. E. Baldwin to R. Allen, London, 25/11/1837. Port. 5B, n. 23(a), Friends'
Library, Dublin.

2. Appeal From The Hibernian Anti-Slavery Committee, 8/12/1833
(Dublin, 1833).

3. Letter from "A" (Allen), dated Dublin, 26/1/1838, in Irish
Friends, v. 1, n. 5, March 1838, pp. 30-39. See A Narrative
of Events, Since the First of August, 1834, by James Williams,
An Apprentised Labourer in Jamaica (London, 1837). Williams
had been brought to England by Sturge, and his narrative was a
particularly bitter indictment of Apprenticeship. Sligo's
speech to the Jamaican Assembly had been delivered in February,
1836.
This was an assessment shared by the English abolitionist John Scoble who, in praising the women of England and Scotland for their anti-slavery endeavours, added that "the daughters of Erin are behind neither, in the zeal with which they have undertaken the cause of the oppressed."  

In May, 1838, three Dublin abolitionists, Richard Allen, James Henry Webb and Edward Baldwin, went to London and worked with other anti-slavery delegates in canvassing Members of Parliament. Richard Allen, together with Webb, called on Lord John Russell and the Marquis of Sligo though the latter refused to seek an audience with the Queen, as Allen had requested.  

Finding that an important petition signed by seventy-five thousand Irish women had somehow been forgotten in the excitement, however, Allen, Baldwin and Webb took steps to present it to the Queen. Allen had borrowed Joseph Sturge's silk stockings for the occasion, while Webb had hired his. The two Irish Friends had their hats removed by the attendants, and both kissed the Queen's hand, though Allen later recalled that "contrary to custom" he remained straight-backed and raised her hand to his lips. James Haughton, the Dublin Unitarian, was also active in lobbying M.P.'s in London at this time, and though he too had been invited to present the


2. Marquis of Sligo to R. Allen and James Webb, London, 16/6/1838. Allen Family letters, Friends' Library, Dublin. Sligo admitted that Paes had a right to request audiences with the Queen, but he stated that he did not want to place the Queen in an unconstitutional position by asking her to declare her support for the abolitionists.
petition\(^1\) to the Queen, he could not bring himself to put on the court dress, and so declined the honour. The Irish delegates were also present in the House of Commons on the 22nd of May, 1838, to witness the successful adoption of a motion that a bill be introduced into the House of Commons for the termination of Apprenticeship, and they later adjourned to Brown’s Hotel, where steps were immediately taken to send the news to the West Indies.\(^2\)

For the La Touche family in Dublin, which had a long record of interest in the anti-slavery question, and which owned slave estates in Jamaica, the abolition of Apprenticeship was not particularly welcome. Declining profits from their estates, coupled with a fear of further "nefarious Whig legislation" was for them a strong inducement to sell their lands to Negroes who were willing and able to buy. On the advice of Hinton East, their estate manager in Jamaica (and against the recommendations of Thompson, Hankey and Sons of London, their agents) the estate was


not sold, though the La Touche family remained concerned that their West Indian profits should be so low.¹

The success of British anti-slavery endeavours, in 1833 and 1838, was extremely encouraging however to abolitionists in America, and the American Anti-Slavery Society declared its readiness to accept any assistance "moral in its character" which British abolitionists might be disposed to make in furtherance of the abolition movement in the United States.² William Lloyd Garrison, the American abolitionist, hoped that the abolition of slavery in the West Indies would provoke America, if only out of share, to free her slaves, and while enumerating the political and economic forces which made it easier to abolish slavery in the British colonies than in the United States, promised that one day

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1. J.D. La Touche to Hinton East, Dublin, 2/10/1845. La Touche letter Book.

2. Grinké, "Resolution passed by the American Anti-Slavery Society" (n.d. 1836?). Box 76, Gay Papers, Columbia University. The careers of Charles Stuart (q.v.) and George Thompson (see below, Chapter 2) will illustrate the ties between American and British abolitionists at this time, and the interest which the former took in the activities and ideas of the latter.
the American abolitionists would be given the same acclaim in
their own society that British abolitionists had won for themselves.¹

For their part, the Irish abolitionists retained a
comprehensive and consistent interest in the West Indies. In their
campaign leading up to 1833 and 1838, they had naturally stressed
their belief that the emancipation of the slaves would not result
in the financial ruin of the West Indian colonies, and after
the slaves were finally freed they tended to interpret the
beneficial aspects of the "West Indian experiment" as a justification
for their desire to see slavery abolished in America. R.R. Madden
for example, argued in 1853 that slavery had been the curse of
the West Indies, and that the emancipation of the slaves could not
be blamed for any economic deterioration in the colonies. What
had gone wrong, he suggested, was that the twenty million pounds
compensation had not been used to buy the machinery essential to
compensate for the resulting shortage of labour, but had gone instead
to West Indian merchants in London.² Clearly conscious of the

¹ Selections from the Writings of William Lloyd Garrison (Boston,
1843), pp. 35-38; An Address Delivered at the Broadway Taber-
nacle, New York, 1/8/1838, by William Lloyd Garrison, in Commem-
oration of the Complete Emancipation of 600,000 slaves on That
Day in the West Indies (Boston, 1838); West India Emancipation,
A Speech by William Lloyd Garrison on 1st. of August, 1834
(Boston, 1834). In 1846, William Lloyd Garrison was presented
with the Journal that one Major Colthurst of Co. Cork had kept
while acting as a Special Magistrate in Jamaica. Colthurst
sent it as a token of his esteem for Garrison's abolitionist
activities in the United States, R.B. Webb to N.W. Chapman,
Dublin, 31/10/1846. Ms. A.9.2. v. 22, p. 103. Weston Papers,
Boston Public Library.

² R.R. Madden, The Island of Cuba, pp. viii-xvi. See also,
The Christian Examiner and Church of Ireland Magazine, Third
series, v. XII, February, 1835, p. 157. The Citizen, (Dublin),
v. 2, n. X, August, 1840, p. 221, stated that the conduct of the
emancipated slaves showed "the perfect safety of the principle of
immediate, unconditional emancipation."
parallels with the situation in Ireland, Hadden complained of those absentee proprietors who stayed in London and neglected the interests of their estates in the West Indies.¹

The question of the superior productivity of free labour was central to the abolitionists' arguments that emancipation was not merely a moral imperative, but a prerequisite for the improved financial position of the colonies. In 1852, William Neilson Hancock delivered a paper in Belfast on the situation in the West Indies. He was convinced that free labour was more productive than slave labour, but suggested that in the West Indies, the freed slaves had not been given a conducive atmosphere to work in. They had not been prepared or educated for freedom, and they still lived and worked, he said, under considerable restraints. His conclusion was that if there had been a financial decline in the West Indies, this proved not so much the unproductiveness of free labour as the folly of the West Indian planters who refused to implement it fully.² Hancock's father-in-


2. The Abolition of Slavery Considered with Reference to the State of the West Indies since Emancipation. A paper read Before the Statistical Section of the British Association at Belfast, by Wm. Neilson Hancock (Dublin, 1852), pp. 3-10. Harriet Martineau made use of this paper in an article claiming that free labour was more productive than slave labour. H. Martineau to Jonathan Pin, Ambleside, 9/1/1853. Pin MSS. i/n. 33. Friends' Library, Dublin.
James Haughton, agreed that a comparative analysis of free and
slave labour demonstrated that "Liberty and Busines do not always
go together". It was with a certain amount of relief, however,
that Haughton welcomed Hinton Rowan Helper's The Impending Crisis of
the South (New York, 1859), as providing what he felt was conclusive
evidence that slavery as an institution was financially ruinous.

The Irish abolitionists also involved themselves in another
related topic, that of the emigration of a supplementary labour

1. James Haughton, Should the Holders of Slave Property Receive
Compensation on the Abolition of Slavery? A Paper read before
the Dublin Statistical Society on 20/12/1852. (Dublin, 1852),
pp. 6-13. As opposed to Hancock, Haughton felt that the slaves,
not the slaveholders, ought to be compensated. Hancock was
Whately Professor of Political Economy in Trinity College,
Dublin until 1851, and also Professor of Jurisprudence and
Political Economy at Queen's Belfast until 1853. See, J.K.
Ingram, "Memoir of the Late William Neilson Hancock, LL.D.,
Q.C." Journal of The Statistical and Social Inquiry Society
of Ireland, v. 9, August, 1889, pp. 384-393. Ingram, a
founder member of the Dublin Statistical Society, and
author of the famous poem, "Who Fears to Speak of '98?", also
wrote the article on slavery in The Encyclopaedia Britannica,
(9th ed. Edinburgh, 1887), v. XXIII, pp. 192-244, and A History
of Slavery and Serfdom (London, 1895); see, Belfast Literary
Society, Historical Sketch with Memoirs of Some Distinguished
Members (Belfast, 1902), pp. 105-106.

2. J. Haughton, Statistics of Free and Slave Labour in the United
States of America (Dublin, 1859). The profitability of invest-
ment in slaves in the U.S.A. is shown in R.N. Fogel and Stanley
L. Engerman, Time on the Cross: The Economics of American
Anstey, The Atlantic Slave Trade, pp. 38-57, produces impressive evidence
to suggest a profit level of some 10 per cent for the British
Slave Trade from 1761-1807, this being markedly less than the figure
of 30-40 per cent often cited.
force to the West Indies. Madden bitterly opposed any *surreptitious* renewal of the slave trade, but in 1853 felt that "by a well-conducted system of emigration" free labourers could be brought to the West Indies from Africa, the Canary Islands and the Azores, who would enable the West Indian planters to continue with some degree of financial prosperity until the complete abolition of the slave trade, which, Madden claimed, still gave an unfair advantage to the planters in Cuba and Brazil.¹ James Haughton, on the other hand, consistently opposed any scheme to bring Coolie labourers from China or India to the West Indies. He maintained that such Coolie immigration, unless strictly regulated and supervised, would result in a renewal of the slave trade, and by leading to increased labour competition in the West Indies, would satisfy the selfish interests of the planters who were anxious to pay even lower wages than at present.² Richard Hussey Walsh, Whately Professor

1. Madden, *Island of Cuba*, pp. XX-XXII. In 1842, Coolie labour was permitted to be used in Mauritius; and, in 1844, Coolie labourers were allowed to work in Jamaica, Trinidad, and British Guiana. The Glasgow Emancipation Society supported these schemes, on the condition that Government supervision was adequate. E*ighth Annual Report of the G.E.S.* (Glasgow 1842), pp. 31-86.

of Political Economy at Dublin University, shared Haughton's sus-
pications of any scheme for importing labourers into the West Indies.\(^1\)

Walsh rejected the suggestions put forward by Carlyle in "Occasional
Discourses on Negro Slavery" to the effect that Negro productiv-
ness could be increased by restoring slavery and the planter's
right to coerce the slave. Carlyle's arguments, Walsh insisted,
ignored the "calf eloquence of facts", which were, that the
Negroes were badly underpaid, and that the managerial ineptitude
of the planters themselves (of which their demand for increased
protection duties was but a symptom) had caused the financial
decline of the islands, and the resultant clavour for an enlarged
labour force.\(^2\)

The Irish abolitionists therefore were concerned with the
plight of the freed slaves, and suspected that the importance of
other labourers would result in a new form of slave-trade and

\(1\) In 1857, Walsh (1825-1862) was appointed Superintendent of
Government Schools in Mauritius. Dictionary of National
Biography (London, 1937), XX, p. 681. For a general dis-
cussion of the question, see E.L. Erikson, "East Indian
Coolies in the West Indies", Journal of Modern History,
v. 4 (1934), pp. 127-144.

\(2\) "Condition of the Labouring Population of Jamaica, as
connected with the Present State of Landed Property in
that Island" by Richard Hussey Walsh...Read before the
Statistical Section of the British Association in Glasgow
April, 1856, pp. 238-260. Carlyle's views were originally
slavery. The situation in the West Indies was also important for them in that it was seen as providing a test-case for the results of emancipation. In agitating for the abolition of slavery in the West Indies, they argued that the situation in the West Indies proved that the Negro was not lazy, and did not require the threat of physical punishment, or the coercive controls of slavery, to make him work hard. Just as the financial plight of the West Indies could not be attributed to the Acts of 1833 and 1838, the abolitionists suggested, so the emancipation of the American slaves would prove to be a boon for the Southern economy. Anti-abolitionist opinion in the United States interpreted the importation of the Hill Coolies into the West Indies as being proof that Britain had recognised that emancipation had been financially ruinous. The abolitionists, however, were justified in ascertaining that the decline in West Indian sugar production, however obvious, was related to factors other than the freeing of the slave.

1. In 1840, the Hibernian Anti-Slavery Society also protested to the Foreign Office against the "proposed withdrawal of the restrictions on the importation of Hill Coolies into the Mauritius". On 20/4/1840, Lord John Russell replied, denying that this would entail either a renewal of the slave-trade or slavery. He quoted the proposed regulations governing the importation, and stated that the Hill Coolies would benefit from the scheme. Letter on behalf of Lord John Russell to Richard Allen, London, 20/4/1840. Fort. 58, n. 20, Friends' Library, Dublin. In 1849, J.D. La Touche wrote asking his estate manager in Jamaica whether he employed coolie labour. "I hope they would make labour generally cheaper in the island: the coolies work well at Mauritius and from a relation of mine who has lived there a long time I have heard a good account of their industry and docility." J.D. La Touche to Hinton East, Dublin, 12/1/1859. La Touche letter book.

To many nineteenth-century reformers, the interests and functions of the political economist and the philanthropist were identical; the findings of statistical inquiry could but confirm the convictions of the heart. The abolitionists, nonetheless, did not merely use the Negroes in the West Indies as referents for their own ideological commitments. They showed a deep interest in the Negro's plight and problems, and condemned any evidence of misconduct on the part of the whites. As late as 1865, following riots in Jamaica, James Haughton condemned the readiness of the Irish Times to ascribe the trouble to the willful conduct of the Negroes. Haughton suggested that, like the Irish, the Negroes had been oppressed for years and consequently perfection could not be reasonably expected from either. He concluded, "I am not the eulogist of the negro. I know he has many faults, but he has long been placed in an unfavourable position, and he deserves more of our sympathy on that account." 

1. Richard Allen, Richard D. Webb and James Haughton were all members of the Dublin Statistical Society, out of which developed, in November, 1850, the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland which was formed to promote the "scientific investigation" of "social questions." Haughton was Vice-President of this Society from 1860 until his death in 1873, and, with the sole exception of Neilson Hamson, was the most frequent contributor to the Society's Transactions. S.S. Millin, The Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland. A Historical Memoir with Portraits (Dublin, 1920), pp. 11-12, 32, 52; R.B. Collison Black, The Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland, Centenary Volume, 1847-1947, with a History of the Society (Dublin, 1947), pp. 6, 66-67.

It was during the struggle to free the Negro in the West Indies, first from slavery, and then from Apprenticeship, that many reformers who later interested themselves in the question of American slavery, served their own anti-slavery apprenticeship. Methods of agitation were developed, ideas rooted, propaganda techniques improved, and organisational structures for anti-slavery activity established. Of the nine members of the committee of the Hibernian Anti-Slavery Society, seven were Quakers. Four of these, Richard Allen, James Henry Webb, Henry Bewley and William Bewley, had been active in the movement prior to 1838, while Richard D. Webb, Dr. Joshua Harvey and Henry Russell became actively involved only in the final stages of the struggle to end Apprenticeship. These Irish Quakers stressed the prominent role played by Joseph Sturge, the English Quaker, in the agitation against Apprenticeship, and his participation in the cause served as a kind of impirmeur for their own. After receiving a copy of an anti-slavery petition drawn up by English Friends, the Yearly Meeting of Ireland in 1838 decided that it too must "do its part", and had sent to Parliament in May, 1838, a petition urging the abolition of Apprenticeship. After 1838, however, when the Hibernian Anti-Slavery

1. James Henry Webb had canvassed M.P.'s in London in 1838 with Richard Allen. His brother Richard Webb, his father James Webb, William and Samuel Bewley and Richard Allen had been among the eighty-one Friends to sign the petition sent by the Irish Quakers to the House of Commons in 1824. Richard D. Webb was also among the Irish subscribers to the Central Negro Emancipation Committee, in December, 1837.

2. "Minute Book of the Yearly Meeting of Ireland", entry for 1/5/1838.
Society focussed its attention on the plight of the American slave, the situation developed in which the majority of committee members at any one time were Quakers, while the Quaker community as a whole in Ireland neither joined, nor actively supported, the Society. The explanations of this rest not only in the way in which the question of American slavery threatened to disrupt the transatlantic Quaker community, but in the schisms and disruptions that had characterised the recent history of the Society of Friends in Ireland.
Chapter Two

Divisions in Irish and American abolitionism
While it was only after Apprenticeship had been abolished in 1830 that abolitionists in Ireland as elsewhere fully devoted their energies to the overthrow of American slavery, some Irishmen of an earlier era had taken an interest in the subject. Thomas Branagan, for example, who was born in Dublin in 1774, and who for a period worked as a slave-overseer in Antigua, sailed for Philadelphia in 1809, where he became a persistent critic of American slavery.¹

Thomas Moore, the Irish poet, visited the United States in 1801; initially he shared Branagan's conviction that slavery ill-accorded with American protestations of love for liberty and democracy, but unlike Branagan, and in the face of persistent American hostility to his published views, Moore recanted on his earlier attitudes in 1816, and declared that it was the Old World which could be properly described as the "Hemisphere of Slaves".² Occasionally Irish abolitionist propaganda in the campaign against West Indian Slavery would draw upon the American situation to illustrate the horrors of slavery.


per so, but throughout the 1820's references in Irish newspapers and journals to American slavery were rare, and these usually compared the arguments used to justify slavery in America with those made by British opponents of West Indian emancipation.

In the 1830's the question of American slavery came more regularly under discussion. The increase in the Negro population of the United States was pointed to as proof of the need for increased British missionary activity in the West Indies, while visiting Americans, both black and white, themselves succeeded in drawing public attention to the existence of slavery in America, and to the plight of the slaves there. In 1835, readers of the *Christian Examiner* were exhorted to support the visit of Nathaniel Paul, who was in Britain collecting funds for the Wilberforce Settlement in Canada. Readers were reminded not to confuse Paul's objectives with those of Elliott Cresson, whose proposals to colonize American Negroes in Liberia were described as being as wise as schemes to "bottle up the Atlantic." Elliott Cresson had travelled in Britain

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4. *The Christian Examiner* (New Series), v. 4, n. XL, January, 1835, pp. 68-69. The Wilberforce Settlement was formed near London, Ontario, for the provision of educational and religious facilities for free Negroes from the U.S.A.
in 1832-33 to win support for the American Colonization Society, and
his visit had prompted William Lloyd Garrison to sail to England in
1833 in order to expose what he felt were the evils of Colonization.
Creoson had held meetings in Belfast and Dublin in 1833, and though
his proposals did meet with some support in the former city, Richard
Allen's later claim that Colonization was never given substantial
backing in Ireland seems broadly accurate, and this probably reflects
the stand which Daniel O'Connell had taken against it.¹

Irish journals also commented on the discussions of slavery in
America itself, which in the 1830's were becoming increasingly heated.
The debates on slavery in the Lane Seminary which led to the formation
of the Oberlin Seminary in 1835 convinced the Christian Freeman that
public opinion was gradually asserting itself and overcoming the
"colour-phobia which paralyzes or perverts the soul of the free
States".²

When the H.A.S.S. was formed in 1837, it specifically refused
to confine its aims to West Indian emancipation, but deplored the
existence of American slavery and proceeded to watch with "hopeful
sympathy" the activities of the abolitionists there.³ The immediate

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1. American Colonization Society. From the "Belfast Guardian" of the
15th. and 19th. April, 1833 (Belfast, 1833).
2. Letter from an "Irish Friend" (Allen), in National Anti-Slavery
7/1833, in W.H. Merrill (ed.), The Letters of William Lloyd Garrison
(Cambridge, Mass., 1971), v.1, p. 225. For Hadden's refusal to
support the colonization scheme in 1831, see R.R. Hadden, A Twelve-
Month's Residence, pp. 340-341.
3. Christian Freeman, V. I., n. XXX, January, 1836, pp. 91-95. This saw
the growth of the Colonization Society as evidence of the develop-
ment of anti-slavery sentiment in America, despite the fact that
those students who went on to form the Oberlin Institute had con-
cluded that no Christian could support the Society. Cf., Reminiscences
of a Transatlantic Traveller... by W.T.M. (Dublin, 1835), pp. 86-89,
105-106.
cause of the interest taken in America by the Dublin abolitionists was the direct influence exerted by George Thompson in 1837, as was indicated by the contacts established between the Seaport Ladies' Juvenile Auxiliary to the Hibernian Negro's Friend Society, formed during Thompson's first visit to Ireland, and the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society. On a broader level, the interest shown by the H.A.S.S. in American slavery, and its refusal to allow its philanthropic objectives to be confined by "geographical limitations", reflected the international, and, more specifically, the transatlantic horizons of the British Nineteenth Century reformer. Against a background of growing mercantile and financial links between Britain and America, which make it "historically fruitful" to think of a single Atlantic economy and in an age which saw the introduction of the Penny Post and the transatlantic telegraph, many reformers made a conscious and determined effort to transcend national boundaries in their humanitarian endeavours.


American institutions, and reform movements also provided a stimulus and example for the British reformers. R.D. Webb, R. Allen and Dr. Joshua Harvey were active members of the Hibernian Temperance Society, for instance, which specifically sought to emulate the aims and achievements of temperance societies in the United States. Dr. Ignatius Bonker was cited to the effect that as concerted public opinion was successfully bringing slavery to an end, so temperance could be abolished by similar agitation. R.D. Webb confessed that before he became aware of the existence and implications of American slavery, he had looked on the United States as "the glory of the world", as representing the potential and actual achievements of regenerate man. Indeed the importance of the United States as a kind of moral exemplar to British reformers, in itself helps to explain why the British abolitionists focused their outlook and energies so predominantly on America after 1838: as Henry Vincent, the British Chartist leader expressed it, it was essential for the success of reform movements in Britain that American slavery be abolished, since opponents of many of these movements could point


2. Public Announcement of the Hibernian Temperance Society. (Dublin, 1830), p. 2; see also, Tit for Tat, or Reciprocal Reconstru-cces to promote National Reform, British Christians Reconstru-ccing with Americans on Negro Slavery, American Christians Reconstru-ccing with Britons on Temperance-British Slavery (Glasgow, 1841).


to the United States, and slavery there, as evidence of the despotism
and hypocrisy implicit in the democratic system.¹ R.D. Webb, if
reluctant to be seen as interfering with the American political
system, nevertheless repudiated the charges that he and his co-
workers in British abolitionism were merely seeking to deny to
America what had been denied to the West Indian Slaveholders, and
remained adamant that he could champion the cause of the American
slave. For men like Webb, the humanitarian impulse assumed the
dimensions of a moral imperative, and the existence of American
slavery stood as a challenge to his ideological commitments—
perfectability, immediation, and a faith that corrupt institutions
should no longer be permitted to stand between man and his fullest
potential. Webb was aware that in approaching American slavery, the
British abolitionist could no longer, as in the 1830's, work
through a sovereign Parliament; he must now confine his activities
to lending moral and financial aid to the American abolitionists,
and to arousing British public opinion on the subject. The novelty
of this situation posed many problems for the British abolitionist,
but for their part, however much they disliked what they felt had
been unwarranted abolitionist complicity over apprenticeship and com-
penation in 1833, the American abolitionists were anxious to enlist

1. H. Vincent to H.C. Wright. State Hermitage, 1/12/1845, "English,
Trish and Scotch Letters Addressed to H.C. Wright, 1843-1847", v. 1.

2. H.R. Temperley, "British and American Abolitionists Compared",
in H. Duberman (ed.), The Anti-Slavery Vanguard (Princeton,
1965), pp. 343-361.
the aid of British anti-slavery workers in their struggle to free the slave. This in itself helped to ensure that the British abolitionists would concentrate their attentions on American slavery after 1838, though slavery existed in other parts of the world, most notably in British India, Cuba and Brazil. Many American abolitionists visited Britain between 1830 and 1860, giving British reformers the opportunity of meeting the men whom Harriet Martineau had described as risking the fury of enraged mobs in their devotion to the cause. British abolitionists, moreover, would also be invited to give their support to rival factions in the American anti-slavery ranks, and, with exceptions, this tended to increase the level of British abolitionists' interest in the American situation. The abolitionist impulse had therefore by 1838 acquired a certain momentum in Britain, and various factors militated against the dissipation of this. The universalist assumption that sin could not be ignored on the grounds of its geographical location has already been noted, and several other considerations underlined the abolitionists' determination to go on and wipe slavery from the face of the earth. Not only had the campaign against West Indian slavery seen the development of anti-slavery organizations and the countering of reform contacts, but anti-slavery itself had come to play an important role in the social and cultural life of many reformers, which in turn made it unlikely that organizational structures would be dismantled and ideological commitments repudiated. If for professional lecturers such as Thompson there was the question of private income to be considered, for the bulk of British abolitionists the question was not, shall agitation be ended, but more often, in which areas shall that agitation be projected? The answer to this question, for
the reasons outlined above, was predominantly American slavery, and this choice was the more readily confirmed since several other aspects of the abolitionists' lives were enriched in the process. Webb delighted in his wide range of American contacts, since they allowed him to transcend the barriers of class and rank which he felt so circumscribed his life in Dublin, while for him, and for other Irish abolitionist families, the dimensions of the slavery controversy, with its related issues such as women's rights, provided immense intellectual refreshment from what they considered the turgid confines of contemporary Irish life and society. It was for this reason that the Webb and Allen households in Dublin, and the Jennings household in Cork, shared a feeling for the American Garrisonians that amounted not only to admiration but gratitude.¹

The period covered by this dissertation also witnessed a substantial number of journeys made by British visitors to America, many of whom published their observations of American society,² while trade and emigration to America flourished with cheaper and more regular Atlantic crossings. Irish emigration to the United States in itself contributed to the sustained interest taken by Irish abolitionists in American affairs, since it meant that they had to respond to the Irish-American attitude to slavery, and since

their own links with America were strengthened by the fact that friends and relatives had emigrated there, while this was not a prospect which could be entirely ruled out in their lives. Webb's sister and uncle settled in America, his son Richard visited there on three occasions, each time receiving assistance from his father's abolitionist friends, and his daughter Deborah, who was married to the grandson of James Hargreaves, inventor of the Spinning Jenny, visited America in 1850-1851. On many occasions Webb wrote to his anti-slavery friends requesting them to give aid and hospitality to acquaintances and relatives who had gone to America, and Webb himself toyed for a time with the idea of removing there. There was, in short, a strong personal reason for Webb's interest in America.

The vast majority of the Irish abolitionists were, and so considered themselves, middle-class. The three Dublin abolitionists who most concerned themselves with American slavery were Webb, Allen, both Quakers, and Haughton, a Unitarian. Richard Allen was the son of a linen and muslin merchant, and in 1830 he set up in business for himself, adding woollens and tailored goods to his trade. By the mid-1840's he and his wife Anne were able to make frequent and lengthy trips to England and the Continent. James Haughton, born in Carlow in 1795, was the son of a miller,

and in 1819 he set up in business in the corn and flour trade. He
soon established a partnership with his brother William which
lasted until 1850. In that year he was able to retire from mer-
cantile affairs and to devote his life almost entirely to philan-
thropic affairs which, following his wife's death, succeeded in
replacing the feeling of spiritual emptiness in his life. Richard
Davis Webb remained a printer and a bookseller throughout his
life—an occupation he shared with several other British abolition-
ists—and though he frequently complained of the long hours and hard
work involved, his business interests too undoubtedly flourished
during the course of the years. There is no evidence that these men
underwent any status displacement which might be used to suggest
possible motivation for their interest in American slavery.

Their religious affiliation, however, was of great importance,
since exclusion from circles of social and political power may have,
in the case of Allen and Webb, confirmed their feelings of isol-
ation in Irish society, thereby strengthening their tendency to
project their interests and energy into American affairs, and since
the Unitarians, and the Quakers in particular, were the denominations
with the closest links with their brethren in America. Moreover,
the situation in the Irish Quaker community was such as to have

1. H. Clifton, "The Remarkable James Haughton from Carlow", in
Carloviana, v. 1, n. 12, December, 1963, p. 28; Haughton,
Haughton, p. 105.

2. J. Haughton to M.H. Chapman, Dublin, 18/7/1844, 18/10/1844.

3. Cf. D. Donald, "Towards a Reconsideration of the Abolitionists",
in Lincoln Reconsidered: Essays on the Civil War (New York,
1956), pp. 18-36; H. Tempey, British Anti-Slavery (Ayles-
distinct implications for the Irish anti-slavery movement. Irish
Friends in the mid-nineteenth century were faced with an international Quaker body threatened with immediate disruption, and a
domestic heritage characterized by schism and internal disputes.
Resolved to preserve their ancient testimonies, including that on
slavery, they were anxious to avoid action that might further en-
danger their communications with American Friends, or involve
participation with non-Quakers. It was not so much that they were
beginning to regard slavery as less of a sin, as that their old
fears about anti-slavery endangering their testimonies and indeed
their existence became exacerbated.

Most of the early Quaker adherents went to Ireland in 1656-
1685, and, capitalizing on the Penal Laws, they quickly established
themselves in trade and commerce.1 Contacts of every kind were
rapidly established with America.2 From 1767-1812 some sixty
American Friends visited Ireland, while from 1691-1770 fifteen
Irish Friends visited America; three of these reported officially
on the travels in America, though none of these touched on the
subject of slavery.3 Travelling ministers such as Thomas Story and

1. I. Grubb, Quakers and Industry before 1800 (London, 1930),
p. 10; Cullen, Anglo-Irish Trade, p. 23.
2. For the background to the development of the Quaker trans-
Atlantic community, see, H. Kraus, The Atlantic Civilization:
Eighteenth Century Origins (Ithaca, 1949), p. 59; F.B. Tolles,
Quakers and the Atlantic Culture (New York, 1930), pp. 23-
29; T.E. Drake, "Patterns of Influence in Anglo-American Quaker-
ism", Supplement No. 20, to the Journal of the Friends' Histori-
cal Society, Autumn, 1953.
3. For. II.n.22. Friends' Library, Dublin; I. Grubb, "American
Visitors to Ireland", in Journal of the Friends' Historical
Society, v. 39, 1940, pp. 25-30; R.K. Jones, The Quakers in
Thomas Sillitoe from England, and John Higham of Aberdeen, also
visited both Ireland and America, thereby helping to establish the
transatlantic Quaker community, based on the principles of "mutual
aid, exhortation, edification and comfort." A mere enumeration
of these ministers, however, does little to convey an impression
of the scope and significance of their travels. By no means un-
typical of these ministers was Thomas Wilson who was born in Quaker-
land and who settled in Blanderry, Ireland. He left there for
America where he became involved in a heated debate with George
Keith in 1690-1691. He then left for Barbados, where he witnessed
the suppression of a slave-rebellion. In 1694 he visited Ireland,
and in 1713 he left once more for America. In the course of his
ministry, therefore, he visited Ireland, America and the West
Indies. Like William Edmundson, he acquired a first-hand know-
ledge of slavery. Ironically, however, while men like Wilson helped
to establish the close links between American and British Friends,
the problem of slavery threatened to rend these assunder.

the American Colonies (London, 1911), pp. 540-542; G.W.
Millar, "Irish Friends Report on their Missions to
bury, "A Quaker from Ireland in America" in Proceedings of
the American Antiquarian Society, v. LXIX, n.5, pp. 112-118.

1. Template, Quakers and Atlantic Culture, p. 31.

2. A Brief Journal of the Life...of Thomas Wilson (Dublin, 1728),
pp. 1, 8-9, 33-48.
Following the establishment of the Penn estates in County Cork (where the younger William Penn had first become acquainted with Quaker teaching in 1657), Irish Quakers were involved in the settlement of Pennsylvania, from where, by the end of the Eighteenth Century they had moved to South Carolina; subsequently, unable to cope with the economic competition from their neighbours who still held slaves, and attracted by the lure of virgin soil, they moved to Kentucky and the west. Many of this group remained in postal communication with their neighbours in Ireland. 1

The ties between Irish and American Friends, established by the first Quakers in Ireland, were confirmed and strengthened by later generations, either through transatlantic business relationships 2 or through works of mutual charity. 3 In short, Irish Quakers established a wide range of contacts with America, and an interest in American slavery was exhibited at every level, as it indicated in the commonplace books of Joseph Poole of Gowton, which reveal an interest in American slavery not only at an anecdotal level, but also the way in which the example of American Friends encouraged those


3. Extract of a Letter from Several Friends in Philadelphia to John Tenthol... (Philadelphia, 16/12/1777), p. 4, P. 20 (139). Friends' Library, Dublin. In this case American Friends, complaining of privation as both American and British armies tried to starve each other out, requested aid: some of the funds sent in reply from Ireland were used by the Philadelphia Friends for their Society for the Relief of Free Negroes Unlawfully Held in Bondage.
in Britain to work for West Indian Emancipation. Individual Irish Quaker families often received conflicting opinions on slavery from their American relatives. James Wright, for example, emigrated from Ireland in 1801, and one of his sons, Benjamin, after an unsuccessful venture in Ohio Democratic politics in 1845, became an ardent abolitionist, and, at the outset of the Civil War, a champion of the cause espoused by W. L. Garrison some fifteen years earlier, namely that the North should break away from any Union with slaveholders. To his somewhat bemused cousin in Dublin he sent reports of the dangers which his point of view now exposed him to in Ohio, and articles from the Ohio Anti-Slavery Bugle which he asked him to circulate. His brother, James, followed a different course, becoming a merchant, planter and slaveholder in Cuba, where he bitterly condemned West Indian Emancipation, compared the lot of his slaves most favourably with that of the majority of Irish peasants, and was appointed American Consul for some years, during which time he sent back pamphlets to Ireland attacking Dr. Hadden’s role in the Amistad Case. His rigorous defence of slavery was not, however, welcomed by his Dublin relations, one of whom, his aunt Rachel in Dublin, required a great deal of persuasion that the money was not slave-produce but came from


a trust set up independently of his plantation, before she would accept
his offer of financial assistance in 1836.1

As seen in the case of the Grubb brothers of Clonmel, Irish
Quaker business interests could on occasion collide with their anti-
slavery commitments. Joshua E. Todhunter was an Irish Friend, for
example, who was resident in New York as a distributor and salesman
of textiles, and among the British firms for which he was an agent
was Pin Brothers of Dublin. He was brother-in-law of Jonathan Pin,
a partner in the Dublin Company, and his initial letters to Pin
testified to the courage and ability of the abolitionists. However,
as Civil War approached and eventually broke out, Todhunter's letters
began to stress increasingly his fear that his business interests would
suffer if the North insisted on waging war. He thus came to support
the position also taken by Benjamin Wright, namely that of urging the
North to accept Southern secession. But while Wright was motivated
by a rigorous commitment to anti-slavery principles, Todhunter's prin-
cipal concern revealed itself as being a conviction that his business
affairs would prosper more given the free trade principles of the South
than in any war situation.2 Todhunter's letters to Pin were widely

1. Wright Ms. Friends' Library, Dublin. James suspected that the
real reason for her reluctance to accept the money was that he
had become a Roman Catholic; another motive may have been her
resentment against the generous largeness of an emigrant rela-
tive who had done well.

2. J.E. Todhunter to J. Pin. New York, 15/4/1862, 15/7/1862,
19/5/1863. Pin Ms. Box 3, f.10/f.17/f.36.
circulated, and they were welcomed by, among others, Sir William
Gregory, the first M.P. to urge British recognition of the Confederacy,
and whose anti-slavery protestations became more obviously insincere
as the Civil War progressed. 1

Irish Quaker connections with America guaranteed an interest
in American slavery, but by no means did they guarantee an involve-
ment in anti-slavery. Irish Quaker attitudes to the anti-slavery
movement in Ireland can only be explained by examining the history of
the Friends in Ireland, and the ways in which they were affected by
the transatlantic Quaker community.

After the treaty of Limerick, Irish Friends, perhaps in reaction
against the vicissitudes of the preceding years, became a sect devoted
it would seem to maintaining the exclusiveness of their body. As the
Eighteenth Century progressed a stress was laid on rules of conduct,
dress, and discipline, which was unparalleled elsewhere in the
Quaker world. 2 The Irish Quaker in the Eighteenth Century was still a
mystic, still therefore persuaded of the immanence of God in the soul
of men, but his convictions now tended to accentuate man's depravity
and fallen state. 3 Quiescence became the predominant feature of Irish
Quaker thought. Quiescence—the submission of the individual before his

1. W. Marwick, "Some Quaker Firms in the Nineteenth Century", in
Journal of the Friends' Historical Society, v.50, n.1, Spring,
1962, pp. 33-35; D. Large, "An Irish Friend and the American
Civil War", in Bulletin of the Friends' Historical Association,
v.47, n.1, Spring, 1958, pp. 20-29; J. Hennin, "Irish Public
Opinion and the American Civil War", (Ph.D. Trinity College
Dublin, 1963), p.69; Lady Gregory, (ed.), Sir William Gregory,

2. A.M. Guenare, The Quaker, A Study in Costume (Philadelphia,
1901), pp. 21-22; Grubb, Quakers in Ireland, p. 81.

pp. xxxiv-xxxvii (Introduction by Rufus Jones).
God, and the suspicion of any activity not felt to have originated in the Divine instruction—was not a matter of energetic activity as opposed to non-activity: this emerges from the careers of the English quietist Thomas Sillitoe, who engaged on much temperance activity in Ireland from 1803-1012, while the anti-slavery convictions of Joshua Boyle in Cork aptly illustrate the mind of the Irish Quaker quietist as activist. The Irish Quakers themselves realised that a quietistic plea could on occasion be offered as an excuse for non-activity. Thus the Yearly Meeting of Ireland reminded the Baltimore Yearly Meeting in 1845 that while "it greatly behoves the members of our religious society...in their endeavours to promote this great object [of abolition]" to "patiently wait for the pointings of our Heavenly Guide, they [should] be careful not to overlook these, however small they may be." The persistence of a quietistic frame of mind among Irish Quakers, however, in itself nourished the intellectual roots that created a conducive atmosphere for the later introduction and acceptance of evangelicalism there. However, many Irish Quakers hesitated to accept the tenets of the evangelical movement, with its heavy stress on Biblical authority. Abraham Shackleton, son of Fox's correspondent Richard, was prominent in a group of Irish Friends who felt that the mystical nature of their faith was being


supplemented in the late Eighteenth Century by an over-rigid reliance on scriptural authority and by dogmatic theories for the attainment of salvation. The aspects in particular of these developments have a bearing on Irish Quaker attitudes to American slavery.

The first is the importance of the role played by American Friends visiting Ireland. Job Scott of Providence, Rhode Island, for example, who died of smallpox in Shackleton's house in Ballitore in 1793, certainly helped to confirm the latter's reluctance as he saw it to reduce religion to a set of rules and doctrinal creeds, while David Sands, who visited Ireland in 1797, felt that the Irish Quaker had become a deist. Sands in particular was most influential in persuading Irish Quakers that salvation had been made possible by the sufferings of Christ as recorded in the scriptures.1 Considerable disarray ensued, particularly among Friends in Ulster, as was found by another prominent evangelical, Stephen Grallet, when he visited Ireland in 1811-1812.2 The dissension, which occurred in its most pronounced form in the years 1793-1801, eventually died down but was never completely resolved.3 Irish Quakers, therefore, experienced disputes which were to trouble the transatlantic Quaker community for the next fifty years, as evidenced in the Hicksite schism in


2. For Grallet's visit to America (where he strongly condemned the Colonization Society in 1824) and Ireland, see B. Seebohm, Memoirs of...Stephen Grallet (2 vols., London, 1861), v. 1, pp. 137-111; v. 2, pp. 121-122.

3. For a contemporary account sympathetic to Shackleton, see W. Rathborne, A Narrative of Events that have lately taken place in Ireland among the Society called Quakers, with Corresponding Documents and Occasional Observations (London, 1804)
the United States, and the controversy among English Quakers in the 1830's concerning J.J. Gurney's espousal of the belief that there was only one fixed basis of religious belief—God as revealed in Holy Scriptures. Clearly there were features which made the Irish situation in some ways unique, in particular the reluctance of both Shackleton and his Irish opponents to accept the dictates of the London Yearly Meeting, and the background of suffering and turmoil in Ireland as a whole at this time, yet the prominent English evangelical William Forster rightly observed, when visiting the United States in 1820, the marked similarities that existed between the disputes over Elias Hicks and his adherents and those that had occurred among Irish Quakers some twenty years earlier.1

Visits from American Friends to Ireland, moreover, became markedly less frequent after 180h, while for their part, visiting English Friends in America were charged with having sought to impose the domination of the London Yearly Meeting on American Friends, and of having engineered opposition to Elias Hicks for this purpose.2 While the links between British and American Friends were sufficiently strong to survive such tensions and animosities, the situation was exacerbated by the fact that each debate was worded in such a way as to allow each faction to claim that they alone were preserving the


2. T. E. Phillips, A Narrative of the Causes which led to the separation of the Society of Friends in America and the Means that were employed to effect it (Baltimore, 1852), pp. 18-23, 35-38. Phillips also accused detractors of Hicks in the United States of being bad Americans in supporting the British cause in 1776, and the domination of the London Yearly Meeting. For an account of the Hicksites which stresses their alienation from the dynamic business economy in the United States, see R.W. Dohearty, The Hicksite Separation. A Sociological Analysis of Religious Schism in Early Nineteenth Century America (New Brunswick, 1967).
original testimonies of the Quaker body. In Ireland, where these controversies first developed, this resulted in the fact that the Dublin Yearly Meeting became extremely concerned when faced with the Hicksite separation in America and the Gurneyite controversies in the London Yearly Meeting, since they had their own experiences to indicate exactly how these could endanger Quaker unity; consequently, they were the more anxious to avoid any action which, as in the slavery controversy, might further disrupt themselves and their transatlantic connections.

The second result of the past disputes among Irish Quakers was that for one of R.D. Webb's questioning mind, there was a long tradition of intellectual dissent among Irish Quakers, at times described as sceptical, deistic and rationalistic by its denigrators. There are remarkable parallels between R.D. Webb and Abraham Shackleton. Both were ardent abolitionists: Shackleton had refrained from the use of West Indian slave-produced sugar (and for a time refused to purchase any foreign goods on the grounds put forward by John Woolman, that were used frequently caused by foreign trade). Both men

1. See also, A Testimony of the Quarterly Meeting of Limerick concerning Sarah Grubb, Discussed (Dublin, 1813), pp. 10-11; E. Grubb, The Evangelical Movement and its Impact on the Society of Friends (London, 1924), pp. 5-6, 14-16.

2. Irish Quakers were also faced, from 1840-1844, with the phenomenon of the White Quakers, led by one Joshua Jacob, who protested against that they considered the worldliness of other Friends. While they were generally dismissed as embarrassing cranks, they again underlined one of the major problems facing Irish Quakers: every faction in every dispute claimed to represent true Quaker principles. R.E. Webb to E. Quincy, Dublin, 2/5/1843, Webb/Quincy Letters.

refused to accept the Bible as an infallible guide, and objected to parts of the Old Testament, in particular the extirpation of the Canaanites, as being irreconcilable with the Christian precepts. Finally, the two men, combining keen intellects with extensive reading and intellectual assertiveness, eventually left the Society.

Shackleton's daughter, Betsy, later recalled that her father's exertions against the slave-trade had been considered excessive, but that his strength of conviction had been essential to rouse the "stupid and indolent" such indeed was Webb's own justification of his actions to those who considered his abolitionism too extreme.

The majority of Irish Friends of Webb's generation attempted to present closed ranks against areas and ideas which might threaten Quaker stability, especially when these emanated from the United States. For Quakers such as Webb, however, this situation could be

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1. Both men were educated at Ballitore School in Co. Kildare, founded by Abraham's grandfather in 1726. Haughton also attended Ballitore, as did some of Allen's brothers. Clifton, Haughton, p. 28; Higanb, Allen, p. 4; H. Leadbeater, Richard and Elizabeth Shackleton. (London, 1822), pp. 3-4. When Shackleton died, he was replaced as headmaster at Ballitore by James White, Webb's wife's uncle. Webb regarded Betsy Shackleton, Abraham's daughter, as one of his closest friends, and her sister Mary not many of Webb's abolitionist friends whom she visited in America in 1851. For Webb's regard for Ballitore, where he got his "first taste for literary society", see R.J. Webb, to A.W. Weston, Dublin, 14/1/1857, Ms.A.9.2.v.29, p. 1. Weston Papers; Ballitore Literary Gazette, 27/2/1827.


3. And possibly a man such as Haughton whose father, a Quaker, had been disowned for countenancing Hannah Bernard, another visiting American Friend who in 1600 had opposed the new stress on scriptural authority, F.D. Tolles (ed.) Slavery and the 'The Woman Question.' Lucretia Mott's Diary of her visit to Great Britain... (Haverford, 1952), p. 51. Mrs. Mott, a Hicksite, was pleased to discover this about him, as it gave her pleasure to meet those who "have suffered for their liberal views of Christianity". L.C.M. Hare, The Greatest American Woman. Lucretia Mott (New York, 1937), p. 115.
interpreted as providing further evidence of the Irish Quaker propensity for repudiating rational protest, and may well have strengthened his inclinations to champion the cause of those American abolitionists whose ideas were later branded as outrageous heterodoxy. Irish Quakers, however, in their Yearly Epistles to their American brethren, continued to display an interest in slavery, and in the problems which its existence posed to American Quakers, while it also reported on their own exertions on behalf of the West Indian Slaves. The Yearly Meeting of Ireland after 1624 was particularly concerned with helping the Quakers in North Carolina who were forbidden by State law to free their slaves and who had therefore transferred them to the care of an agent. Finding the financial burden of this arrangement too great, the North Carolina Friends had decided to encourage the slaves to accept Colonization, mainly in Liberia, or emigration to the western States of America. The Irish Quakers provided financial assistance for this venture, until 1840, some seven years after Garrison had visited Britain in his attempt to expose what he took to be the enormities of Colonization proposals, but the difficulties reported by the North Carolina Friends in their Yearly Epistles may well have provided conclusive proof to the Dublin Quakers that, if the ethical considerations involved were not, as Garrison had suggested, overwhelming, then the practical considerations at least were insuperable.

1. Over £95 in 1836.

2. In 1840, the Irish Friends had advised those in North Carolina to petition for the utter abolition of slavery, some two years after the North Carolina Friends had reported that they had done precisely that. See, "Epistles to the Yearly Meeting of Ireland,
The fund to help the North Carolina Friends which the Irish Friends had contributed to, had been set up by the London Yearly Meeting. Indeed, throughout the campaign for West Indian Emancipation Irish Friends acting as a body had involved themselves largely after exhortation from London Friends, who circulated petitions and anti-slavery literature, and collected financial contributions. This to a certain extent reflected the larger role which guilt perhaps played among English Friends who had a more extensive history of personal involvement in slavery and the slave-trade; but also, the relationship between the Yearly Meetings in Dublin and London. This, admitted the Irish Quakers, was somewhat "anomalous in character"; Dublin Friends acted with "some degree of subordination", but with "an independence of action not quite consistent with the position of an inferior body."²

Irish Quakers had to be chided on occasion in the 1820's, however, for their failure to respond with sufficient zeal to the anti-slavery example set them by English Friends,³ while charges of a more serious


nature concerning the conduct of British and American Quakers in general, appeared in the pages of the *Irish Friend* (1830-1842), a monthly edited in Belfast by William Bell.

Bell was born in Belfast in 1795, and became active in temperance and anti-slavery work there. He was the sole editor and proprietor of the monthly which had an increasingly large English circulation as well as being sent to Friends in America. In his "Introductory Address" Bell promised, while refusing to publish any material that impugned the Society of Friends, that he would diffuse such information as would lead to a greater prevalence of the "spirit" of the Society, and would not shrink from discussion of "the prevailing inconsistencies" such as slavery and intemperance. The statement might have appealed to those who feared the effect of contemporary pamphlets attacking the Quakers, and also to those who welcomed the airing of views on controversial topics. It thereby embodied all of the traditional ambiguities which had beset those who claimed to uphold original Quaker teachings. Bell's position, moreover, was made even more difficult by his insistence that his paper was fully independent and unconnected to the Society of Friends in Ireland.


In the first issue of the Irish Friend was printed the opening
Address of the H.A.S.S., and Bell from the outset supported the
campaign for West Indian Emancipation, and noted, with respect to
Irish Quakers, there existed "too much sympathy" on this subject.¹
After the abolition of apprenticeship, Bell began to devote more
space to the topics of temperance, and to opposing schemes to
colonize, for example, New Zealand: citing extracts from William
Howitt's Colonization and Christianity, Bell asserted that coloniza-
tion, even when carried out in the name of religion, had resulted
in the cruel maltreatment of aboriginal populations, such as the
Indians in the United States, the aborigines in New South Wales,
and the Africans who had suffered at the hands of the Boers in
South Africa.²

Recognising that the anti-slavery impulse had "not abated"
however, Bell welcomed the formation in April, 1839, of the B.F.A.S.S.³
and he also gave his support to the British India Society, formed
in July, 1839, agreeing with George Thomson that if India could
provide a source of free cotton, then English industry need no longer
under-write American slavery.⁴

1. Irish Friend, v.1, n.5, March, 1839, p.27. Allen in Dublin
wrote long letters for Bell at this time on the conduct of the
campaign against apprenticeship.

2. Ibid., v.2, n.2, February, 1839, p. 13; v.2,n.3, March, 1839,
p. 17; v.2, n.7, July, 1839, p. 52. In this context Bell
praised the work of the Aborigines' Protection Society.

3. Ibid., v.2, n.4, April, 1839, p. 28. Allen attended as a dele-
gate at the first meeting of the B.F.A.S.S.

4. Ibid., v.2, n.8, August, 1839, p. 57; for Allen's insistence
that the British India Society should continue to function as
a separate body, see, ibid., v. 3, n.3, March, 1840, pp. 21-22.
Bell's occasional criticisms of Irish Quakers for their apathy on the slavery issue, and his determination to retain his editorial independence led to increasingly strained relations between him and the Quaker body in Ireland and by January, 1840, he was complaining that he was being deprived of much valuable information owing to the "prejudices of some and the supineness of others." This situation was exacerbated when he published a review of a pamphlet by the English Quaker Elizabeth Pease, entitled The Society of Friends in the United States: Their views of the Anti-Slavery question, and Treatment of the People of Colour. Compiled from Original Correspondence (Darlington, 1840). This purported to show that American Quakers were both strongly prejudiced against Negroes, and were reluctant to support the anti-slavery movement: Bell insisted initially on confining his attention only to the first of these charges, and concluded that the pamphlet showed that British Friends were not only entitled but obliged to reconstrue with their American brethren.

Bell had expected to be criticized for these statements, and he did indeed receive letters of censure from British Friends who, he insisted in return, were in a small minority. He agreed with a letter written by William Seal, Quaker Secretary of the G.E.S., that Friends could not offer as a reason for refusing to join anti-

1. Ibid., v.3, n. 1, January, 1840, p. 4.
slavery societies the fact that prayers were often given by members of other denominations on anti-slavery platforms, and in reply to a statement by one English-Quaker, who claimed that American Friends were justified in not joining anti-slavery societies with men who supported non-resistance, by referring to the constitution of the New England Non-Resistant Society, which he interpreted as being a peace society, and therefore one that could hardly be uncongenial to Quakers. In a private letter to Elizabeth Pease, the American Quaker abolitionist, William Basset praised the stand that Bell had taken, and referred to rumours current in American Quaker circles that Bell was not a Friend, that the Irish Friend was read only by disaffected Quakers in Britain, but was read and thoroughly appreciated by American abolitionists. Bell learnt of the accusations alluded to in this letter and in October, 1840, denounced them as "unfounded calumny", pointing to the two thousand copies which were chiefly circulated in England each month as proof of this: he himself claimed to be a follower of the principles laid down for Friends by George Fox. However, there had, by Bell's own admission, been evidence of strained relations between himself and the Quaker

1. Ibid., v.3, n.4, April, 1840, pp. 25-26. Bell however seemed more sensitive than Scaal to this objection, and referred to an Epistle from the London Yearly Meeting of 1828 urging Friends, especially in an age of inter-denominational philanthropic activity, to maintain the ways of the Society, Ibid., p. 37.
2. Ibid., p. 37.
body in Ireland, and some indication that the percentage of Irish readers of the Irish Friend did decline from 1838-1842.\textsuperscript{1} Bell claimed that a majority of British Friends supported his contention that American Quakers displayed a good deal of prejudice against American Negroes, and that only a minority felt that any remonstrance would be both "unfortunate and inexpedient". Very much aware that he himself had confined his remarks to the first of Elizabeth Pease's allegations, he suggested to his readers that the World Convention in June, 1840, would provide an opportunity of eliciting further information on the matter.\textsuperscript{2}

This Convention, sponsored by the B.F.A.S.S., was an outstanding example of the transatlantic dimensions of the anti-slavery movement. However, it was at this Convention that most British abolitionists first became aware of the divisions that had taken place among American abolitionists.

In July, 1837, Sarah and Angelina Grimké\textsuperscript{3} of Charleston, South Carolina, had lectured on anti-slavery in New England, and were given considerable encouragement in Garrison's \textit{Liberator}. Garrison

\textsuperscript{1} Bernard Canter, "The Irish Friend", pp. 29-30. (Mr. Canter's essay is part of an uncompleted work on Quaker newspapers in Britain. A copy of it in ms. form is in the Friends' Library, Dublin, and I am grateful to Mr. Canter and Mrs. O. Goodbody for allowing me to consult it). Mr. Canter suggests that by October, 1840, more than half of the Quaker households in the United Kingdom were taking the Irish Friend.

\textsuperscript{2} Irish Friend, v.3, n. 7, July, 1840, p. 46.

\textsuperscript{3} G. Lorimer, \textit{The Grimké Sisters from Carolina. Rebels Against Slavery} (Boston, 1967).
had already quarreled with the prominent New England clergymen, W.E. Channing and Lyman Beecher, accusing them of being too moderate on the slavery issue, and the Grimké sisters, lecturing in churches and discussing such subjects as whether or not the Bible sanctioned slavery, almost inevitably became involved in Garrison’s controversies with the clergy. In July, 1837, the General Association of Congregational Churches issued a Pastoral Letter stating that itinerant lecturers should not be allowed to hold meetings in church, and deploring the participation of women in public meetings. Soon after this appeared the first Clerical Appeal, signed by five Congregational ministers, and specifically rebuking Garrison for his criticisms of individual clergymen. 1 Garrison’s interminable response to this in the Liberator gave concern to many of his friends, including John G. Whittier, who feared that anti-slavery would lose a great deal of support if it was allied, as Garrison seemed to insist, with a wide range of reform demands. Further cause for division was provided by the Peace Convention which took place in Boston in September, 1838, when, thanks to Garrison, women delegates were allowed to speak, vote and hold office. The resolutions of the New England Non-Resistant Society, which was formed at the meeting, pledged resistance to all human activity which rested on force, and though these were later defended by Bell in Belfast as being in keeping with Quaker

peace principles, to many in the United States as in Britain they seemed to provide further evidence that the ultimate effect of Garrison's plans would be to discredit abolitionism entirely by associating it with anarchism. And if Garrison suspected that the cause of abolition gained status by his being engaged in debate with such as Beecher and Canning, this was balanced by the suspicion of his opponents such as Charles Torrey, a Congregationalist minister in Providence, that Garrison's perfectionist and non-resistant views were essentially inimical to their own career and financial interests. Garrison survived attempts in 1839 to overthrow his control of the M.A.S.S., but throughout 1839 regional tensions in American anti-slavery found expression, and prominent New York abolitionists, in particular Henry Stanton and James G. Birney disapproved of the way that Garrison's non-resistant principles had led him, and the M.A.S.S., to discountenance political action as an anti-slavery instrumentality. These quarrels and disaffections came to a head in May, 1840 at the annual convention of the A.A.S.S. Garrison organised his support with great skill and the convention was effectively packed in his favour when Abby Kelley was appointed a member of the business committee, Garrison's opponents objected and withdrew to form the A.F.A.S.S.¹

¹ Lewis Tappan was Treasurer, with his brother Arthur as President. Birney and Stanton were secretaries. L. Filler, The Crusade Against Slavery (New York, 1960), pp. 127-133.
Although effective autonomy had already passed to the State anti-slavery societies the succession of the anti-Garrison or "New Organizationist" forces in New York testified to the existence of widespread disagreements about the nature of the anti-slavery movement as such: on the one hand were those who felt that women's rights and non-resistance were merely "extraneous" issues which provided a cargo of encumbrances, impractical, alienating many, and detracting from abolitionism as the first and foremost of the reformers' demands; on the other were those such as Garrison who insisted on a wide syndrome of related reforms as being the prerequisite for securing a world free from oppression. These were the ideological dimensions of the debate which—focussing on the women's rights issue—first revealed themselves to British abolitionists at the World Convention in London.

The original invitations from the B.F.A.S.S. in June, 1839, had failed to specify the sex of the delegates; the second invitation, issued in February, 1840, specifically referred to "gentlemen". However, the A.A.S.S. convention in New York in 1840 appointed Lucretia Mott, the American Hicksite, as one of the delegates.

1. Not all of Garrison's opponents, however, initially supported the idea of forming a Liberty Party to secure abolition by political ends. In March 1840, Lewis Tappan wrote that the anti-slavery movement was fast varying into "three bands". The first were the GARRISONIANS, "composed of infidels, Universalists, Unitarians, worldly men of all sorts and some xians probably; secondly were those who supported the formation of a political party, which Tappan predicted would resemble, in its "career", the Anti-Masonic Party; thirdly was the "Evangelical Alliance"—composed of men who were prepared to vote, but who remained convinced that "God's blessing will be signally displayed when the principal efforts are made to enlighten and correct and influence our countrymen by moral suasion". Tappan saw himself at this stage as belonging to the third group. L. Tappan to G. Smith, New York, 21/3/1840. Smith MSS. Syracuse University.
to attend in London. On the first day of the Convention, Wendell Phillips, of the A.A.S.S., proposed that a committee be set up to prepare a list of delegates, which should include the women from America: after a long debate the question was effectively settled against the inclusion of the female delegates when Birney suggested that those who now supported the cause of women's rights were those who also advocated non-resistance principles. Garrison arrived too late for the debate, but indicated his displeasure at the outcome by sitting in the gallery throughout the Convention.

Some seventeen delegates were scheduled to attend the Convention from Ireland. Of these, the largest group was from Dublin and was largely composed of members of the Webb family: they included Webb (1805-1872) himself, his wife Hannah, his brothers James Henry (1810-1860), and Thomas, (1806-1884), his cousin Anne Allen (1805-1868) and her husband, Richard, and finally his sister-in-law Maria Waring (1810-1874). Close family ties were a feature of the Irish anti-slavery movement; though, stemming as they did from the network of familial links within the Irish Quaker world, it was easy, as Webb himself was aware, to find relations of his who disagreed violently with his anti-slavery attitudes or who took no part in anti-slavery at all.

Although the Irish women went to London as visitors, and not as delegates, and consequently expected to sit in the gallery, their

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1. Temperley, British Anti-Slavery, p. 87; see also, letter from Joseph Sturge in the Liberator, 8/5/1840, discouraging female delegates from attending.
2. Including 1 from Cork and 3 from Belfast.
sympathies were moved by the sight of Phillips pleading the rights of
the American women: Hannah Webb commented, in a rare moment of irony,
that the fact that they were allowed to attend at all showed that
the cause of women's rights was making some progress. Her more
outspoken sister Maria Varina had been amused at the noisy debate,
and felt that the American women had acquired a greater dignity by
refusing to refer to themselves as ladies. R.D. Webb for his part
gave his interpretation of the divisions among American abolitionists:

"There is a split amongst the abolitionists here and
in America. One party, who have peculiar government
principles and are in favour of the rights of women
to participate in their discussions, are the disciples
of Garrison. The others, who oppose such views, are
generally united by such of the clergy as are abolition-
ists. Birney belongs to this party. Both are firm
to the great cause; but I could have the most depend-
dence on the old, or Garrison party."

Webb, after meeting George Thompson and reading Harriet Martineau,
had been in a "fidget" to meet Garrison. How he found him "somewhat
impatient, like a moral torrent, ...exceedingly free and courteous,
very communicative and full of his subject. In some respects he is
awful, but I could hardly make this clear in a moment." The Dublin
deleagates were enormously impressed with Birney, when they entertained
at their lodgings, but although Webb's understanding of their ideas
was imperfect at this stage, and though he clearly found himself incapable
of sharing some of Garrison's views, it was with the Garrisonians

1. H. Varina to S. Poole; H. Varina to S. Poole; R.D. Webb to S.
Poole. These letters to Sarah Poole of Co. Wexford, a cousin
of R.D. Webb's, were copied in 1896 from her letterbook of 1840
by Webb's son, Alfred. Ms.A.1.2.v.9, n.60, Anti-Slavery
Letters to Garrison. The letters are all undated, but were
written from London in June, 1840.
in London that Webb and his circle most clearly sympathised. As well as the feelings of sympathy for the excluded American women felt by Hannah Webb and her sister, the Dublin contingent had also been predisposed to welcoming co-workers of different views into the abolitionist ranks. As this issue had been debated in the Irish Friend prior to the Convention, the religious affiliation, rather than the sex of the potential co-worker had been the factor in question. Yet, at the Convention, the Dublin delegates, all dressed in traditional Quaker garb, were aware that one of the most prominent of the excluded Americans was Lucretia Mott, an adherent of Elias Hicks. It was later urged in the Liberator that Mrs. Mott had been discriminated against mainly on religious grounds, (Joseph Sturge had written urging that only orthodox Quakers be sent as delegates from the United States,\(^1\)) while Webb wrote dismissively of her to Sarah Poole in London: "The women [delegates from the United States] are intelligent, pleasant, unassuming, and one of them, Lucretia Mott—-as plain a Friend as thy Mother and a Hicksite preacher —is considered a person of great ability".\(^2\) The debates on the seating of the women delegates had revealed that the majority of the Convention had certain convictions about the nature of the abolitionist movement: for Webb, after reading the debates in the Irish Friend in the months before the Convention, these conceptions appeared

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1. Morrill, Garrison, pp. 353-358; fn. 15; Pennsylvania Freeman, 3/12/1860; D.B. Price to D. O'Connell, in National Anti-Slavery Standard, 8/10/1860; Memorial of Sarah Pugh. A tribute of Respect from her Cousins (Philadelphia, 1880), pp. 22-26. Many prominent Hicksites in America were Garrisonian, including I.T. Hopper, A. Kinbar, the Motts, and S. Pugh.

2. "Poole Letters".
curiously conservative and circumscribed, suggesting that the cause of the slave had been subordinated to that of sect by the Broad Street Committee and the A.F.A.S.S.\footnote{1}

Another factor which helped to explain Webb's predilection for Garrison and his supporters was the undoubted pleasure he and his circle took in associating with important abolitionists who had, it seemed, been spurned by the metropolitan committee. The G.K.S. had some tradition of reluctance to accept the domination of London abolitionists,\footnote{2} and while there were few such features in Irish abolition history, Dublin's past dependence on London for abolitionist literature and policy directives may have provoked a readiness to seek greater autonomy and a reluctance to accept London's patrimony any longer. Abolitionists in Dublin, moreover, had established close contacts with anti-slavery groups in Birmingham in the late 1820's, and through Thompson with the G.K.S. (and, the Boston abolitionists) in the late 1830's.\footnote{3} Though the H.A.S.S. had at first been impecunious and therefore dependent on London for assistance, it had retained an independent status and was never simply an auxiliary society.

Furthermore the situation in London in June, 1840, may arguably have

\footnote{1} William Martin, the orthodox Cork Quaker who had first persuaded Father Mathew to take up the temperance cause in Ireland, also objected to the exclusion of the female delegates, as did Father Mathew himself. S. Pugh to W.W. Chapman. Bristol, 31/8/1852. \textit{Tbid.}, v. 26, p. 52; R. Allen to W.L. Garrison. Dublin, 1/9/1840. Ms. A.l.2.v.9, p. 108. \textit{Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison.}


\footnote{3} G. Thompson to R.D. Webb. London, 12/1/1852. Ms.A.l.2.v.21, p. 16. \textit{Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison.} His lectures in Cork had led to the formation of a Female Abolition Society there, auxiliary to the Glasgow Ladies' Auxiliary Emancipation Society, itself allied to the G.K.S. See poems by the Cork Quaker, Mary Tweedy, \textit{The Wrongs of Africa. A Tribute to the Anti-Slavery Cause} (Glasgow, 1838), preface.
nurtured these aspects of the Irish Quaker tradition which had long
rejected any notion that Irish Friends were simply subordinate to those
in London.

Webb took great pleasure in associating with the famous abolition-
ists at the Convention, and spoke to O'Connell and Madden, "and loads
of stars higher than these". He was aware that some at the Conven-
tion were rather "haughty and scornful of our poor little anti-
slavery spirit", and frequently in the following years he expressed
surprise that the London committee had, by its neglect, allowed the
Dublin abolitionists to befriend Garrison and his circle:

"If the English had cosseted them, we should not have
laid hold on...their garments—being neither wealthy,
brilliant nor influential. We should have revolved at
a distance, like the slow march of satellites round the
sun, "unable to approach Garrison and his circle" unless
at a distance, if they had been patronized by the
Gurneys, Stalays, Sturges, Fosters and so forth."

Webb had been astonished to find that in fact these men did not surround
Garrison wherever he went, and this was the situation that allowed the
Dublin delegation, self-conscious about the extent of their knowledge
of and contribution to the cause, to invite for example Garrison and
Phillips to their lodgings. The provincials had made common cause
with the rejected Americans, in a way only made possible by what
Webb took to be the crassness of the metropolitan Society. The
Committees of the H.A.S.S. and the B.F.A.S.S. were both middle class
in composition, yet the former in London had felt aware of their
provincial obscurity and also, in relation to the latter, a certain
social inferiority: the Garrisonians, in a sense rejected by the
B.F.A.S.S., were thereby capable of conferring enormous compensatory
status on the Dublin delegation. ¹ Webb and his wife in later years were to look back on the London Convention as one of the greatest events of their lives, especially memorable in that it had given them the opportunity of meeting Garrison and his friends. The debates in the Irish Friend had suggested that there existed at least a potentially receptive audience for Garrison and his ideas in Ireland. Before June, 1840, there had been little means of assessing how large this was, though the Dublin delegation at least travelled to London unprepared for the disclosures about the schism yet unwilling to dismiss out of hand the prospect of aligning with Garrison, while their readiness to try to come to terms with Garrisonian ideas was increased by their feeling that their provincial circle had been given enhanced status vis-à-vis the London committee by their association with the representatives of the A.A.S.S. There were as yet however, no clearly defined alignments. The understanding by the Dublin abolitionists of the extent or indeed the nature of the divisions in American abolitionism was imperfect, while Phillips for his part had appeared to accept with some grace his defeat over the female delegates, and Garrison himself had attended the banquet following the Convention. Consequently, Garrison was pressed to visit Ireland, but so were Birney and Stanton of the A.F.A.S.S.: the prospect of prominent American abolitionists visiting Ireland at the behest of the

small group of Irish reformers over-rode any considerations as to
precisely which faction the visitors belonged to.

Abolitionists had argued out in the pages of the Irish Friend
issues pertaining to their cause, yet they were aware that little
had been done from 1838-1840 to encourage the development of anti-
slavery sentiment as such in Ireland. As Thompson had complained,

"The summer must not be allowed to pass without an
effort to rouse the Emeralders. Alas, alas! except
on party questions you are as sluggish as your own Liffey.
When will the time come when Ireland, no longer distracted
by political and polemical contests will have her heart
affected and sanctified by the contemplation...of the
slavery of others, and engage in a glorious effort to make
the world as free from tyrants and oppression as she is
herself from the venomous reptiles of the earth."1

The Dublin abolitionists were therefore anxious to capitalize on
the interest shown by the Irish press in the Convention, and to
suggest the overall unity of sentiments rather than what Allen
referred to in his report to the Irish Friend as "the little inter-
ruption in the general feeling of harmony" resulting from the question
of the female delegates. 2 The Convention received fairly extensive
coverage in the Irish newspapers, the Repeal press in particular
being anxious to give coverage to O'Connell's speeches there, while
Allen successfully encouraged the Citizen to report the activities in
London without giving much attention to the divisions there. 3

v. 8, p. 6, Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison.

2. Letter from "I.Z.Z." (Allen), in Irish Friend, v.3, n.8, August,
1840, pp. 59-60.

3. The Citizen (Dublin, 1841), v.2 n. 10, August, 1840, pp. 213-
214; praised Garrison as an intrepid abolitionist who "for some
cause" did not take part in the debates; The Freeman's Journal,
16/6/1840 reported that the women had been excluded, though
seemed to attach no significance or importance to this.
The first of the American delegates to arrive were Lucretia Mott and her husband James. In Dublin she addressed a temperance society where she spoke on peace, anti-slavery, moral reform and temperance, and also at a meeting for the "humbler class of working men and women". She also attended a Quaker meeting in Dublin where she rose to speak and was quietly listened to by the Irish Friends, though one of them told her husband that he expected that she would be asked to sit down any minute. The Motts then travelled to Belfast where they met William Bell who struck them as being "strongly orthodox". Though appalled by the extremes of wealth and poverty they found in Ireland and horrified by the prevalence of the latter, they were captivated by Webb and his allies, while he for his part was extremely impressed with Mrs. Mott in particular. He publicly described her as the "Lioness of the Convention" and in barely muted terms regretted her exclusion from the Convention, adding that she proved there was no justification for those who argued that a woman active in reform must necessarily neglect her domestic duties.

Lucretia Mott had noted that Webb's father had shown some misgivings about even conversing with a Hiskite, and she teased Webb that his brother Thomas was more willing to think for himself on religious matters than he was, yet Webb effectively supported the

2. Reprinted in the Liberator, 23/10/1840.
argument that Bell had put forward in the *Irish Friend* of May, 1840, to
the effect that abolitionists should object to any attempt to impose
conditions of membership on the anti-slavery ranks other than those
of conviction and sincerity. Webb's thinking on this matter was
further stimulated by the arrival of the next visitors, Garrison
himself accompanied by Nathaniel P. Rogers, who arrived on the 29th
of July. For the two Americans the trip to Dublin was something of
a rest, at least in terms of the strenuous programme of lectures
and speeches they had delivered in England and Scotland, though again
both men later expressed their delight at the reception they
received in Dublin where they met Webb's abolitionist circles which
included Charles Corkran, the Unitarian editor of the *Dublin Weekly
Herald*, George Downes, librarian of Trinity College, and Mary and
Joshua Edmundson.

When they left, Webb accompanied Rogers and Garrison to Liverpool
from where they embarked for America. Garrison had by now replaced
Lafayette as Webb's hero, and for the Dublin Quaker the visit had been
a turning point in his life. Hannah Webb summed up the impression
Garrison had made. Noting that he would have them throw away the
"sectarian glasses" through which the were accustomed to read the
Gospel, she described the sort of world he wished for:

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   Anti-Slavery Letters from Garrison; letter from Rogers quoted in Wigham, Allen, p. 39.

2. Highly thought of by both Webb and Mrs. Mott, Corkran left for
   Norwich in 1843, and then on for Paris.

3. See poem by Downes, "Farewell to William Lloyd Garrison", in Gay
   Papers, box 81. Columbia University.

4. Mary was a sister of Eliza Wigham, daughter of John Wigham,
   secretary of the R.H.S. who had married Jane Smeal, sister of
   John Smeal, the secretary of the G.E.S. Joshua was himself re-
   lated to Hannah Webb, thereby providing, with his wife, an example
   of the way in which family ties strengthened connections between the
   provincial reformers.
"A world in which there would be no slavery, no kings, no beggars, no lawyers, no doctors, no soldiers, no palaces, no prisons, no creeds, no clergy, no sects, no weary or grinding labour, no luxurious idleness, no peculiar sabbath or temple... no restraints but moral restraints, no constraining power but love. Shall we judge such a man because he may go a little further than we are prepared to follow? Let us first consult our consciences and our testaments". 1

Wells of millenial thinking had been tapped, and Garrison had invoked the conviction that the religious impulse could flourish untransmuted by sect or creed: it was not that they thought in terms of the levelling of society but that they were fired by the image of prisons and palaces disappearing when men became elevated to a new dignity, a closer proximity to God. Richard Allen also sensed with some excitement this notion of moral revolution through restoration to what Webb called the "first principles" that he felt were implicit in Garrison's thought. Rebuking those who described Garrison's non-resistance views as "pernicious" or "absurd", Allen related them to basic Quaker tenants. 2 Privately, however, Allen expressed his doubts and felt he could not renounce all appeal to or support from human governments. 3

The Webb, however, struggled to come to terms with ideas which they sensed were not so much new in themselves as would give renewed life to old ones, and Webb, if "puzzled", wanted others to feel the same and printed five hundred copies of a non-resistance pamphlet given him.

1. "Poole Letters". One Dublin clergyman, in contrast, told Webb that Garrison, whom he had met, would probably have good reasons to repent of his religious ideas in the next world.


by Garrison. It was, therefore, of little surprise, but ominous for future British anti-slavery unity, when Webb wrote Garrison saying that Birney and Stanton were coming to Dublin, but that "we won't be so much at our ease with them, nor will we feel the same sympathy with them that we have with you": Webb also gave indication as to where his sympathies lay when he wrote to George Thompson in late August—"Kussa for the old organisation." 2

Birney arrived with Mr. and Mrs. Stanton, and John Scoblo, the Secretary of the B.F.A.S.S. Of all the abolitionist visits to Dublin that summer, this clearly aroused the greatest public interest. Their first meeting, on the 26th. of October, was largely attended by what Allen called the "operative classes", the type of audience for which Webb, Allen and Haughton had already held temperance meetings in the city, and in this instance probably augmented in size due to the prominence and origin of the main speakers. Both Birney and Stanton gauged their speeches extremely affectively. Birney stressed his own Irish descent, and hoped that the edicts of the Council of Armagh could be extended to protect Negro slaves. "Vehement cheering" followed when he remarked on the absence of separate pews for Negroes in Catholic churches in the U.S.A., though many Irishmen in the South, he added, were slaveholders. Stanton


4. Abby Kimber, S. Pugh and George Bradburn had visited Dublin between the time that the Motte left and Birney arrived.
asked his audience to "put beyond the pale of their good opinion" any Irishman in America who supported slavery, and reminded them they could thus, given the importance of the Irish-American community, do much to effect the abolition of slavery. While these sentiments, and any mention of O'Connell's name, were met with loud cheering, Dr. Hadden claimed that Birney had spoken too leniently of the Irish-Americans, who, he said, were bitterly opposed to abolition.1

On the following day, in Allen's words, those of "a higher grade" were given the opportunity of hearing the visitors speak, though he noted with disappointment that the size of the audience was low compared to that on the previous evening,2 while Stanton and Birney, claiming the effects of a rough sea-crossing to Dublin, spoke but little. Reports of the meeting, if confused, do suggest that there was some altercation between Scoble and Allen after the latter, in a speech which claimed that the H.A.S.S. had endeavoured to "follow in the footsteps" of the B.P.A.S.S., noted that the H.A.S.S. could never condone any attempt made by abolitionists, following the advice of Clarkson and William Wilberforce, to put down the slave trade by using the British navy to capture the traders. Dissenting from this, and in a veiled reference to the controversies over

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1. See reports in Freeman's Journal, 27/10/1840, and Morning Register, 27/10/1840. Scoble talked mainly of the shortage of sugar which he denied could be attributed to the laziness of the former West Indian slaves; one of the explanations he offered was that since the temperance movement had begun in Ireland, more tea and thus more sugar had been consumed there. Stanton and Birney had attended a meeting of the L.N.R.A. earlier that day.

2. Webb claimed to have more confidence in the anti-slavery sentiments of the "ragamuffins" who had attended the first meeting. R.D. Webb to E. Pease, Dublin, 4/11/1840. Ms.A.1.2.v. 10, p. 32. Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison.
Garrison, Scoble replied that he wished to remove anti-slavery from "all questions of political agitation...theological controversy...party consideration." While these exchanges did offer hints of the growing split between the London and Dublin abolitionists, both Allen and Scoble were anxious on such an occasion to avoid a lengthy public dispute, and the meeting ended with a motion being passed condemning those Irishmen in Cuba, Brazil and America who owned slaves, or condoned slavery. The sentiments expressed at the first meeting of the visitors in Belfast, arranged by the Belfast Auxiliary to the B.F.A.S.S., held in a Presbyterian church, and presided over by the Rev. Thomas Drew, Church of Ireland Minister of Christ Church, Belfast, differed in important ways from those uttered at the two Dublin meetings: Ireland's anti-slavery tradition was not invoked, rather its paucity was rebuked; and Stanton, criticizing the American churches for their failure to condemn slavery, did not fail to include the Presbyterians in his indictments. The majority of the speakers at this meeting were ministers of the Presbyterian Church, and they appeared to accept in principle the charges that were brought against the American churches since a motion was proposed and accepted by the meeting urging that no fellowship should be held with those which supported slavery. It had been urged at the World Convention that British churches

1. Report of meeting in Freeman's Journal, 28/10/1840.
2. Birney, visiting relatives in the North of Ireland, did not attend.
adopt this policy, which, it was argued, was the best means of channeling British anti-slavery sentiment against institutions that Birney himself had already castigated as the "bulwarks" of American slavery.\(^1\) As an abolitionist tactic, this was nevertheless fraught with potential drawbacks. An important feature of the transatlantic world at this time was the close links existing between the British churches and their American counterparts, which remonstrances from the former on the slavery issue might disrupt.\(^2\) Secondly, it was open to the danger that different denominations in Britain might exploit the anti-slavery issue in order merely to berate rival churches.\(^3\) In the months following the London Convention these implications were not fully thought out, though the motion passed at the Belfast meeting significantly made no explicit mention of any American church.\(^4\)

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2. Birney had sent copies of his book to the Archbishops of Dublin, York and Canterbury in 1840, asking the leaders of the Established church to do everything in their power to influence the American churches. The Archbishop of Dublin replied expressing sympathy, as did the the Archbishop of Canterbury, though the latter noted that he had no right to remonstrate with churches over which he had no jurisdiction. B. Fladeland, James Gillespie Birney: Slaveholder to Abolitionist (Ithaca, 1955), p. 203.

3. With characteristic generosity of spirit, however, William Bell had refused in 1840 to condemn American Methodists' recalcitrance on the slavery issue while Friends themselves remained by no means blameless. *Irish Friend*, v. 3, n. 9, September, 1840, p. 64.

4. Report of meeting in *Northern Whig* (Belfast), 31/10/1840.
The visits of Birney, Stanton and Scoble therefore gave an indication of future developments in Irish abolitionism. In Belfast, Stanton and Scoble had addressed a Protestant, mainly Presbyterian audience, while the first meeting in particular had been mainly attended by Roman Catholics, and there Birney and Stanton had deliberately singled out the Roman Catholic Church for praise. The resolution passed at the Dublin meeting referred, not as in Belfast, to the American churches as such, but to the Irish-Americans. Although Madden felt that these had been insufficiently rebuked, he agreed with the Americans' contention that if firm and clear expression were given to the Irish Catholic anti-slavery tradition, the Irish-Americans could be persuaded to change their ways.

For the small group of Dublin abolitionists, moreover, Birney and Stanton were welcome and warmly received guests, though less so than had been Garrison and his friends. Their travelling companion, however, John Scoble, while given little public attention compared to the Americans, had proved thoroughly unpopular with Webb, who referred

1. For Madden's discussion of this at a meeting of the H.A.S.S. earlier in 1840, see *Morning Register* (Dublin), 1/2/1840.

2. See articles, "American Slavery...an Irish Question", *Citizen*, v.2, n.10, August, 1840, pp. 212-213; v.2, n.14, December, 1840, pp. 487-495. (The Citizen felt that the Irish people would never be won over to temperance by "sordid material considerations", but felt that slaveholders would accept abolitionist arguments which stressed the unprofitability of the institution.) For American press criticisms of Madden's "misrepresentations" of America at the Dublin meeting, see *Fladeland*, Birney, pp. 204-205.
to him as a "self-willed, tyrannically minded, narrow-souled, clever bigot." Webb objected also to the way the London Secretary, together with Stanton, lost no opportunity in Dublin of calumniating Garrison; and Anne Allen had exchanged angry words with Scoble following some insinuations he had made against the non-resistants. Scoble's unpopularity with the H.A.S.S. committee clearly strengthened their hostility to the B.F.A.S.S., as did his and Birney's attempts to malign ideas which had come to hold a great fascination for the Dublin abolitionists.

The implications of non-resistance were difficult to accept by a group of abolitionists who had had little time to reflect on them, who were concerned that the doctrine could but lead to anarchy, and who themselves, extending the practices of the campaign against West Indian slavery, continued to petition the British Parliament on such subjects as Coolie immigration into the West Indies, and the British recognition of Texas. Moreover, they were both "puzzled" and angered by statements in the Liberator declaring that the New Organisationists, who included men they admired, were the most "malignant" form of pro-slavery.

However, they continued to defend Garrison from charges that they felt unfairly misrepresented him. William Bell, who had already

been criticized for an article condemning American Friends for their apparent prejudice against Negroes, was rebuked by Captain Charles Stuart for printing Allen's letter on Garrison's non-resistance views, and replied by declaring that he agreed with Allen's interpretation and that he, after investigation, had found the accusations that had been made against Garrison's religious views unfounded.

Stuart was merely one of many who complained of Allen's article on Garrison, forcing Bell to conclude that his abolitionist views were being seized on by those "previously inimical" to the *Irish Friend*, but he was supported by Haughton who claimed to have found no disposition on Garrison's part to propagate non-resistance views in Dublin:

as for the women's rights question—\[...\] one that had been studiously avoided by both Bell and Stuart—Haughton remarked that the term was in itself objectionable, since, in his felicitous words, in "every object, of a good or benevolent nature, man and woman should go hand in hand."\[...

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1. *Irish Friend*, v.3, n.11, November, 1840, pp. 80-81. Bell saw prejudiced notions about innate Negro inferiority as being one of the "strongholds of slavery."

2. Ibid., pp. 84-85; v. 3, n. 10, October, 1840, p. 73.


For an earlier *Irish statement* protesting against the slavery imposed on women, see, W. Thompson, *Appeal of One Half of the Human Race...* (London, 1825), pp. 7, 12, 103, 170, 187. Haughton was criticized unfairly so in his opinion, by the *Revolution* (New York), in 1869, for not advocating the right of women to vote, while R.D. Webb's son Alfred in 1891 did urge this, giving as one of his reasons the role played by women on both sides of the Atlantic in the anti-slavery campaigns. Haughton, *Haughton*, pp. 225-231; A. Webb, *An Appeal to the Members of the House of Commons on the Question of Woman's Suffrage* (Dublin, 1891), p. 5.
Bell continued to report that he had lost subscribers who claimed that he had given support to Garrison and identified non-resistance with Quaker principles, but, despite occasional examples to the contrary, as when Stuart referred to Bell's "gross delusion," the debate continued in a way in which statements of individual opinions by no means precluded a willingness to accord decent motives to those of differing views. This situation however changed with the arrival in Britain of John Anderson Collins, agent of the M.A.S.S. The Old Organised, or Garrisonian, Abolitionists in America had accused the A.P.A.S.S. of "stealing" the Emancipator, the organ of the national Society in America and Collins had been sent to Britain to collect money for the National Anti-Slavery Standard which had been established in competition. It was Garrison's idea that Collins should make the visit though other Garrisonians such as Lucretia Mott regretted that he had been sent on a "begging mission" at this time. The letter of introduction which he had been given helps to explain much of the

1. Bell claimed that he did not wish to appear as Garrison's apologist, and indicated that he had heard that the non-resistants held "very erroneous opinions on other points": he had met and formed a high opinion of Birney and Stanton.

2. Stuart declined to accept an invitation issued by the C.E.S. to come to Glasgow and there defend his accusations against Garrison. "C.E.S. Minute Books", v. 1, entries for 3/3/1841, 25/3/1841.

3. See article by Thomas Clarkson on Garrison in Anti-Slavery Reporter, 23/9/1840.

divisions which his visit caused since it informed British abolitionists, for perhaps the first time in such explicit terms, the Garrisonian version of the events in New York, 1840: it accused the A.F.A.S.S. of having, for its grand object, the "utter extermination" of the A.A.S.S., as had been proved by such conspiracies as the Pastoral Letter and the theft of the Emancipator.¹

There was little possibility that Collins's trip would prove financially successful, given the fact that the expense of sending delegates to the World Convention had drained financial resources, while in Dublin and Cork, as elsewhere in Britain, William Dawes—Webb's first American anti-slavery "guest"—and John Kepp had already been collecting funds for the Oberlin Institute.² Collins, however, made valuable acquaintances in Elizabeth Pease in Darlington, and Thompson in Edinburgh, the latter of whom asked Webb if Collins could visit Dublin, adding that Collins should stay clear of "controverted" topics, at least in public.³ Collins's difficulties were further exacerbated by reports which began to reach Dublin of the Chardon Street Convention held in Boston in 1840. At this meeting—probably first sponsored by Garrison though he took a very restrained part


in its proceedings—were discussed such topics as the sanctity of
the sabbath and the necessity of having a paid clergy.¹ The discussions
were regarded as abhorrent by many American clergymen, one of whom,
the Rev. Nathaniel Colver, wrote Joseph Sturge condemning Garrison as
holding the most fanatical and heretical views. Colver's letter, con-
taining allegations against Collins also,² was circulated in England,
which further infuriated him, following as it did the refusal of
the B.F.A.S.S. to aid him on the grounds that there had been a great
loss of confidence in the A.A.S.S. Collins demanded of the B.F.A.S.S.
which American Society they gave their support to, and, their hand
forced, they declared their allegiance to the A.F.A.S.S. Collins
response was to publish in Glasgow, Right and Wrong Among the Abolition-
ists of the United States, which again reviewed the divisions of 1830 and
the Garrisonian accusations against Tappan and the A.F.A.S.S. Collins
visited Ireland in February, 1841, leaving fifty copies of his pam-
phlet which William Bell distributed.³ The Dublin abolitionists had
already been warned by Thompson that Collins lacked "tact",⁴ but on

¹. Merrill, Garrison, pp. 177-180.
². Temperley, British Anti-Slavery, p. 211; R. Allen to J.H. Tred-
³. W. Bell to J.A. Collins, Belfast, 1/3/1841, Ms.A.1.2.v.11,p.139.
Anti-Slavery letters to Garrison. Collins had a "delightful"
interview with Bell, whom he found familiar with the "spirit"
of New Organization if ignorant of the facts of the American
divisions.
⁴. G. Thompson to R. Allen, Manchester, 6/2/1841. Port. 58
(29). Friends' Library, Dublin.
Elizabeth Pease's suggestion, Webb promised to print Collins's pamphlet prior to having read it himself, and had in January, 1841, declared his support for Collins's mission. In November, 1841, the H.A.S.S. had written to ask if the Committee of the B.F.A.S.S. had authorised the circulation of Colver's letter, and had been assured in reply that such was not the case though two members of the Committee, acting on their own behalf, had had "cognizance" of the matter. After a further exchange of letters in January, 1841, the B.F.A.S.S. expressed a wish that the matter was now at an end; in one sense it was, for the H.A.S.S. wrote back formally ending correspondence between the two Societies.

Early in 1841 Webb had been informed by Collins among others that Garrison's religious views were being deliberately misrepresented by his anti-slavery opponents, and this made him more prepared to accept as valid the charges of religious exclusiveness against the A.F.A.S.S. and its London allies. In November, 1840, Webb had been asked if he was still "battling with English Friends in defence of Old Organization", a phrase which indicates the assumption of American Garrisonians that

2. R.D. Webb to J.A. Collins. Dublin, 7/1/1841. Ibid., v.11, p. 11.
he supported them,\(^1\) while his predilections for the Garrisonians was strengthened in 1841 by the manner in which they appeared to be spurned not only by the religious establishment in New England, but by the Society of Friends in England and Dublin. Largely under the influence of Incretin Mott, Webb’s own intellectual revolt against the Society of Friends was developing. In May, 1841 Webb was warned by a Public Friend of the dangers he was exposing himself to in associating with men who supported non-resistance and women’s rights\(^2\) and this may well have strengthened his feeling of common cause with the Garrisonians, while the refusal by Dublin Friends to let Collins speak in their Meeting House suggested to Webb that Quakers in both England and Ireland were unjustifiably condemning the religious views of men more committed to abolition that they themselves were. The refusal of the Irish Friends to countenance Collins,\(^3\) was recognized by Webb as being a severe blow to his financial prospects in Dublin, since they were the single most munificent group of contributors to reform in the city. Once again the H.A.S.S. gave the anti-slavery disputes as little publicity as possible at this stage. They were not alluded to in the Irish Friend, while Allen and Haughton, aware of the controversies that surrounded the Garrisonians and

3. As Webb realised, Collins's social radicalism, his support for Chartism, and his strictures against exploitation of the poor—all of which ideas he "rode pretty generally" in Dublin—alienated many Irish Quakers who saw his views as "Socialism, Chartism etc." R.D. Webb to E. Quincy. Dublin, 16/8/1843. Webb/Quincy Letters.
anxious not to alienate further potential support in Ireland, argued that the public would be discouraged by evidence of abolitionist squabbles and that Collins's pamphlet should therefore not be circulated.

Ironically, with some four hundred copies of it still in his possession in 1841, Webb made arrangements for its stereo-type plates to be returned to the United States by an Irish emigrant, John Armstrong, first cousin to James G. Birney.¹

Nevertheless, the Dublin abolitionists felt it incumbent upon themselves to take sides in the dispute. There had been bifurcation in the anti-slavery ranks on the question of exclusiveness in abolition, and this had revealed itself as being essentially more than merely tactical in nature. However, Collins succeeded in polarising the anti-slavery divisions in 1841 by making the issue one of moral choice, since his very vocabulary, which included notions of theft and insidious deeds, introduced an element of intractability into the situation. Indeed, for Webb, the compulsion to declare his formal position provided relief from what had been the difficulties involved in months of responding to new ideas and allegiances.

The abolitionists in Dublin were also motivated once more by a strong provincial reluctance to accept the domination of the London Society whose actions in the Collins dispute had been interpreted by

then as an unacceptable attempt to impose metropolitan attitudes on the entire anti-slavery movement in Britain. The H.A.S.S. Committee would indicate its growing autonomy by its strongly-worded disapproval of T.F. Buxton's African Civilisation Society, which was based on the notion that African chieftains should be encouraged to deal not in slaves but in legitimate commodities, to further which end trading posts would be established in Africa.\(^1\) Doll in the *Irish Friend* was already committed to the notion that all colonial ventures inevitably injured native populations and the H.A.S.S. Committee for their part insisted that the slave-trade could only be abolished at source, by abolishing slavery itself. Their antipathy to the scheme was increased when it received the support of the American Colonization Society, whose Secretary, R.R. Gurley arrived in London to proclaim his backing for Buxton's proposals. Colonization was in fact repudiated by Buxton himself,\(^2\) but Gurley's visit prompted Allen to remark to American abolitionists: "No Hibernians are not gullible" by him;"...Amazed am I that a London audience cannot see through it."\(^3\) The Colonization issue was seized on by Allen to demonstrate the superior perception of the Irish abolitionists, forcing Scoble, in a bid to prevent them expropriating this moral

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position, to write to Bell condemning Gurley's Society. ¹ When in April, 1841, George W. Carr, a prominent Irish temperance reformer and currently employed as an agent of the A.C.S. arranged a meeting to form a Dublin Auxiliary, with auxiliary branches of its own in Tipperary and Belfast, ² its composition reflected the strong support given in Britain generally by the Anglican establishment to Buxton's venture, ³ and its Committee in particular was made up of men far above the H.A.S.S. in social status. ⁴ George Carr (who had worked with Allen and Webb in the Irish temperance reform movement, as had Judge Crampton who was also on the Committee of the Irish branch of the A.C.S.) invited Allen and Haughton to the opening meeting, which they did though the latter was ruled out of order when he rose to speak at the end. The H.A.S.S. Committee, however, publicly voiced its disapproval of the aims of the Society, and while pointing out that the B.F.A.S.S. also opposed it, criticized the London Convention for its failure to discuss the venture: ⁵ this was another instance, as the H.A.S.S. saw it, of the conspiratorial duplicity and lack of abolitionist principle on the part of London abolitionists.

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3. Templetay, British Anti-Slavery, p. 54.
5. Also questioned were the abolitionist credentials of those politicians including Gladstone who supported the Government's patronage of the plan to send an armed expedition to the Niger River. Letters from Haughton and Allen, in Morning Register, 13/3/1841, 5/4/1841.
This readiness to rebuke London abolitionists of such national stature as Buxton and J.J. Gurney indicated a growing assertiveness among the Dublin abolitionists which itself resulted from the increased stature and confidence manifested among them since the World Convention and the visits of the American delegates. Throughout the disputes over Collins' moreover, the importance of the regional factor in determining the position adopted by the H.A.S.S. had been both revealed and strengthened by the close relations that had been established between the G.E.S. and the H.A.S.S. In Glasgow, Smeal and Murray had also espoused Collin's cause, while Webb with Elizabeth Pease, John Wigham in Edinburgh and Smeal himself, was one of the four British abolitionists nominated in February, 1841, to receive donations to aid in the circulation of the American pamphlet.¹ The B.F.A.S.S. also chose to reply to Smeal's accusations concerning the Colver letter by sending to the G.E.S. copies of the letters that had already been sent to the H.A.S.S. Whether or not this was calculated as a deliberate slur on the G.E.S., it certainly did much to strengthen the conviction among the abolitionists in Dublin and Glasgow that they were part of an alliance to defend Garrison and his friends from metropolitan villification.²

1. Resolutions of Public Meetings of the Members...of the Glasgow Emancipation Society...in reference to the Divisions among American Abolitionists (Glasgow, 1841), p. 23.

2. Ibid., pp. 26-30. The evidence suggests that close cooperation existed between the G.E.S. and the H.A.S.S. over the letters which each sent to London. Webb for instance saw a copy of Smeal's letter to Sturge, while the H.A.S.S. were prepared to send to the G.E.S. a copy of their reply to the first B.F.A.S.S. letter. R.D. Webb to J.A. Collins. Dublin, 30/3/1841. Ms. A.1.2.v.11, Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison.
In Scotland, Collins's visit and the ensuing discussion had resulted in considerable differences within the abolitionist societies. The Edinburgh Ladies' Emancipation Society, largely under the influence of Eliza Wigan, adopted a pro-Garrison stand-point while the E.E.S. strongly supported the B.F.A.S.S. In Glasgow, the Ladies' Auxiliary Emancipation Society declared itself against the Garrisonians, thereby prompting Collins: to help to establish the rival Glasgow Female Anti-Slavery Society. Smeal and Murray enlisted Chartist support against their opponents and the G.E.S. thereby retained its pro-Garrison stand-point, though this was accomplished at the expense of the defection of many moderates from the Society. Webb may well have been encouraged in his support of the Garrisonians by the example shown by Smeal and Murray in Glasgow, and he published works by the Glasgow Garrisonians outlining their arguments. There were, however, no such internal disputes within abolitionist societies in Ireland. When the Cork delegates returned from the 1840 Convention, it was decided, despite William Martin's objection to the exclusion of the female delegates, to reorganise the Anti-Slavery Society there as an auxiliary to the B.F.A.S.S.: the Secretary confessed that since 1838

3. Smeal and Murray had, much to the dismay of moderate members, published extracts from H.V. Chapman's Right and Wrong in Massachusetts, an earlier version of the events described by Collins. Sixth Annual Report of the G.E.S. (Glasgow, 1840), Appendix, 7.
4. For example, An Appeal to the Ladies of Great Britain...by the Committee of the Glasgow Female Anti-Slavery Society... (Glasgow, 1841).
anti-slavery interest in the city had declined markedly, and noted that
the Cork Society had agreed to meet only quarterly.¹ In Belfast there
had been some consternation among the Committee of the Belfast Auxiliary
to the B.F.A.S.S. as the Rev. James Morgan, a Presbyterian minister
in the city, had been quite disillusioned by his experiences as a
delegate to the World Convention. He had been appalled by the be-

haviour of the American Garrisonians in the women's rights debate,
and also condemned as inept the organisers of the Convention for

having introduced the grandson of Thomas Clarkson to the Convention.
One of the few delegates who had nothing good to say of the Convention,
Morgan refused to speak or write about it when he returned home much
to the chagrin of the local Committee who had hoped for some return
for their expense in sending him in a series of talks that would
stimulate public opinion in the city.²

Though it to some extent anticipated the more serious clashes in
Belfast anti-slavery that occurred from 1843-1847, there was little
in Morgan's behaviour which gave the Society reason to alter its
relations with the B.F.A.S.S. Of the visiting Garrisonians only the
Motts and Collins had travelled to Belfast, and they had held no public
meetings, while the visit of the A.F.A.S.S. delegation with Scoble probably
increased the Belfast abolitionists' readiness to continue their

S. 18.c.4/136.
². Rev. J. Morgan, Recollections of My Life and Times...(Belfast, 1874),
pp. 177-181.
auxiliary status. Birney and Stanton made no public reference to the American divisions while in the city, though James Standfield knew of them and regretted their existence as harmful to the cause, and he, an Episcopalian and Secretary to the Society, would have wished to avoid public discussions of topics obnoxious to the Presbyterian community, especially given Morgan's assumption that anti-slavery was the province of zealots and incompetents. In Belfast, therefore, there was no parallel to the situation in Dublin where a regional distrust of metropolitan domination combined with other factors and found expression in attachments to the Garrisonians.

Webb, however, did report the formation of a new "old organization" Society in Limerick which once again demonstrated the importance of family ties in Irish abolitionism as the abolitionists in question were Rebecca, Susanna and Charlotte Fisher who were sisters of Thomas Webb's wife. It was misleading to refer to a Society, since there were neither members, office-bearers, rules nor meetings. What these three Quaker sisters did do until the 1850's was to subscribe to and read avidly American abolitionist newspapers, and to organize the collection of articles which they sent for sale in bazaars run


2. Nor was there similar animosities about methods of putting down the slave-trade. F.A. Calder, joint-secretary of the Belfast Society, and himself an ex-Naval Lieutenant, showed no computations about proposing the use of the Navy to capture slave-traders. F.A. Calder to P. Bolton. Belfast, 5/1/1847. Mss. Brit. Emp. S.18.c.2h/100.

by the Boston abolitionists. For Rebecca Fisher, and her sister, Susanna, a school teacher, the appeal of Garrisonianism lay in the intellectual stimulation it offered combined with the opportunity it provided of engaging in good works. Recalling with pleasure her meeting with Collins, she wrote in 1842 to an American correspondent:

"We live in a land of apparent freedom—but alas! how chained in its most important aspect—mind is held in bondage and the chains are held sacred...but the prospect is different when we look across the waters that connect us with you—in America we see light breaking." ¹

Similar expressions of gratitude for intellectual stimulus, and of feelings of sympathy, were expressed by Webb's cousin, Sarah Poole:

"We owe your noble land much indeed! We live on the agitation you create, for in our own land is the stillness of death; such a stillness always treads where a sceptred monarch reigns, where time-worn institutions remain in all their power though the ages that called for them have passed. I love agitation, for life never exists motionless."²

Nor would Webb himself ever forget the sensations of new hopes and aspirations that accompanied his first contacts with the Garrisonians and indeed his memory of them did much to sustain his support for Garrison through the vicissitudes of the next twenty years.³

In Dublin there was no Society established in opposition to the H.A.S. S. By 1841, the Committee of the H.A.S.S. was effectively composed of

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the following members: the two Secretaries, Allen and Haughton, with Webb and his brothers Thomas and James. Dr. Joshua Harvey, who had been a founding member of the Society, was still contributing to the Boston Basaar in 1842, but played little active role in the Society's affairs after 1839. Several other figures remained on the periphery, such as George Downes, Corkran, and the Unitarian minister Dr. Drummond, while Edward Baldwin since late 1839 had been devoting his energies almost exclusively to lecturing on British India in England. Though the barrister Robert R.R. Moore (1811-1864) did not entirely break his connections with the H.A.S.S., he became on Allen's encouragement involved in the campaign against the Corn Laws as an Anti-Corn Law League lecturer. His relations with Webb were badly strained when he eloped with Rebecca Fisher then abandoned her in Manchester in 1847 where she remained an active Garrisonian.  

John A. Collins wanted the women abolitionists in Dublin to form an anti-slavery society on lines similar to the Glasgow Female A.S.S. A Dublin Ladies' A.S. Association had been formed in 1837 led by the Quaker Jane Russell, but this had collapsed in 1838. Webb


replied to Collins's request by pointing out that there were only three women willing to participate in any such Society: his wife, Anne Allen, and Mrs. George Downes.  

Hannah Webb reported, in July, 1841, that she had indeed formed an anti-slavery Society, whose sympathies had been "enlisted" on the side of the A.A.S.S., but in no formal sense did such a Society exist. Hannah Webb arranged for the distribution in Dublin of abolitionist literature and organized collections of articles in Ireland for the Bazaar in Boston, but there were never even regular meetings of the three women: it was a Society in name only.

There were many other issues to absorb public attention in Ireland at this time—in particular the Repeal Movement and the agitation against the Corn Laws, while there was no middle-class grouping in Dublin prepared to sustain an active interest in abolition Societies apart from the Society of Friends: Webb, Haughton and Allen moreover had effectively pre-empted the organized anti-slavery movement in the city since 1839 and had done so in a way that made it particularly difficult for the Irish Quakers to join them. In the eyes of the Dublin Quakers, organized abolition in the city had become identified with criticisms of the Quakers in the United States and with demands that they themselves revert to first principles: they resented the presumptuousness and feared the implications of both. There was little motivation for them

1. R.D. Webb to M.W. Chapman, Dublin, 20/11/1841. Ms.A.1.2.v.12,pt.1, p. 129, Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison. Mary Edmundson had refused to speak to Collins at all in Dublin and had drifted away from the H.A.S.S. because of its relations with him.

to join the H.A.S.S., or to support its activities, especially since, through their contacts with Collins, and despite their attempts to minimize the publicity given in Dublin to the controversies surrounding him, the "extraneous" notions already discussed became associated with the H.A.S.S.¹ Nor was there incentive for the Irish Quakers to form an anti-slavery Society in opposition to the H.A.S.S. and in support of the E.P.A.S.S.: to do so would have both gone against their tradition as established in the campaign against West Indian slavery and confirmed by their recent history, and provoked further controversy in Dublin concerning Quaker testimonies. Even Webb could not help being "disgusted" at Collins's "atheism"—though he added the characteristic Garrisonian adjoinder that "this was his affair and not mine".² Webb in common with other British Garrisonians commented on Collins's want of tact, and was in later years to decry Collins's behaviour in Dublin as totally lacking in common sense and calculated only to do mischief.³ In May, 1841, however, Webb's view was that

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1. In Glasgow, Garrison had read aloud at an anti-slavery meeting a Chartist hand-out called "A White Slave", while insisting that the conditions of the industrial poor in Britain and the Negro slaves in America were essentially incomparable. The activities of Smeal and Murray may also have persuaded the Irish Quakers that to countenance Garrisonianism was to court social radicalism.

2. R.D. Webb to M.W. Chapman. Dublin, 4/2/1845. Ms.A.1.2.v.15, p. 13. Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison. Webb also felt that Collins's later involvement with the Owenite community at Skaneatles showed that the American's ideas were "unsuited to the natural constitution and mundane destiny of man".

though Collins's manner was not likely to lighten purses, it was best for the truth to be established than for the A.A.S.S. to receive money from men who would certainly have not given it had they any real knowledge of Garrisonian views.¹ In a sense this was the more realistic appraisal since it was unlikely that Collins, whatever he said or did, would receive aid from the Irish Quakers.²

Despite the aid which Collins was given by the Dublin abolitionists,³ Webb later complained that the American had frequently accused him of being "new organized". What prompted this was the H.A.S.S.'s sensitivity about the public image of the anti-slavery movement, and also Webb's inability to accept wholeheartedly Garrisonian ideas at this stage, combined with his ability to understand and sympathise with the motives of men whose actions he deplored, even those who had shown that his suspicions about the extent of the "Pharisaical spirit" of New Organization in Dublin were justified.⁴ This capacity applied

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2. His reputation certainly preceded him to Dublin, since of the many invited to meet him when he first arrived in the city, few turned up.

3. In 1841 Collins sent to the A.A.S.S. some ninehundred dollars which he had collected in England and Scotland. "Minutes of the Executive Committee of the A.A.S.S.", v.1,p. 276, entry for 3/2/1841. Webb noted that of the thirty pounds collected for Collins in Dublin, over twenty-six had been donated by members of the H.A.S.S. Committee and their families. R.D. Webb to W.L. Garrison. Ms.A.1.2.v.12, pt. 1,p. 35. Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison.

4. Ibid.
to anti-slavery foes and friends alike, and Collins had misinterpreted the manner in which Webb had refused to second his railings against his Tappanite rivals and those supporters whom, as in Scotland, he considered less than active. There would be others, but the main exception to this statement about Webb's attitudes in 1841, was John Scoble, and Webb's personal hostility to him was compounded by his knowledge that except in extraordinary circumstances members of Anti-Slavery Committees left the affairs of their Societies in the hands of their Secretaries, who had control of correspondence and the arranging of dates and agendas for meetings. Scoble's unpopularity was to an extent a function of the influence Webb knew he had in the B.F.A.S.S.

In terms of the transatlantic abolition movement the break between the H.A.S.S. and the B.F.A.S.S. was significant in that Webb became, with George Thompson, the most active British protagonist of the A.A.S.S. Webb began to play a more decisive and assertive part in organising H.A.S.S. affairs, and when Charles Lennox Remond visited in July, 1841, it was Webb who first sensed his importance and made arrangements for his tour in Ireland.

Remond, a Negro, born of free parents in Massachusetts in 1810, had become an agent of the M.A.S.S. in 1838 and had attended the World Convention where like Garrison he had refused to take part in the

1. Many Hicksite Garrisonians criticised Smeal for placing a notice in the Glasgow Argus stating that Mrs. Hott was a Hicksite and therefore could not be identified with the Quaker members of the G.E.S. Webb, however, continued to remind the American Garrisonians of their obligations to a man who had stood by them faithfully. Hallowell (ed.), Hott's, pp. 175-176; National Anti-Slavery Standard, 15/10/1840, 16/7/1846; Fifth Annual Report of the G.E.S. (Glasgow, 1839), pp. 31-33; J. Hott, Three Months, pp. 68-69.


proceedings. He had travelled through England and Scotland with Garrison and had at first planned to come to Ireland with Collins but a lung infection had forced him to stay in Scotland to recuperate. Charles Stuart had warned British abolitionists against both Collins and Remond, though Webb explained that the latter was more successful in collecting money in Dublin because Collins had expressly declared himself as the agent of the A.A.S.S.; further factors in Remond's favour according to Webb was his tact, his pleasing appearance and the fact that he was a Negro. Though the Methodists and the Independents refused him the use of their Halls, Remond was given permission to hold four anti-slavery meetings in the Quaker Meeting House and one in the Presbyterian Church Hall. Remond's ability to confine his speeches in Dublin to simple and highly effective denunciations of slavery won over many Friends who had one month earlier refused their Meeting House to Collins, while the H.A.S.S. abolitionists were delighted at the interest shown by even the wealthy and respectable in him.

Webb accompanied Remond on a tour of Ireland. In Waterford there had been reports that Remond was not connected with the B.F.A.S.S. but supported the A.A.S.S. and Garrison's advocacy of women's rights, though Webb reported that "crowded audiences" in the city had been won over by Remond's eloquent and impassioned condemnations of the iniquities


of slavery. By his own estimation, Remond achieved his greatest success in Cork where he stayed with William Martin and where his visit led to the formation of the Cork Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society, prominent in which were the Jennings sisters, who were Unitarians, and Hannah E. White, yet another Quaker cousin of Hannah Webb. Though some Cork ladies had been collecting for the Boston abolitionists before Remond's visit, Isabel Jennings confessed that while she had read Harriet Martineau's *Herald of Freedom* previously, the question of American slavery had not been "felt" till his arrival. The Cork Ladies were soon faced with the same tactical considerations that had made Allen and Haughton reluctant to circulate Collins's pamphlet in Dublin. Isabel, Jane and Charlotte Jennings, with Hannah White, expressed privately their strong indignation "against the originators of the seceding society" (the A.F.A.S.S.), but they felt it best not to press the subject on their Society, the majority of whose members they stated to be ignorant of the schisms, and who at present were interested only in the "broad principles" of anti-slavery. The novelty of listening to a


visiting Negro abolitionist clearly dispelled any suspicions that the Cork A.S.S. may have had about his abolitionist affiliations and a meeting was arranged for him by the Cork Society which was then an auxiliary to the B.F.A.S.S. Remond was delighted at this, though was more at a loss to describe precisely the nature of abolitionism in Belfast where he found that "few Organization business" had been pretty thoroughly done and where there had been allusions made to him about "division subjects". He had however found Bell to be one of the "faithful few", if "hardly old organization", and trusted that some of his listeners had been imbued with the "dreaded Garrisonism". In public, however, Remond again refrained from commenting on the American schisms, and confined himself to the same line of argument as had Stanton in Belfast, urging that the British churches resuscitate with their American brethren. The most prominent of Belfast Presbyterian Ministers—including Drs. Edgar and Hanna—allowed Remond to hold anti-slavery meetings in their churches, while even the Rev. James Morgan consented to speak at one of the meetings.

Though Webb was frequently embarrassed about Remond's propensity to seek pecuniary assistance in Ireland and advised against a return visit in 1843, he was delighted that Remond "always praised Garrison


2. U. Fall to R. Allen, Belfast, 7/11/1841. Port.5B (33). Friends' Library, Dublin; C.L. Remond to R. Allen, Belfast, 15/10/1841. Allen Family Letters. The Haitian L'Instant Fils had visited Dublin in 1841 and travelled to Belfast with Remond and spoke at his anti-slavery meetings there. Haughton, claiming that the former had been converted to temperance in Dublin later saw the growth of the temperance movement in Haiti as most laudable. Letter from Haughton in Freeman's Journal, 19/1/1843.

3. For reports of these see, Northern Whig, 21/10/1841, 23/10/1841.
and never blarneyed America." The H.A.S.S. Committee were grateful to Remond for having strengthened the interest of the Jennings sisters in American anti-slavery: Webb himself reported in August, 1842 that he had met them and found that Cork was "up to the boiling point" in anti-slavery, and that they themselves were great admirers of Garrison and Remond. Had Remond used the anti-slavery platform to advocate women's rights and non-resistance, or to argue the merits of the A.A.S.S. in comparison to those of its Tappenite detractors, he would have been poorly received in Waterford, Cork and Belfast; indeed, it is unlikely that he would have had such a tour arranged for him at all since the H.A.S.S. had pointedly planned no similar itinerary for Collins. Reviewing the state of anti-slavery in Ireland in 1842, Webb concluded that while New Organization flourished in Belfast it was "dead" elsewhere. This was in some respects pertinent, there being various pockets of Garrisonian support in Cork, Limerick, Waterford, Wexford, Brandon, Mallow, Athlone and Youghal which were in contact with the H.A.S.S. in Dublin.

The Cork and Belfast men's Anti-Slavery Societies remained as auxiliaries to the B.P.A.S.S. but this had not detracted from their interest in and patronage of Remond. Remond, if delighted at the


"fashion-beauty-intelligence and respectability" of his Belfast audiences lamented that the anti-slavery cause in the city was in the hands of men who cared more for "dignity" than the slave.¹ He did not there William Webb, Anne Allen's brother, and complained of his new organized views: Webb's wife Maria (1806-1873), a Quaker, was to become the most prominent Irish abolitionist opponent, first in Belfast and later in Dublin, of the Garrisonians. Yet James Standfield himself had shown himself willing to censure views proposed by his co-religionist, Bishop Meade of Virginia, while visiting Belfast, thereby indicating his own readiness to uphold Remond's own injunctions about religious remonstrances.² Moreover, when in the midst of sectarian disputes over the slavery issue in Belfast, it was said that Remond had been a white man who had assumed the "Ethiop tinge" in order to collect money, Standfield was one of those most prominent in denouncing this accusation.³

The Belfast abolitionists in fact were offended that Remond failed to keep in touch with them after 1841, while in 1843 Sarah Poole remarked that Remond had succeeded in arousing a "transient" zeal among the "mercurial" Irish.⁴ Remond nevertheless had operated with great eloquence and tact, the impact of the first testifying to the degree of

potential Irish interest in American slavery, the need for the second to the latent tensions in Irish abolitionism. Whatever the resent-ments and strains of later years, he returned to America with memories of a heady success in Ireland. He also took with him the Irish Address, an appeal to the Irish-Americans on the slavery question: this bore sixty thousand Irish signatures, including that of Ireland's most noted abolitionist figure, Daniel O'Connell.

1. And the persuasion of the former could overcome such lapses in the latter as his declaration in Belfast that there were only two places where a Negro could worship according to the dictates of his conscience in America: Roman Catholic Churches and Ternany Hall.

Chapter Three

O’Connell
In August, 1875, during the O'Connell Centenary Celebrations in Boston, three famous American abolitionists recalled the importance of O'Connell's role in the American anti-slavery movement. John Greenleaf Whittier, the Quaker poet, saw no reason to change the high opinion of O'Connell's anti-slavery services he had formed many years earlier; William Lloyd Garrison wrote to commend on the aid and inspiration he had always received from him; and Wendell Phillips noted how O'Connell's actions as an agitator had influenced the abolitionists' own conception of moral reform. Parallel celebrations in Dublin also mentioned this aspect of O'Connell's career, though it was fitting that his anti-slavery commitments should receive greatest stress in Boston which was not only an important Irish-American centre, but also the city with the closest links with British anti-slavery.

The three tributes all mentioned the consistency of O'Connell's stand on the slavery issue. This was not, however, a view which Garrison and Phillips in particular had always maintained. The abolitionists in the post-Civil War period did, with exceptions, tend to recall their earlier careers in terms which suggested that anti-slavery had been a unified crusade consistently maintained against a moral

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evil, but this was a distortion, if an understandable one, of the facts. The two concepts, principle and expediency, seen as polar opposites on an ethical scale, were precisely the terms by which abolitionists of the day evaluated O'Connell's anti-slavery record; if slavery was a sin to be immediately abolished then any signs of temporising were to be interpreted as evidence of sin also.

O'Connell's interest in the problem of slavery dates from Cropper's exposition of his plans to end Irish impoverishment and West Indian slavery at one step; these were incorporated as resolutions of the Society of the Friends of Ireland which was established by O'Connell. O'Connell began to address anti-slavery meetings in Ireland and London, and one of the most common stories told by and about him was that in 1830 he indicated his willingness to forgo possible benefits that might accrue to Ireland when in the House of Commons he refused the aid of twenty Members representing the West Indian interest who suggested that if he stopped attacking slavery they would assist him in Parliamentary matters relating to Ireland.

O'Connell quickly made the acquaintance of the most prominent London abolitionists and in 1833 championed Garrison's attack on the Colonization Society; Garrison was grateful for this though later indicated his disapproval of the fact that O'Connell expressed some sympathy, in reference to the Nullification Crisis, of the threatened secession of


2. Speech by O'Connell at L.N.R.A. 28/9/1845, in Nation, 4/10/1845; Wendell Phillips said that T.F. Burton had personally vouched for the authenticity of the claim. O'Connell Centenary Record, p. 548.
South Carolina from the Union. O'Connell was not only an active participant in the extra-Parliamentary campaign against slavery but supported the cause from within the House of Commons, where in 1833 he objected to both the Apprenticeship and Compensation proposals.

Though he complained that English journalists frequently failed to report his speeches, his abolitionist reputation grew, both in America and Britain.

In 1835, while O'Connell was visiting Scotland, considerable disension arose in the G.E.S. when proposals were made to appoint him an Honorary Member and to present an Address to him. Vociferous critics of his role in the "Great Agitation" for Roman Catholic Emancipation were overruled after they were informed that the G.E.S. had been confidentially asked to get O'Connell to pledge himself to divide the House if Duxton seemed like waverling when he brought in his Bill against apprenticeship the following session.

With emphasis and attention successfully shifted from O'Connell's religious and political affiliations to his record as an abolitionist, he was created an Honorary Member and the Address to him confirmed those Americans who made his abolitionist convictions a pretext for riots against the Irish in the United States.


5. A Full and Correct Report of the...Public Meeting...held to present the Emancipation Society's Address to Daniel O'Connell (Glasgow, 1835), pp. 5-11.
O'Connell interpreted these riots as evidence of the way the sufferings of the Irish in Ireland had strengthened their sympathies for the oppressed in America, and while it was stated that the Address was presented "altogether uninfluenced by political considerations", the preponderance of Whig supporters in the audience was indicated by the reactions given to O'Connell's mention of Robert Peel's name.\(^1\)

In 1833 O'Connell had told his constituents in Ireland that slavery was a crime to be at once, unconditionally and for ever abolished,\(^2\) and in Glasgow he repeated his anxiety to end Apprenticeship. From May to August, 1836, he sat on a Special Committee to enquire into Apprenticeship,\(^3\) and following the disclosures of Sturge, Sooble, Lloyd and Harvey about the working of the system, he was present at the formation of the Central Emancipation Committee where he claimed that the abolitionists had been "cheated...humbugged...bamboozled...and swindled" into accepting the payment of compensation to the West Indian slaveholders in 1833.\(^4\) O'Connell himself spoke in favour of Sir George Strickland's motion of 29/3/1838 for the termination of Apprenticeship,\(^5\) though he was considerably disconcerted when,

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1. Ibid., p. 8; Second Annual Report of the Q.E.S. (Glasgow, 1836), pp. 13-15.
4. For O'Connell's appreciation of Sturge's endeavours against Apprenticeship, see S. Hobhouse, Joseph Sturge (London, 1919), pp. 43-44.
5. For a complete list of those M.P.'s who opposed the motion, see, Eclectic Review, April, 1838, pp. 30-32.
after the defeat of that motion, the British Emancipator published a
list of those Irish Members who had opposed the motion. Not all were
members of O'Connell's party, and O'Connell's control over that party
was never entirely effective, yet O'Connell, given the Lichfield House
Compact, was clearly torn between a desire to end Apprenticeship and
a reluctance to bring down the Whig Government on the issue. Though
O'Connell and the four members of his family who were also M.P.'s
voted in favour of the abolition of Apprenticeship, it was an uneasy
moment in the relations between him and the anti-slavery movement,
but one that soon passed in the euphoria following the termination of
Apprenticeship later that year. The incident had provided evidence
of the type of difficulty facing O'Connell when the cause of the slave
could be seen as conflicting with that of Ireland, though a measure
of O'Connell's standing in the abolitionist movement was indicated by
the growing incidence of references to prominent Negro leaders as
"Black O'Connells".

1. For a complete list of those M.P.'s who opposed the motion, see,
   Poetic Review April, 1838, pp. 30-32.
2. J.H. Whyte, "Daniel O'Connell and the Repeal Party", in Irish
3. A.H. Graham, "The Lichfield House Compact", ibid., v. XII., n. 7,
4. Burn, Apprenticeship and Emancipation, pp. 351-354; Freeman's
   Journal, 3/1/1838; J.O'Connell, Recollections and Experiences,
   v. I., pp. 274-275; 296-302; for the abolitionists' criticism
   and O'Connell's reply, see, British Emancipator, 25/ h/1838, 25/ h/1838, and draft of a letter from Richard Allen to the Morning
5. J. Sturge to D. O'Connell. Birmingham, 13/1/1838, in O'Connell
   Typescript.
6. Abolition of Negro Apprenticeship, being the Fourth Annual
   Report of the O.A.S. (Glasgow, 1838), p. 111; Mathiesson,
   British Slavery, p. 303.
From as early as 1829 O'Connell had denounced slavery in America, while his comments in Glasgow had led the G.E.S. to draw parallels between him and George Thompson, whose visit to America it had already sponsored, and who, like O'Connell had been criticized for unwarranted interference in American affairs. In 1830, O'Connell was instrumental in attempts to broaden the scope of British anti-slavery, and to focus its attention on America, now that the immediate objectives in the West Indies had been gained. He wrote to Sturge:

"Make use of your professed objects to consider the propriety of forming a society to aid in the universal abolition of slavery. If you do that, come what will, I am with you at Birmingham the first of August. I could not promise unless I had an object of that importance in view. --Specify America if you choose, or leave the name out of your plan. Put the announcement in such a way as to enable us to begin the work with the vile and canguinous slaveholders of Republican America. I want to be directly at them. No more sidewise attacks; firing directly at the hull, as the seamen say, is my plan."

O'Connell did attend the meeting in Birmingham alluded to, and in his speech there he condemned George Washington as a slaveholder, and Andrew Stevenson, current American Ambassador to the Court of St. James, as a slave-brooder. Stevenson reacted angrily to this, and the two men exchanged a series of letters which were given wide


4. Quoted in H. Richard, Memoirs of Joseph Sturge (London, 1865), pp. 175-176; for indications in 1835 that O'Connell would propose this as soon as the abolition of Apprenticeship was gained, see, A Full and Corrected Report, p.10.
coverage in the British and American press.¹ O'Connell was castigated by newspapers in the American South, where it was widely held also that Stevenson had acted foolishly in the affair, while in Congress John Quincy Adams championed O'Connell. The A.A.S.S. also published five thousand copies of his Birmingham speech and his correspondence with the Ambassador.²

As late as September, 1841, the H.A.S.S. were petitioning Parliament to demand that Stevenson be no longer received as Ambassador,³ and O'Connell's controversy with him focussed public attention on American slavery at a time when abolitionists were anxious to channel the anti-slavery impulse into a concerted campaign against slavery throughout the world. The American abolitionists were delighted that the existence of American slavery had been dramatized in such a way. They exulted at the exuberance of his language⁴—there was as yet no misgivings about the military metaphors which he employed—and hailed his support for the British India Society as another means by which American slavery could be abolished.⁵

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² Fifth Annual Report of the C.E.S. (Glasgow, 1839), pp. 72-74; "Minutes of the Executive Committee of the A.A.S.S.", p. 98, entry for 18/10/1838.
⁴ For an earlier indication of this, see, W.L. Garrison to H. Garrison, Boston, 11/11/1835, Ms. A.I.I. v. 1, p. 82, Anti-Slavery Letters from Garrison.
O'Connell's presence at anti-slavery meetings was not always, however, welcomed, and in July, 1840, at the first public meeting of the African Civilization Society in London, his words were drowned by an organ playing as he rose to speak at the close. The Repeal and Whig Press in Ireland, noting the presence of Robert Peel on the platform, backed O'Connell's fulminations against what he saw as a nefarious Tory plot. In his speech in Glasgow O'Connell had shown how adroitly he could introduce political issues for his own ends into his abolitionist speeches, and he used this incident first to indicate Tory hypocrisy, and then as a rejoinder to later taunts that he was an abolitionist only in order to win the support of English abolitionists.

It was largely as a result of this incident that the Repeal press was so assiduous in reporting O'Connell's speeches at the World Convention later that month.

His speeches there against American slavery enhanced his reputation with the American delegates including Garrison, and Lucretia Mott sought to enlist his aid for the excluded female delegates. On 20/6/1840, three days after she had requested him to give his opinion, he confessed that while he had been "strong against" the admission initially on the grounds of the "ridicule" it might excite, he now agreed that it was wrong to exclude them.

1. For the A.C.S. version of the incident, see, First Annual Meeting of the Society for the Extinction of the Slave-Trade... (London, 1840), p. 52.
2. Morning Chronicle, 2/6/1840, h/6/1840; Freeman's Journal, h/6/1840, 3/6/1840; Northern Whig, 6/6/1840, 9/6/1840; Morning Register, h/6/1840. For an Irish Tory reaction to the incident, hostile to O'Connell, see, Dublin Evening Mail, 3/6/1840, 8/6/1840.
5. Tolles, (ed.), Diary of Lucretia Mott, pp. 33-34. O'Connell
While his delay in replying in itself indicated his qualms about admitting the women, and meant that the Garrisonians could make no use of his letter at the Convention, both British and American Old Organisationists soon seized the opportunity presented by the letter to demonstrate that they were backed by such an eminent abolitionist figure. Garrison spoke with O'Connell at a temperance meeting in Exeter Hall soon after the Convention, while O'Connell called to see Garrison at Webb's house in Dublin. Back in America, Garrison called on American Negroes to show their appreciation for O'Connell by asking British abolitionists to plead the cause of the "poor Irishman" while the National Anti-Slavery Standard sought to meet the widespread interest in the Irishman by publishing long extracts from his anti-slavery speeches. There was, however, little to justify the hope on the Garrisonians' part that O'Connell had indicated his preference for any abolitionist Society. His letter had been an implicit criticism of those who accepted the vote for the exclusion, but testified also to the reasons which had seemed at the time to justify the decision. Moreover, O'Connell himself welcomed the presence of


2. *Report of the Speeches...of the American Delegates...at the Great Public Meeting of the C.S.S.* (Glasgow, 1840), p. 10.

ladies at his L.H.R.A. meetings in Dublin but continued to insist
that they were not to be addressed from the platform since as regards
the affairs of the meeting they were "not considered to be present."¹
When John A. Collins visited Britain and was introduced to O'Connell it
was evidently assumed that the latter's letter to Lucretia Mott
marked him as a likely supporter of the American's visit; however,
Collins received no aid, encouragement or recognition from O'Connell.²

While some of the Anti-Slavery Societies in Dublin had sought
to make use of his position as an M.P. in order to have their abolitionist petitions presented to the House of Commons,³ O'Connell's relations with the Quakers in particular had frequently been strained. Thus,
in 1824, he had accused the Irish Quakers of proselytising in Ireland
and of caring more for the West Indian slaves than they did for the
Roman Catholic Irish.⁴ O'Connell could at anti-slavery meetings overcome the prejudices of those Quakers present,⁵ but indication of the antipathy felt towards him was shown by the reluctance of the


Quakers at the Yearly Meeting in London in 1826 to use the word "emancipation" in reference to the slaves because it smacked too much of Roman Catholic Emancipation.¹

Both Allen and Haughton, however, had cooperated with O'Connell in the 1830's, against the power of trade guilds and trade unions respectively,² and at the London Convention the Dublin delegates welcomed the reception given to O'Connell as reflecting credit on Irish abolitionism as a whole, and Webb was proud to note that the Liberator had called to his house to visit Garrison.³

In the period following the Convention both O'Connellites and abolitionists in Dublin gave their backing to the British India Society, and efforts to prevent the importation of Hill Coolies into Mauritius,⁴ while the Freeman's Journal, especially after Birney and Stanton's visit, called on the abolitionist movement to "cease no more" in Ireland, so that every Irish emigrant would leave for the United States an uncompromising opponent of slavery.⁵ In the L.N.R.A. itself John O'Connell, Daniel's son, began in November, 1840.

3. R.D. Webb to S. and L. Poole, Poole Letters.
5. Freeman's Journal, 26/9/1840, 31/10/1840.
to deliver a series of weekly "anti-slavery reports", in which he described various aspects of the slavery question in America; these were largely extracts from Theodore Weld's, *Slavery As It Is*, and lasted until the two O'Connells left Ireland in February, 1841 to attend the House of Commons.¹ Both abolitionists and Repealers also cooperated closely over attempts to foil efforts being made in Limerick to recruit Irish labourers for the West Indies. After Haughton had brought John O'Connell's attention to this and had been invited to address the L.N.R.A. on the matter, Thomas Steele, O'Connell's Head Pacificator, was dispatched to Limerick. Later, R.R.R. Moore was invited to speak at an L.N.R.A. meeting and Steele also addressed a meeting of the R.A.S.S., where he dwelt on the cooperation between the L.N.R.A. and the "Irish Anti-Slavery Association" in opposing what he took to be a scheme to renew the slave trade.²

While the affair showed the kind of moral and administrative alternative to British rule that O'Connell could offer in Ireland, for the abolitionists it offered a welcome opportunity not only to demonstrate the selfish interests of West Indian planters but to show that they themselves were not merely concerned with indulging in what the Nation later referred to contemptuously as "transatlantic

philanthropy". It strengthened the cordial relations that had been established between the H.A.S.S. and the L.N.R.A. moreover, and these were further demonstrated in their reaction to the question of British recognition of Texas.

In response to a request from Sturge, O'Connell had in July, 1839 raised this issue in the House of Commons, fearing the possible annexation of Texas, at the desire of American slaveholders, to the Union. O'Connell also proposed that a colony for free Negroes who were British subjects, be set up near the Northern boundary of Mexico; this would be "under the British flag" and would act both as a buffer to American expansionist aims and a haven for free Negroes in America who were deprived of their rights there. Little came of this proposal though the Freeman's Journal as in all other issues at this time supported O'Connell's denunciations of Texas while John O'Connell at the L.N.R.A. condemned those who urged British recognition. The H.A.S.S. twice protested to the Foreign Office about this, and John O'Connell denounced as specious Lord Palmerston's reply to the first letter. The H.A.S.S. sent off a third letter protesting against

3. Freeman's Journal, 7/11/1840; National Anti-slavery Standard, 31/12/1840; R. Allen to Lord Palmerston. Dublin, 17/12/1840, in Freeman's Journal, 29/12/1840; speech by J. O'Connell at L.N.R.A. meeting, 11/1/1841, ibid.; 12/1/1841; R. Allen to Lord Palmerston. Dublin, 15/1/1841, ibid., 9/2/1841. O'Connell feared the boost to slavery which might result from the annexation of Texas to the Union, and with other abolitionists pointed to the abolition of slavery in Mexico in 1829 as a contrast to affairs in Texas, which he saw as being run by men only interested in the profits to be made from crooked land speculation. In particular, he condemned the operations in London of General Hamilton, a member of the Texas Council, who had supported
the assumption that more weight should be given to commercial rather than humanitarian considerations in such situations, while O'Connell, advising the Irish not to emigrate to Texas where they would have, he said, to compete against slave labour, objected to the British recognition of Texas in Parliament, at the L.N.R.A., and at abolitionist meetings. From the summer of 1840 until the end of 1841, therefore, both Repealers and abolitionists alluded frequently to the strong links between their respective movements. John O'Connell insisted that the L.N.R.A.'s desire for liberty was not "bowed down" to Ireland alone, while from an abolitionist standpoint Ebenezer Shackleton, an Irish Quaker miller and the great-grandson of Abraham Shackleton of Ballitore School, drew close comparisons between O'Connell and Garrison: both used moral force only, and the American statement in the Liberator, 1/1/1831 was likened to the Irish Liberator's refusal to yield in his agitation for reform. Shackleton concluded:

"In America the slave is called a slave—he is black, and is flogged; in Ireland he is called a labourer—he is white, and is only starved. The Catholics of Ireland were the free men of colour of America. They were free by law, but were branded as an inferior race, to wit, by the...corporations...by the Bank of Ireland etc."4


3. "I am in earnest—I will not equivocate—I will not excuse—I will not retreat a single inch—AND I WILL BE HEARD".
Shackleton's comparisons between the American Negroes and the Catholics of Ireland were an early contribution to a debate which absorbed a great deal of the abolitionists' attention, both in Ireland and in America. Richard Allen had already protested against those who justified their non-involvement in Irish abolitionism by arguing that the condition of the slaves was better than that of the Irish peasants, though Shackleton himself had made the statement only in order to illustrate the essential similarities between the aims of the abolitionist and Repeal movements.

There were indeed certain ideological affinities between O'Connell and the Society of Friends. O'Connell praised the moral force precepts of Quakers, while Quaker reformers such as Thomas Webb praised his dictum that Repeal was not worth the shedding of one drop of blood at the State trials in 1841, moreover, when one of the charges brought against O'Connell was that his arbitration courts subverted the existing legal machinery, the Freeman's Journal cited the Quaker custom of submitting disputes for arbitration, as a precedent. Finally, there was the question of tithes, against which both Roman Catholics and Quakers such as R.D. Webb protested.

4. Ibid., 7/2/1840.
There were, however, indications that the relationship between the abolitionists and the Repealers continued to be fraught with obstacles and conflicts of interest. Having abjured political action for themselves, the Garrisonians were, though to varying degrees, uneasy about his role as a politician. When he won their praise, he was acclaimed as a statesman, and reformer; when quarrelling with him, they accused him of the compromising behaviour implicit in all political action. His continued services to the anti-slavery cause did much to make many of them see him as the one man who showed that a career in politics was not necessarily inimical to the adoption of a moral stance, yet even in November, 1840, in the era of good feelings with O'Connell, the Garrisonians referred to him as a "politician", adding that "even politics cannot quench the fire of his humanity". Though this consideration was tempered as far as the H.A.S.S. were concerned by the fact that they too were petitioning Parliament on anti-slavery matters, it consistently emerged as a point of friction between O'Connell and the Garrisonians. For his part, O'Connell remained suspicious about the political predilections of Irish Quakers, though he was pleased to note that many Friends were giving him their support in 1841.

Moreover, the H.A.S.S. tended to see in British India, and in proposals that Britain recognise Texas, evidence of the moral recalcitrance of mankind in general, but the Repeal press tended to criticize these as proof of English perfidy in particular. Though he consistently refused to accept as an excuse for American slavery the argument that Britain had been responsible for introducing it in the first place into the American Colonies, O'Connell seldom hesitated to contrast his own

abolitionist record with that of successive British Governments, and his remarks were seized upon by his supporters in the Irish press who to a much greater extent than he, and to the dislike of the abolitionists, were willing to make political capital out of the anti-slavery movement. This conflict of interests was revealed in discussions of the slave-produce movement, where Haughton opposed the importation and use of slave-produced cotton whereas the Repealers gave as one of their criticisms of the Union the fact that the industrial resources of Ireland had been neglected, and hoped for the day when cotton from the American South would be imported directly into Ireland. Similarly, Haughton urged the Irish people to cease smoking tobacco which he saw as a noxious weed and slave-produced, while both Daniel and John O'Connell concentrated their efforts on attacking the prohibitory tax which they felt Ireland had to pay on that tobacco. John O'Connell did neatly re-introduce the abolitionist factor when he argued that given Repeal, Ireland would be able to grow her own tobacco and thus would have no need to purchase slave-produced, but this did little to reassure Webb in particular that the Repealers were not introducing politics into abolitionism in a way which prompted doubts about the sincerity of their abolitionist convictions. Daniel O'Connell had continued to praise Joseph Sturge, and had appeared at B.F.A.S.S. meetings in London. The Garrisonians felt no compulsion to criticize him for this since to have done so would have exposed them to the assumption

2. Report of the Parliamentary Committee of the L.N.R.A....founded on Dr. Kane's Treatise... (Dublin, 1841), p. 36; R. Kane, The Industrial Resources of Ireland (Dublin, 1841), p. 37.
5. Ibid., 17/5/1841.
that O'Connell did not support them. They had a stronger reason, however; whatever their misgivings about him,¹ they felt convinced that he was the only man who had the power and prestige and influence to persuade the Irish-Americans to join the anti-slavery ranks. Though they were not unaware of the social and economic competition between Negroes and Irish in America, which contributed to Irish-American prejudices,² few of the American abolitionists initially shared Webb's opinion that given the propensity of the Irish to "associate the idea of equality and...impartial liberty" with America, not even O'Connell's remonstrances would have much effect on the Irish Americans.³

In 1838, having heard that O'Connell had been criticized by some Irish-Americans in Philadelphia for his comments on American slavery, Elizur Wright, corresponding Secretary of the A.A.S.S. requested O'Connell to publish an address to the Irish-Americans.⁴ O'Connell had already claimed in Glasgow that if ever he had a free moment he would write such an address telling his countrymen in America to "laugh the Republican slave-owners to scorn and ridicule",⁵ and again, in April, 1839, James Birney was asked by the A.A.S.S. to invite O'Connell to send an address.⁶ The next request came from the Dublin abolitionists themselves. Following Dr. Hadden's exposition of Catholic anti-slavery testimonies and his statement that the Irish Catholics in America believed that slavery was not "repugnant" to their religion, Haughton urged O'Connell to write to the Annual General Meeting of the Catholic Prelates of Ireland, which was to meet in Dublin in February, 1840, suggesting that they issue some indication of their "regret" at such an interpretation of the Roman

⁵ A full and Corrected Report, p. 9.
⁶ "Minutes of the Executive Committee of the A.A.S.S." p. 182, entry for 15/3/1839.
Catholic tradition. O'Connell did not comply with this request, though Madden himself appealed to the Irish Bishops to declare their support for Pope Gregory XVI's Apostolic Letter of 1839 condemning slavery and the slave-trade. Madden's speech to the H.A.S.S. at the beginning of 1840 did not fail to impress O'Connell, however.

There was still further talk of an Address at the World Convention, but the first occasion on which O'Connell directly addressed the Irish-Americans was when he signed the Irish Address which was drawn up by Haughton, Webb and Allen in the late summer of 1841. This stressed the fact that the "power of steam" had brought still closer Ireland and America, and assured the Irish-Americans of the high regard Ireland held for the United States. It urged, "...By all of your memories of Ireland, continue to love liberty—hate slavery—GLORIFY BY THE ABOLITIONISTS—and in America you will do honour to the name of Ireland."

Richard Allen reported in July, 1841, that fifteen thousand signatures had already been collected, including those of forty-three Roman Catholic Clergymen and that of one Joseph Foster of Co. Dublin whom Allen described as having been a slaveholder for thirty years: only the Dublin grocers, who apparently feared that if slavery was abolished the price of sugar would go up, had objected to the

2. A cutting of Madden's speech (from the Dublin Weekly Register, 1/2/1840) with extensive margin notes in O'Connell's handwriting, is to be found in the O'Connell Papers, University College Dublin. (Legal Papers. Box 1, folder 1, n.6). The H.A.S.S. committee were also impressed with the significance of the speech. R. Allen to J.H. Tredgold, Dublin, 21/3/1840. MSS.Brit. Exp. S.10.c. 4/33.
5. Address from the People of Ireland to their Countrymen and Countrywomen in America...with Extracts from the Speeches of O'Connell (n.p., 1847), pp. 1-2.
Estimates varied as to how many had signed; Collins gave the figure as fifty-eight thousand, though the one most frequently cited was sixty thousand. Richard Allen later told Garrison that O'Connell had been among the last to sign, and had not known of the Address till he was asked to sign it. However, in November, 1841, the H.A.S.S. had given Thomas Ray, Secretary of the L.N.R.A., copies of the Address, with blank sheets of paper attached, and these were sent to the various Repeal Wardens in Ireland. Two of these Wardens sent back reports that Protestants refused to sign because they objected to O'Connell, while one collected the signatures of the Catholic congregation as they left chapel on Sunday morning.

The Repeal Association had a national organization and central administration that was both extensive and sophisticated more than that enjoyed by the H.A.S.S., while the Dublin abolitionists had been referring to his abolitionist record and in particular to his quarrel with Stevenson before O'Connell signed it, in an attempt to secure the support of the people of Dublin for the Address. In Belfast, William Bell reported that some nine thousand signatures had been collected.

4. W. Muldowney to T.M. Ray. Ballyfoyle, n.d. Ibid., folder 10, n. 2073; William Gaule to T.M. Ray. ?, 30/11/1841. Ibid., n. 2074, Over 1500 signatures were sent by Gaule.
collected during Remond's visit, but Webb, indicating that many of
the signatures were those of people who signed only because it was
linked with O'Connell's name, asked if the Irish Address was not
"...a farce...How few among the tens of thousands who have already
signed understood what they put their names to! Is it moral to use
such machinery?". Certainly the Irish Address began to receive much
closer attention in the American abolitionist press once it was
realised that O'Connell's name headed the list of signatures, and that
Father Mathew had also signed it.

The Boston abolitionists gave a triumphant reception to the
Address, which was presented at a meeting in Faneuil Hall on 20/1/1842,
when a "large number of the Irish inhabitants of Boston and vicinity
were present", and all the speeches were designed to appeal to the
Irish-Americans present. George Bradburn attested to his Irish
parentage and recalled that he had met O'Connell and Father Mathew in
Ireland; James Canning Fuller, who was born in Ireland, claimed to have
stood watching as Castlereigh "took the bribe for the betrayal of
Ireland"; Phillips stated that the "voice of Rome was the first to be
heard against the slave-trade"; Garrison likened the claim of the
slaveholders that the slave was incapable of taking care of himself to

1. Irish Friend, v. 4, n. 11, November, 1842, p. 169.
   12; pt. 2, p. 129. Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison. The
   Address was in English.
England's claim that Ireland was not fit to rule itself; and a resolution was passed, declaring,

"That this meeting most cordially wishes old Ireland success; in all her righteous efforts to redeem the Emerald Isle from every species of British oppression, and especially in the grand movement of DANIEL O'CONNELL, for the repeal of the fraudulent act of Union between his country and England".¹

Garrison, who chaired the meeting, described it as a great success, and claimed that there had been no "opposition from any quarter".² The events of the following weeks were to prove this judgement somewhat precipitate.

John Hughes, Roman Catholic Bishop of New York, condemned the Irish Address as a forgery and added that should it prove genuine then every Irish-American should reject it, since it was an unwarrantable piece of foreign interference in American domestic affairs. Garrison saw it as "an interference which God approves, and which humanity will bless", while Birney's reply to Hughes was to become the stock abolitionist retort in such cases: either Hughes was not a Repealer, in which case he had no right to speak for Irish-Americans; or if he was, then this too was evidence of interference in British affairs. Birney realised the tactical limitations of such an argument however, and added that he wished to give no offence to American Repealers.

Bradburn, Rogers, and Phillips attended a meeting of the Boston Repeal Association on 2/2/1842 but they found that the meeting

1. Tenth Annual Report of the M.A.S.S. (Boston, 1842), pp. 9-25. 4,000 were said to have attended the meeting.


was strongly opposed to any attempt to "build up Anti-Slavery sympathies on the altar of Repeal",¹ and they confined their remarks to an advocacy of the Repeal movement.²

The abolitionists were soon faced with opposition from an important element in the Irish-American community, the Boston Pilot. This paper made several criticisms of the Irish Address which were to be frequently repeated by those Irish-Americans who repudiated O'Connell's abolitionism: it asked how O'Connell could reconcile his advocacy of moral force with his support for abolitionists whose doctrines could only lead to bloody slave insurrection; it insisted that the Irish would never allow themselves to be brought into "the vortex of abolitionism" which, inspired by England and which, if allowed, would lead to the dissolution of a Union to which they owed so much.³ Realising the importance of this paper, the Garrisonians in Boston at once wrote to the H.A.S.S. in order to secure rebuttals of these points,⁴ and the Dublin abolitionists passed a resolution vouching for the authenticity of the Address and the signatures, and Richard Allen

1. Boston Pilot, 5/2/1842.

2. For Phillips' disgust at this meeting, characterised by "low mean politics—demagogical earthly words" and at which he said the men of the H.A.S.S. would have fainted and O'Connell would have been unable to breathe, see, W. Phillips to R. Allen. Boston, 30/3/1842, Ms. A.1.2.v. 12, pt. 2, p. 139; Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison; N.P. Rogers to R.D. Webb. Concord, 20/2/1842. Ibid., p. 29.

3. Boston Pilot, 5/2/1842; 12/2/1842; 18/6/1842; Liberato, 18/2/1842.

sent on ten thousand more signatures. The American Garrisonians, however, were more interested in securing a personal statement from O'Connell himself which would demolish the forgery accusations.

Collins and Reevsd also suggested that R.R.R. Moore be sent across to America with the imprimatur of the L.N.R.A. and with expenses paid by the American abolitionists, to visit the American Repeal Associations and attest to the Address's genuineness. The Pilot had never questioned that it or O'Connell's signature were genuine, and the charge of forgery arguably involved an attempt to raise the issue of abolitionist trustworthiness while avoiding direct censure on O'Connell. Another Irish-American reaction—which was ridiculed in the Irish press but whose importance was not lost on the Garrisonians—was indicated by the Pilot's angry comment that the Address had referred directly to the Irish-Americans as a "distinct class" of the community, and invited them to join with abolitionists whose avowed aim it saw as being to overthrow both Constitution and Union. The Pilot insisted that to identify with such men would be to destroy the aspirations and credentials of the Irish-Americans as Americans; and to undermine

Faneuil Hall meeting but reported that its editor was already convinced that O'Connell's abolitionism had done "much mischief" to the cause of Ireland in America.


3. Ibid.
their protestations of loyalty, gratitude and affection for America. Collins wrote to Webb that the Irish-Americans believed that "patriotism, religion and philanthropy demands their non-interference with slavery", and the Pilot did indeed accept this view. O'Connell seldom failed to mention in his anti-slavery speeches that by condemning slavery, the Irish-Americans would reflect credit back on Ireland, while Allen thanked Garrison for upholding Ireland's honour by rebuking the Irish-Americans. But when O'Connell said that he would recognise no man as an Irishman who did not detest slavery, he may have failed to recognise that he was addressing Irish-Americans who were at a formative and testy stage of their developing nationalism.

Garrison believed that the Irish-Americans had been deceived into accepting such attitudes by "a stupendous conspiracy...between the leading Irish demagogues, the leading pseudo-democrats, and the southern slaveholders," and accused the Southern States and leading Democratic journals of having two reasons for supporting Repeal; their wish to enlist Irish political support, and their desire, by sending aid to the L.N.R.A., to "stop O'Connell's mouth on the subject of slavery".

1. Boston Pilot, 25/6/1842. Discussing the Irish-American rejection of the Irish Address, the Pilot claimed that nothing could have happened "to elevate the Irish more effectually in the scale of American patriotism." See also the report of a meeting of Irish-Americans at Pottersville, Pennsylvania, in National Anti-Slavery Standard, 21/3/1842.

2. W.L. Garrison to G. Benson, Boston, 22/3/1842. Mass.L.L. v. 2, p. 87. Anti-Slavery Letters from Garrison. Phillips wrote to Allen, in a letter which he said was not for publication, that the Irish in America were "an illiterate mass in general", manipulated by those who only wanted their vote, while the American Repeal Associations were only part of a scheme "intended to...secure offices for hungry demagogues". W. Phillips to R. Allen, Boston, 30/3/1842.
Though there was evidence of widespread interest in the Irish Address, the hostile reaction of the Irish-Americans contrasted greatly with the confident hopes the abolitionists had displayed in Faneuil Hall.

O'Connell had already been criticized by Irish-Americans for his anti-slavery speeches. The implications for the Irish Repeal coffers of sustained attacks on American slavery had concerned the O'Connellites since October, 1840, when, at the second meeting addressed by Birney and Stanton in Dublin, John O'Connell indicated that the L.N.R.A. had received a certain communication containing the information that if certain Repealers avoided the slavery issue they would be presented with a large sum of money. When pressed by Scoble to amplify his statements, he was somewhat evasive, but made it clear that the L.N. R.A. would reject with "indignation and contempt" such a bribe. After the London Morning Chronicle had taken up this statement in the context of American interference in British affairs, he explained that what he had said was that the L.N.R.A. had been warned that by advocating anti-slavery it would put a stop to a great deal of the contributions sent from America. Following further confusion in November, 1840, Daniel O'Connell tried to clarify the situation by explaining to R.R.R. Moore that while the L.N.R.A. would never cease to condemn slavery,


neither would it refuse aid from the American South. Such statements prompted Haughton's complaint in January, 1842, that the L.N.R.A.'s desire for liberty was purely a "selfish affair", and despite the co-operation between the two over the Irish Address, the latent tensions between the L.N.R.A. and the H.A.S.S. were displayed when John O'Connell reacted in turn by reminding Haughton that the Repealers were "entitled" to accuse the Irish abolitionists, though not him personally, of caring little for Irish liberty.

Of the Dublin abolitionists, Allen remained confident at this stage that O'Connell would not be silenced by American money, and he accepted as justifiable the course which O'Connell had outlined to Haughton.

Dr. Madden, however, complained of the "lamentable" affect which American aid, or the threat of its withdrawal, would have on the abolitionist sentiments of the L.N.R.A., and Haughton penned another letter requesting Irish Repealers not to recognise as Irish any Irish-Americans who upheld slavery and thereby disgraced Ireland.

While John A. Collins expressed some sympathy for O'Connell's problems, others indicated their concern that he had not repudiated

2. J. O'Connell to J. Haughton. Dublin, 27/1/1842, ibid., 28/1/1842. Haughton was a paid-up member of the L.N.R.A., one of whose strongest claims for Repeal according to John O'Connell was that once free, her abolitionist convictions would no longer be seen as "the unheeded cry of a mendicant province".
4. Freeman’s Journal, 15/2/1842. Haughton penned the letter for and on behalf of the St. George’s Patriotic Irish Manufacturers’ Mart. It was read at the L.N.R.A., 14/2/1842.
Irish-American reactions to the Irish Address,\(^1\) and Wendell Phillips in particular indicated to the Dublin abolitionists that he wanted O'Connell to state that he did not want the money of slaveholders or their friends, adding, perhaps somewhat disingenuously that O'Connell, though not the L.M.R.A. as such, should be asked to issue a further Address.\(^2\) Accordingly, Haughton issued a further appeal to the L.M.R.A. in May, 1842, and O'Connell proposed that a Convention be held in Kilkenny in the summer to draw up such an Address, while pointing out that this would have nothing to do with the L.M.R.A. and that the terms of the Address, if uncompromising, would be conciliatory.\(^3\)

Both his attempt to postpone further discussion and his insistence that the Address would contain no phillipics indicated O'Connell's surprise at the severity of the Irish-American reaction to the Irish Address, while his reluctance to acquiesce to abolitionists' demands was strengthened by indications that his criticisms of American slavery would not be given unquestioned backing even in the Repeal press. The *Fresman's Journal* had already stated

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3. Report of L.M.R.A. meeting, 10/5/1842, in *Fresman's Journal*, 11/5/1842. Occasionally O'Connell's remarks on American slavery were so severe as to offend the patriotism of American abolitionists. Elizur Wright was concerned that O'Connell had offended Republican institutions in 1844 when O'Connell rebuked Judge John O'Neill for having sentenced to death a man who had helped his slave mistress to escape in South Carolina. Abel and Klinberg, *Anglo-American relations*, p. 259. Despite the fact that O'Connell stressed that O'Neill was a disgrace to Ireland, John Bright also argued that O'Connell had been "too wholesale" in his criticisms of a country which apart from slavery, Bright admired. Report of meeting of B.F.A.S.S., 17/5/1844, in *Times*, 18/5/1844.
that Ireland should seek to exploit any wars which broke out between England and America, and had seen the right-of-search issue as being a likely cause of such a conflict since Britain, by insisting on her right to search American vessels suspected of being engaged in the slave-trade, would offend Northern "pride" and Southern "interests". (Unlike this newspaper, O'Connell did not fail to see the implications for slavery of American slave-trading, which he condemned as a disgrace to the "name of liberty", but he did contend that England would have to make great concessions to conciliate Ireland before she went to war with such a powerful adversary as the United States). A tendency to ignore the slavery issue and to calculate instead the possible benefits that might accrue to Ireland, was also shown by the Freeman's Journal's changing attitudes to Martin Van Buren: before the Presidential Election of 1840, it interpreted his pledge not to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia unless the slave-States consented, as evidence of the way slavery had corrupted the entire fabric of American society; these misgivings were, however, ignored in 1841 when it hailed the support given by so prominent an American as Van Buren to the Repeal Cause.

2. Ibid., 3/12/1841. For an Irish abolitionist's response to continued American involvement in the slave-trade, see, R.R. Madden, A Letter to W.E. Channing... (Boston, 1839); L. Tappan to R.R. Madden, New York, 2/12/1839. Ms. 21. o. ii. p. 43. Correspondence of R.R. Madden. Royal Irish Academy.
4. Ibid., 2/9/1840, 10/2/1841.
The apparent implications of O'Connell's speech on the right-of-search issue was that if Ireland was conciliated, presumably by Repeal, then she would support England in any war.¹ The Freeman's Journal, on the other hand, had implied that its sympathies were with the United States, which it saw as a friend to Repeal, and a possible ally of Ireland and a potential foe of Ireland's enemy. By December, 1841, therefore, the Freeman's Journal had reached a position where it was unwilling to risk alienating the United States, and it made no mention of the Irish Address: this was true also of the Dublin newspaper which in other respects was O'Connell's staunchest supporter, the Pilot. These papers did not openly criticise him at this stage, yet their failure to discuss the Irish Address or to attest to its authenticity suggested that important sections of support for the Repeal movement were not convinced as to the wisdom of his course regarding the slavery question.² The Freeman's Journal of 14/5/1842, for example, published a lengthy report of a meeting of the Baltimore Repeal Association in April, 1842, at which the Address had been denounced,³ while the Pilot, also published on 23/3/1842, a report of a Repeal Convention in Philadelphia, 22/2/1842, at which it had been decided for the sake of preserving unity, to leave it to individual

¹ This was the interpretation given to O'Connell's statement by "An American in London", ibid., 14/1/1842. At the L.N.R.A., 17/1/1842, O'Connell replied to this, declaring that he was glad to see England's "chartered insolence" humbled by America, but condemning American involvement in the slave-trade, and proposing a joint tribunal of British and American representatives to solve the right-of-search question, ibid., 18/1/1842.

² Of the Repeal press, the Monagh Guardian and the Morning Register did support O'Connell and the Irish Address; neither, however, had been so closely identified with O'Connell as the Freeman's Journal or the Pilot.

³ Amicus, its American correspondent, published a letter in the Freeman's Journal, 18/5/1842, which echoed the earlier statement
Repeal Associations to decide how to react to the Address. There was as yet, however, no direct confrontation with O'Connell, and though the Baltimore Repealers felt that the Philadelphia Convention had settled the matter in favour of repudiating the Address, the Freeman's Journal, in reporting the Convention, made no comment on the controversies that had taken place on the slavery question.  

On 21/5/1842, however, two letters were read at the L.H.R.A. from American Repeal Associations conveying directly to O'Connell the feelings of American Repealers on the Irish Address. The first, from the Repeal Association of Louisiana, enclosed two hundred pounds, and declared that a Native American Party had been established in New Orleans which had accused the Irish there of being hostile to slave-holders who had treated them with the greatest hospitality.

O'Connell responded to this by again deferring a fuller discussion of slavery to the Kilkenny Convention, and sought to make it clear that he could not be identified with the Boston abolitionists by rebuking Garrison for his views on the sabbath and a paid clergy: the very idea of a meeting being held by Garrisonians for "religious purposes of a particular persuasion" was, according to O'Connell, inimical

of the Boston Pilot by contrasting the "monomania" of the American abolitionists with the "sublime spirit" of O'Connell's moral force.

1. Ibid., 21/3/1842.

2. Commenting on this letter, the National Anti-Slavery Standard, 7/7/1842, denied its claim that Nativism was established in America by England, and that anti-Catholic prejudices were indigenous to the East. It argued that opposition to Irish immigration was Southern in origin. For an indication of the growth of nativism in New Orleans, St. Louis and Louisville, see, Filler, Crusade Against Slavery, pp. 147-148.
to the principles of the L.N.R.A. The second letter was from C.S. Brosnan of the Albany Repeal Association1 who insisted that the fact that the Irish-Americans had been addressed as a "distinct body" was "in direct violation of their constitutional obligations", and claimed that while the abolitionists generally insulted the Irish, "those who discountenance" the abolitionists were "the real friends of Ireland." O'Connell moved in reply that Brosnan's letter not be inserted into the minutes,2 and while admitting that the material conditions of the slaves might be better than those of many Irishmen, said that the slaves were fed only so that their masters might get more work out of them. He reminded Brosnan that there were no Constitutional obstacles to prevent him seeking the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia and ended by denying suggestions he had seen in some American newspapers that he had appealed to the Irish-Americans to join any particular anti-slavery Society.3

O'Connell's speech satisfied neither abolitionists nor Irish-Americans. The Garrisonians were furious at what they saw, justifiably, as O'Connell's attempts to discredit them and to dissociate himself from them. Edmund Quincy described him as "new organized", while Phillips reacted with less restraint:


2. T.M. Ray said this was the first time he had ever moved one of O'Connell's motions "with regret".

"'Tis the beginning of the end. He dare not face the demon when it touches him. He would be proslavery this side the pond—'a mere peeler' as we say—he won't shake hands with slaveholders no—but he will shake their gold...—the toil of her room demagogues". Maria Weston Chapman "says he is emphatically 'The Great Beggarman'...yes and bought for a pittance £200—well we can do without him—Anti-Slavery kisses no man's toes."

For the abolitionists, O'Connell's statement that his signature on the Irish Address was genuine, had come both too late and in the wrong context.

As regards the slaveholders' money, Phillips did alter his earlier views in June, 1842, when he told Webb that it was not "absolutely necessary" for O'Connell to refuse this, providing that he did not let his "noble lips be clogged with gold". Phillips did add that the American abolitionists did view, with the "intensest sympathy" Haughton's conviction that no slaveholder's money should be accepted by a body which sought to secure greater human liberty.

Haughton, however, never defined in precise terms what he meant by this. The Louisiana Repealers had made statements abhorrent to Haughton, but had pointed out that they were not slaveholders. He did argue that Ireland should reject the sympathy of those who supported slavery, yet the Louisiana Repealers had confined their comments

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2. Ibid., see, letter from Haughton read at L.I.R.A., 11/6/1845, in Nation, 16/6/1845.

to other, if related, matters. What particularly annoyed the Garrisonians was that since they had received and promoted the Irish Address and had therefore become associated with it, they had assumed that it would persuade the Irish-Americans and also convey status on themselves within the abolitionist movement, but the former apparently remained obdurate while they, the Garrisonians had been expressly criticized by O'Connell. This was why they viewed events within the L.N.R.A. with increasing alarm, and with some confusion. In July, 1842, for example, fifty pounds from the Mobile Repeal Association was handed in at the L.N.R.A. by the Rev. McGarahan, an Irish-born Catholic priest who had spent the previous nine years in the Southern States. In his speech he alluded to the rejection of the Irish Address and claimed that the slaves were unfit for freedom. O'Connell's speech in reply was praised by R.D. Webb, yet the money was accepted and again O'Connell, in reference to the Garrisonians, claimed that he had asked no-one to join in anti-slavery combinations that would injure people's property. There were indications at this time that Repealers in both America and Ireland were concerned about the amount of time that was being devoted to the potentially divisive issue of slavery. William Stokes, President of the Philadelphia Repeal

1. It might have been otherwise. In 1841, before leaving for America, Joseph Sturge wrote saying that if convenient, he should be glad to take O'Connell's address to the Americans. There was none extant at this time. J. Sturge to D. O'Connell, Birmingham, 2/3/1841. O'Connell Typescript.

2. Freeman's Journal, 19/7/1842. The reference to property had been made in the context of American Repealers' complaints that the abolitionists had countenanced the stealing of horses by fugitive slaves.
Association wrote to the L.W.R.A., asking O'Connell to lay on the shelf any letters from America which would provoke further dissension by their defences or justifications of slavery, and John O'Connell replied that in a sense this had already been done. It was Daniel O'Connell himself, however, who next re-introduced the topic, giving as his reason the fact that he had read in the American press statements that he had given credit to calumnies against the abolitionists. Denying this to have been the case, O'Connell deplored the part the Irish had played in Philadelphia in the anti-Negro riots on the first of August, and pointedly asked why the Roman Catholic leaders in the city had not protested against this. For the Garrisonians, however, this speech was once again spoiled by O'Connell's statement that he dissented from the religious opinions of those abolitionists who, "like William Lloyd Garrison," wished "to abolish Sundays and all religious rank". This confirmed Phillips in his earlier view that O'Connell provided a perfect example to Liberty Party supporters that nothing good could be expected of politicians, while the M.A.S.S., which in the previous year had paid tribute to O'Connell, now accused him of abandoning anti-slavery because of the "precarious possibility of a few blood-stained dollars". They felt that their

own position had been undermined by a cynical manoeuvre designed
to strengthen O'Connell's own relations with the American Repeal
movement: they gave little consideration to the difficulties he
faced, even when he was rebuked by a leading figure in the Roman
Catholic Church in America.

O'Connell had in his reply to Stokes reproached the Catholic
leaders in Philadelphia, but this was a subject he rarely broached. 1
While individual Catholic priests such as Dr. Cahill were prepared
to denounce American slavery in Ireland, 2 the Church hierarchy had
refused to act on Madden's request in 1840. In 1841 another attempt
was made by the English Peer, Lord Clifford, to interest the Irish
Catholics in the slavery issue. In a lengthy Address to the Catholics
of Ireland, Lord Clifford, who was himself a Roman Catholic
and who opposed the Repeal movement, declared that an anti-slavery
remonstrance was the only "vengeance" which Irish Catholics should
take on England, which had not only oppressed Ireland for centuries
but which nor singularly failed to support the British India Society.
His pamphlet included a list of statements by Church Fathers on slavery
and also pointed to O'Connell's treatment at the A.C.S. in June, 1840
as evidence of English recency. 3

1. Though at the L.H.R.A., 23/11/1840, John O'Connell had expressed
his regret that the Roman Catholic Church in America should
have been so involved with slavery in America, and his belief
that no man aware of the teachings of the Church could support

2. Dr. Cahill, Lecture on Slavery... (Waterford, 1846), pp. 13-17.
In 1859, Cahill went to the United States where he lectured,
though not on slavery, till the outbreak of the Civil War.
J.C. Curtin (ed.), The Lectures... of the Rev. Dr. D.U. Cahill,
with a Biographical Sketch... (New York, 1885), p. 366.

3. Christianity versus Slavery... presented to the Catholics of
Ireland by... Lord Clifford (Dublin, 1841), pp. iii-viii, 46-81;
Lord Clifford, "To the Catholics of Ireland", in Times, 9/12/1841.
O'Connell offered Clifford the use of the Mansion House in Dublin to hold a meeting in, but this Clifford declined, recognising the unpopularity of his views on Repeal. He did, however, report that Catholic Priests were without exception willing to sign an address which was placed with his pamphlet in the Catholic Poor: Society. 1

Haughton welcomed Clifford's pamphlet, which quoted Hadden's letter to the Bishops, as a further means of enlisting Catholic support for the abolition movement, 2 while Webb's relations with Clifford were somewhat strained after he published a pamphlet by George Thompson which Clifford had promised to pay for: after waiting eighteen months, Webb sent in the bill, and was reprimanded for his effrontery. 3

Moreover, despite Clifford's claims, it would appear that while the opportunity to indicate the superiority of Irish abolitionist convictions over those of England would not be entirely unwelcomed, the reaction of the influential Rev. MacHale, Archbishop of Tuam, was probably typical of most Irish Catholic Clergymen to Clifford: MacHale was scornful of Clifford's views on Repeal, and clearly did not think that Ireland would after centuries of "oppression" be satisfied merely by exposing the iniquities of English attitudes to slavery. 4

2. Haughton was sent the pamphlet by the Camellite priest and his co-worker in the temperance movement, Father Spratt: a correspondence started between the two as to whether Protestants or Catholics were the greatest upholders of the slave-trade. Freeman's Journal, 10/12/1841; A. E. Farrington, Rev. Dr. Spratt, O.C.C. His Life and Times (London, 1893), pp. 111, 169, 179.
4. For MacHale's reply to Clifford, see, Freeman's Journal, 18/12/1841.
The main reason for the refusal of the Catholic Church in Ireland to declare itself officially on the slavery issue was that it had close contacts with the Roman Catholic Church in the United States, which itself avoided disruption by refraining from "taking an absolute dogmatic position" on slavery, thereby allowing a vast range of attitudes on the question to exist within it.¹

O'Connell himself was friendly with John England who was born in Cork² and appointed in 1820 Bishop of Charleston and Carolina, a diocese in which one fifth of his flock were Negroes. In 1833, perturbed by abolitionist accusations against the Catholic Church, and anxious to promote missionary work, he urged Pope Gregory XVI to appoint a Bishop specifically to minister to Negroes and Indians in America; he also urged the Church to recognize the efforts of the American Colonization Society.³ He aroused the opposition of many who feared that he was endangering the stability of Southern society by such proposals, while his appointment as Papal delegate to Haiti in 1833 was resented in the South because it was taken as a sign of the favourable attitude of the Pope to President Tyler's abolition of slavery there. Similarly, he felt obliged in 1836 to defend his school for Free Negroes in Charleston with armed men, as he feared

¹ H.J. Rice, American Catholic Opinion in the Slavery Controversy (New York, 1941), passim.
² O'Connell had helped pay the fine when England, as trustee of the Cork Mercantile Chronicle, was fined in 1813 for refusing to give the name of a writer who had offended the authorities. W.J. FitzPatrick, The Life...of the Rev. Dr. Doyle (2 vols. Dublin, 1860), v. 2, p. 5, claims that England organized a force of 40,000 men designed for the invasion of Ireland in the event that Parliament refused to grant Roman Catholic Emancipation; if true, this would have violated O'Connell's own moral force principles.
mobs would try to burn it down. In 1835, he publicly denied that members of the Roman Catholic Church were identified with the anti-slavery movement.

When in Ireland in 1832, on a trip to collect funds for missionary work in the South, England had explained that while "no greater evil" could be brought upon any country than slavery, the slaveholders did treat their slaves with genuine affection and benevolence, and that no "satisfactory political solution" ever presented itself to the United States.¹ Such sentiments did not accord with O'Connell's views, and as opposition grew in the South to the latter's attacks on American slavery, England in an open letter criticized his interference in American internal affairs. It was a controversy during the American Presidential election of 1840, however, that provoked England's most stringent criticisms of O'Connell. General Duff Green, editor of the (Baltimore) Pilot and Transcript, favoured the Whig candidate, William

Henry Harrison, and wished to identify England and the Southern Catholics with the Democratic candidate Martin Van Buren.

John Forsyth, then Van Buren's Secretary of State, had declared in a speech in Georgia in August, 1840, that Harrison's candidacy had been forced on Southern Whigs by a combination of anti-masonry and abolition. Forsyth cited Pope Gregory XVI's Apostolic Brief, which he attributed to O'Connell's influence, in order to accuse Southern Catholics of favouring abolitionists and Harrison's candidacy. Amid this welter of allegations, England was perhaps justified in complaining that the Roman Catholics in the South were being used as "shuttlecocks" by American political parties. Fearful of any attempt to identify Catholics with abolitionists, England publicly replied to Forsyth in his newspaper, the United States Catholic Miscellany. He recalled that he himself had been condemned by Northern abolitionists and that eleven years previously he had reproved O'Connell for his attacks on American slavery. He also claimed to have witnessed with delight as O'Connell rebuked "the sanctimonious hypocrisy of a heartless band" of Irish abolitionists who had presented two petitions to Parliament: one for the abolition of slavery, the other for the enforcement of the penal laws against
the "white slaves" of Ireland. Thus England sought to prove that he was too patriotic an American to identify with British abolitionists; that he rejected the hypocrisy of Irish abolitionists; and that he condemned English prejudice against Irish Catholics. The sole remaining matter to be dealt with was Pope Gregory's Apostolic Letter, which England attributed not to O'Connell's influence but to the Pope's sense of duty. Moreover, England insisted that this condemned not slavery but the slave-trade, otherwise the Southern Bishops could not have accepted it without refusing the sacraments to those Roman Catholics who would not manumit their slaves; he claimed that the Pope had personally vouched for this interpretation to him. Slavery, England claimed, was neither intrinsically sinful nor contradictory to the Divine or Natural Law; it was an inevitable consequence of the fall of man and while open to abuses, these had been largely mitigated by the Christian religion.¹

There was little new in England's disquisitions on slavery, but from O'Connell's viewpoint, their significance lay in England's interpretation of the writings of the Church fathers such as St. Patrick,²

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who were seen to have condemned only the slave-trade. 1 O'Connell found it impossible to make this interpretation, this distinction between the slave-trade and domestic slavery, and was disconcerted when the Rev. McGarahan brought up at the L.N.R.A. the name of England, O'Connell's "beloved and lamented friend", and a Catholic Bishop. O'Connell recalled his last meeting with England, in January, 1840, when O'Connell had dissented from England's views on abolition and the Bishop had informed him of his intention to complete his Letters on slavery and dedicate it to O'Connell. England died in 1842, but in 1844, they were re-published and, as England had wished, dedicated to O'Connell. The introductory note, written by William G. Read of Baltimore, however, showed none of the affection England had felt for O'Connell: Read claimed that England's writings undermined O'Connell's "unwarrantable attempt to impair the semblance of religious authority".

1. The Apostolic Letter invoked "...all Christians...that none henceforth dare to subject to slavery...Indians, negroes, or other classes of man...and on no account henceforth to exercise that inhuman traffic by which negroes are reduced to slavery..." England did condemn the slave-trade, but did not mention the origin of the American slaves, nor the domestic slave-trade nor the continued American participation in the slave-trade.
to his anti-slavery speeches.\(^1\)

The *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, 20/3/1842, claimed that O'Connell would be uninfluenced by Read's "blarney", but by 1842, he had been criticized by two powerful Irish-born Bishops in America, Hughes and England. O'Connell was not persuaded to change his interpretation of Catholic testimonies on the slavery issue yet it was of great significance that England opposed him since he was an important and respected figure in Ireland. There is evidence that the Church in Ireland initially tended to agree with O'Connell's reading of the Apostolic Letter, which was seen as forbidding "the commerce of negroes" and testifying to the zeal for "the suppression of slavery" that "has ever distinguished the Roman Pontiffs".\(^2\) However, England's published views showed the difficulties facing not only him\(^3\) but the Church in Ireland, which, if it were to back O'Connell or respond to appeals such as Madden's, would be rejected by and further encumbrance a man who had already been given a great deal of financial assistance by Irish Catholics.\(^4\) One of O'Connell's biographers, W. Fagan, lamented that England's "genius burned out amidst a race of uncivilized slave-owners";\(^5\) his grave in Cork is engraved with the inscription that his

1. *Letters of the Late Bishop England to the Hon. John Forsyth...* (Baltimore, 1844), introduction.
3. For evidence of the dual source of criticisms of England, see, *Harald of Freedom*, 15/3/1842, which published an article showing how the Charleston Observer had sought to embarrass England by pointing to his friendship with O'Connell.
5. Quoted in *FitzPatrick, Doyle*, v. 2, p. 5.
death would be "...at with the tear of the orphan and the Negro". For the Church in Ireland, the implications of supporting O'Connell's sweeping denunciations of American slavery were clear enough: by refraining from declaring an official position and by helping England, it could be seen, as he claimed, as mitigating the worst aspects of slavery. Bishop Hughes's reaction to the Irish Address, and O'Connell's own repudiation of Garrison's views on the sabbath and a professional clergy, provided further explanation of the Catholic Church's emulation of the American Church in refusing to make an official declaration on the slavery issue. Similarly, O'Connell's working relations with a man such as the Archbishop of Tuam explain his refusal to press the Church on the matter.

The Garrisonians, it has been suggested, experienced some vicarious identification with O'Connell as a man who, like themselves, had to struggle against both public apathy and opprobrium.1 This seldom, however, led them to sympathise with his reluctance to challenge either the silent or the vociferous opposition outright; indeed it more often increased their ire when they felt abandoned by a man who, they felt, should recognise his affinities with them. Haughton immediately protested when O'Connell at the L.M.R.A. proposed a vote of thanks to Robert Tyler, the son of the American President, who had

spoken at a Repeal meeting in Washington, D.C. O'Connell refused to read out at the L.N.R.A. the abolitionists' protests that President Tyler was a slave-breeder, and later insisted that he felt bound to accept American aid which was not accompanied by a qualifying insistence that Ireland declare itself in favour of American slavery. All Haughton claimed to have been objecting to was the acceptance of "the hollow sympathy and the blood-stained money of American slaveholders", but he promised to "tease" O'Connell no more about the subject.

O'Connell clearly felt that a policy respecting the reception of American aid had been accepted which would thus satisfy both abolitionists and Repealers. Though no Convention had been held in Kilkenny in the summer of 1842, O'Connell once more indicated his wish to declare a moratorium on the slavery issue: he said, in reference to his vote of thanks to Robert Tyler, that the Irish

1. Freeman's Journal, 17/3/1843. Lord Brougham in the House of Lords, 8/3/1843, protested against President Tyler's espousal of the Repeal cause, and asked what the result would be if Queen Victoria publicly sympathised with American slaves: he added that he considered emancipation as "wise" as Repeal proposals were "pernicious". Ibid., 11/3/1843.
5. At the State trials of 1844, O'Connell made much of the fact that he had refused to countenance Robert Tyler's advocacy of physical force. Freeman's Journal, 6/2/1844. In 1845, the abolitionist Henry C. Wright quarrelled with James McHenry, the American Consul in Londonderry, after accusing John Tyler of being a slave-breeder. The Northern Whig criticised McHenry's views, and James Haughton tried to persuade O'Connell to tell the former President he would not be welcome in Dublin. O'Connell replied that at that time a speech by him on anti-slavery would excite little interest. Northern Whig, 11/1/1845, 23/1/1845, 25/1/1845, 1/2/1845; National Anti-Slavery Standard, 3/4/1845; D. O'Connell to J. Haughton. Dublin, 4/2/1845.
Repealers would not interfere, either directly or indirectly, with American slavery, and that whatever course he took as an individual, he would, when speaking on behalf of the Irish people, maintain the "strictest neutrality" on the subject of every American institution. Thomas Steele also promised that when he and John O'Connell went on their fund raising tour of the United States, they would not interfere in the slavery issue, but would hold their abolitionist convictions in "sanctification". This word appalled Haughton who urged that the two men not visit the United States if such were their plans, and Steele in turn accused Haughton of acting and thinking as if he lived in an ideal world.¹ The affair ended quietly—with Steele's love for hyperbole giving Haughton the opportunity of making one of his very rare jokes—and Haughton was invited to chair a meeting of the L.N.R.A. at which it was discussed. But Haughton did not deny Steele's point; indeed he argued that the premise that man was unregenerate had led to wars and bloodshed. Integral to Haughton's thinking was that man was perfectible, and therefore that all human activity should strive to attain that perfection: to fall short of that aim would in itself confine man's potential. The polarities which Haughton invoked—"slaveholding" as opposed to "liberty-loving", "blood-stained dollars" as opposed to "generous gifts"—showed his desire

¹. Steele's speech, mislaid earlier, appeared in the Freeman's Journal, 2/5/1843.
to make an absolute declarative statement of the good as opposed to
the evil, and to offer this as a measure against which all the
Repeal activities must be tested. He probably knew that O'Connell
would not return American money at his bidding, but neither that
nor his considerable faith in O'Connell as an abolitionist deterred
him from making normative pronouncements that slaveholders' money
ought never to be accepted. For O'Connell, such manichaean statements
and the frequency with which they were uttered, proved increasingly
irksome. As Haughton intended, they seemed to constantly question
the very morality of the Repeal movement. Furthermore, they provoked
further discussion of the slavery issue and this was resented by the
Irish-American, while O'Connell himself had many other problems to
face than that of American slavery.

Nevertheless, though O'Connell was cheered in the L.N.R.A.
when he stated that he would not interfere in the slavery issue, he
also welcomed the role which Haughton played as the self-appointed
emissary between the Repealers and the abolitionists. O'Connell's
reactions to the taunts of the American abolitionists revealed the
pride which he took in his abolitionist reputation, while Haughton

1. In October, 1843, Steele said that it had been decided that
there was no need to go to the United States. The English
Government had already expressed its concern at American
support for the Repeal movement, and O'Connell may have wished
to avoid becoming embroiled in this question. Another motive
may have been his disquiet at the way both American Repealers
and abolitionists had reacted in such a way as to suggest
that Steele would not be able to avoid becoming involved with
the slavery issue in America. Herald of Freedom, 9/6/1843;
National Anti-Slavery Standard, 1/6/1843; O. Bradburn to
Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison; letter from Amsden, in
Freeman's Journal, 18/11/1842.
had acquired in Dublin a reputation for great probity and humanitarianism. He had worked with Catholics such as Father Mathew and Father Spratt in the temperance movement and therefore could not easily be accused of ignoring the plight of the Irish poor nor was there affixed to him any of the stigma so often attached to Protestant "good works". The support given by such a man therefore conferred a certain status on the Repeal movement at a time when it was anxious to dispel any criticism that it was a purely Catholic organisation run by charlatans who were interested only in undermining the very fabric of Irish society; his membership served to maintain the L.N.R.A.'s ecumenical and philanthropic credentials. Whatever his irritation at his persistent statements on slavery, therefore, O'Connell always spoke highly of Haughton, and in a way that went beyond the conventional decencies.

For his part, Haughton always treated O'Connell with a deference that would have pleased the Liberator, and on many occasions cited O'Connell as an outstanding abolitionist example to the Irish people.

Haughton's membership of the L.N.R.A. was also valuable to the abolitionists, not only in the sense that his presence tempered Repealers' irritation at his outbursts against those he did not care for. In 1843 he refused to shake James Gordon Bennett's hand on the L.N. R.A. platform, and Bennett reacted by publishing a letter to the Times condemning O'Connell's attacks on American slavery and accusing the Irish-American Repeal movement of seeking to replace all the aristocracies of Europe with Republics. See Times, 30/8/1843; and for O'Connell's angry comments, Freeman's Journal, 9/7/1843.

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1. Haughton believed that after the Union was repealed, the basic rights of the individual—to human dignity, employment and education—would be assured. He complained of the oppressive tax system which he felt only added to the oppression of the poor in Ireland. Letter from Haughton, ibid., 17/8/1843.

2. His references to Haughton as "my friend" were the more significant given his outbursts against those he did not care for. In 1843 he refused to shake James Gordon Bennett's hand on the L.N. R.A. platform, and Bennett reacted by publishing a letter to the Times condemning O'Connell's attacks on American slavery and accusing the Irish-American Repeal movement of seeking to replace all the aristocracies of Europe with Republics. See Times, 30/8/1843; and for O'Connell's angry comments, Freeman's Journal, 9/7/1843.

strictures on their failure to support Ireland's cause, but because he acted as a channel through which abolitionists could address their comments to O'Connell. It was Haughton who in May, 1843, presented O'Connell with the Address of the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society, and O'Connell invited him to take the chair at a special meeting of the L.N.R.A. 2

The Address was in direct response to the letters from the Albany and Louisiana Repealers read at the L.N.R.A. one year earlier. The Pennsylvania abolitionists recognised that O'Connell had exposed the "sophistry" of these, but had felt constrained to write since attempts had been made to "divert" his anti-slavery. Again it drew parallels between Repeal and abolitionism, suggesting that the latter recommended not an illegal resistance to lawful authority, but rather the "kind of resistance which refuses voluntary action in support of an unrighteous law"—the type of law which, it added, O'Connell had first been elected to Parliament in opposition to. 3

The Address was the most able, measured and judicious case ever made by the abolitionists to the L.N.R.A. against those Irish-Americans who favoured Repeal but opposed abolition, though it contained only one argument that had not been heard at the L.N.R.A. before, and this was a denial that the abolitionists in America were hostile to Repeal. O'Connell agreed that it was an authoritative

1. The Address had been brought to Britain by H.C. Wright. Letter from Webb, in National Anti-Slavery Standard, 14/9/1843.
2. Allen reported that Haughton's family all objected to his chairing Repeal meetings. Ibid., 20/7/1843.
3. The text was given in the Freeman's Journal, 12/5/1843.
document, "completely answered" the Louisiana and Albany letters, and "satisfactorily exploded" those of Thomas Mooney, which had appeared in the Dublin Pilot and Nation.¹ He rejected the argument that the abolitionists were retarding the emancipation of the slaves on the grounds that this was precisely the charge that had been made against himself in the movement for Roman Catholic Emancipation, and added,

"Over the broad Atlantic I pour my voice, saying ... 'Come out of such a land, you Irishmen, or if you remain, and dare countenance the system of slavery that is supported there, we will recognise you as Irishmen no longer'."

O'Connell recognised that such sentiments were bound to have repercussions and maintained that he was speaking only as an individual:

"We may not get money from America after this declaration, but even if we should not, we do not want blood-stained money".

He then added his proviso, though this time in a slightly different form, putting the onus on the Irish-Americans: if they made any conditions as to the Irish Repealers having to give their support to slavery, then "let them cease sending" money "at once".²

While accepting the risk that this speech would alienate the Irish-Americans, O'Connell astutely realised that few even of his harshest critics would insist that he give his support to slavery as a condition of their sending him money. When American money was

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1. Mooney was born in Ireland and served as American correspondent of the Pilot (1841-1842), and Nation (1842-1846), and had also been active in American Repeal circles. On the day that the Louisiana and Albany letters were read at the L.N.R.A., one from Mooney was also entered into the minutes, though O'Connell stated his regret that it showed how Mooney had been influenced by pro-slavery thinking in America, and declared that Mooney could in no sense be regarded as an official emissary of the L.N.R.A. in America. Ibid., 23/12/1841, 19/2/1842, 23/5/1842, 2/7/1842. Houghton was impressed with the information provided for potential emigrants in Mooney's Nine Years in America (Dublin, 1850).

sent, therefore, he accepted it; but what his speech did do was to disrupt the support for the Irish Repeal movement, especially that which had been building up in the American South.

Whatever O'Connell's ability to combine a remarkable force of expression with a wide range of possible meanings, he had expressly accepted the Pennsylvania letter and said "I embrace" its opinions. Faced with such an unequivocal declaration, the Repeal Associations of Natches and Charleston dissolved, the latter attempting to mollify outraged opinion further by distributing its funds among local charities. Under the heading, "Repeal in America", the Freeman's Journal reported the hostile reception given to O'Connell's speech in Baltimore, Boston, Charleston, Washington D.C., and Philadelphia, where Robert Tyler claimed to have found it impossible to reconcile the speech with the vote of thanks accorded him earlier, and thus suggested that the former was probably the work of the Anti-Slavery Convention then meeting in London.¹

Infuriated by reports which had appeared in the Baltimore Sun of Tyler's speech, Steele indicated in late July that he intended introducing a resolution at the next meeting of the L.N.R.A. to the effect that

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¹. Freeman's Journal, 1/0/1843. The New York Freeman's Journal claimed that the speech indisputably had been made by O'Connell who was said to be both ignorant and ill-informed on the question. The common ground between it and Tyler was the desire by both to repudiate O'Connell's abolition while avoiding an open repudiation of his leadership of the Repeal movement.
the Irish people fully supported O'Connell's abolitionism, and Haughton agreed to second this. Haughton did go to the meeting but it was so crowded he could not get in. Neither could he hear O'Connell's speech, but he did hear the cheering, and he immediately penned a letter to the Freeman's Journal which appeared on the following day, 5/8/1843. Haughton, as it turned out, had been correct in assuming that the cheers he had heard were for O'Connell's anti-slavery speech, but in that speech, while affirming his praise for the Pennsylvania Address, O'Connell declared that there were abolitionists in America for whom he felt only the "most sovereign contempt"; he followed this by referring to "one Mr. Lloyd Garrison, who on religious subjects appeared to be something of a maniac." O'Connell then said he was a member of the anti-slavery Society to which Joseph Sturge belonged—the B.F.A.S.S.—and described Garrison as the "last man in the world whom he [O'Connell] would countenance, or any man that belonged to the same party as him," O'Connell also stated that Steele's letter in the Freeman's Journal had been much too "harsh", and that had he known of it earlier he would have tried to prevent its publication. His speech had been carefully phrased, as a result of the reports of the American Repeal

1. Letter from Steele in Freeman's Journal, 28/7/1843.

2. The report in the Nation, 5/8/1843, gives the phrase as "the profoundest contempt".

3. Speech by O'Connell at L.N.R.A., 4/8/1843, in Freeman's Journal, 5/8/1843. O'Connell's opposition to the Irish Chartists is described in R. Higgins, "Ireland and Chartism" (Ph.D., Trinity College, Dublin, 1959), pp. 75-77. In this speech, however, he did declare his support for Sturge's Complete Suffrage Union.
meetings, to suggest to the Irish-Americans that despite his anti-
slavery convictions he was by no means a tool of the American abolition-
ists, and that he specifically repudiated the Garrisonians—a group
to whom, though he may not have known it, the Pennsylvania abolition-
ists themselves belonged. Haughton's chagrin was great. He himself
protested to O'Connell that he and Garrison both advocated reform and
faced public obloquy, and felt that the two men should never speak of
each other but in terms of "affection and respect".¹ Webb, who
described Haughton as one of O'Connell's "most sincere admirers and
friends" recorded Haughton's statement that O'Connell had no moral
courage to "do right regardless of views of expediency". Webb felt
that O'Connell's conduct confirmed his suspicion that much anti-
slavery sentiment in Britain was only used in making "clap-trap
speeches" and in assuring "the early establishment of a reputation".²

In Philadelphia, the abolitionists published O'Connell's
speech in reply to their Address,³ and used this to reply to charges
made at a meeting of the Philadelphia Repeal Association in July,
accusing abolitionists of opposing Repeal, and being cruel to their
Irish servants and hostile to Roman Catholicism.⁴ More important to

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3. Loyal National Repeal Association. Daniel O'Connell and
American Slavery (Philadelphia, 1843).
Boston abolitionists, however, was O'Connell's speech of the fourth of August. Garrison was personally piqued at O'Connell's pretense "scarcely" to know him, and instructed Quincy to prepare a report for the Liberator detailing the length and intimacy of their acquaintance. ¹

The M.A.S.S. also prepared a resolution censuring O'Connell, though one abolitionist, Anne Warren Weston, objected to this, thinking that Garrison was reacting more against personal slight than injury to the cause. ²

In the L.N.R.A. itself, the slavery issue continued to absorb a great deal of O'Connell's time. In reply to those who feared that his attacks on American slavery would put an end to the remittances from America, O'Connell claimed that they had received "fully" ³ two hundred pounds since his May speech; he especially welcomed contributions from the Repeal Associations in the Southern States (twenty-five pounds from Harper's Ferry, Virginia, ⁴ and over one hundred and twenty-six pounds from Louisiana ⁵) since these proved, he said, that the senders loved Ireland more than slavery and were willing to sacrifice their prejudices and personal interest. Several of the Southern Repeal Associations complained bitterly of his reply

to the Pennsylvania Address: thus the St. Louis Repealers (who sent one hundred and seventy-four pounds), described it as "wantonly ungenerous, gratuitously insulting, and...unwarrantably malignant", while the Savannah Repealers pointed to the way the speech had provoked the hostility of many "native" Americans in the South to the Repeal movement.\(^1\) These vituperative letters gave O'Connell an opportunity of showing that while he was prepared, literally, to pay the price for his abolitionist stand, he was not entirely sacrificing the cause of Ireland. However, they also showed that many Repeal Associations in America were not mollified by his repudiation of Garrison.

Some Repeal Associations, particularly those in Philadelphia\(^2\) and Baltimore, had pursued a cautious course generally in reference to O'Connell's anti-slavery speeches, in an attempt to avoid total disruption on the issue, while the Repealers in Boston did see O'Connell's strictures on Garrison as vindicating the "greatness and consistency" of his course.\(^3\) The Cincinnati Irish Repeal Association,

\(^1\) Report of L.N.R.A. meeting, 27/9/1843, ibid., 28/9/1843.

\(^2\) In June, 1843, William Stokes had resigned temporarily as President of the Philadelphia Association after disagreements concerning the reading of a report on the subject of O'Connell's May speech. O'Connell welcomed the formation of a New Association, particularly as it charged Stokes with having opposed O'Connell's abolition on marrying a lady who owned slaves, and with having rebuked the New Association for having accepted the subscription of a Negro, "Mr. Purvis", who had met O'Connell in London. Three weeks later O'Connell reported that Stokes had emancipated the slaves and deserved the thanks of the L.N.R.A., ibid., 2h/7/1843, 1/8/1843, 27/9/1843, 2h/10/1843. The Negro referred to was probably Robert Purvis, who met O'Connell in London in 1834. B. Quarles, Black Abolitionists, (New York, 1969), p. 131.

\(^3\) Boston Pilot, 20/8/1842, 23/9/1843.
however, decided to upbraid O'Connell for his views: its letter (dated Cincinnati, 27/7/1843), was read at the L.N.R.A. on 28/8/1843.

The Cincinnati letter complained of the speech which O'Connell had made in reply to the Pennsylvania abolitionists, but merely restated, if in more strident a way, the arguments that the Pennsylvania abolitionists had already been praised by O'Connell for rebutting: the Cincinnati Repealers insisted that the future of the American Union depended on the continued existence of slavery, and resolved to oppose any attempts to abolish it.¹

The abolitionists in Ohio had been active in circulating copies of O'Connell's reply to the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society, and the Repealers there were anxious to deny that they could be associated with the anti-slavery movement. O'Connell for his part was horrified at the sentiments of the letter, particularly since it emanated from a free State and since it sought to justify slavery on the grounds of Negro inferiority. John O'Connell felt "almost inclined" to throw the letter out of his hands: he did not, and the sum of over one hundred and thirteen pounds was entered into the L.N.R.A. cash-books.²

The Cincinnati letter was a direct challenge, however, to O'Connell's judgement and authority, and he read his reply, the


Address to the Cincinnati Repealers, at the L.N.R.A., 11/10/1843.

In this he presented his most comprehensive statement of views on American slavery—claiming that a constitutional lawyer who interpreted the Constitution in the light of the Declaration of Independence would not hesitate to declare that the former could not be read as supporting slavery. He admitted that among the abolitionists were many "wicked and calumniating" enemies of Catholicism, but insisted that this malice would not be best met by giving up to them the "side of humanity": As a Utilitarian, O'Connell felt that emancipation was worthy of support on the grounds that it would benefit both slaves and slaveholders, while he urged the Irish-Americans to take notice of the slur which their present attitudes of slavery was casting on the Irish people, whose moral reputation would also therefore benefit from a change in these attitudes. Repeating his belief that the Catholic Church condemned "slaveholding, and especially slave-trading", but avoiding the pitfalls that had ensued from the Irish Address's pleas that they join the abolitionists, O'Connell ended his address with the appeal that the Irish-Americans, "in the name of your fatherland—in

1. For the appeal of abolitionism to evangelicals and utilitarians, see E. Halsévy, A History of the English people in 1815 (New York, 1924), pp. vi-viii, 509.

2. Therefore, also the domestic slave-trade.
the name of humanity—in the name of the God of mercy and charity"; abandon for ever all attempts to defend slavery.  

The abolitionists gave the Cincinnati Address a warm reception. Garrison was in contrast to O'Connell to claim that the constitution was a pro-slavery document, but this did not prevent him from recognising the potential contribution which the Irish-Americans could make to abolition by their votes. Moreover, O'Connell had insisted that in any event slavery violated a law higher than the Constitution and had outlined several ways the Irish-Americans could aid the abolitionists and help secure the civil rights of Negroes without breaking their Constitutional obligations however these were interpreted. Any Irish-Americans who continued to defend slavery, argued O'Connell, would be defacing Ireland and likening themselves to the opponents of Roman Catholic Emancipation who had claimed agitation had retarded reform. Finally, any Irish-American Catholic who continued to defend slavery would be betraying the teachings of their Church.

O'Connell's comments on the Catholic Church and slavery were the more welcome to the abolitionists since, following the Irish Address and his speech of May, 1843, they had with increasing frequency to face the accusation that they were hostile to the Roman Catholic religion.

1. Nation, 11/10/1843. O'Connell said that he dictated the letter while sitting for the Irish sculptor, John Hogen, who was also present at a "monster meeting" in Ireland on 1/10/1843 when O'Connell had claimed the support of the Irish people for his denunciations of American slavery. Ibid., 7/10/1843. Wendell Phillips later said he hoped the statue would be placed in Faneuil Hall.
In Dublin the H.A.S.S. Committee were intent on enlisting as many Irish Roman Catholics as possible in the anti-slavery movement. By their own admission, moreover, their remarks at their weekly meetings in the Royal Exchange were largely addressed to predominantly Roman Catholic, urban working class audiences: They therefore tended to stress those factors such as the absence of separate Negro pews which they felt would instil a sense of the Catholic anti-slavery tradition, rather than risk alienating their audiences by arraigning, for example, the position that Bishops Hughes and England had taken on the question. This was essentially a tactical ploy, confirmed, one suspects, by a sensitivity arising from their awareness of their own religious and class affiliations, and pedagogical function, in relation to those of their audiences: Richard Allen, for example, objected to parts of William Howitt's Colonisation and Christianity because he felt the influence of the book's central thesis on Roman Catholics would be undermined by the needless affront it gave to their religion. 1 Webb in particular, however, was bitterly critical of what he took to be the elements of superstition in Roman Catholicism: he detested it—the word is not too strong—as epitomising the dominance of creed over critical thought, as being indetical to the spirit of rational enquiry which he considered to be a prerequisite for man's intellectual

and moral elevation. Such were his animosities that he displayed a
readiness to make most abusive statements about the Church and to
ridicule prominent Roman Catholics. The abolitionists may have been
expected to welcome Dr. Cahill's published lecture on slavery, but
Webb deliberately and publicly ridiculed the Irish Priest for the
elementary blunders he had made in reviewing the historical back-
ground of the anti-slavery movement. 1 Webb alone of the Dublin
abolitionists was prepared publicly in Dublin to rebuke the Catholic
Church in Ireland for its failure to take a more active stand on the
slavery issue, 2 and for him this failure was characteristic of an
institution based on the "abominable theory" of "Papery" and which
existed by keeping its adherents in a state of ignorance and intellec-
tual subjugation. 3 Many abolitionists in America, especially follow-
ing the increased rate of Irish immigration, saw the growth in the
number of Catholics there as a crisis facing the country. A notable
example was the Rev. George Bournes, who reacted to Gregory XVI's Letter
in much the same manner as O'Connell had advised Roman Catholics to

1. Webb may have suspected Cahill of charlatanism, and, as a
professional lecturer, of capitalizing on the interest in slavery which Frederick Douglass had aroused in Waterford in 1846. Letter from Webb, in National Anti-Slavery Standard, 19/11/1846.


3. R.D. Webb to A.W. Weston. Co. Dublin, 26/9/1857. Ibid., v. 29, p. 25; letter from Webb in National Anti-Slavery Standard, 30/12/1857. Webb was educated at Ballitore, with Roman Catholics, at a time, he said, when there was a "sort of aristocracy in protestantism". Letter from Webb, Ibid., 2/9/1852.
adopt against their detractors: he urged American Protestants not
to allow Catholics to expropriate the moral position of being abolition-
ists.\textsuperscript{1} Anti-Catholicism did play an important part in the syndrome
of interests which helped to weld together the Anglo-American Protestant
alliance in the 1830's,\textsuperscript{2} but in general most abolitionists do not
appear to have participated in the growth of nativist feeling in the
United States. John Greenleaf Whittier reminded Americans in 1835
that,

"The Catholic question has been but imperfectly under-
stood in this country. Many have allowed their just
disapprobation of the Catholic religion to degenerate
into a most unwarranted prejudice against its conscientious
followers".

Whittier was talking in the context of Ireland, a common focal point
for discussions of the Catholic religion, and he admonished those who
described the Roman Catholic Emancipation movement as merely "a
struggle for supremacy or place".\textsuperscript{3} Denying that Catholics alone could
be accused of sectarian bigotry,\textsuperscript{4} he insisted that Ireland had legiti-
mate grievances—including absentee landlordism, the deleterious
effects of the Union, and the tithe system—and while unconvinced that

\begin{enumerate}
\item For Bourne, see R.A. Hillington, The Protestant Crusade,
1800-1860 (New York, 1938), pp. 114-116; L. Hillington,
"Some Connections between British and American Reform Move-
ments, 1830-1860, with Special Reference to the Anti-Slavery
\item Ibid., p. 40.
\item Wilberforce's advocacy of the abolition of colonial slavery
and his bitter opposition to Roman Catholic Emancipation was
applauded in the Christian Examiner and Church of Ireland Maga-
nine (Third Series), v.3, n.xxxiii, July, 1838, pp. 451-452, 508.
\item Further evidence that every abolitionist was not necessarily
unaware that the traditional sources of abolitionist support
in the British Isles were in many respects open to the same
charge of narrowness and bigotry which they made against the
Catholics of Ireland is shown in Rev. John Biland, Letter to
a Clerical Advocate of the British and Foreign Bible...,
Societies... (London, 1829), pp. 5-6.
\end{enumerate}
O’Connell’s agitation for Repeal would provide a solution for these, he did feel it would result in "such a thorough reform in the government and policy of Great Britain, as shall render a repeal unnecessary".  

Many abolitionists did share what Whittier called a "just approbation" of Catholicism—with all the assumptions that that epithet implied—and this frequently did erupt into "a most unwarranted prejudice" as they became frustrated and infuriated either by O’Connell or the Irish-Americans thereby confirming the suspicions of both. They did, however, continue to insist that they were hostile neither to Repeal, the Catholic religion, nor to Irish immigrants in general. Garrison had declared, in the months following the Irish Address, that he was "an Irish Repealer and American Repealer... I go for the Repeal of the Union between England and Ireland, and for the Repeal of the Union between North and South."  

This declaration was supported by many in the anti-slavery movement who added that it was not merely a hypocritical attempt to win over the Irish-Americans. Others thought that O’Connell’s agitation for Repeal was diverting attention from the pressing practical


2. One suspects that at times O’Connell took some pleasure in provoking anti-Catholic prejudice, as when he gave as one of his reasons for saying that the woman delegates should have been admitted in 1840, the importance of the role women had always played in his Church. Parker Pillsbury also thought well of the Catholics’ "cult of the Virgin; a pro-feminist view in his interpretation". Filler, Crusade against Slavery, p. 148.

needs of the Irish people, 1 while N.P. Rogers considered Garrison's advocacy of both Repeal movements to be a political action and therefore inimical to non-resistant principles. 2 Webb was a persistent critic of both O'Connell and Repeal, and complained of the "foolish high-go-mad" remarks which Garrison made in the Liberator in favour of a movement which Webb feared would bring Catholic ascendancy after causing much dissension in a country composed of discordant elements. 3 Though Webb, like Allen, abhorred the imprisonment of O'Connell, and found that the presence of English troops on Irish soil offended his feelings "as an Irishman (for I am one of that race of white niggers)" 4 he provoked the abolitionists on occasion to chide him for the views he expressed on O'Connell. Thus while he praised the Cincinnati Address as O'Connell's greatest abolitionist effort, and drew attention to the pressing calls on O'Connell's time and energy when it was being written, his rejoinder that O'Connell had penned it only to take his mind off other matters and to curry favour with the abolitionists was criticized by the National Anti-Slavery Standard, and Lucretia Mott who later concluded that Webb's own political leanings had coloured his opinions of the Liberator. 5 Surprise was sometimes expressed that Webb's remarks

on Repeal and Catholicism in the *National Anti-Slavery Standard* did not endanger him in Dublin: the reason they did not was that so few in Dublin knew of his contributions to the American abolitionist press.

All American abolitionists were not merely infatuated (as Webb sometimes suspected) with O'Connell's personality. Henry C. Wright who in his tour in Britain constantly defended the Repeal movement, recorded his impressions of O'Connell lecturing at an anti-Corn Law meeting:

"I never saw anything as absorbingly and overpoweringly ridiculous as the bowing of O'Connell. I could not go it. My gravity was all overturned...Did you ever see a large barrel on two small sticks—with a short thick neck and a buffalo's head—put it before an audience of five thousand, set...the audience to shouting—and that is O'Connell in the Free Trade Hall."¹

Even abolitionists distrustful of O'Connell admired his advocacy of moral force and felt that in Ireland, with Father Mathew's temperance movement, there was in operation an experiment which was potentially of central importance to the progress of mankind. As N.P. Rogers expressed this feeling,

"...would it not be just like Providence, if he should select for the example to mankind a people...down-trodden and despised as poor Ireland has been."²

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There was undoubtedly, as the Irish-Americans suspected, a close correlation between the frequency and timing of the abolitionists' declarations of sympathy for repeal, and their attempts to capitalise on such documents as the Irish Address in order to win them over. There was, however, less substance in the accusation that this indicated merely a callous and cynical desire to manipulate Irish-American feelings: the sheer amount of space devoted to Ireland and Irish affairs in the abolitionists' correspondence itself testifies to both the intensity and consistency of their interest in Ireland.

Mutual animosities did exist, however, and were fuelled by a two-way process whereby abolitionist disappointment with the Irish-Americans found expression in views and attitudes which served to exacerbate the animosities of the latter group, and abolitionist attempts to break this pattern were occasionally unrealistic and frequently repudiated as hypocritical. It has been suggested that the "core" of the Irish-American position on the slavery issue centred neither in support for slavery nor dislike of the Negro, but that both "were related by transference to the real source of the Catholic Irish antagonism-dislike of the Abolitionists". Clearly the abolitionists did urge a course which the Irish-American community

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1. See, the short story by Lydia Maria Child, entitled, "The Irish Heart", with its glossary of such phrases as "navourmeeh" and "soushla mairtrie", in National Anti-Slavery Standard, 26/6/1845.

did consider clashed with the perception of the attitude which they were expected to take towards the American Union and Constitution, while they associated the abolitionists with a series of causes which were inimical both to their interests and the social structure of their community. 1

In this situation, many abolitionists such as Phillips made comments about the Irish-Americans in his private correspondence, which differed widely from his public, published statements. One abolitionist, however, N.P. Rogers, was so exasperated by the comments O'Connell had made about Garrison in August, 1843, that he published articles in his paper, the Herald of Freedom, which were to cause the greatest friction yet between the Garrisonians and O'Connell.

Rogers attributed O'Connell's remarks to the fact that he had never forgiven Garrison for rebuking his failure to take the Temperance pledge from Father Mathew in July, 1840. 2 Rogers refused to believe that O'Connell had spoken only to conciliate the South, and as

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1. Owen Dudley Edwards, The American Image of Ireland. A study of its Early Phases (offprint from Perspectives in American History, v.4, 1970), 264-268, cites the temperance advocates as evidence of this, but notes that Irish-Americans were prepared to support a temperance Society which was organized by members of their own religious and ethnic community, and which urged temperance as a means by which the Irish-Americans could win more easy acceptance in American society. See, Sister J. Bland, Hibernian Crusade. The Story of the Catholic Total Abstinence Union of America (Washington, D.C., 1951), and B. Harrison, Drink and the Victorians (London, 1971), pp. 103-104, 165, 166. Both American and Irish abolitionists found common ground in their praise for Father Mathew's efforts in Ireland, the success of which did little to bear out the angry outbursts of those abolitionists who felt that the Irish were opposed to every reform.

2. Garrison had rejected as unsatisfactory O'Connell's claim that he did not wish to give Mathew's movement a political complexion. Herald of Freedom, 4/9/1840, 11/9/1840. Garrison himself had not commented on this to his wife, but had reported only the speech which O'Connell had made in favour of total
a Garrisonian was anxious to deny that O'Connell had been won over by the Tappanites. In a subsequent article, entitled "The Stultifying Power of Superstition", he recalled dining with O'Connell at Elizabeth Pease's in London, and the expression that had come over O'Connell's face as he crossed himself before eating: it became,

"an idiotic blank—as unmeaning as the visage of a great calf...There was not a man in the United Kingdom I believe, who could have looked like such an infinite fool...It was Catholic monkery, and I could therefore look upon it with Protestant intrepidity...It had transferred Daniel O'Connell, in a single instant, into something vastly more than a natural fool."

This was copied into the Liberator, and it was with a "man called Lloyd Garrison" that O'Connell associated it, in a speech at the L.N.R.A., 24/10/1843, in which he regretted the "unhappy disposition" evinced by the abolitionists, and declared his readiness to call upon the American abolitionists to cooperate in "the spread of Christian charity" with the Irishman and Catholics in Ireland, and "obtain their assistance": the Irish Address in reverse, in effect.

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2. Ibid., 15/9/1843.
3. Nation, 28/10/1843. On the same day, O'Connell took the opportunity of demonstrating that he was selective in his praise of American abolitionists and that some of these supported Repeal, by thanking Gerrit Smith who through Lewis Tappan had sent
Most American Garrisonians were embarrassed at Rogers's article, and Webb himself called it a "discreditable production" for which he had nothing but reprobation. Edmund Quincy denied all responsibility for it and claimed that the editorial decision to carry it in the Liberator had been taken in Garrison's absence, thereby indicating the latter's "procrastination and disorder" in running the paper. Maria Weston Chapman asked Webb to request O'Connell to write an article in the Liberty Bell apologising to Garrison. Webb, understandably, declined to put his "head in the lion's mouth", but passed on the message to Haughton. O'Connell did read a letter from Haughton to the L.N.R.A., 30/10/1843, which alluded to O'Connell's "just" rebuke of an article which had also aroused Haughton's indignation, and though O'Connell referred in his reply to the Liberator as an "absurd" newspaper, Webb felt that the fact that Haughton's letter had been read at all amounted to an apology. Rogers himself regretted the expressions he had used, but insisted that he had been criticizing not Roman Catholic but sectarian superstition; the first he had been able to recognize as a Protestant in 1840, but now he was in a position to recognize both.  

...220 to the L.N.R.A. G. Smith to D. O'Connell. Peterboro, 28/7/1843. Smith Papers, (outgoing letterbrooks), v. 1, pp. 420-422. Syracuse University; letter from C. Torrey to G. Smith, in Albany Weekly Patriot, 15/8/1843. On the second of July, Smith wrote O'Connell claiming that Garrison was a Christian; this letter was also forwarded to Tappan who dissented from Smith's view. It is possible that O'Connell received this letter, with or without Tappan's disclaimer; I have seen no evidence that he did. L. Tappan to G. Smith. New York, 21/8/1843, 18/9/1843. Letterbook 4, pp. 230, 238. Tappan Papers.

1. Freeman's Journal, 31/10/1843; E. Quincy to R.D. Webb. Dedham, 27/11/1843. Quincy/Webb Letters. Haughton had believed that Mrs. Chapman's letter implied that Rogers would be called upon to apologise to O'Connell.

2. Herald of Freedom, 24/11/1843. In his paper, 23/6/1843, Rogers had claimed that "Popery is priesthood confessed. Protestantism is Popery concealed."
With an "openness" that staggered Webb, but also, one suspects, with some appreciation of the foibles of the great, Haughton succeeded in more or less mollifying O'Connell by including in his letter a request for the Liberator's autograph on behalf of an American friend. Rogers's article, however, had appeared in the Herald of Freedom before, but had come to O'Connell's attention after, the Cincinnati Address was sent from Dublin. As a result the abolitionists were faced with the position of welcoming and distributing the Cincinnati Address while rejecting O'Connell's accusations that Garrison was a religious bigot.

The Cincinnati Address had little disruptive effect on the Irish-American community, largely because the Second National Repeal Convention met in New York in September, 1843, before the Address was sent, while any antagonism it aroused was largely replaced by the widespread feelings of sympathy felt in American Repeal circles after the Clontarf Proclamation, the State Trials of 1844, and O'Connell's subsequent imprisonment. Moreover, the Boston Pilot, while describing the Cincinnati Address as a lucid and able denunciation of slavery, rejected what it said about the American abolitionists, and welcomed Rogers's article and O'Connell's reaction to this as proof of its contention, and of O'Connell's more mature reflection on the subject.1

1. The Savannah Repealers dissolved after O'Connell's Cincinnati Address, but, with the Charleston Repealers, reformed soon after, on hearing of O'Connell's arrest. The Albany Democratic Reformer, 6/1/1844, quoted the Boston Pilot's statement that the "contracted and insensible rupture" in Charleston was over, and urged the Natchez Repealers to reform also.

2. Boston Pilot, 10/11/1843. The Pilot had taken the opportunity provided by Rogers's statements subsequent to the offending article, to suggest that the Garrisonians were hostile not only to the Catholic but to all forms of established religion.
The Boston *Pilot* accused the abolitionists of deliberately ignoring O'Connell's repudiation of their religious views and of concentrating solely on the Cincinnati Address. This was not wholly accurate since both the *Herald of Freedom* and the *Liberator* had replied to O'Connell's statements, but it was true that the abolitionists did devote most of their attention to publicizing the address.

Garrison himself presented it to the Annual General Meeting of the Rhode Island Anti-Slavery Society, and at a meeting in Faneuil Hall on 10/11/1843, at which Wendell Phillips offered three cheers for the "abolitionist Pope Gregory XVI", thereby provoking the comment from John G. Tucker, Vice-President of the Boston Repeal Association, that if both the Pope and O'Connell were abolitionists, it was his duty to remind the audience that the Irish-Americans were ruled neither from Rome nor home. If the Garrisonians welcomed O'Connell back into the place "he should occupy", by the side of the abolitionists, the Boston

1. National Anti-Slavery Standard, 4/1/1844; Twelfth Annual Report of the M.A.S.S. (Boston, 1844), pp. 23-26. Edwards, *American Image*, p. 271-272, suggests that Bishop Hughes "was, from his point of view, wise in protesting against O'Connell's intervention in the American slavery issue", and that "O'Connell offered a challenge to the basis of Hughes's power of a kind that would ultimately destroy the ascendancy of the church in Irish-American politics." On the slavery issue, O'Connell would only have offered a challenge to Hughes's power if Hughes had disagreed with those Irish-Americans who had already decided that their views on slavery were not going to be determined in Dublin or Rome. O'Connell backed Hughes's proposals in 1842 to reduce lay control over Church property. *Nation*, 26/11/1842. In July, 1843 Hughes was on the same platform in Dublin as O'Connell who claimed that even Africa looked on Ireland and sighed for leaders such as Ireland had to lead her out of bondage. *Freeman's Journal*, 4/7/1843.
Pilot reminded its readers that neither O'Connell nor Garrison, but Tucker, and another Irish-American who had spoken, D.W. O'Brien, were the accredited spokesmen of the Irish-American community on the slavery question. Non-Garrisonian abolitionists, meanwhile, were equally assiduous in publicising the Address. In Cincinnati itself, Salmon P. Chase helped to organise a meeting of the "Friends of Liberty, Ireland and Repeal", while Lewis Tappan in New York sent a copy of Gregory XVI's Apostolic Letter to Chase, with the suggestion that the Catholic Bishops of the city "may like to see it."

In Ireland itself, O'Connell was absorbed by the State Trials which were to be held in February, 1844, and at which he was charged with conspiracy and incitement to sedition. He sought to disprove these charges and noted in December, 1844, that the L.N.R.A. had refused aid from Chartists and French Republicans, and had also refused "American sympathy for it was coloured with the blood of the Negro." At the Trials themselves, O'Connell argued that neither the slave-trade nor Colonial slavery would ever have been abolished had Wilberforce and

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1. Boston Pilot, 25/11/1843. The Pilot was especially angry that advertisements put out by the Garrisonians for Fansuill Hall had described it as a Repeal Meeting.

2. One British abolitionist was probably less than sensitive to the feelings of his American allies when he noted his delight that O'Connell had responded to the "nasal sensibility" of the Cincinnati Repealers who had complained that Negroes smelt badly, by alluding to the stale smell of tobacco-spittle which British visitors had frequently complained of as being the prevailing "odour" among native, free Americans. G. Armstrong to S. May, Jr., Clifton, 30/10/1843. Ms.B1.6.v.1,p.37. May Papers.


4. Nation, 9/12/1843.
Clarkson had to face the charges now brought against him, while they too had organised mass public meetings: moral agitation he felt to be essential against wrongs of all kinds, and he argued that it would be futile to try to coax the Southern slaveholders into freeing their slaves. He also sought to deny that he was a hypocrite by pointing to his speeches attacking slavery which were made at a time when he knew large sums of money were in the process of being sent from the American South. Such statements told but lightly on judge and jury: on the same day as it was announced in the English press, the formal verdict of guilty was delivered to O'Connell in Dublin.

Nor were O'Connell's continued statements on the slavery issue proving popular with the young Repealers who worked for the Nation newspaper in Dublin. In December, 1843, President Tyler had declared himself strongly in favour of the annexation of Texas, and the Nation exulted at this, feeling that Ireland could only benefit from any ensuing war between England and the United States. O'Connell himself realised the opportunities that could accrue to Ireland: if Ireland were contented, he asked, could other nations dare to press their claims on England as America was now doing in Texas and Oregon?

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3. See poem, "To John Tyler, on Reading His Message", in *Nation*, 6/1/1844.
The Nation disclaimed such reasoning out of hand: they would accept Repeal as a spoil of Battle but not as a sop tossed by England who only wished to strengthen its position against the country which had befriended Ireland and succoured her exiles. It therefore warned that, "Repeal must not be put into conflict with any party" in the United States. "The men of the Southern States must not have their institutions interfered with, whether right or wrong. Where is our mission to crusade against the faults of our friends... We might as well refuse English contributions because of the horrors of mill slavery, or of Italy because it bows under the accursed bayonets of Austria, as quarrel with the Americans because of their domestic institutions, however, we may condemn and once and for all protest against them".

The Nation recalled that Ireland had received aid from slaveholding America in 1828, in the struggle against Roman Catholic Emancipation. The ideological content, and also the focus, of anti-slavery agitation, had developed considerably since then, but for the Nation the tactical and ethical considerations remained unchanged: Ireland must not insult, alienate or repudiate its most important ally, while it was also unthinkable to win Repeal by a policy of ingratiating England.¹

The State Trials provoked a wave of sympathy for O'Connell, and in March, 1844, contributions were sent to the L.M.R.A. from Virginia, Georgia, Louisiana, and Charleston, thereby giving O'Connell an opportunity of demonstrating that his anti-slavery speeches had not been entirely disastrous in terms of their effect on the American Repeal Associations or the amount of aid they were willing to send to Dublin.²

1. Nation, 8/1/1844; see, Freeman's Journal, 1/12/1843, 5/12/1843, for an appreciation of the attraction of American institutions, except slavery, for Ireland.

However, while the Nation had declared its opposition most openly, the Dublin Pilot, (which had from 1841-42 published Mooney's letters), also indicated its disquiet at O'Connell's policy when to his concern, it published in April, 1844, the letter from the Cincinnati Repealers. In a speech in May, 1844, John O'Connell also criticized the Freeman's Journal and the Pilot for advocating the American annexation of Texas which he said would result in the addition of nine more slave States to the Union. For the first time, in fact, the Freeman's Journal, in the editorial that O'Connell was objecting to, had raised the question of the repercussions of annexation on American slavery, but his speech not only won plaudits from Tom Steele and the H.A.S.S., it brought the Pilot and the Freeman's Journal to heel; neither newspaper mentioned the Texas issue for some six months. The Nation also declined for several months from mentioning the annexation issue, but the O'Connellites had been shown that both opposition to and dissension from their policies did exist. Moreover, the Freeman's Journal's article had been in reply to one that had appeared in the London Times opposing annexation, and there was


3. Freeman's Journal, 18/5/1844; Pilot, 15/5/1844.


little for John O'Connell to relish in being placed in the apparent position of supporting a paper generally considered to be the most abusive of the Repeal movement, against one of the foremost champions of that cause.

Disputes broke out again in January, 1845, however, when the Nation declared that unless there was a foreign war involving England, Repeal would not be carried that year.¹ The Freeman's Journal in similar mood felt that Ireland would have little to fear from a war between the United States and England: it repeated that it abhorred slavery and that its sympathies would therefore be "distracted" should such a conflict arise over Texas, but it raised the prospect of the North annexing Canada as a convenient counterpoise to the annexation of Texas—a proposal which had already been angrily denounced by Canadian Repealers.² The Nation and the Freeman's Journal both praised President James Polk's determination to annex Texas, and resented, it is clear, England's reluctance to go to war over the issue: this was taken as indicating both England's apprehension of America's military strength and also that her anti-slavery beliefs were strong enough only to rob the British people of millions of pounds in order to compensate the West Indian slave-holders.³ Daniel O'Connell himself assailed the English Government

1. Nation, 11/1/1845.
for recognising Texas, and for "political cowardice" in failing to oppose the American "transgressors", and then declared that the English, "can have us... the throne of Victoria can be made perfectly secure—the honour of the British empire maintained—and the American eagle in its highest point of flight, be brought down... let them give us the Parliament in College Green, and Oregon shall be theirs and Texas shall be harmless." \(^1\)

This speech has been described as a "master piece of folly". \(^2\) As a statement of tactics, however, it contained nothing that O'Connell had not uttered before. The Nation itself had hinted, two days previously, that it too was considering the possibility of England being forced to ameliorate Irish discontent before opposing American designs in Texas, \(^3\) but it recoiled from O'Connell's unequivocal enunciation of this consideration. O'Connell in the following week then reminded America of the threat of leaders from the West Indies coming to foment slave-insurrection in the West Indies, \(^4\) and the Nation professed horror at the prospect of the Negroes being organised under the "awful banner of liberty and vengeance" to overthrow an institution which England had introduced into America, and which Ireland had not "Quixotic mission" to involve herself in.

Continuing O'Connell's metaphor, the Nation asked if the

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2. O'Faolain, *King of the Beggars*, p. 321. O'Faolain writes disparagingly of John O'Connell at this stage, "pontificating on Negro slavery (as if his father had not already sufficiently antagonised America)...".


4. Speech at L.N.R.A., 7/4/1845, ibid., 12/4/1845. Readers of the Repeal press had already some conception of the American fear of slave revolts; letters had appeared from both ex-President Andrew Jackson and General Cass arguing that America should annex Texas if only to forestall British attempts to use Texas as a base from which to incite slave rebellion throughout the South. Freeman's Journal, 13/6/1844; Dublin Pilot, 22/2/1844.
"sparrows of Downing Street" could frighten America, but coyly gave assurances that the "humble loyalty" of the Empire would support Queen Victoria in any war, however. "unjust or injurious". The Nation was playing a subtle, if dishonest, game: it was rebuking O'Connell for having offered aid to England in the hope of winning concessions, yet it too had not dismissed this course and in fact saw the passing of the increased grant to Maynooth College as an example of what the English Government could do, when faced with war with America, to conciliate Ireland.2

As a result of O'Connell's 'American Eagle' speech the Repeal Associations in Portsmouth and Norfolk, Virginia, and in New Orleans, dissolved. The speech was also condemned by Repealers in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, while the Baltimore Repeal Association dissolved and then re-formed3 after a letter was sent from Robert Tyler, explaining that the Nation, indeed the whole press of Ireland, William Smith O'Brien and Thomas Davis, all expressed the "most ultra-American sentiments" on the Texas question: Tyler added that O'Connell did not represent the sentiments of a hundredth part of the Irish people, and that the Young Irelanders repudiated his opinions "most decidedly".4 In reply to

1. Nation, 12/11/1845.
2. Ibid., 26/2/1845.
4. Letter from Tyler quoted in Nation, 21/6/1845.
a complaint from the Repealers in Dubrique, Ohio, that his speech would stimulae nativist opposition to the Irish-Americans, O'Connell repeated that he was willing to be "bribed" by England in order to win Repeal, and added that his speech had been badly received in America only because the bulk of it had been taken up with an attack on American slavery.¹

The Young Irelander and contributor to the Nation, Thomas Davis, had objected at the L.N.R.A. to O'Connell's 'American Eagle' speech, but had been abruptly dismissed by the latter,² and in August, John O'Connell repeated the outlines of the O'Connellite strategy, adding only that if Repeal were not granted then Ireland would "stand smillingly"³ by" and reap the benefits if England were ruined.⁴ He also suggested that England was being thoroughly hypocritical, and in fact favoured the annexation since a strengthened South would be in a position to pass a lower tariff, which would be in England's commercial interests. These points made, however, he went on to denounce the Federal Government for having plotted for years to secure first the independence and then the annexation of Texas, thereby provoking an angry quarrel in the L.N.R.A. with the Dublin solicitor, Richard Scott, who declared that abolition in the city was solely the business of the H.A.S.S., and that the Repealers should

1. Report of L.N.R.A. meeting, 21/7/1845, ibid., 26/7/1845.

2. Davis complained to William Smith O'Brien that half of the American Repeal Associations had dissolved, and that the other had been re-constituted on the doctrine of "principles not men", thanks only to the stand taken by the Nation. T. Davis to W.S. O'Brien, Dublin, 17/6/1845, 26/7/1845. Ms.434, 435. Smith O'Brien Papers. National Library of Ireland.

3. Presumably not, therefore, idly.

desist from any further repudiations of American slavery. Deploring
the incident, the Nation reminded its readers that while the West Indian
slaves had been the "harmless objects" of thoughtful philanthropy,
the very wickedness of American slavery had debased the slaves there and
made immediate emancipation perilous, and agreed with Scott that the
business of the L.N.R.A. as a body was to secure Repeal.1 While this
statement was made in measured tones and called for a greater degree
of caution and moderation on all sides, in private the Young Irelanders
fulminated against John O'Connell's browbeating conduct towards Scott.2

The Slavery issue had become an extremely important factor in the
deteriorating relations between O'Connell and the Young Irelanders,3 who
while unsympathetic to slavery itself, believed that O'Connell's repeated
strictures against it needlessly affronted the United States.4

1. Ibid.

2. J. Dillon to T. Davis. Ballina, 6/8/1845, in C.G. Duffy, Young
Ireland. A Fragment of Irish History, 1840-1845 (2 vols. London,
1896), v. 2, pp. 200-201; C.G. Duffy, Thomas Davis. The Memoirs of
an Irish Patriot (London, 1890), pp. 313-316.

3. See the stress given to it in Duffy, Young Ireland, v. 2, p. 197.
Thomas Davis, as yet the only Young Irelander to openly confront
O'Connell on the slavery issue, had already had a bitter and emotional
clash with the latter in the L.N.R.A., 26/5/1845, over the Government's
proposal to establish three University Colleges in Ireland, which
O'Connell opposed, Nation, 31/5/1845.

4. M. Doheny, The F felon's Track, with a preface by Arthur Griffiths
(Dublin, 1914), p. 25. In Doheny's, History of the American Revolu-
tion (Dublin, 1846), pp. xi-xii, 35, is evidence of the interest
taken by the Young Irelanders in the United States, the book
being dedicated to Robert Tyler. Doheny was embarrassed at the
presence of American slavery, and wrote that "a holier emancipation
remained and remains to be achieved. When it is affected, and not
till then, there will be no blush for him who writes America's
history". Doheny felt that the American Revolution affirmed the
rights of people to use physical force in a just cause, a position
which Haughton refused to accept, seeing the continued existence
of slavery as a kind of retribution for the taking up of arms in
1776.
Slavery had become embroiled in Anglo-American diplomatic relations and there were differences in opinion as to precisely how, when and to what extent, England's difficulties could become Ireland's opportunities. The Nation considered O'Connell's stance to be unworthy of Ireland, and his abolitionism a positive encumbrance, though it found the latter on occasion useful, as when it countered accusations that Ireland was in a cowardly fashion seeking only to exploit English difficulties with suggestions that O'Connell's rejection of American aid was proof that Ireland sought Repeal by the purest of means. O'Connell's most ardent supporters in the L.N.R.A. on the slavery issue were his son John, his relative Captain Broderick, Thomas Steele, Edward Clements, a Dublin barrister, and T.H. Ray. John O'Connell was still forced occasionally to upbraid the Freeman's Journal for printing comments on the slavery question which he found unacceptable, 1 while both it and the Pilot had maintained a discreet silence about the 'American Eagle', and the latter published extracts from the Waterford Freeman, and the Tipperary Free Press, newspapers which normally supported O'Connell, regretting the speech. 2 O'Connell's 'American Eagle' speech, moreover, was criticised in Orestes Brownson's Quarterly Review, which stated that O'Connell's attacks on American slavery were made only to enlist the

sympathy of British abolitionists, but did not rebuke him for this, nor for pledging Irish aid to England since for him to have done other would have belied his own claim that Repeal was a question of internal British legislation. Brownson did, however, accuse O'Connell of interfering in American affairs, and for giving his support to the abolitionist party, "the least...countenance" of which was seen to be "recreancy to God and treason to the state". Large extracts of this were published in the Tablet, an influential Catholic journal published in London, which recommended Brownson's Quarterly to the Catholic reader.

In reply to this, John O'Connell stated that his father had "repudiated all idea of connexion" with the abolitionists, many of whom had bitterly anti-Catholic feelings, and O'Connell himself denied that he had ever courted the English abolitionists. The stress laid by both

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1. Brownson admitted that Americans may have "transcended" their rights by supporting Irish Repeal, but contended that O'Connell should not have retaliated by allying himself with the "domestic enemies" of the United States.

2. For Brownson's attitude to slavery and the Negro, see, Rice, American Catholic Opinion, pp. 97, 107, 111; and J.C. Murphy, "An Analysis of the Attitudes of American Catholics towards the Immigrant and the Negro" (Ph.D., Catholic University of America, 1940), pp. 60-80.


on the anti-Catholic prejudices of the abolitionists was far removed from
the larger view of the question he had taken in the Cincinnati Address
and reflects not only the source of these latest criticisms but of the
stress O'Connell was under in a situation in which Repeal had not been
granted or won and in which his abolitionism was being singled out more
frequently as one of the major reasons why it had not. In an attempt
to show that he was an upholder of the Catholic religion, O'Connell
attacked the iniquity of both American and English abolitionists, many
of the latter having been, he said, among the greatest critics of the
increased grant to Maynooth.

James Haughton, had with other Irish Unitarians, supported
the increased grants, and had, with the H.A.S.S., praised John O'Connell's
reply to Richard Scott—thereby prompting Tom Steele to suggest three
cheers for the H.A.S.S., the B.P.A.S.S. and Joseph Sturge—but it is
possible that Haughton was experiencing a growing sense of disillusion-
ment at O'Connell's readiness to raise the issue of abolitionist anti-
catholicism and thereby enflame Irish-American and Irish Catholic hosti-
ility towards the anti-slavery movement in order to further his own ends.

1. The Tablet, 6/3/1847, disagreed with Madden's assertion that the
entire Catholic tradition opposed not merely the slave-trade but
slavery, and ridiculed Madden's lay efforts at interpretation
when Southern Bishops knew better. R.R. Madden to Tablet. Dublin,
21/2/1847, in "Unpublished Essays and other Literary Fragments..."


Steele's words reflected more than merely characteristic bombast;
they indicated that which Webb was painfully aware of, the
ignorance of many in Britain of the ideological differences
between the abolitionist Societies.
He certainly became more willing to express publicly his disagreement with O'Connell, and with Webb became more critical of O'Connell's offer to be a "recruiting sergeant" for England, and his propensity to praise the valour of Irish troops serving in the British army. Webb admitted that O'Connell believed in the value of moral force, but was no true non-resistant in that the "hectoring, bullying style" of his speeches in effect constituted a threat to the English Government that if they did not grant Repeal, the Irish would seize it by force. Haughton also, as did Ebenezer Shackleton, expressed his concern at O'Connell's offer of aid to England, which they saw as a violation of peace principles. This was an important development, since the quarrel over the issue of physical as opposed to moral force eventually led to the secession of the Young Irelanders, supported by Haughton and sympathised with by Webb, from the L.N.R.A.

The complexities of the network of sympathies, loyalties and affinities surrounding O'Connell's position on the slavery issue were

5. Letter from Haughton in Freeman's Journal, 11/7/1845; Pilot 15/7/1845. Letters from Shackleton in Freeman's Journal, 27/1/1846.
compound still further by three issues in which O'Connell both pleased the Dublin abolitionists and alienated further important sections of his Repeal support: these concerned the lowering of the duties on sugar, the Oregon question, and references to a possible American invasion of Ireland.

Many abolitionists, while free-trade advocates, were concerned that if the duties on sugar were lowered, this would stimulate the Brazilian and Cuban sugar-trade, and consequently increase slavery there and lead to increased involvement in the slave-trade. John O'Connell had argued in this vein in 1840, and had been supported by the Freeman's Journal, then in the full flood of post-Convention enthusiasm for the anti-slavery cause. In 1841, however, the situation changed when the Tory party opposed Lord John Russell's proposal to reduce the duties. In the L.N.R.A., R.R.R. Moore opposed this also, while Edward Clements argued that the Tories' claim to be concerned at the effect any equalization of the duties would have on slavery was arrant hypocrisy. The Dublin Evening Post had supported the Tories, while the Northern Whig reminded abolitionists that they had always claimed that slave-labour could not compete with free-labour.

3. Ibid., 15/10/1840.
The *Freeman's Journal* considered neither English party to be sincerely interested in the slave, but particularly questioned the abolitionist commitments of the Tories, one of whom, Mr. Irving, M.P. for Antrim, had been shown to own interests in a Brazilian mining company which worked its mines with slaves.¹ James Haughton had to write to deny allegations in the Dublin *Evening Post* that the abolitionists were engaged in an alliance with the Tories which was inimical to the interests of free-trade and therefore the British people.²

O'Connell's dilemma was that while he did not want to be party to any action that would stimulate the slave-trade,³ he felt that if the Whig Government were defeated, it would be a "triumph for the enemies of Ireland".⁴ Caught in the same position as they had been in 1838, both Daniel and John O'Connell eventually voted for the Whig proposals, thereby earning the plaudits of the *Freeman's Journal* which praised them for unwillingness to throw obstacles in the way of the Irish people obtaining cheaper sugar.⁵ The paper later urged the British Government to augment the West Indian labour force by arranging for African labourers to be shipped there, though this again was a proposal which the H.A.S.S. had opposed.⁶

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O'Connell's own misgivings on the issue were revealed at the fifth anniversary meeting of the B.F.A.S.S. in London, on 17/5/1844, when George Thompson argued that if the abolitionists supported duties which discriminated against sugar that was not from the West Indies, they would in effect be appealing to Parliament to sustain this policy and such would be in violation of their reliance on moral force, and in contrast to the B.F.A.S.S.'s earlier opposition to the Government-sponsored Niger Expedition. Moreover, Thompson said, the B.F.A.S.S. had not urged the Government to prevent the importation of slave-produced cotton, coffee or tobacco; it appeared to him that humanity had "leapt out of the coffee-pot and into the sugar-bowl". In his reply to this, O'Connell said that while he considered free-trade a good thing, honesty was better. The resulting controversy was such as to make O'Connell say at the L.N.R.A., that the B.F.A.S.S. was, regrettably, on the point of dissolution.

Apart from Richard Allen, who felt that his peace principles would not allow him to sanction the use of the force which he took to be necessary if slave-produced sugar were to be excluded, the H.A. S.S. committee supported O'Connell, and Webb felt that Thompson had displayed a want of good temper in London. The Freeman's Journal,

1. Reports in Times, 16/5/1844; Pilot, 20/5/1844; Northern Whig, 23/5/1844.

however, insisted that the best interests of the Irish people were at stake, and these would be best served by making available to them sugar at the lowest possible price. 1

In the summer of 1846, the issue arose again when it was proposed that the sugar duties be reduced still further, and the *Freeman's Journal* described those abolitionists who objected to this as being manipulated by the Tories and blind to slavery at home. 2 O'Connell's difficulty was increased since not only did he feel the Tories were motivated solely by a desire to return to office, but the Young Irelanders had openly talked of his being a tool of the Whig party. John O'Connell resolved this problem by declaring that he and his father would not vote. 3 The sugar duties question raised for O'Connell the problem of reconciling his free-trade and anti-slavery principles in a situation made more delicate by the political state of affairs in England in relation to Repeal, and the growing refusal by important sections of the Repeal press to countenance any other course other than that which would mean cheaper sugar for Ireland; eventually O'Connell was forced into stating that he had had a headache and had found a pair in the House of Commons. Moreover, even those Irish abolitionists who, like Webb and Haughton, admired the way that O'Connell recognised the anti-slavery dimensions of the issue, did so in private, not in

2. Ibid., 16/7/1846, 23/7/1846, 29/7/1846, 30/7/1846; *Pilot*, 22/7/1846.
public, since they were both reluctant to advocate a course which had been condemned as showing that the abolitionists cared little for the trials of the Irish people, and since they were themselves deeply disturbed by the implications of the question, which they found themselves to be discussing in terms of non-resistant theory in a way that seemed unconvincing even to American Garrisonian non-resistants. O'Connell and his son John were therefore left very much alone, to justify and explain their reactions to Repealers who were normally pleased to claim that O'Connell was a man of principle, but who had become increasingly suspicious that he would in this instance be sacrificing Ireland's interests by any statement of that principle. O'Connell also found himself dissenting from the view taken by the Nation, Pilot and Freeman's Journal on the Oregon question. This had arisen in what was by now a predictable fashion, when in 1843, O'Connell agreed that England had a justified claim to the "greater part" of the disputed territory, but questioned how this might be enforced when Ireland was as yet not conciliated. In 1845, the Freeman's Journal, with barely-concealed excitement, declared that there was nothing to prevent Oregon from becoming a casus belli between England and America, and added that in this instance there was

1. See below, Chapter five.
2. Freeman's Journal, 18/7/1843. The Nation, 16/5/1846, claimed that the Indians had the most legitimate title to Oregon, but they had been robbed and the question was who would enjoy "the fruits of that robbery:" the Nation declared itself in favour of America.
no question of slavery to cause the Irish people "distraction of
feeling": O'Connell did not agree, and argued that the Americans were
anxious to secure Oregon in order to open up another "mart... for
trafficking in human flesh."\(^1\)

The *Freeman's Journal*, if disappointed in its hopes for a war,
found consolation in its explanation that John C. Calhoun had not
forced England into a war over Oregon because as Secretary of State
he had helped to secure the American annexation of Texas and did not
want to undo his work there by provoking the English to form an alli-
ance with Mexico.\(^2\) Calhoun had earlier been criticized by the
paper's American correspondent for defending American slavery,\(^3\) but
though the *Freeman's Journal* agreed and regretted that Texas "was so
much thrown into the scales of the slave influence", no censure was
passed on Calhoun, even given the argument that he had wished to
establish closer mercantile links between England and America. Rather,
it was felt that Irish readers would take a "greater interest" in
Calhoun because of his Irish blood, and since he had found in America
the type of opportunity that because of England's repression would
have been denied him in Ireland.\(^4\) The implications of this were that
the *Freeman's Journal*'s pragmatic attempts to squeeze the maximum

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1. *Freeman's Journal*, 15/5/1845, 31/7/1845; Speech at L.N.R.A.,
21/7/1845, in *Nation*, 26/7/1845. John O'Connell agreed with the
*Freeman's Journal*, saying that in Oregon there was no slavery
issue to "damp their pleasure" at the likely humiliation of

2. Garrison felt that the American war with Mexico would produce
a "mighty reaction against the Slave Power" in the North;
Webb was not convinced, and worried at the degree of support
given in the North to the war. W.L. Garrison to R.D. Webb,
from Garrison; letter from Webb, in *National Anti-Slavery Standard*,
26/8/1847. *The Nation*, 11/11/1847, felt that there was evident
"injustice" in America's declaration of war on Mexico; however,
the fact that America was also "indirectly" warring against British
mortgages in Mexico would mitigate Ireland's "indignation" against
the invaders".


possible benefit to Ireland had led to a situation in which the interests of the slave were always a secondary consideration and, increasingly, ignored altogether, even when Calhoun's own interests had been admitted to be essentially in opposition to the paper's desire for a war between England and America. As over the sugar duties, it had progressed from professions of interest in the slave to an insistence that Ireland's interests were paramount, and in the process it began to see in American slavery little else than a potential cause of Anglo-American conflict, and a source of embarrassment to those like itself who calculated on the benefits Ireland could expect to derive from such a conflict. The continued failure of the Repeal movement to achieve its aims, coupled with the growing sense of rage and frustration that accompanied the famine, had brought to the surface trends long latent in much of the Repeal press's thinking on the slavery issue.

Daniel O'Connell had always repudiated those Americans who advocated the use of physical force to win Repeal, and in 1846, his Head Pacificator Tom Steele, reacted even more angrily to resolutions that had been proposed in the American House of Representatives relative to an American invasion of Ireland. Even the correspondent in

1. Another factor explaining the emergence of these trends, as far as the Freeman's Journal was concerned, was the visit to Ireland in 1843 of Wilson Grey, a member of the American Bar, and brother of the editor of the Freeman's Journal. At the Repeal Association he recalled how ashamed he had felt in the United States to discover that his countrymen were "slaves", and he claimed with pride that Calhoun and Andrew Jackson both often attested to their Irish blood. Report of L.N.R.A. meeting, 25/9/1843, in Nation, 30/9/1843.
the London Times treated these as something of a joke, but Steele rejected any proposed attempt to annex Ireland which had declared its loyalty to constitutional monarchy to a country which countenanced slavery and thereby disgraced the name of Republicanism. This outburst provoked the Nation to reproach him for his philanthropy, which it called a "species of nationalist polygamy", since it refused to appreciate that Ireland's interests must come first. The Nation added as evidence of its own morality and discretion, that,

"We abhor the principle of slavery as sincerely as he or any other man possibly can. We have said so again and again; and we think all we say, though sometimes prudence prevents us from saying all we think".

The conclusion that Webb drew from these developments was that of all the Repealers, O'Connell was the only genuine abolitionist: the others in his opinion did not want to alienate America because they wanted American aid. He described the Young Irelander's opposition to John O'Connell's views on the Texas annexion as "proslavery" (as the American abolitionists used the term, Webb added, meaning that the Young Irishers, however, they might abhor slavery on principle, were not willing to criticise it or declare themselves openly against

1. Times, 28/1/1846.
3. Nation, 7/2/1846. Charles Gavan Duffy, editor of the Nation, later expressed his outrage at the speech by Steele, whom he described as a "crazy rhapsodist" and a "preposterous Pacificator". Duffy felt that Steele had been authorised to speak in such a manner by the person who above all, perhaps, infuriated the Young Irishers — John O'Connell. C.G.Duffy, Four Years of Irish History, 1845-1849 (London, 1883), pp. 33-34.
it). The Nation, he said, was willing to see "all the Blacks in Negro-
land chained and paddled and flogged out of existence" in order to gain
its objective, Repeal. He was also appalled by the readiness of the
Young Irelanders to countenance physical force, usually in relation, he
admitted, to other countries.¹

Nevertheless, Webb greatly admired the Nation, which he considered
to be the ablest of Repeal newspapers. In 1844—somewhat three months after
it had declared its opposition to those Repealers who insisted on attacking
American slavery at every opportunity—Webb was requested to send
Repeal newspapers to Philadelphia where they would be displayed by
the abolitionists in a reading room, in an attempt to attract the
interest of Irish-Americans, and decided that the Nation was the best
newspaper to send.² Three factors accounted for Webb's attitude.

Firstly, as a printer, and newspaper correspondent, he admired the
quality of writing in the Nation—though he once described its style
as "made up of Carlyleanism, schoolboy eloquence, and vaunting
Celtic Nationality".³ Secondly, Webb retained a strong suspicion that

1. R.D. Webb to E. Quincy. Dublin, 2/11/1845. ibid; R.D. Webb to
M.W. Chapman. Dublin, 16/8/1845. Ms.A.1.2.v.15, p. 50. Anti-
Slavery Letters to Garrison; R.D. Webb to [?].n.p.m.d. Ms.A.9.2.
v. 16, p.22. Weston Papers. He described the Nation in this letter
as "longing for an Irish Marathon or Thermopylae...ready to annihi-
late any-body who would tread on Brother Jonathan's corns by the
slightest hint of...millions of slaves...grossly ignorant of the
hollowness of your slaveholding babblers about liberty".

Ms.A.1.2.v.14, p. 45. Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison.

Webb deplored the attitude toward the Negro displayed in Carlyle's
As indicated by his correspondence with Gavan Duffy, however, the
Scottish writer had an immense influence on the Young Irelanders,
in particular John Mitchel, who while critical of what Carlyle had
written of Cromwell's activities in Drogheda, described the former
O'Connell was a mere dissembler, a politician who, however sincere as an abolitionist, could seldom resist the opportunity to exploit even the noblest of causes for the most specious of reasons: it was very clear, in contrast, precisely where the Nation stood. Finally, while no Repealer, he had been deeply offended by the conduct of the English Government towards Ireland, and reproachful of abolitionists such as Harriet Martineau when he felt they supported that conduct; there was about the Young Irelanders a manliness, a refusal to indulge in fawning servility, which he could not help but admire. For these reasons he defended the Young Irelanders when they seceded from the L.N.R.A.

On the first of June, 1846, O'Connell had the L.N.R.A. affirm its allegiance to moral force principles, and six weeks later, on July 13th, he introduced his Peace Resolutions, which urged that the L.N.R.A. confine itself to the use of peaceful means, "to the utter exclusion of any other." John Martin, the Young Irelander, declared that only Quakers could accept the Resolutions as "true doctrine", and O'Connell, suggesting that the slave-trade had been established by "Quakers and others" using moral force, confessed that he was glad to be described as a Quaker with reference to his pacifist views. Webb however, in the light of O'Connell's recent offer of aid

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to England, considered such talk to be mere casuistry.¹

James Haughton also felt that O'Connell had acted out of mere expediency, and resigned from the L.N.R.A., arguing that after his 'American Eagle' speech, O'Connell was in no position to pontificate on moral force. Haughton did not see O'Connell's resolutions as an attempt to ensure that the L.N.R.A. would stick to moral force even after his death; rather he saw their introduction as a ploy to get rid of O'Connell's youthful rivals,² and one that was accepted by the L.N.R.A. which was incapable of accepting any form of intellectual tolerance: it was not, Haughton claimed, physical liberty alone that he advocated.³ The manner in which O'Connell had frequently referred to Garrison had deeply pained Haughton. It had persuaded him that O'Connell was not above behaving in an unethically, vituperative and vindictive way; and his conduct towards the Young Irelanders confirmed him in that view.⁴

The Young Irelanders were pleased to welcome Haughton into their ranks, especially since, as the Nation noted, he had so often complained

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¹ Letter from Webb, in National Anti-Slavery Standard, 22/10/1846.

² Webb's expression was "cavalier" expulsion. Letter from Webb, in National Anti-Slavery Standard, 26/11/1846.

³ Expulsion was only warranteable, Haughton argued, in cases of gross immorality—a charge that could be brought against both Old and Young Irelanders in that both were "guilty of the immorality of using strong drinks". Report of L.N.R.A. meeting of 11/9/1846, in Freeman's Journal, 15/9/1846; correspondence between Haughton and T.M. key, in Nation, 19/9/1846.

⁴ O'Connell had permitted accusations of anti-Catholicism to be made against the Young Irelanders also, in the L.N.R.A. ibid., 3/8/1846; see also, speech by O'Connell at L.N.R.A., 11/1/1847, in Nation, 16/1/1847.
of their warlike spirit, and therefore it was significant that he, a
self-confessed believer in moral force, should have protested against
O'Connell. Haughton, however, had in the past criticized the Nation
for praising Robert Tyler, whose position on the slavery issue, made
him one of Ireland's "greatest enemies",¹ and he was clearly per-
turbed at the possible consequences of his decision, since he wrote
to the Nation protesting against its attitude to the Mexican war,
which Haughton believed had been caused by America's desire to extend
"the area of slavery". The Nation had also received seventy pounds
from Irish-Americans. Haughton did not request that this be sent
back, but he did urge the Nation to give "sterling value" for it by
protesting against the evils of slavery: O'Connell, Haughton noted,
had given his countrymen a "fine example" in relation to the "great
question of human rights".² This was what the Young Irishmen claimed
O'Connell had denied to them, while given their own statements on the
question it was unlikely that they would accord with Haughton's injunc-
tion that they continue O'Connell's "wise" and "noble" policy of re-
fusing to yield to the slaveholders. William Smith O'Brien, for one,
was delighted at the boldness of the letter but agreed with "scarcely"
a word of it, save the general sentiments that Repealers ought to dis-
courage in every way consistent with moral force the practice of slavery.³

 O'Brien Papers.
However, Haughton did attend a meeting arranged by the Young Irelanders in Dublin, 2/12/1846, at which he objected both to any "unworthy coalition" with the Whigs and the tendency of the L.N. R.A. to introduce "sectarian subjects" into its proceedings. He also expressed the hope that conciliation could be effected with a man whom he had long admired.

Later in the month he chaired a meeting of the Young Irelanders which agreed on a joint committee to meet with the O'Connallites, and on 16/12/1846 he was a member of a Young Ireland delegation which failed to secure any reconciliation. In January, 1847 he was elected a member of the Council of Irish Confederation which had been established by the Young Irelanders in opposition to the L.N.R.A. On the question of funds, he said that he would reject for their treasury "the blood-stained contributions of American slaveholders" and also the subscriptions of "degraded Irishmen" who supported slavery. Haughton's words were applauded, but were soon questioned by Father John Kenyon, Roman Catholic Parish Priest of Templederry. Rejecting the notion that the Catholic Church condemned slavery and stating that if the Irish refused slaveholders' money they would achieve nothing except the enrichment of the latter, Kenyon asked whether, if Haughton was drowning in the Ganges, he would refuse the aid of a proffered walking stick from a thug:

1. Nation, 5/12/1846, 12/12/1846, 19/12/1846.
2. Report in Nation, 16/1/1847; see also, letter from Haughton, ibid., 9/1/1847.
"Money is the algebraist's x; it may represent anything; let it stand then, for a walking-stick. Be the slaveholders of America Thugs, for the nonce; or Thuggers if you prefer it. Let the Union be the gulf and Lord John Russell the pair of crocodiles; and there's an end on't."

Haughton's retort to the implications of this scenario was that a drowning man's death would be hastened by the acceptance of an offer of assistance from an enemy in disguise, and therefore that, similarly, the acceptance of slaveholders' money would be disastrous for Ireland since her good name would be sullied and the cause of Repeal damaged because England would realise she was not dealing with a virtuous nation.

The Nation finally succeeded in declaring that it was "positively done" with the slavery issue. Like O'Connell, the Young Irishers, however, essentially failed in their attempts to remain silent about slavery because they faced on the one hand abolitionists who wanted to preserve and sustain Irish abolitionist convictions, and on the other those from their own ranks who felt that any expression of abolitionist sentiments would alienate America. Haughton attended a meeting of the Irish Confederation in Dublin, 3/3/1847, where, as treasurer he presented a statement of accounts so exhaustive it drew some derisive laughter from the audience, but again his reputation for philanthropic probity was welcomed by the confederate leaders such as Richard O'Gorman.

1. Letter from Kenyon, ibid., 30/1/1847.

2. Letter from Haughton, ibid., 6/3/1847, enclosing Hadden's comments on the Catholic Church's anti-slavery tradition, which were rejected by Kenyon, ibid., 13/2/1847.

3. Ibid., 15/2/1847. Haughton insisted that he was not a sort of "enthusiastic Don Quixote, willing at all times to run a tilt at a monster slavery", and this statement can be compared to Hadden's remark that while it was not incumbent on men to "enter on a general crusade" against slavery, nor to answer every expression of sympathy from America with protests against slavery, this, February, 1847, was one occasion when it was imperative that men declare themselves on the issue.
precisely because he was known to oppose both slavery and war. Haughton, however, had been goaded by taunts from John O'Connell concerning his association with men such as Kenyon, and his position as treasurer to the "Young Ireland war party". He was determined therefore to bring up the slavery issue, and in his speech he exhorted the Confederates to work for the abolition of slavery wherever it existed (without mentioning America by name), while he emphasised as an example of oppression, the treatment afforded to the Rajah of Sattarah. Haughton saw this case as an example of the treatment being meted out to the people of India; the Nation, however, saw it as an illustration of the iniquities of British rule, and reminding its readers that Ireland too had suffered under this, advised the Rajah to go back and organize public opinion in India, rather than rely on the "soirée of philanthropy" of England.

Haughton had had some hopes of interesting Duffy in the Rajah's case, which he argued in private to the leading members of the Irish Confederation, but he was by now convinced that they hated England more than they loved liberty. He had supported the Repeal movement

2. George Thompson first interested the N.A.S.S. in the case in 1842, and in 1845 the latter petitioned Parliament to request that an impartial hearing be given to the Rajah's complaints that he had been illegally deprived of his property by the East India Company. In 1846, Haughton had asked Thompson about rumours that the Rajah was a slaveholder, noting that if these were true they would make Thompson a slaveholder's agent. G. Thompson to E.D. Webb. London, 11/12/1842. Ms. A. 1. 2. v. 12, pt. 2, p. 43. Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison; Freeman's Journal, 9/1/1845; speech by Webb at Hibernian British India Meeting, Ibid., 16/12/1846; J. Haughton to G. Thompson. Dublin, 15/12/1846. Ms. A. 1. 2. v. 16, p. 138. Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison; Nation, 6/3/1847.
3. Ibid., 13/3/1847.
because he saw it as a means of binding together the various disparate elements in Irish society. He had frequently accused the wealthier classes in Ireland of refusing to support reform movements such as temperance and anti-slavery, and this he attributed to the fact that because of the Union that portion of Irish society "of Saxon origin" had become alienated from the "humbler classes". What Haughton was aiming at, in short, was the moral reconstruction and regeneration of Irish society. The moral basis of the anti-slavery and Repeal movements, therefore, Haughton took to be identical and inseparable, and his introduction of the Rajah's case was an attempt both to state this belief, and test the willingness of the Confederates to accept it.

He chaired a meeting of the Irish Confederation, 7/4/1847, and in his introductory speech again criticized American slaveholders, but this met with some adverse comments from the floor, and after consultations with Smith O'Brien, he agreed to "forego" his own feelings. After a motion was proposed protesting against Austrian activities in Cracow, Haughton rose to suggest that the Confederation should similarly concern itself with the violated rights of the American slaves: again this provoked protests that he was out of order and that Repeal, not "slave-lectures" was the business of the meeting. Thomas D'Arcy McGee then proposed a vote of thanks to George M. Dallas, Vice-President of the United States, who had attended a meeting in Washington D.C. to discuss the question of American famine relief for Ireland. Haughton

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1. Letter from Haughton, in Freeman's Journal, 11/8/1846. He was not unaware of the contradiction in terms involved in having to remind the wealthy of the concept of noblesse oblige.
protested, though to no avail, that this, the first "manifesto" that the Confederation were to send to America, should not be addressed to a slaveholder. Smith O'Brien claimed that the meeting had meant no disrespect for his views, but Haughton stated that each time he tried to speak on slavery, he had been prevented from doing so: as the L.M.R.A. had done to them, the Confederates were now denying him the rights of free speech.¹

Soon after the meeting Haughton sent in his resignation, in protest against the letter of thanks to Dallas. Duffy was concerned that his secession would lay the Confederation open to "damaging ridicule" and proposed that a deputation try to persuade Haughton to stay. No such deputation was sent, though Haughton did receive a letter regretting his decision.²

Two months later, in May, 1847, news reached Ireland of O'Connell's death in Genoa. As the Nation declared, he had stood at the centre of Irish affairs, creating by the very force of his personality and authority, a wide field of flux in which different groups and alignments were held in place largely by their antipathy or allegiance to him.³ William Lloyd Garrison was grieved to hear of his death, and

¹. Nation, 10/4/1847.
³. Nation, 5/6/1847. Father Kenyon in a letter which the Nation printed but whose views it disclaimed, argued that Ireland owed nothing to O'Connell who was a bully surrounded by toadies.
though reflecting on his many failings, resolved to honour his memory.\(^1\) Webb, less magnanimous, felt that O'Connell, like many other great men--Daniel Webster sprang to mind--had squandered his great talents by his want of principle.\(^2\) Various factors had prevented the complete disruption of O'Connell's relations with the Garrisonians. Apart from their sympathy for Ireland, and for O'Connell as another exponent of unpopular reform, the sheer reverence which many of them felt for him was important: many of Phillips's outburst of shrill temper, for example, were clearly that of a man reluctant to admit that one of his heroes had feet of clay. Their testimonials of respect for him, however, could never be wholly separated from their estimation of his usefulness. Haughton held him up as an example to the Confederates, while, later, Father Mathew, John Mitchel and O'Brien would all be reminded of the example he had given when they themselves disappointed the abolitionists. When Louis Kossuth visited America in 1852 and declined to declare himself in favour of anti-slavery, the Boston Abolitionists published a pamphlet which contained extracts from fourteen speeches by O'Connell on American slavery: O'Connell was described, in contrast to Kossuth, as a nationalist leader who was not prepared to further his own cause at the expense of that of the slave.\(^3\)


The question of American aid, in particular, Southern, contributions to the Repeal coffers had in fact produced much tension between O'Connell and the abolitionists. Though they themselves were divided on the issue, they did agree that when O'Connell attacked them, or tried to forestall further discussions of slavery in the L.N.R.A., this could be taken as evidence that the money was undermining his abolitionist convictions, that he was in effect abandoning the slave in order to promote Repeal. Wendell Phillips in 1872 recalled that in Conciliation Hall in Ireland he had witnessed O'Connell insisting that the sum of one thousand pounds sent by slaveholders in New Orleans be returned to them because he considered it the "unpaid wages" of the Negro slaves, which Ireland, however poor, would never deign to accept. Though no such incident appears in the published L.N.R.A. reports, O'Connell himself proclaimed (as evidence of Ireland's devotion to principle) that the L.N.R.A. had "spurned" American money when it was accompanied by arguments in defence of slavery, while John O'Connell also stated that the Irish Repealers had "on two or three occasions" actually returned the money when it was accompanied by attempts to "palliate slavery". It is possible that O'Connell made arrangements

2. Speech at L.N.R.A., 20/10/1845, in Freeman's Journal, 21/10/1845. On the contrary, he had accepted the money that had accompanied the letter from the Cincinnati Repealers, for example.
to return the money privately because he did not want to create public controversy, but such action would not have accorded with his policy, decided on at an early date, to accept money from the Southern States, even from those who defended and indeed advocated slavery, on the grounds that the senders cared more for Ireland than for slavery.\textsuperscript{1}

There was one occasion, on 27/5/1844, when O’Connell did announce that the L.N.R.A. would return a bill for over one hundred and seventy-eight pounds, sent by the Repeal Association in New Orleans. O’Connell did admit that he was "the less reluctant" to accept it since it came from a slave State, but his reason for refusing the money was that the accompanying letter contained resolutions in which "the duty of allegiance to the British crown was set at nought, and a system of force and violence suggested in its place."\textsuperscript{2}

Once again, however, the use which the abolitionists made of it can be contrasted with their denunciations of his reaction to the American contributions. Haughton himself suggested that O’Connell had set a "noble example" to the Free Church of Scotland which in 1844 received financial aid from the Southern States.\textsuperscript{3}

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\textsuperscript{1} R.D. Webb to E. Quincy. Dublin, 2/2/1845. Webb/Quincy Letters. In this letter Webb said that O’Connell took the slaveholders’ money until they made his support of slavery one of the conditions of their gifts.

\textsuperscript{2} Speech at L.N.R.A. 27/5/1844, in Nation, 1/6/1844. He later said that for similar reasons he had refused money sent from New York and Boston.

Slavery Standard felt that it was significant that the Irish Repealers, in contrast to the Free Church, were too "pure" to receive slaveholders' money. Similarly, Isaac Nelson, Presbyterian Minister in Belfast and a prominent opponent of the Free Church's acceptance of the money, argued that O'Connell had in fact refused the slaveholders' money. Nelson did not support the Repeal Movement, and he suggested that, given O'Connell's stance on the issue, it was "the more shameful" for the Free Church to accept the money. Such references to O'Connell, made during the "send back the money" campaign conducted by the abolitionists against the Free Church, and against the Irish Quaker Relief Committee, show the importance for them of the issue of Southern contributions to the L.N.R.A.

It was in relation to O'Connell's Repeal movement that the American abolitionists first became concerned with the implications for British abolitionism of money sent from the South. The ideological roots, if as yet vague and ill-defined, of the attempts to get the Free Church to return the money were planted and nourished in the response of American and Irish abolitionists and Repealers to the contributions sent from the Southern States to the L.N.R.A.

Indeed the abolitionists felt that O'Connell was of such importance in the success of their movement that they were at times led to


applying double standards when assessing his behaviour. In September, 1845, for example, R.D. Webb told Elizabeth Pease that he agreed with Harriet Martineau that Garrison's campaign against the Federal Union hindered the growth of abolitionist sentiments in Britain since the British people objected, reasonably enough in Webb's view, to interfering with the institutions of a foreign country: five days later, Webb complained to M.W. Chapman that O'Connell refused to give his opinion on the merits of a dissolution of the American Union. Similarly, in 1845, the Anti-Corn Law League praised the support given to the free-trade movement by Southerners such as Calhoun and George McDuffie (then Senator from South Carolina), and Haughton protested to John Bright about the "regretful communications" that had passed between the A.C.L.L. and the Southerners. Haughton, however, specifically disclaimed any intention of criticizing the A.C.L.L. for accepting the aid of "bad men if offered", though he did object to O'Connell (and later, the Young Irishmen) doing this. O'Connell had immense international stature, his statements were given extensive coverage in the


2. Letter from Haughton, in National Anti-Slavery Standard, 11/12/1845. George Thompson, who was closely associated with the A.C.L.L. was embarrassed about the incident, while Webb felt that the business interests of many A.C.L.L. supporters had led them to prefer cheap cotton to emancipation. Phillips felt that Haughton should be congratulated for his action. R.D. Webb to E. Quincy. Dublin, 2/11/1845. Webb/Quincy Letters; V. Phillips to R.D. Webb, n.p.n.d. Ms. A.1.2. v. 15, p. 31. Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison.
British and American press, and there was the importance of the Irish-American community to be considered: for these reasons it was essential or so the abolitionists thought, that he be seen and therefore encouraged to act in a manner consistent with anti-slavery principles.

O'Connell also claimed that because of his denunciations of American slavery, he had prevented "perhaps, thousands of pounds coming from America", to the L.N.R.A.¹ The Repealers were sensitive to the fears of the British Government about the extent of American aid—this had led to John O'Connell qualifying his statements in 1840 to the point of retraction—but O'Connell's unpopularity in the South had by their own admission made it increasingly difficult for Repeal Associations to flourish there, while his May, 1843 and 'American Eagle' speeches had led to considerable disruption among the Southern Repeal Associations: when and where they did continue to exist it was often only after making it clear to Irish and Southern audiences that they totally dissociated themselves from his abolitionism.

The letter from the Cincinnati Repealers showed that such a reaction was not confined to the South, while Repeal Associations in the border and Northern States tended to suggest that O'Connell's abolitionism was an aberration, the result of ignorance and the misleading information he had been given: in other words, that O'Connell was a great statesman whose stance on the slavery issue, however reprehensible,

¹ Speech at L.N.R.A., 19/1/1846, in Nation, 24/1/1846.
was insufficient reason for Repeal to be abandoned in America. Yet the American slavery question clearly disrupted, and on occasion ruptured, his relations with the Irish-Americans.

Partly because it also emerged as a complicating factor in Anglo-American diplomatic relations, it also exacerbated O'Connell's relations with his domestic rivals. Abolitionists of an earlier day had testified to his success in inculcating abolitionist convictions in Ireland. Thus the English anti-slavery leader, George Stephen, felt that,

"...Ireland needed no agitation or abolition; from Cape Clear to the Giants' Causeway, Ireland was an abolitionist in heart and in action, irrespective of party feeling, whether in politics or religion; and much, may most of this was due to Mr. O'Connell. He did it disinterestedly; he made no bargain for reciprocal support; he was content to fight his own battles with his own forces".1

Webb believed that O'Connell had never succeeded in such a fashion, and that the moral censure at the heart of the abolitionist argument was lost on most Irishmen who looked on America as an ally and provider. He had shaped and given expression to a substantial degree of interest in the anti-slavery movement, and for so doing was criticized by those who felt that he was not serving the best interests of Ireland itself.

Those assumptions were facile—though O'Connell himself often made them—which suggested that he represented disinterested philanthropy, his detractors calculating misanthropy. Like the Young Irishers, he was not incapable of exploiting England's difficulties with America, or of using the anti-slavery issue to call into question English

1. Quoted in Klinberg, Anti-Slavery Movement, p. 249.
sincerity and morality. Nor were the Young Irishers all in favour of slavery: Duffy claimed that the occasion of his final break with Mitchell was over his refusal to accept for publication in the Nation an article which the latter had written in defence of "the perpetual slavery of the Negro" and objecting to the "emancipation of the Jew", while there were Confederates who did accept slavery as a sin and who argued that Americans would quickly perceive the "hollowness of a sentiment" which professed to reconcile a desire for Irish liberty with a propensity to tolerate Negro slavery. However, in general, the Young Irishers, and much of the Repeal press traditionally thought to be supporters of O'Connell, did argue increasingly that O'Connell was wrong to insist on condemning American slavery, since this would alienate the Irish-American Repealers, and make it more difficult for them to win the support of the American people. Especially as Repealers became aware that the prospects of gaining Repeal through the policies of O'Connell did not appear to be significantly improving, and as conditions in Ireland itself deteriorated to the point of catastrophe, the conviction grew that his course in relation to America was extremely damaging. It was increasingly seen


2. Speech by N. Blake to Drogheda Confederate Club, in Nation, 27/11/1847.

as providing tangible evidence that O'Connell was alienating Ireland's allies in an obsequious attempt to please her enemy. Growing numbers felt that the slaves would not benefit from Ireland's involvement with their cause, and they could not comprehend Haughton's or O'Connell's insistence that Ireland would benefit materially and morally from an increased commitment on the part of both the Irish and the Irish-Americans to the anti-Slavery movement.¹ The vocabulary of Repeal and abolition was remarkably similar: the Repealers talked of the enslavement of Ireland, described the Irish as slaves to oppression, and alluded to the Repeal movement as one of liberation, of emancipation. To many, however, repeated condemnations of American slavery was evidence of misplaced philanthropy, since not only did these fail to give priority to the condition of the Irish people but they positively injured the Repeal movement to end Irish enslavement.² Complaints were frequently made in the Repeal press that the conditions of the Negroes in both the West Indies and the Southern States were better than those of the Irish poor:³ abolitionism might attest to O'Connell's devotion to reform.

1. Nation, 13/2/1847. A "Clare Curate" (Kenyon) in any event felt that the willingness of American slaveholders to aid such a movement as that for Irish Repeal indicated a willingness on their part to renounce the "revolting system" of slavery in America. Ibid., 4/9/1847.

2. They believed that the fact that the Irish were struggling for their freedom proved that they were not slaves; concomitantly, and this might provide further insight into their attitudes to American slavery, they felt that those who tolerated being slaves deserved to be enslaved. On the other hand, they were quick to express their horror at the notion of slave-insurrection, just as the Irish-American repealers were quick to condemn any attempt by the abolitionists to condone the stealing of horses by fugitive slaves. See, letter from Kenyon, ibid., 30/1/1847. Often accused of fomenting anarchy, the abolitionists, as opposed to such as Calhoun—saw slavery as a form of moral anarchy.

3. Freeman's Journal, 28/2/1842, 24/10/1842, 11/8/1843, 13/3/1853; Nation, 6/2/1847. In the House of Commons, 7/12/1847, John
and therefore bring Ireland credit, but was in the eyes of his critics assuredly absurd, ineffectual and harmful, when it was to the detriment of Ireland.  

Especially following statements such as had been made in the 'American Eagle' speech, Garrison was frequently accused of being unpatriotic in seeking the aid of abolitionists such as O'Connell in his efforts to emancipate the slave, while the latter's opinion of the Garrisonians was frequently critical and dismissive. Despite his regard for Haughton, he had more in common with the outlook of middle-class English radicals like Joseph Sturge than did with the members of the H.A.S.S. Outbursts such as Rogers's descriptions of O'Connell crossing himself did much to convince not only O'Connell of the anti-Catholic prejudices of the abolitionists, and he would make timely denunciations of these, recognising the difficulty of his position in relation to much

O'Connell was ruled out of order when he angrily protested against the statement of a previous speaker who said that the Irish "...were about as fit for freedom as the blacks...the House might not be aware of it, but it was a curious fact, that the blacks had a proverb that 'if niggers were not niggers, Irishmen would be niggers!'", ibid., 11/12/1847.

1. Speech by Michael Doherty at Irish Confederation, ibid., 21/4/1847; speech by T.F. Meagher at Irish Confederation, ibid., 15/5/1847.


of the Repeal press, the Catholic Church in Ireland and America, and the Irish-Americans on this issue. Yet the abolitionists were convinced that his conception of human liberty was broader-based, more far-reaching, than that of the critics of his abolitionism. O'Connell might have refused to discuss slavery at all in the L.N.R.A. He did not, however, and the abolitionists recognised that it constituted a remarkably large--his critics, and O'Connell himself occasionally felt, excessive--part of Repeal proceedings from 1840 to 1847. Even during and after the Civil War, the abolitionists continued to appeal to the memory of O'Connell's abolitionism in an attempt to influence the Irish-Americans. 1 As late as 1873, Garrison expressed a desire that O'Connell's "noble conduct" on the slavery question, his refusal to relent on American slavery whatever the consequences to the L.N.R.A., should be recalled, to "immortalize his memory", "soften the prejudices" of the Irish-Americans towards Negroes, and to "strengthen the personal integrity of our fellow men". 2 If Garrison concluded in 1872 that O'Connell's anti-slavery record had proved him to be "incomparably more

1. Daniel O'Connell and the Committee of the Irish Repeal Association of Cincinnati (Cincinnati, 1863); Liberty or Slavery? Daniel O'Connell on American Slavery (Cincinnati, 1863); Daniel O'Connell upon American Slavery, with other Irish Testimonies (New York, 1860); The Irish Patriot, Daniel O'Connell's Legacy to the Irish-Americans (Philadelphia, 1863); see also, Address from the People of Ireland to their Countrymen and Countrywomen in America...with Extracts from the Speeches of O'Connell (n.p. 1847). The bulk of these were issued following Irish-American riots against the Negroes and Draft Laws which took place in New York, in July, 1863.

then a technical geographical Irishman", it was an opinion shared by many American Negroes, including the National Convention of Coloured Newspapers, which also expressed at the O'Connell Centenary in Boston its gratitude for his "eloquent and effective pleas" on behalf of its people.
Chapter Four

The Protestant Churches and American Slavery
In the campaign against West Indian slavery, though James Mullalay had declared that the Bible was hardly unequivocal on the subject, most abolitionists had insisted that there was no scriptural defence or justification for slavery. In Ireland as elsewhere, moreover, anti-slavery activists had sought to interest members of their own and other denominations in anti-slavery, while several of the Churches in Ireland had not been slow to recognise both their responsibilities and opportunities in this respect.

In this situation there had been much exhortation, and consequently, some measure of reprimand for those who, it was felt, were slow to accept their Christian injunctions: Joshua Beals in Cork, for example, had clearly been pained by the lack of response his activities had met with among Roman Catholic clergy, and had been aware of the sanctions imposed by his own sect against cooperating with other sects in anti-slavery agitation. Yet in general there was little to prepare the British abolitionists for the disclosures contained in J.O. Birney’s, *The American Churches, the Bulwarks of American Slavery*. Faced with a thesis that the American churches were not merely inactive in the anti-slavery struggle but were in fact acting through the justification they provided for it as the "bulwarks" of American slavery, the British abolitionists responded in a way that had important consequences for denominational rivalries in Britain, and for transatlantic relations within the various sects.

Birney’s book did much, if not to exonerate the Quakers from his central charge, at least to indicate that unlike other sects, they
refused to accept slaveholders as members. Some Irish Friends, however, felt that this fact was unjustifiably paraded by their fellow Quakers, and when one writer to the *Irish Friend* pointed out that the Society of Friends was "the only body of Christians in the United States which is admitted to be untainted with the guilt of slavery," William Bell reminded his readers that, on the evidence of Birney’s book, Free Will Baptists and Covenanters were also free from this taint.

The *Irish Friend* had hitherto confined its strictures to the colour prejudice which it felt was displayed by American Friends. In April, 1842, however, this slowly developed into a sustained attack on American Quakers for failing to enter into the anti-slavery movement with sufficient zeal, and on British Friends for failing to provide their recalcitrant brethren in the United States with both example and exhortation. Bell’s experience of the events and controversies of 1839-1841 led him to the conclusion that both American and Irish Friends were in fact exploiting quietism in order to provide both an excuse and camouflage for their manifest reluctance to act positively on the anti-slavery question. He wrote that it was clear from the American Epistles to the London Yearly Meeting that the American Quakers did "not appear to encourage every effort to put a stop to" slavery, "from a mistaken apprehension (as we believe) that, unless we have a particular and especial call to this, or any other work of

2. *Irish Friend*, v.4, n.9, September, 1841, p. 169.
mercy, it will not be acceptably performed." Bell clearly felt that the
Friends did have a "particular and especial call" to anti-slavery, but in
any event, he added dryly that, as much as he trusted Divine Providence,
he felt that all men as "responsible agents" were required to use those
talents which that Providence had been pleased to "entrust" them with. 1

Richard Davis Webb was another Irish Quaker abolitionist who
displayed a growing disillusionment with anti-slavery positions taken
by both American and Irish Friends. Webb had been furious at the
Irish Friends for refusing J.A. Collins the use of their meeting
house in 1841. But by 1843 this anger had developed into despair,
and almost contempt. His letter to Edmund Quincy describing the
Yearly Meeting of Friends in Dublin indicates this:

"I am indignant—excited—and disgusted. And no
wonder for I have just come from a sitting of the
Yearly Meeting of Friends now being held in this
city."

What had aroused Webb's anger were the epistles from American Friends.
He complained that these always consisted of "9 parts sermons, 2 Indian
affairs, 1 (and a little 1) part slavery of the most diluted and milk
and water kind. And they go down the Quakers' spiritual throats like
milk. I took notice of some of them—I was asleep while others were
being read. For instance from Baltimore Y.M.—not a syllable about

1. Ibid., v. 5, n.6, June 1842, pp. 88-89.
coloured people or slavery." From Ohio, "no way was open" to help
the Negroes. From North Carolina, the "way was not found" to petition
on behalf of the Negroes, "but our concern on their behalf does not
relax".¹

Webb was clearly exasperated by these epistles: increasingly
it was proving difficult for him to reconcile his exposure to the
language of Garrisonian immediatism with the linguistic restraints of
formal Quaker communications. More than this, however, he was
appalled by the failure of the American Friends to act, and he was
dismayed when the Irish Quakers showed that they were content to
interpret these "dry compositions" as evidence that their American
brethren were doing their utmost to uphold their testimonies against
slavery. Both American and Irish Friends in his opinion were reneging
on the finer points of the Quaker tradition: the former had been
corrupted by living in a slavery-tainted society, while nineteen-
twentieth's of the latter were ... "Tories, who hate reform, love the
quiet, shake their heads at Richard Allen and shun me."²

It is difficult to disentangle Webb's growing disillusionment
with the position taken by Friends on the question of American
slavery, from his struggle to attain what he considered was a position

¹ For these epistles, see "Epistles to the Yearly Meeting of
Friends in Ireland (1821-1847)". MS. A.24. Friends' Library
Dublin.

of intellectual independence from received notions of religious affiliation and belief. But, as in the case of Bell, who unlike Webb remained a member of the Society, what prompted Webb to adopt a more critical position was the schism that took place among Indiana Friends, starting in 1839-1840.

From Bell's point of view it was doubly vexing that the initial reports he received of the secession of anti-slavery Friends from the Indiana Yearly Meeting were accompanied by statements about Hicksites and slavery. These were not necessarily complimentary—they warned for example that New York Hicksites had expelled some of their members who had worked on anti-slavery committees—but they clearly embarrassed the orthodox Bell, who had already found himself forced to reject the accusation that his paper was read only by "disaffected Quakers." Complaints soon reached Bell, however, that he had failed to take into account the difficulties facing Friends in America when he criticized their failure to act more energetically in the anti-slavery movement. In particular, it was charged that the Irish Friend had ignored the fact that American Friends who had joined with Hicksites in anti-slavery agitation, had "been gradually drawn from their attachment to the society." The writer admitted that the Hicksites were very "strenuous Abolitionists (and most rightly so)", but he

1. See letter from "F" in Irish Friend, v.5, n.4, April, 1842, pp. 51-52. This cited extracts from the New York Emancipator, 31/12/1841, referring to a memorandum from the Indiana Yearly Meeting advising Friends to avoid using their Meeting Houses as anti-slavery committee rooms or lecture halls, and not to join "in association with those who do not profess to wait for Divine direction in such important concerns."
nevertheless requested Bell to be more mindful of the difficulties facing American Friends before he indulged in further castigations of their conduct.

In his reply to this Bell made no mention of the Hicksites by name but instead came out with a lengthy statement in which three main points were made. These were, firstly, that there was no justification for American Friends not joining in anti-slavery societies. Secondly, he maintained that there was a growing body of evidence to suggest that while American Friends were not slaveholders, they were failing to uphold the traditions laid down by such men as John Woolman, and in fact were "acquiescing at, or aiding, however remotely or indirectly, the cruelties inflicted by others on their oppressed fellow creatures". Finally, he stated that the most "charitable construction" he could place on the Indiana Yearly Meeting was that in its dislike for the "excess of zeal" which it felt some abolitionists displayed, it had been led to the opposite extreme. This was in fact the strongest statement that Bell made in the Irish Friend about the American Quakers and slavery, and it was also his last on the topic, for the last issue of the monthly appeared in November, 1842, and soon

1. For example, that provided in Joseph Sturge, *A Visit to the United States in 1841* (London, 1842), reviewed in *Irish Friend*, v. 5, n. 9, September, 1842, p. 129. Sturge's statements on the American Friends' response to abolitionism were the more useful for Bell (as his writings on Apprenticeship had been for the Hibernian Anti-Slavery Society in 1837) because Sturge was a prominent orthodox English Quaker himself.

afterwards Bell and his family moved to the United States. The immediate reason for this was the collapse of Bell’s business in the winter of 1842, though there were clearly other factors which at least made his decision to abandon the paper easier to make. Bell was the sole proprietor, financier and editor, and though the Irish Friend did expand beyond a circulation that was initially confined to Belfast and its environs, he faced increasing problems in his attempts to keep the paper alive. Prominent among these were rising costs, and promotional obstacles, but also, and perhaps more fundamentally, his willingness to print and editorialise on material such as anti-slavery, which certainly affronted many American Friends and left Bell to comment on the “discouragements” he had to face from others in Britain who were concerned lest the Society of Friends he identified with his views, and who, Bell hinted, did much to uphold information from him about such events as the various Yearly Meeting in Britain.¹

While Bell left for the United States, however, there to take an active interest in the anti-slavery movement, events in Indiana continued to absorb the interest of Friends in Britain. Disagreements among British Friends concerning the secession of anti-slavery Quakers in Indiana reached a head in 1843 when both groups in Indiana sought to enlist the aid of the Yearly Meetings in England and Ireland.

Since 1840, the Epistles from the Indiana Yearly Meeting had been notable for their repeated expressions of hope that Friends

everywhere would, in their efforts to free the slave, labour "as a body" and keep out of "all commotions and excitements" then so prevalent in America. In 1842 however, these rather vague expressions focussed more sharply into an explicit warning against any such publications as would weaken the faith of the Quakers or spread a spirit of "subordination and discord" among them. This was a direct reference to a document which the anti-slavery seceders were preparing in an attempt to win the support of British Friends; and it was the arrival of this document in the Spring of 1843 that provided the occasion for the quarrels in Quaker circles in Britain.

Whereas Bell was somewhat isolated from decision-making Quaker circles, both as a result of his editorial line and geographical position, Richard Webb and Richard Allen in Dublin both attended the Yearly Meeting in Dublin that received the Epistles from Indiana. The first document to be read—that from the Indiana Yearly Meeting—Webb described as an "odious document" which attempted to cover up a total lack of commitment to anti-slavery beneath accusations against the undue zeal and "insubordination" of the seceders. Webb reported to Quincy that he had taken the step, unusual for him, of publicly requesting the Irish Friends to note that the anti-slavery Quakers in Indiana had also a point of view which ought to be considered; but, concluded Webb no-one had listened to his appeals.

1. Epistle from Indiana Yearly Meeting to the Yearly Meeting of Ireland, 1840. "Epistles to the Yearly Meeting of Ireland, 1821-1847". Ms.A.24, Friends' Library, Dublin.

The Irish Quakers however, had clearly been undecided as to how to react to the Indiana situation. In March, 1843, the letter from the Indiana Yearly meeting warning against any communication from the seceders, had arrived in Dublin. One month later, the document from the Anti-slavery Indiana Quakers had arrived. This, the Committee of the Yearly Meeting in Ireland decided, should be further discussed, and it was decided "after some consideration" to lay the letter in question before the Yearly Meeting which was to meet in May. However, this was not done because in May the Epistle from the London Yearly Meeting arrived, containing a statement that it too had received a document from the anti-slavery Friends but that, after much deliberation, it had been decided to return the epistle to Indiana without its having been read by the Yearly Meeting. It was the decision by the Dublin Committee of the Yearly Meeting of Ireland to follow this ruling that so infuriated Webb.

It was also a decision, however, that he had clearly anticipated, since the American Quaker abolitionist James Canning Fuller was at that time visiting Britain and in April in a letter accepting an invitation to visit Webb in Dublin, he had enclosed a letter from three of the Indiana seceders, and had invited Webb to set it up for print if he, Webb, felt it would be useful in view of the coming Yearly Meeting in Ireland.

This Webb did, and it is evident that Fuller's pamphlet and
the other letters and documents which Webb had printed on Fuller's arrival
in Dublin, both embarrassed and irked many Quakers in Dublin.

Both Fuller and Webb had argued that the secession had taken
place because the Indiana Yearly Meeting had proved reluctant to uphold
Quaker testimonies against slavery. Most Irish Quakers however were
less concerned with evaluating the merits of this viewpoint than with
devising a formula which would allow them to indicate their abhorrence
of secessions of any kind from the Society, and also avoid appearing as
if they had debated the specific accusations made by the seceders and
finally sided with the Indiana Yearly Meeting. The solution eventually
agreed upon was to send two letters to the Indiana Yearly Meeting; the
first, the formal Epistle from the Yearly Meeting, did not differ greatly
from the Epistles sent in that and other years to other Yearly Meetings
in the United States, apart from the fact that it regretted the late
divisions in Indiana and made reference to the pamphlets which had been
circulated both in Indiana and in Ireland on the question. The second
letter however, was sent by the Standing Committee of the Yearly Meeting
in Ireland, and as such it did not have to be read to and approved
by the Yearly Meeting in session. In consequence this second letter

1. A letter Addressed by James Canning Fuller...to the Editor of
the London Friend... (Dublin, 1843); see also, Secession of a
Large Body of Friends from the Yearly Meeting of Indiana...
(Dublin, 1843).


3. In its epistle to the Indiana Yearly Meeting the Yearly Meeting
in Ireland noted that an "exercise for the preservation of your
members from the perusal of hurtful publications, is one in
which we can feelingly sympathise; for it is evident to us
that much injury has resulted in many places from the excited
feelings fostered by the reading of such." More explicitly,
the Standing Committee in Dublin justified its decisions to
could discuss in much greater detail the reaction of the leading Irish Quakers to the situation in Indiana. It declared its "disapprobation" of the secession, which it described as a movement "inconsistent with the good order of our Society", and insisted that the seceders must be regarded as men who had showed a "previous alienation of heart from that which constitutes the true bond of unity." It concluded with an encouragement to the Indiana Yearly Meeting to uphold the traditions of the Society by continuing in the vanguard of the abolition movement.¹

One year later the epistle from the seceders was returned to them,² while the Indiana Yearly Meeting chose to issue a single reply to Dublin, reporting on its efforts to educate the "people of colour", and enclosing a document, An Address from the Indiana Yearly Meeting to the Christian Professors in the United States on Slavery,³ which was read with much interest by the Yearly Meeting in Ireland, causing it

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² "Proceedings of the Yearly Meeting Committee, 1834-1853", v.3, p. 333, entry for May, 1843. The epistle was to be accompanied by a minute showing that the epistle had been referred to the Yearly Meeting. In fact it had not been so referred in 1843, and there is no evidence from either official Quaker records or from individual Quaker letters to show that it was so referred in 1844. A possible explanation might be simple clerical error, since the last minute in the Yearly Meeting Committee's records for 1843 suggests that the letter was to be read to the Yearly Meeting; this was in March, one month before the arrival in Dublin of the Epistle from the London Yearly Meeting which caused the Committee to alter their decision.

³ "Epistles to the Yearly Meeting of Ireland, 1821-1847", Ms.A.24. Friends' Library, Dublin.
to renew its belief in the "righteousness" of Quaker testimonies against slavery.

There was much to justify Webb's claim that the Irish Friends were putting the 'unity' of the Society above every other consideration. His interpretation of events was confirmed in 1845 when the London Yearly Meeting sent out a deputation to investigate the situation in Indiana and this reported in favour of the Indiana Yearly Meeting. Although the delegation included two members of the B.F.A.S.S., William Foster and John Allen, and a third, William Stacey, whose commitment to anti-slavery Webb had been led to have great faith in, he concluded that the delegation's findings confirmed that Quakers hated secessions more than they did slavery. Webb felt that the bulk of the Irish Quakers had acted in a way that was thoroughly typical of the Society of Friends as a whole.

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1. "Proceedings of the Yearly Meeting Committee, 1834-1853", v.3, p. 318, entry for March, 1843; "Epistles of the Yearly Meeting of Ireland, 1822-1853".


3. The British Friends, edited by Robert and William Smeal in Glasgow, was a direct and conscious descendant of Bell's Irish Friend. (See, British Friend, v.1, n.1, 31/1/1843, pp. 1, 8.) In April, 1843, the British Friend declared its support for the Indiana seceders, though it pointed out that they, the seceders, could not hope to be seated as Friends at the London Yearly Meeting. In 1846 and 1847, it did publish material critical of both the London Yearly Meeting and the deputation, but it saw the latter as evidence of an awareness of the anti-slavery aspects of the secession, and rebuked those who were "undeservdly" censorious of the delegation. Ibid., v.1, n.4, April, 1843, p. 56; v. 4, n. 1, January, 1846, p. 16; v.4, n.5, May, 1846, pp. 128-130; v. 5, n. 8, August, 1847, p. 206.
Webb, however, was reaching the conclusion—one that was shared by O'Connell and Elizabeth Pease—that Irish Friends were even more conservative than London Friends.\(^1\) His comments on the Irish Friends increasingly were to resemble those of later-day critics of the position taken by Quakers on the question of American slavery.\(^2\) On one level this point of view failed to take into account the frequent examples of the times when the Dublin Friends reprimanded with an insistence that was as firm as its expression was gentle those American Friends who, it felt, were clothing apathy towards abolitionism in the suffocating garments of quietistic declarations of good intent. Moreover, there was the question of the likely American reaction to such proddings to be considered. In 1853, for example, the Ohio Yearly Meeting tersely replied to what it termed 'admonitions' from Dublin with assurances of its own good faith towards abolitionism, and reminders that the time for the extermination of slavery was "in the hands of Him who is mightier than the noise of so many waters".\(^3\) In the face of such statements the Dublin Quakers were conscious that any undue persistence by them could be read by their American brethren as either accusations of lying, or as evidence of an unacceptable reliance on worldly actions. There was little the Yearly Meeting of Ireland could do under these circumstances to influence either the course of events in America or

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the actions of its American correspondents; and it was a recognition
of this fact that led the bulk of the Epistles from Ireland to
dwell at lengths which Webb felt were uncalled for on the difficulties
facing American Friends in their efforts to uphold the Society's
testimonies. 1

Every communication sent from the Yearly Meeting in Dublin to
American Friends provides evidence that the Irish Friends were both
appalled by the existence of American slavery, and anxious to see its
abolition. The problem for them, however, was that the anti-slavery
movement seemed to present so many potential pitfalls to unwary
Quakers. This was suggested by events not only in Indiana but in
Ireland itself. Quite apart from their desire to preserve good
relations with American Quakers in the transatlantic Quaker community,
they wanted to preserve unity within the Quaker body in Britain and
America; and many aspects of the current abolition movement seemed
to act as a positive threat to that unity.

Webb was aware of this feeling. He reported to Quincy that
among Irish Friends he was looked upon as a "heretic of the worst kind.
But you can't be a true abolitionist without thinking—and you can't
think without differing from your sect—and if you do they'll hate you." 2

When the Indiana seceders asked Webb and Richard Allen to campaign

1. See, for example, Epistle from the Yearly Meeting of Ireland
to the North Carolina Yearly Meeting, 1841.

2. R.D. Webb to E. Quincy. Dublin, 2/5/1843. Webb/Quincy
Letters.
to win the support of British Friends for their cause, Webb was forced
to state that Allen had too much to lose, while Webb, would count
for little in British Quaker circles because following his association
with Garrisonianism, he was looked upon as a heretic and a Unitarian. ¹

By the very fact that he espoused the cause of the Indiana secession in
1843 he was subsequently of little value or help in arguing the cause
of that secession in Ireland. Events in the Quaker movement in Ireland
in the previous fifty years had made Irish Friends extremely sensitive
to schisms, and this was heightened when the secession in Indiana was
immediately supported by Friends in Dublin who seemed to care nothing
for the unity of the Society, and everything for the anti-slavery
aspects of the case.²


2. Such a description would have fitted Webb at this stage, though
not Allen, Bell, or the Smeals in Glasgow. Possibly to avoid
giving offence to those Quakers whose support they were anxious
to enlist, many abolitionist pamphlets addressed specifically
to the Quakers pointed out that the record of the Hicksites in
anti-slavery was by no means spotless. After reading the
Journal of Elias Hicks, Webb commented that he could see little
ground for the disagreements between the Hicksites and their
opponents. Webb felt that the Irish Friends were in effect
strongly attached to Hicksite principles as opposed to the evangeli-
cal views of the London Quakers, though he also added that
in his view the Irish Quakers did not know what Hicksism was,
but formally condemned it as a heresy ranking with non-resistance
and Unitarianism. Fuller, An Address, p. 7; R.D. Webb to M.W.
Chapman. Dublin, 28/6/1842, 22/2/1842. Ms.A.1.2.v.12, pt. 2,
When further controversies broke out among American Quakers in the 1840's, between Gurneyites and Wilburites, these served as further support for the feeling of the Irish Quakers that a great effort must be made to preserve the unity of Quaker society.

It was in an attempt to prevent further divisions within the Society that the Yearly Meeting in Ireland re-published a document which had been first issued by the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting in 1843. This sought to re-state the 'ancient Quaker testimonies' which it felt had been lost sight of by both those who, by over-stressing the Divine Light and confusing it with Deism, had undervalued the scriptures, and those who, in an excessive reaction to this, had failed to appreciate the importance of the Divine Light in all men.

Inasmuch as this pamphlet tried, if not to establish common ground between the Wilburites and Gurneyites, at least to point out that each group placed excessive influence on one item in the Quaker faith, it clearly approximated closely to Webb's own thoughts on the American disputes. However, from the standpoint of the Yearly Meeting of Ireland, it was entirely appropriate that these attempts to preserve doctrinal unity should be accompanied by statements on anti-slavery which Webb would not have approved of. It advised Friends that

the early Quaker fathers who laboured against slavery had been preserved from "rash and imprudent excitement, which often impel those who yield to their influence, into measures which, instead of promoting, retard...the objects which they professedly have in view." It cautioned Friends that "in the anxiety to be doing something, political motives, party feelings, unsound principles, and other influences equally at variance with a right exercise of mind, be not mixed up with it, to the great injury of the cause, and of the individuals who suffer themselves to be drawn into such a condition." This was precisely the kind of statement that Webb had satirized earlier, and would do so again, on the grounds that it was, in his opinion, a shabby collection of euphemisms designed only to discourage an active participation in the anti-slavery movement by Friends. The pamphlet was nevertheless printed by Dublin's best-known firm of Quaker printers, Messrs. Webb and Chapman.

It has been stated that Webb left the Quaker church out of disgust at the reaction of the Yearly Meeting of Ireland to the Indiana secession. This statement was based on a letter written by Webb in February, 1844, in which he claimed to have "given up all sects" after the treatment by British Friends of the anti-slavery Quakers in Indiana.

1. The Ancient Testimony of the Religious Society of Friends commonly called Quakers respecting some of their Christian Doctrines and Practices, reviewed and given forth by the Yearly Meeting held at Philadelphia, the fourth Month, 1833 (reprinted, Dublin, 1844), pp. 10-11, 12-13, 70-72.
Webb, however, did not formally resign from the Society until 1851. It was true that he was disgusted with the reaction of the Yearly Meetings in Ireland and London to the events in Indiana; he even wrote that Irish Quakers were little better than American pro-slavery Friends.¹

He was also furious when Irish Quakers returned from America and seemed to confirm what he had long suspected was a strong tendency among Quakers to try to avoid becoming entangled in anti-slavery.² However, Webb still agreed with Quakers on most matters of faith, and he had found no other sect which appealed to him as much. Moreover, he was beginning to realise that former friends and family were shunning him. Because of his work for the Boston Anti-Slavery Bazaar, he wrote, he was regarded as a 'blacksheep' among Irish Friends. His involvement in the anti-slavery movement had brought him many new friends; but what he gained in terms of new friendships and new intellectual excitements had to be balanced by the loss of personal contacts in Dublin itself.

Possibly Webb in 1843 realised that his resignation from the Society was ultimately inevitable, the end result of the abolitionist's compulsion to "think", and of the tendency of all sects to deplore the consequences of "thinking". Much however would have to happen, both in terms of additional disillusionment with Quaker abolitionism and

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¹ R.D. Webb to M.W. Chapman, Dublin, 1/5/1853. Ibid., v. 13, p. 31.

² See for example his comments on the Quaker Jacob Green who visited Ireland after spending four years in America. Linny Poole heard Green preach at a meeting in Wexford, and similarly denounced his views on slavery. R.D. Webb to M.W. Chapman, Dublin, 26/11/1944. Ibid., v. 14, p. 76; L. Poole to R.D. Webb, n.p. 13/1/1944. Ibid., v. 14, p. 3.
of his personal quest for intellectual freedom, before he was willing to formally resign in 1851. What had happened as a result of the Indiana events was that while Webb did not find it difficult to understand the reaction of the Yearly Meeting of Ireland, it was one that was based on a set of assumptions which, because of his inversion in abolitionism, was becoming increasingly unacceptable to him.1

Webb felt that most Irish Quakers who were interested in abolition were New Organized and added this was especially so in Belfast, a city which he described as the one flourishing centre of New Organization ideas in Ireland.2 Apart from William Bell, however, Belfast Quakers do not appear to have played a prominent role in anti-slavery at this time. The Belfast Anti-Slavery Society did remain an auxiliary to the B.F.A.S.S., though the Belfast abolitionists had, on their own initiative, taken active and early steps to appeal to Christians in America.

The wording of this appeal reflected the influence of J.G. Birney who had visited the city in 1840, since it stated that slavery had found its most 'secure refuge' in the American churches. It did not threaten the American churches directly with a refusal to recognize them in Christian fellowship, but it certainly acknowledged that this was a possible course of action which the British churches might be

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forced to take if any 'members of our Churches who may be participators in the crime of slavery' did nothing to mend their ways.¹

The Address was penned by the Rev. James Morgan and its main themes were taken up later in 1842 when certain clergymen in Belfast sought to persuade their Churches to issue a more specific address to their respective brethren in the United States.

This first happened in July, 1842, at the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, when the Moderator, the Rev. Dr. Edgar, advised his fellow members that they should "remonstrate with their American brethren on the subject of slavery." This proposal found backing from the floor on the grounds that many in the Presbyterian communion in the United States "were engaged in the support of the slave system", but Dr. Henry Cooke successfully ended further discussion of the topic by reminding the Assembly that slavery in the United States was "a political matter entirely", one that was likely to lead to a wrecking of the American Union, and therefore one in which the Assembly had no right to interfere.²

The members of the General Assembly were soon made aware of the pitfalls of their position, when the rival Remonstrant Synod


of Ulster held its annual meeting less than two weeks later in Belfast. At this meeting a resolution was passed criticizing those Presbyterians who had proved to be more ready to condemn Unitarians and Catholics in Ireland than they were slavery in America. The Synod soon encountered its own difficulties, however, when a further proposal was made to remonstrate with their brethren in America. This suggestion was also defeated by those members, led by the Rev. Dr. Montgomery, who more circumspectly, seemed content with praising the stance taken by American Unitarians against slavery, and who opposed any remonstrance on a subject which they felt clergymen in Ireland could be but imperfectly acquainted with.  

The pattern of later reactions by the Presbyterian and Reformed Presbyterian Churches in Ireland to the question of American slavery was established by the events of 1842, and by the two trends which had emerged from the General Assembly and Synod which had met that year. These were, firstly, the tendency for both denominations to try to score points against each other by criticizing each other's activities vis-à-vis slavery; and, secondly the clash within each denomination, between what can be termed activists and non-activists on the anti-slavery issue. From the standpoint of the Belfast Anti-Slavery Society,

1. Report of the Annual Meeting of the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster, in Northern Whig, 21/7/1842. The debate became so heated that after a quarrel between two leading members of the Synod, the Rev. Dr. Henry Montgomery and the Rev. J.S. Porter, the latter walked out, claiming that he had been accused of supporting slavery. See also, letter from Porter, ibid., 23/7/1842. For evidence of further support for the position taken by Montgomery, see, ibid., 9/12/1844. For Dr. Montgomery, see J.A. Crosier, The Life of ... Henry Montgomery (2 vols. London, 1875), and R. Allen, "Henry Montgomery, 1788-1865", in H.A. Crone, T.W. Moody and D.B. Quinn (eds.), Essays...in Honour of James Hadis Todd (London, 1949), pp. 255-277.
the situation was complicated still further by the fact that its secretary, James Standfield was a member of the Church of Ireland. When Standfield spoke at the General Assembly in 1843 his remarks in praise of Presbyterian missionary work, and on the difficulties which slavery placed in the way of attempts to convert the "heathens", were clearly better received than his proposals that the Irish Presbyterian Church refuse its pulpits and communion to visiting Presbyterians who countenanced slavery.1

Standfield, and his fellow joint-secretary, Francis Calder, were particularly worried lest the Presbyterians be thoroughly alienated from the anti-slavery movement by excessively severe attacks on the Free Church of Scotland which had sent commissioners to America to solicit financial aid and which in fact had accepted such aid from the Southern States. When H.C. Wright visited Belfast in December, 1844, he was cautioned by the two men on several occasions against offending Presbyterian Ministers.2 According to Wright, several Ministers had called upon Standfield to warn that if at any of Wright's meetings the Free Church was criticized, they would rise to call the meeting to order.

Wright in fact, by his own admission, could not speak at all about slavery, either in public or in private, without condemning the

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1. Meeting of the Irish Presbyterian General Assembly, Belfast, 11/7/1843, in Northern Whig, 13/7/1843. Two ministers spoke in favour of Standfield's proposal, although a formal protest against one of a similar nature was entered by a "number" of Ministers.

Free Church of Scotland. At first he was not excluded from Presbyterian circles and his first public meeting was held in a Presbyterian church, where one resolution was proposed by the leading Church of Ireland clergyman in Belfast, Dr. Drew, and seconded by the Presbyterian, Dr. Edgar. While Wright spoke in very critical terms of the Presbyterian Church in America, Standfield, still striving diplomatically to avoid any disruption, confined his comments to criticism of his own sect, the Church of Ireland, for its relative failure to back anti-slavery, and to praise of the anti-slavery record of the Presbyterian General Assembly. Despite these efforts at conciliation, however, Wright succeeded at this meeting in effectively polarising opinion within the Presbyterian church, and in attracting the interest of some Independent Clergy who made available for him one of their meeting houses for a discussion of peace. It was significant that the only Presbyterian Minister present at the breakfast given for Wright by Standfield on the day before the former left to spend Christmas with Webb in Dublin, was Isaac Nelson, later to become the foremost Irish Presbyterian critic of the Free Church of Scotland and its supporters.

When Wright returned to Belfast in January, the vast majority of Presbyterian Ministers were no longer prepared to attend his meetings, or even to meet with him in private. At his first meeting, on the thirteenth of January, Wright devoted all his remarks to an attack

1. Northern Whig, 18/12/1841; also among Wright's audience at this meeting was William Webb, who with his wife Maria, later entertained him at his home.
on the Free Church Commissioners and the American Presbyterians. He also requested the Irish Presbyterians to use all their influence in order to drag the Free Church from the "slough." The meeting was held in the church of the Rev. Isaac Nelson who also chaired a meeting on the fifteenth. At this meeting Standfield caused some consternation by condemning Dr. Edgar by name for his failure to "uphold" his former position on anti-slavery. The Reformed Presbyterians of East Belfast, for their part, had chosen a propitious occasion on which to present an address to Wright which defined slavery as un-Christian. Wright (whose comments in his private journals show that he was not acquainted with inter-denominational rivalries in Belfast) welcomed this address and promised to circulate it in the United States.

The Presbyterian leaders such as Dr. Edgar had obviously been worried at Wright’s visit to Belfast, and his meetings there had more than confirmed their fears. As a result of Wright’s activities there had been four major developments: Dr. Edgar had become convinced that anti-slavery in Belfast could be equated with condemnations of the Free Church and those who chose not to attack it; Isaac Nelson had emerged as the leading Presbyterian opponent of the policies of the Free Church; groups such as the Reformed Presbyterians had shown

1. Ibid., 16/1/1845.


3. Also the Independents in Belfast; and later, the Covenanters. See notice of the reception given by Belfast Covenanters to Professor Wylie, professor of Languages in the University of Pennsylvania, in Northern Whig, 21/10/1845.
themselves willing to declare their own commitment to anti-slavery;
and, finally, perhaps emboldened by the seal of Nelson and his small
band of supporters and by the alternative sources of anti-slavery
support apparently offered for the first time by denominations other
than the Presbyterians, 1 Standfield had abandoned his former stance as
a conciliator and had openly attacked Edgar's reluctance to support
Wright. As happened so frequently in the history of Irish abolitionism,
the visit of a leading American abolitionist had helped to give shape
to forces which had long been latent in the situation. It had been a
remarkable achievement even for one whom Lucretia Mott had described
as being ready to "out-Garrison Garrison". 2 Belfast had experienced
great controversies during the campaign against West Indian slavery,
but since 1840 even visiting Garrisonians had seemed constrained by the
prevailing sentiments in the city. Wright, with his readiness to
speak openly on sensitive matters, and with the forthright manner in
which, for example, he publicly accused the American President,
John Tyler, of being not only a slaveholder but a slavebreeder, seemed
determined from the outset to show who was, and who was not, a committed
abolitionist in Belfast. And in his opinion, anyone who failed to

1. Before 1844, Standfield considered the Presbyterians to be
the strongest allies which the abolitionists in Belfast could
hope to enlist; this explains the earlier reluctance to alienate them.

Letters. Friends' Library, Dublin. Webb printed Wright's
Six Months in Graefenburg, and his non-resistant tract, A Kiss
for a Blow. He "edited the Yankeaisms" out of both books, the
latter of which offended both his brother-in-law in Waterford and Richard Allen's cousin in Cork, both Quakers, because
of its "dangerous views". Webb reported that he had been
advised by Dublin Quakers to turn Wright out of his house, while
he himself worried about the American's apparent indifference
attack the conduct of the Free Church of Scotland was by definition an
enmity of the slave. 1

The problems caused by such an approach were, for the Presbyterian
Church in Ireland, two-fold. Firstly, it had close contacts with its
sister church in America, and consequently would offer strong resistance
to those even of its own members who advocated the withdrawal of fellow-
ship and communion rights to such visiting American Presbyterians who
were said to defend or even condone Negro slavery. 2 Secondly, it had close
contacts with the Free Church of Scotland itself. The Rev. Henry Cooke
in particular was friendly with Dr. Chalmers, and had helped in the
negotiations in London between the Government and the parties which
eventually seceded to form the Free Church of Scotland. Though Cooke
was sympathetic to the seceders, however, and was present in Edinburgh
when the Great Disruption took place, he had felt that some kind of
compromise solution was possible. 3 Cooke was close, both personally

to his family, and his liking for Maria Waring: these mis-
givings he recalled later when he heard rumours that Wright
was living with a woman not his wife. R.D. Webb to H.W. Chap-
man, Dublin, 3/11/1844. Ms.A.I.2.v.14, p. 68. Anti-
Slavery Letters to Garrison; R.D. Webb to E. Quincy. Dublin,
2/5/1843, 16/8/1843, 3/1/1845, 2/10/1846. Webb/Quincy Letters;
letter from Webb, in National Anti-Slavery Standard, 1/2/1847.

1. Letter from Wright, in Northern Whig, 11/1/1845; see also,
Dyp. S.10.c.11/2h.

2. American Presbyterians had split in 1837, and for the role of
the slavery issue in this schism, see, C.B. Staiger, "Abolition-
ism and the Presbyterian Schisma of 1837-1838", in Mississippi
Valley Historical Review, v, 36, 1949, pp. 391-411.

preached in Cooke's church in Belfast, in August, 1842, and
the two had been friends since the late 1820's. Northern
Whig, 30/8/1842.
and ideologically, to run like Chalmers: but he did not want to openly espouse a movement whose possible repercussions in the north of Ireland might include a disruption among Presbyterians there, and a withdrawal of state aid at a time when the increased Government grants to Maynooth College had already alarmed many not of the Catholic persuasion. When the Rev. Isaac Nelson chaired a meeting in his church in Belfast in April, 1845, at which it was decided to ask the Presbyterian Church Assembly to appeal to the Free Church of Scotland, this was regarded as yet further evidence that if Irish Presbyterians became embroiled in the anti-slavery movement as this was currently manifested in Belfast, it could only threaten their relations with the American Church and lead to a deterioration in their already complicated relations with the Free Church in Scotland.\(^1\) The Church leaders in Belfast, however, did not want to be forced into the position whereby their stance on the slavery question became the target for not only the complaints of the Belfast Anti-Slavery Society but also the derisive comments of other denominations in the city, and when Standfield sent a series of resolutions to the General Assembly in July, 1845, that Assembly quickly resolved to recommend that Presbyterians in America take active steps to abolish slavery wherever it existed.\(^2\)

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2. Report of General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland 7/7/1845, ibid., 10/7/1845.
Some eleven months after Wright had left Belfast to visit Scotland, another American abolitionist visited Ireland, who, like Wright, was to act as a catalyst in provoking further controversy on the question of American slavery. Frederick Douglass's career as an abolitionist had from the beginning been linked with Ireland, \(^1\) though his first visit to Ireland did not have a propitious start, since Edmund Quincy wrote Webb expressing a fear that, once in Britain, Douglass would join forces with the Broad Street abolitionists, and since Maria Weston Chapman later asked Webb to warn Douglass against becoming swayed by the attention paid to him in the British Isles. \(^2\)

Webb showed Douglass Maria Chapman's letter. He had not been asked to do this, though Mrs. Chapman had requested him to warn Douglass of the dangers facing him in Britain. \(^3\) Angrily, Douglass

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1. One of Douglass's earliest appearances as an abolitionist had been in 1842, when the Boston Garrisonians had welcomed the Irish Address at Faneuil Hall. Introducing Douglass to the assembly, Garrison presented him as a man who could prove to the slaveholders that the Negro was capable of speaking for himself, just as, Garrison added, Ireland was capable of speaking and acting for itself, though England denied this. *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, 17/3/1842.


3. Webb had also previously been advised by Wendell Phillips that, unlike Remond, Douglass was always prepared to "take a hint". W. Phillips to R.D. Webb. Boston, 15/5/1845. *Ibid.*, v. 15, p. 34.
assured her of his adherence to Garrisonian ideas and reminded her of the inevitable consequences of any further attempts to put his activities under "overseership". Five years later he recalled to Webb that the original letter of warning had stuck in his "crop".  

Mrs. Chapman was in turn extremely angry at Webb's decision to show Douglass her letter, and curtly demanded to know why he had done so.  

Webb lost no time in seeking, as he put it, to vindicate himself.  

He had simply read Mrs. Chapman's letter aloud in a meeting of the H.A.S.S, at which Douglass was present. A mild-mannered and

1. Douglass to R.D. Webb. Rochester, 12/9/1850. Ibid., v. 19, p. 82; P. Foner, (ed.), The Life and Writings of Frederick Douglass (4 vols. New York, 1950), v. 1, p. 65; Douglass felt that the letter had implied that he was "particularly open to money temptation and would be likely to be bought up by the Broad Street Committee". M.W. Chapman had clearly stated that Douglass had benefited from his involvement in the anti-slavery cause and that his devotion to principle had never been really tested.


3. Afterwards, Webb was more concerned with restoring himself to Mrs. Chapman's confidence than sensitive to the offence that had been done to Douglass. R.D. Webb to M.W. Chapman, Dublin, 22/1/1854. Ms.A.9.2.v.28, p. 4. Weston Papers.
kindly man, Webb on occasion was capable of conduct which if in retrospect seems little more than gauche, was felt at the time to be callous, and it is possible that his reading of the letter in public was an example of this propensity. More than this, however, Webb had been alarmed by the early warnings which had connected Douglass's name with Remond's. Webb felt that Remond had been spoiled by the fêting he had received in Britain, and felt that there was evidence to suggest that a trip to Britain could include many pitfalls for the visiting American Negro abolitionist. When he met Douglass and perceived in him a haughty, over-sensitive and ungrateful demeanour, this may well have led Webb to take the course which so offended Douglass and which resulted in lasting antagonisms between the two men, from which in turn stemmed important consequences for the subsequent history of the anti-slavery movement in Ireland.

1. Anti-Slavery Advocate, v.1, n. 3, December, 1852. Webb also offended both J.H. McLain and A.W. Weston by publishing their letters, without permission in the Advocate; Mary Estlin felt he was not a very "judicious selector" of what, with propriety, he could make public from his private correspondence.

2. There had also been much about the conduct and views of Collins and Wright which Webb had deplored, though he was particularly concerned to offer the two Negro abolitionists, Remond and Douglass, advice as to their behaviour in Britain. Remond, earlier, had also taken offence at this. Webb felt constrained to offer no such "schooling" to Wright as, he informed Mrs. Chapman, he had done in the case of Douglass. There was an independence of spirit and judgement about the latter which Webb found difficult to reconcile, perhaps, with his own preconceptions of the advice and guidance which a Negro abolitionist would both require and appreciate when visiting Britain. R.D. Webb to M.W. Chapman. Dublin, 22/2/1842. Ms.A1.2.v.12, pt. 2, p. 30. Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison; R.D. Webb to M.W. Chapman. Dublin, 16/8/1845. Thid., v. 15, p. 60.
Despite the ill-feeling between the two men, however, Webb could not fail to appreciate what he termed Douglass's 'talent, sense and quick wittedness', and he quickly arranged a series of meetings in Dublin and elsewhere in Ireland for the American. After addressing two meetings on temperance, Douglass spoke at an anti-slavery meeting in the Music Hall, during which he condemned both Methodists and Quakers for their conduct towards the Negro slaves in America, and, like Birney and Stanton and many others before him, he received 'tremendous applause' when he praised the services of O'Connell and recalled that there were at least no separate pews for Negroes in American Catholic Churches. Douglass was later invited to address the Lord Mayor and the Alderman of Dublin, then, after two meetings at the Royal Exchange, he spoke at two meetings in the Quaker Meeting House. Webb and Douglass had been surprised when the Friends assented to the use of their Meeting House for an anti-slavery meeting, since Douglass had already publicly criticized the Society in America. At the first meeting, care was taken to avoid undue controversy, but the second was attended

1. Douglass came to Ireland with the American Quaker, James Buffum, whom Webb came to like more than Douglass, while admitting that he had not the latter's "genius". R.D. Webb to H.W. Chapman, Dublin, 2/6/1845. 12.A.9.2. v. 30, p. 40. Weston Papers.


3. Buffum and Haughton also attended this reception, which greatly pleased Douglass, though less so Haughton who was distressed at the practice of drinking toasts. Letter from Haughton, ibid., 3/10/1845.
by some Dublin Methodists, who after Douglass's remarks in the Music Hall, had refused him the use of any Methodist meeting House. The Quakers warned that any clapping should be suppressed and that Douglass should stick as far as possible to 'facts,' but his speech condemned the American Methodist church.¹ Webb spent most of the meeting dashing through the audience trying to silence those Roman Catholics who were delighted at the Methodists' discomfort, to pacify those Methodists who threatened a noisy demonstration unless Douglass present a similar indictment of the Catholic Church in America and give a more balanced view of their endeavours in anti-slavery, and to reassure those Quakers present that the customary peace of their Meeting House was not about to be shattered. As a result, Douglass was refused the use

¹ For information on the hostile response given by American Methodists to a remonstrance sent by British Methodists on the slavery issue, in 1835, see D.G. Mathews, Slavery and Methodism. A Chapter in American Morality, 1780-1815 (Princeton, 1965), pp. 149-150; and, L. Billington, "Some Connections between British and American Reform Movements," pp. 72-81. Following the abolitionist activities of Orrego Scott, great disagreements on the slavery issue occurred within the Methodist Episcopal Church in America from 1836 onwards, and these culminated in the formation of the abolitionist Wesleyan Methodist Connection of America in 1843. L. Filler, Crusade Against Slavery, pp. 123-124. The Irish Methodists claimed that Irish Methodists had been instrumental in the formation and growth of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America, and remained loyal to it. Rev. W. Crook, Ireland and the Centenary of American Methodism (Dublin, 1869), p. 136, and passim. The soldiers over slavery in America left the Irish Methodists unwilling to accept the exhortations of British abolitionists such as the H.A.S.S., which had earlier, in 1841, become involved in a dispute with the Dublin Methodists following the accusations made by Remond against the American Methodist Episcopal Church, the subsequent refusal by Dublin Methodists to allow him the use of their meeting houses for anti-slavery purposes, and statements made on the subject in Dublin by a visiting Irish-American Methodist, the Rev. James Caughey. Four Letters to the Reverend James Caughey, Methodist Episcopal Minister on the participation of the American Methodist Episcopal Church in the sin of American Slavery: Three from Robert Johnston, member of the Methodist Society, Dublin, and one from Richard Allen, Secretary of the Hibernian Anti-Slavery Society (Dublin, 1841).
of the Meeting House for further meetings. Webb protested this decision, though to no avail, while Douglass was less concerned with the consequences of the meeting than with conveying to Garrison the news that he had been given permission in the first place to speak in the Meeting House.  

Reviewing the possible reasons which the Irish Quakers may have had, Webb insisted that Douglass indeed had spoken only of the facts of the situation, and that the sum total of Quaker anti-slavery action in the U.S.A. consisted merely of ineffectual Epistles and testimonials. To Quincy, however, Webb confided that Douglass had given strong hints that at subsequent meetings he would go on to arraign the Society in more stringent terms: the incident was yet another cause of Webb’s disillusionment with the Quaker sect.  

Moreover, while Webb described the Dublin Quakers as Douglass’s most intransigent enemies in Ireland, their decision to refuse Douglass the use of the Meeting House was considered by Webb to be of less importance than their shunning of Collins in 1841. This was because Douglass had succeeded to an extraordinary degree in arousing the interest of other influential sections of the Dublin community. Webb realised that Douglass could reach a far wider audience than that which

1. R.D. and Thomas Webb to the Members of the Society of Friends in Ireland, in National Anti-Slavery Standard, 10/10/1845; Freeman’s Journal, 13/9/1845.

attended the Royal Exchange meetings: hence his speedy arrangements for the Music Hall meetings. Douglass's evident success and popularity in other quarters, meanwhile, allowed him the luxury of a certain unconcern with the action taken by the Dublin Quakers. He attended and was invited to address, for example, a meeting of the L.N.R.A., where he and O'Connell spoke on anti-slavery. Similarly, Webb reported later that while Irish Quakers and Methodists were still furious at Douglass, his visit to Dublin had encouraged some Dublin Methodists to care more for anti-slavery than for the "undisturbed repose of their own sect", while it soon emerged that representatives from other denominations, hitherto undistinguished in the abolition movement, seemed prepared to follow in the wake of Douglass's criticisms of the Methodists and, if not to espouse the tenets of Garrisonianism, at least to deliver sermons on the slavery question. If Douglass had alienated important groups in Dublin, he had attracted great interest in the city, both by his anti-slavery and temperance activities, while

1. An added attraction at Douglass's meetings were the Hutchinsons, a singing group from America with close contacts with the Garrisonians. Webb arranged a meeting between them and the manager of the Music Hall in Dublin, who also allowed Douglass the use of the Hall free for three nights: it seated some 3,000 people. R.D. Webb to M.W. Chapman. Dublin, 30/9/1845. Ibid., v. 12, p. 63.

2. Letter from Buffum, in National Anti-Slavery Standard, 30/10/1845. Webb was dismayed at Douglass's high estimation of O'Connell.

3. An example was the Dublin Independent clergymen, the Rev. S.S. Morrison, who after Douglass's visit, delivered three anti-slavery sermons in the city. Morrison was encouraged to do this by William Shortt, a Dublin Methodist who heard Douglass speak and who remained, until his death in the mid-1850's, a firm convert to Garrisonian ideas and the doctrine of no-fellowship. See, letter from Shortt, quoted in National Anti-Slavery Standard, 29/4/1847.
new potential allies emerged to support his meetings. What did worry both Webb and Haughton, however, was that Douglass's remarks in Dublin would ruin the reception he would receive in his tour in the south of Ireland. His strictures against both Methodists and Quakers in particular, Webb considered, were ill-considered since they gave the impression of a personal animus against those sects which would militate against Douglass's success elsewhere in Ireland. ¹

Webb had organised Douglass's five-week stay in Dublin with remarkable skill, and in planning Douglass's tour in the south of Ireland, he simply built on the network of family contacts which had hitherto been mainly employed to collect contributions for the Boston Bazaar. Douglass travelled first to Wexford where he held two meetings and stayed with Webb's cousins: Joseph and Lizzy Poole. In Waterford, the audiences at his meetings were smaller because there were some horse-races in the neighbourhood at the time, while the decision to charge an entrance fee kept away the poor, who said Webb, were always the "heartiest clappers". Adding to this "dampening effect" was the fact that an earlier Negro visitor to the city had rather spoiled things for Douglass by having lectured on anti-slavery while under the influence of drink.² It was in Cork, however, that Douglass scored his greatest success. There he stayed with the Jennings family.³


3. Apart from a few days spent at the house of the Cork Quaker, William Martin.
eight brothers and sisters, which was fortuitous for him since Jane and Isabel Jennings in particular were extremely involved in the entire gamut of Garrisonian reform interests and had been organizers of the Cork donations to the Boston Bazaar since 1841, while remaining sensitive both to the general ignorance in Cork of the anti-slavery divisions in America, and to the fact that Douglass would have had little success in the city if he had dealt either on these divisions or on Garrisonian ideas concerning religion. Douglass did neither.

Once again, careful advance preparations had been made, and Baffin and Douglass, on arriving in Cork, were entertained at a public breakfast. The latter's advocacy of temperance in Dublin stood him in good stead, since he was hailed in Cork as a temperance reformer and this brought him to the notice of Father Mathew who organized a soirée attended by two hundred and fifty people, and then followed this by inviting Douglass to breakfast at his home the morning after. Such attention clearly boosted Douglass's reputation and status, while his manner and bearing were clearly found fascinating by those who "formerly looked on slaves as necessarily servile". Despite his criticisms in Dublin, Douglass was given permission to speak in the Methodist Meeting House where he again, reported Webb,


2. I. Jennings to H.W. Chaplain. Cork, November, 1847. Ms.A.I. 2.v.17, p. 74. Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison. One newspaper commented that his speeches in Cork finally disproved the assertion that "the taint of African Blood necessarily produces inferiority, either of body or mind". Cork Examiner, 13/10/1845. When Douglass rebuked as the language of slavery, a statement in the Cork Constitution that he was a "fine young Negro", that paper quickly denied that the phrase had been derogatory of the Negroes. Ibid., 20/10/1845, 27/10/1845.
condemned the Episcopal Methodist Church in America. Any loss of support from the Methodists, however, was immediately balanced by the accretion of new sources of abolitionist interest. As the Jennings sisters noted, after Douglass's visit, they were receiving donations for the Boston Bazaar from people who for religious or political reasons had never before interested themselves in the matter. In particular, the Jennings sisters, who were Unitarians, found that the Independents, and, for the first time, Lay members of the Church of Ireland, were prepared to endorse Douglass's activities in Cork. The Independent clergy made their Chapel available for his meetings, and also passed a resolution declaring that they would have no fellowship with any Christian who was in any way tainted with slavery. This was the first such commitment that Douglass had won from an Irish Church.


2. J. Heughton to H.C. Wright. Dublin, 1/12/1845. "English, Irish and Scotch Letters Addressed to H.C. Wright", v.2. At his meeting in the Wesleyan Chapel, Patrick St., Cork, Douglass had accused both American Quakers and Methodists of being influenced and corrupted by the "upholders" of slavery. This statement was objected to by two Methodist clergymen present, who complained that Douglass had unfairly singled out the Methodists for attention, while ignoring the Roman Catholic Church, thereby appealing to the majority of the audience who "required but little incentive to introduce them to cast opprobrium on their sect". William Martin insisted that Douglass was by no means trying to give personal offence to British Methodists, but Douglass caused further consternation when he added that those Methodists who defended the Church in America were in effect defending the men who had once lashed his slave sister into bloody insensibility. Cork Examiner, 20/10/1845.
Though Douglass did advertise the Boston Garrison at his meetings in Cork, his speeches dwelt largely on his own horrific experiences as a slave, and these clearly had a considerable impact in a community which, Douglass saw, had first been led to an awareness of the evils of American slavery by Remond, and which now welcomed him, not at all as an advocate of Garrisonism, but as a spokesman of the Negroes in America. The Gentlemen’s Anti-Slavery Society in Cork was still officially an auxiliary of the B.F.A.S.S. yet its leading members played an active role in organizing Douglass’s activities in Cork, and, together with the Ladies’ Society, which was led by the Jenningses, presented a farewell Address to Douglass in the Independent Chapel.

With Webb, who had travelled down to attend his meetings in Cork, Douglass later travelled to Wexford and Limerick, where, once more, he stayed with relatives of the Dublin Quaker. In Limerick he impressed Mary Gough as much as he had done the Jennings sisters, and


2. Including the Unitarian, Richard Dowden, later Lord Mayor of Cork, and leading temperance reformer: Isaac Varian, a brush manufacturer who later supported Haughton in his quarrel with Father Kenyon; and J.F. Maguire, biographer of Father Mathew. *Cork Examiner*, 15/10/1845; *Nation*, 20/2/1847; 5/5/1847.


4. R.D. Webb to H.W. Chapman. Dublin, 16/11/1845. Ms. A.1.2.v.15, p. 78. *Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison*. Dublin had stayed only three days in Cork, before returning to Dublin: Douglass however had remained for over three weeks.

at the end of his two week stay there was entertained at a Temperance
Soiree, which was attended by over four hundred of the "most respect-
able citizens" of the town.¹ A number of clergymen were present, of
various denominations, though once again the Independents played a
notable role.

At this stage in his tour, Douglass was both flattered by
the reception he had received, and convinced that, in terms of the
interest his visits had aroused, he had accomplished a great deal.
Webb had printed two thousand copies of Douglass's Narrative, and by
November, 1845, five hundred had already been sold, two hundred and
fifty of these in Cork alone. Douglass in consequence clearly became
more confident, more assured that his judgement was sound, and his
own decisions correct. This feeling manifested itself in many ways,
including a further dispute with Webb concerning details of a further
edition of the Narrative,² and a refusal to join with H.C. Wright in
advocating the dissolution of the American Union, on the grounds that
he, Douglass, did not agree as to the importance of discussing this
topic, and felt that Wright had "created against him prejudices which
I as an abolitionist do not feel called upon to withstand." Furthermore,
Douglass added, Wright was the spokesman for doctrines "with which I

v.14, p. 63. Weston Papers; Report from Limerick Reporter,
in National Anti-Slavery Standard, 1/1/1846. After the
Temperance Band had played, Douglass sang a "beautiful sen-
timental air."

² R.D. Webb to H.C. Wright. Dublin, 22/2/1846. "English,
Irish and Scotch Letters Addressed to H.C. Wright", v. 1;
2.v.16, p. 32. Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison.
do not wish to be seen identified." Douglass insisted that he was "a man of one idea”—an abolitionist.1

Wright's pamphlet on Dissolution had been sent to many people in Ireland, including many Ministers of religion, and not all of these had agreed either with Wright's views or with the efficacy of advocating them.2 While the abolition societies in Dublin, Cork and Belfast had all purchased copies of the pamphlet and had undertaken to distribute them, Douglass was justified in claiming that the themes and content of his speeches in Ireland had hitherto proved attractive to most of his audiences, and that by continuing to stress his own experiences of slavery he could most successfully bring his listeners to an appreciation of the horrors of slavery. Nevertheless, his decision regarding Wright was not viewed kindly by Webb, even though the latter had expressed his own misgivings about the disunion campaign.3

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1. F. Douglass to R. D. Webb. Limerick, 10/11/1845. Ibid., v. 15, p. 76.

2. H. C. Wright, The Dissolution of the American Union, demanded by Justice and Humanity, as the incurable enemy of Liberty... Addressed to the Abolitionists of Great Britain and Ireland (Glasgow, 1845).

3. William Martin to H. C. Wright. Cork, 1/1/1846. "English, Irish and Scotch Letters Addressed to H. C. Wright", v. 1; R. D. Webb to H. C. Wright. Dublin, 13/11/1845. Ibid., v. 2; J. Standfield to H. C. Wright. Ibid., v. 2. For evidence of a body of opinion opposed to Wright's pamphlet, see, James White to H. C. Wright. Waterford, 11/2/1846; Ibid., v. 2; Edward Dalton to H. C. Wright. Waterford, 13/2/1846. Ibid., v. 2; Robert Murphy to H. C. Wright. Waterford, 26/2/1846. Ibid., v. 2. Standfield had told Wright that he would have to consult his committee before purchasing the pamphlet. The best indication of abolitionist misgivings about Wright's views, apart from Webb's statements, is however to be found in the pamphlet itself. In an open letter to Haughton, Wright disclosed that he was aware that many British abolitionists would be reluctant to be seen as interfering in American domestic politics; Haughton's reply, though finally claiming a readiness to join
As a result of these events, Douglass travelled to Belfast rightly proud of his achievements in Ireland, yet full of bitterness against Mrs. Chapman and suspicious of Webb, while Webb was concerned for his well-being after he left the "petting" of the Jennings family, and Mrs. Chapman and Edmund Quincy, alarmed by Webb's letters, feared that the reception he was receiving in Ireland would sooner or later so damase him as to whittle away his usefulness to the anti-slavery movement. 

with Wright in seeking an overthrow of the Union by moral means, provides proof that Wright's disclosures were not without substance. Wright, The Dissolution of the Union, pp. 3-6. The pamphlet can be seen as an attempt to allay the doubts of the British abolitionists on this matter. For evidence of Wright's propensity for giving offence in Scotland, see Rice, "Scottish Factor", pp. 324, 359.

1. R. D. Webb to E. Quincy, Dublin, 2/11/1845. Webb/Quincy Letters; E. Quincy to R. D. Webb, Dedham, 13/12/1845. Quincy/Webb Letters. Increasingly, Webb began to complain of the "insolent swagger" of Douglass's letters, and to take offence at Douglass's apparent lack of appreciation for the considerable aid he had given him in Ireland, while Douglass suspected that Webb was acting as a spy for Mrs. Chapman. It is possible to find justification for Douglass's suspicions, but there is also evidence to bear out Webb's content that, in Ireland, Douglass seemed uncommonly prone to give and take offence; he annoyed not only James Haughton and Maria Waring, but Buffa and the Hutchinsons. F. Douglass to R.D. Webb, Glasgow, 20/4/1846. Ms. A.1.2. v. 16, p. 13. Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison; S. Pugh to R.D. Webb, Philadelphia, 28/12/1857. Ibid., v. 27, p. 6. Isabel Jennings predicted that the two would never get on well. She had already had misunderstandings with Webb, and had some sympathy, therefore, for Douglass's feelings in the situation. I. Jennings to M.W. Chapman. Cork, n.d. Ms. A.9.2. v. 23, p. 47. Weston Papers.
As soon as Douglass arrived in Belfast, he learnt from James Standfield that his detractors had been stirring up prejudice against him and that the Methodists in Cork and Dublin had written letters warning their correspondents against him. Again, Douglass was immediately successful in securing the use of the Independent Meeting House for his first meeting, and then, thanks to letters of introduction from Shortt, he was permitted to hold another in the Wesleyan Chapel, at which the formation of a Female Anti-Slavery Society to help collect goods for the Boston Bazaar, was announced.

At this stage however, the reaction to Douglass became exceedingly mixed. On the one hand, the Independents again produced a letter of remonstrance to their American brethren, and this course was repeated by the Belfast Baptists following stern criticisms of the Baptist Church in America by Douglass. On the other, feeling was by then running high against Douglass in other quarters. Mary Ireland, a teacher at the Belfast Academical Institution, and a founder member of the Female Anti-Slavery Society, reported to Mrs. Chapman that slanderous rumours were being circulated in the city, insinuating that Douglass was an imposter; as she pointed out, Douglass's attacks on the Free Church of Scotland had offended many who normally took "the

2. Later, another meeting was held in the Primitive Methodist Chapel. National Anti-Slavery Standard, 26/2/1846. Dr. Drew was also prominent in the initial support given to Douglass in the city.
lead in other good works" in Belfast.¹

It was apparently Standfield and Calder who had first brought Douglass's attention to the Free Church controversy, and they had supplied him with pamphlets on the question. One day after reading them, Douglass concluded that he would have to spend some time in a city which he described as the "very bed of presbyterianism and free churchism" and in which he felt he could strike the most effective blow against slavery.² At his following two meetings Douglass dwelt on the iniquities of Dr. Chalmers and the Free Church, both, he realised, being highly regarded by the majority of his audience, who nevertheless, he wrote Webb, came out enthusiastically against the Free Church's actions.³ After a short trip to Liverpool, however,⁴ he returned to Belfast where he found that the supporters of the Free Church had not been won over as easily as he had first thought.


3. F. Douglass to R.D. Webb. Liverpool, 14/12/1845. Ibid., p. 88; Northern Whig, 13/12/1845.

4. During which he met Sturge, for whom he professed high regard, thereby doing little to persuade Webb of the excellence of his judgement.
Emboldened by the support which however was forthcoming from other quarters,¹ Douglass continued his condemnations. In particular, he was supported by the Rev. Isaac Nelson, now working closely with Standfield, and by the leading Reformed Presbyterians, Dr. Montgomery and John Scott Porter. Douglass had also criticized the leading American Unitarian Dr. Dewey, but Montgomery and Porter continued to attend his meetings and publicly defend him when he began to concentrate his attacks on the Free Church and its Presbyterian supporters in Ireland.

Douglass in particular was rebuked in the Banner of Ulster, which he described as being "the tool of the reverend slavery gentlemen" in Belfast. Isaac Nelson also reacted angrily to the newspaper's accusation that the abolitionists in Belfast were guilty of "impudence" and "indiscretion". Nelson charged that the Banner of Ulster had sacrificed abolition to the pecuniary interests of the Free Church and had done much to thwart the efforts of both Wright and Douglass in the city. Nelson realised that the Banner of Ulster was insinuating that the campaign against the Free Church was a tactic master-minded by the Reformed Presbyterians in the city to embarrass the Presbyterians but he insisted that though he disagreed with the theological outlook of men like Dr. Montgomery, all men should be prepared, whatever their doctrinal differences, to work together to free the slave.

¹ Douglass was also visited in Belfast by William Webb and other Friends; he regretted that neither Allen nor Haughton had bothered to give him letters of introduction to more Quakers and Unitarians in the city. Y. Douglass to R.D. Webb, Belfast, 7/12/1845. Ms. A.l.2.v.15, p. 87. Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison.
The fact that such views, however, were published in the Northern Whig gave not only an indication of the depth of Nelson's commitment against the course taken by the Free Church, but also added to the conviction of the leading Presbyterians in the city that men like Nelson were merely the tools of a Reformed Presbyterian plot.  

In January, 1846, Douglass left Belfast to continue the campaign against the Free Church in Scotland, leaving his allies in the North of Ireland to continue the struggle there.

Nelson had earlier repudiated the claim made earlier by the Banner of Ulster that all respectable men were leaving the Anti-Slavery Society by stating that the Society had never, in fact, been larger or stronger. Nelson's words were borne out by the list of committee members, which showed that though the social composition of the Committee remained middle-class, it had markedly increased in size.

Of the Presbyterian Ministers, however, only Morgan and Nelson had served on the Anti-Slavery Committee since 1840. Therefore, though of the nineteen members of the New Committee, Nelson alone has been

1. Letters from Nelson in Northern Whig, 13/1/1846, 5/2/1846, 29/2/1846; report of public breakfast given for Douglass, ibid., 8/1/1846. Nelson complained that his letters were not being published by the Banner of Ulster, which was edited by George Troop, formerly editor of the Aberdeen Banner. His letters, and also one from John Scott Porter protesting against the Free Church, were however all published in the Northern Whig, whose editor was Francis D. Finlay, Porter's brother-in-law. The Northern Whig was long taken to be both the political and doctrinal enemy of the Presbyterian Church and its leading figures such as Cooke. Northern Whig, 3/2/1846; Belfast Literary Society, Historical Sketch with Memoirs of some Distinguished Members (Belfast, 1902), pp. 91-97; Porter, Cooke, pp. 58, 195.


3. See Appendix 2.
identified as a Presbyterian, evidence of Presbyterian disapproval of it and its activities must be sought elsewhere than in its list of members. Similarly, though no leading member of the Reformed Presbyterian Church served as a committee member, this gave no indication of that denomination’s evident support for the campaign against the Free Church and its Presbyterian allies in Belfast.\(^1\) Two Quakers, however, were for the first time prepared to take an active part in organized anti-slavery activity in the city.

Standfield and Calder proceeded to quarrel openly with the Reverend James Morgan, returning money that he had sent to Frederick Douglass on the grounds that he, Morgan, had helped to circulate "certain reports" injurious to Douglass’s success in the city.\(^2\) Morgan sought to placate his critics on the new committee by arranging for the re-print of the Address from the Belfast Anti-Slavery Society to the Christian Churches which he had penned in 1841. At first, however, this had only the effect of further convincing Standfield of the shallowness of Morgan’s earlier anti-slavery commitments. In an open letter to Morgan, Standfield and Calder asked how he could reconcile the 1841 Address, which had raised the prospect of no-fellowship, with his present desire to block all of the abolitionists’ efforts against

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1. Not all other members of Irish denominations were, however, necessarily prepared to interfere in what they considered to be the internal affairs of the Free and Presbyterian Churches. See, D. Staley to H.C. Wright, Clonmel, 13/3/1846. "English, Irish and Scotch letters addressed to H.C. Wright", v.2. Staley was a Minister of the Church of Ireland.

2. Letter from James Standfield, in Northern Whig, 10/2/1846.
the Free Church. When the Northern Whig applauded the way in which this
letter exposed "that smooth little parson", Mr. Morgan, and then later
published a front page report of a meeting held in Glasgow by Buffum
and Douglass demanding that the Free Church return the money to the Southern
States, and when the newspaper published a letter from Standfield con-
gratulating the Synod of the Secession Church in Scotland for resolving
to have no fellowship with slaveholders, Morgan realised that the
Presbyterian church in Ireland was in serious danger of being outaman-
ceuvred on all sides, both by its denominational rivals and the hostile
abolitionists.¹ Though in May, 1846, Standfield had to report that the
Anti-Slavery Society had been obliged to distribute free copies of
a pamphlet written by Wright arraigning Dr. Chalmers' views on slavery
since no-one in the city was prepared to purchase it,² the Presbyterian
leaders there clearly appreciated the pitfalls of their position; at
their approaching General Assembly they did not want to be seen as
abandoning the Free Church in the fact of hostile opposition; neither,
however, did they wish to arouse further criticism against themselves

¹ Northern Whig, 17/3/1846, 10/4/1846, 14/5/1846, 2/6/1846.
Irish and Scotch Letters Addressed to H.C. Wright, "p.2. J.O'Neill,
fast emerging as the Belfast abolitionist most influenced by
Wright's religious notions, offered, if Wright thought wise, to
circulate in Belfast a pamphlet Wright had written condemning
the sabbath. O'Neill clearly worried lest this pamphlet offended
the sensibilities of many in Belfast and suggested that he should
perhaps wait till after the General Assembly; he added that
under any circumstances Standfield would probably object to its
Ibid. Wright's pamphlet, First Day Sabbath not of Divine Appoint-
ment, had offended Scottish traditions, and would have done so
in Belfast, as O'Neill suspected.
by appearing as the opponents of anti-slavery. They were, moreover, further embarrassed when Dr. Thomas Smyth visited Belfast. Smyth, a Presbyterian Minister in South Carolina, was born in Belfast, the son of an alder in the Presbyterian Church whose minister was the father of Dr. William Hanna, the son-in-law and biographer of Dr. Chalmers. In 1844, Smyth had secured from Chalmers a statement of his unwillingness to "unchristianise" the South simply because slavery happened to "prevail" there. A warm supporter of the Free Church, Smyth was a harsh critic of those who, like Douglass wished the Free Church to return the money. The mood of the Presbyterian leaders in Belfast, however, was indicated by their request that Smyth not participate as a delegate in the General Assembly, but merely view the proceedings from the balcony as a spectator. As the excitement and tension increased, placards appeared in the city attacking Douglass and advising the local populace to "send back the nigger".


3. Later in July, 1846, Smyth made certain unguarded statements in Belfast, which Standfield's lawyers agreed were "injurious to the moral and religious character of Douglass. Smyth was forced to make a full retraction and apology. Recalling the incident later, Webb claimed that Smyth had visited Belfast only to claim a legacy, and that the incident had aided the abolitionist cause in Belfast. National Anti-Slavery Standard, 10/9/1846.

4. R.D. Webb to M.W. Chapman. Dublin, 16/7/1846. Ms.A.9.2.v.22, p. 75. Weston Papers. Webb added that the placards could have been the work of no-one but Smyth, the "diabolical Minister of Christ."
On the first morning of the General Assembly, the subject of American slavery was raised when the foreign correspondence was read. The new Moderator of the Assembly, Dr. Morgan, described the letters from the American Presbyterians as containing the "usual defence" offered for slavery, and while he admitted that the Americans acknowledged the worth of the Irish Assembly's resolution which had been prepared and sent in 1845, he noted that the bulk of the American comments were confined to an attack on the abolitionists who were accused of retarding the cause of abolition by their fanatical behaviour.

Considerable discussion then followed as to whether the subject should be dropped or referred to a committee, with Isaac Nelson advocating the latter course and proposing that any memorial should be worded in the strongest possible terms. The turning point in the debate came when the members were reminded by one speaker of the storm over the Free Church and that in consequence of this "a change had taken place in the circumstances of the Church since their last meeting, and it became them to become more decided on the subject". Against the objections of those who insisted that they were needlessly interfering in a topic which could only alienate the Americans and be solved by American legislation, the question was referred to committee by the moderator, much to the delight of Douglass who at an anti-slavery meeting in Belfast that same night congratulated the Assembly in the presence of Dr. Edgar, who had strongly supported the motion. ¹ The Committee appointed

¹ Northern Whig, 9/7/1846.
to draw up a reply to the American Church in fact produced two documents. One, while not wishing to threaten no-fellowship with the American Church, accused it of being "guilty before God". The other declared that the American Church should expel from communion all those who refused to free their slaves, and that no Christian church could hold fellowship with those who held slaves or who "winked" at it. Both letters were referred back for further discussion.  

Nelson conferred with the abolitionists in Scotland, and there, the decision was immediately made to print the epistle which the Irish General Assembly had finally decided to send to America, on the grounds, Nelson argued, that the Edinburgh Witness, which opposed the abolitionists' campaign against the Free Church, had so misrepresented that document as to make it appear that the Free Church and the Presbyterians in Ireland had taken largely the same view of the slavery question. Nelson's intentions were to show that the Irish Presbyterian General Assembly, whatever their earlier position and despite their close contacts with the Free Church, had finally come out against that Church and opted for no-fellowship.

The letter, signed by the Moderator, James Morgan, condemned both slavery and those who upheld it as contrary to the law of nature and the teaching of scripture, and while deploiring any excesses.

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1. *Northern Whig*, 14/7/1846. Several oblique references to Smyth were made in the course of the discussion.
committed by the abolitionists, declared that the American Presbyterian's theoretical defence of slavery and "feeble" comments on its "admitted enormities" were much more likely to retard the abolition movement. Where interpretations differed however, was concerning whether or not the Irish letter had warned the American Presbyterians with no-fellowship. Nelson and the Glasgow Examiner were in no doubt that it had. The Witness declared that it had not.

The document, probably a compromise between the two proposed versions discussed in the second debate, therefore permitted the supporters of the Free Church to claim it as similar to their views, and the opponents of the Free Church to see it as a radical epistle which proved that the Free Church had lost an important ally, the Irish Presbyterian Church. When Nelson realised this he delivered another lecture in which he recalled the Address which Morgan had written in 1841 as evidence of the support given in Belfast for no-fellowship principles. Though merely three months before the Assembly in 1846 Morgan had been publicly criticised by Standfield in the Northern Whig for re-issuing this under false pretences, the Belfast abolitionists now presented him with a vote of thanks, which was "cordially acknowledged", in


2. There was, strictly speaking, no direct threat to withhold communion, though it did declare that no church "should hold communion" with those who were guilty of holding slaves. See, "Acknowledged Slander" Against Free Church Assembly and Slavery contrasted with the Irish Assembly; and "Acknowledged Slander against Mr. Frederick Douglass by the Rev. Dr. Smyth of Charleston (Glasgow, 1845), pp. 6-18. Not even the decision to send a letter to America protesting against American Presbyterian attitudes towards slavery had been "unanimous".
appreciation of the decision made by the Irish Assembly not to allow Dr. Smyth to sit or vote as a member.¹

Despite the efforts of Nelson and other abolitionists, however, the campaign against the Free Church of Scotland did not secure its ultimate objectives of forcing the Free Church to return the money and of obtaining a firm commitment from the Churches involved to adopt an unequivocal principle of no-fellowship with slaveholders.² The epistle to America was signally ineffective, since the American Presbyterian church merely reminded the Belfast Assembly in 1847 that slavery was a civil institution which outsiders had no more right to interfere with than Americans did with the British monarchy, and that there were millions of people enslaved to Popery in Ireland, which the Assembly would do well to concentrate its efforts on.³

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3. Report of the General Assembly, in Northern Whig, 13/7/1847. The question of enslaved Catholics had also been raised by Isaac Nelson, Wright, and George Thompson. All three accused Dr. Cunningham in Edinburgh of having said that if slavery were abolished, former slaveholders would endanger their souls by being forced to employ Irish-American Catholic house-servants. Nelson, Slavery supported, p. 13. In defence of Cunningham, it was maintained that he had merely stated that as the south held slaves, so many in the North employed Catholic servants. A. Cameron, The Free Church and her accusers in the Matter of American Slavery, pp. 22-23.
The excitement engendered in Belfast in the summer of 1846, though partly assuaged after the General Assembly, did not, however, entirely abate. There had been considerable animosity shown towards the abolitionists, and Douglass in particular, while the debates in the Assembly itself had shown that many Presbyterian ministers, though they were eventually defeated by a combination of those such as Nelson who wanted the Irish Presbyterians to come out against the Free Church and those who realised that in the circumstances a policy of remaining silent on the subject of American slavery would merely play into the hands of the abolitionists and other denominations, felt it best to avoid any statements which might threaten relations with the Free Church and their American brethren. Despite Nelson’s optimistic interpretation of the Assembly’s intentions, most Presbyterians in Belfast still felt that the abolitionist campaign against the Free Church had been waged by foreign fanatics in league with those who sought only to discredit the General Assembly. These suspicions once more emerged in Belfast in 1846, when Garrison and Douglass visited the city and reviewed the proceedings of the Evangelical Alliance.

The Evangelical Alliance had been proposed as a form of cooperation between evangelical sects in Britain, Europe and the United States. It had quickly attracted the attention of the denominations involved. In Ireland, the denominations concerned had quickly declared an interest in its affairs, but as elsewhere these did not include the Unitarians, in Belfast the Reformed Presbyterians, the Quakers, and the Roman Catholics.¹

¹. See list of ministers, including the Presbyterians Samuel Hanna, James Morgan and John Edgar, who promoted the Evangelical Alliance in Belfast, in *Northern Whig*, 9/12/1845. For evidence
In these circumstances, any involvement of the Alliance with the slavery question was bound to excite attention, both from participants and non-participants alike, and the B.P.A.S.S., which had a largely Quaker composition, demanded that at the proposed World Conference in 1846 the Alliance should reject any connection with slaveholders. At the Conference, the abolitionists' pressure effectively prevented the formation of any kind of federation such as had been originally envisaged, but Nelson's proposal that all the branches of the Alliance exclude slaveholders was rejected. The Old Organizationists were unsatisfied at this, and Garrison, who visited Ireland in October, 1846, was consequently prepared to denounce the Alliance in a country where its very existence had already aroused strong passions.

Webb confessed to Garrison that if it had not been for Douglass's earlier exertions in Belfast, he, Garrison, would not have received any welcome at all. However it was precisely the activities of Douglass and his allies in the city against the Free Church that determined the

of the strong support given to the Alliance by Irish Methodists, see C.H. Crookshank, History of Methodism in Ireland (4 vols. London, 1888), v.3, p. 365, and, R. Huston, ...Life... of the Reverend Fossey Tackaberry (Belfast, 1853), pp. 279-282.


2. R.D. Webb to W.L. Garrison, Dublin, 9/9/1846, Ms A.1.2.v.16, p. 195. Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison. Despite Webb's praise for the work done by Douglass against the Free Church, relations between the two deteriorated further after both Webb
kind of reception that Garrison did get. An article in the Belfast
News Letter warned readers that Garrison was "a remarkable man, in many
respects, but in none more so than in his ceaseless sanity to the
orthodox Evangelical Churches, both in this country and in America".
The article went on to disclose that Garrison had lectured in Boston in
a hall owned by disciples of Thomas Paine, and had in London, censured
the Alliance for excluding both Unitarians and Catholics.

This report, manifestly designed to discredit Garrison in the
eyes of Presbyterians, prompted Garrison to begin his meeting in Bel-
fast with a wish that St. Patrick had driven the "reptiles and calumna-
tors who advocated slavery" from Belfast. His speech caused a tremendous
stir in the city, especially in the Belfast News Letter and the Banner
of Ulster, since Garrison not only attacked the Free Church of Scotland,
but also the Evangelical Alliance which, he declared had been broken
up by American slavery. His statements on both of these matters were
angrily challenged from the floor of the audience. Garrison had not
only offended the Presbyterian community's sabbatarian traditions but,
in praising Pope Gregory XVI, Father Mathew and Daniel O'Connell,
repeated his claim that in a choice between "Papacy which goes against
the chains of slavery" and "that Protestantism which puts them on",
he would opt for the former. It is unlikely that Garrison could have

2. Garrison's views on the Sabbath were, he claimed, thoroughly
consistent with those held by Calvin, Luther, Penn, Fox and Paley,
and this opinion was upheld by the Northern Whig. The antipathy
spoken at all on the Free Church and the Evangelical Alliance without arousing some disapprobation, but his decision to discuss the charges against him one by one carried the controversy, as it were, back into his opponent's camp. Both Standfield and Nelson attempted to placate the feelings of Mooney, editor of the News Letter, when Garrison publicly rebuked him for the offending article. However, it was not only the content of the speech but the manner in which Garrison delivered it, insisting that the Evangelical Alliance was a pro-slavery body and repeating the statement he had made in London to the effect that "If your God allows men to be made beasts of, then your God is my devil!" that so offended his critics in the meeting, which finally broke up in "confusion." Garrison had not alienated his abolitionist allies, and both Standfield and Nelson delivered condemnations of the Alliance which were no less critical, though certainly less declamatory. But to most Presbyterians in Belfast, the visit of Garrison only served to discredit still further the Anti-Slavery Society and its American allies.¹

shown by the Banner of Ulster and the Belfast News Letter to these views, however, indicates the wisdom of Douglass's refusal to travel with Wright, though Douglass had nevertheless become identified with the latter's religious views. Three months before Garrison's visit, Douglass had to deny a report in the Belfast Protestant Journal, 18/7/1846, that he, Douglass, was a "high priest of anti-Ministry, anti-Churchism, and anti-Sabbathism." F. Douglass to editor, Protestant Journal. Belfast, 23/7/1846, Douglass Papers. Library of Congress.

¹ Report of anti-slavery meeting, 3/10/1846, in Northern Whig, 6/10/1846.
Garrison next visited Dublin, where once again he addressed an audience on the subject of the Evangelical Alliance. He began to condemn the Alliance and the Free Church, and to contrast the Alliance's neglect of the slave with O'Connell's refusal to be bribed by American slaveholders' money, but he was interrupted by shouts from the floor attacking the Alliance as an organization designed to destroy the Roman Catholic religion, while one supporter of the Alliance in the audience insisted that Garrison had thoroughly misrepresented the Alliance's intentions regarding that religion. Garrison's rejoinders that he knew Protestants in America who refused to allow their slaves to read the Bible, and that if Catholics had acted as the Alliance had done in banning the press from some of its proceedings they would have been censured by Protestants, caused further uproar in the audience, but were insufficient to win plaudits from the Dublin Pilot. That newspaper, which had long felt that O'Connell's advocacy of anti-slavery was ill-advised, commented on Garrison's performance:

Garrison is well known to be the reverse of friendly to the principles of Catholicity. Indeed his hostility to the faith of Ireland, and to the privileges of Irishmen in America, are known as widely as the bonds of the Union. It is, therefore, that we quote his sentiments respecting the Evangelical Alliance with the more confidence, because in thus exposing the rottenness of the men who have banded together in a new crusade against Catholicity,

he bears testimony as strong as it is unconscious."¹

The Pilot was able to use the incident not only to attack Garrison but also by using Garrison's speeches, to label the Alliance as hostile to both the slave and the Irish Catholic.² As Webb noted, never had an anti-slavery meeting "made such a storm in the ecclesiastical puddle" in Dublin.³

Any adverse effects of Garrison's speeches in Ireland were probably not long-lasting. In Dublin, Garrison's meeting was poorly attended and not well reported, rumours of the impending famine being the absorbing concern of the day, together with the debates on the Corn Laws and the sugar duties. In Belfast, however, Isabel Jennings reported that many were still shocked by Garrison's speech, and that she knew one lady there who would refuse to let Garrison into her house "lest he convert her to the error of his ways".⁴ In Dublin, as in Belfast, Garrison had triggered off deep resentments against the abolitionists: his speeches had not created these. Such animosities were for long to play a decisive role in Irish abolitionism, though they

1. Pilot, 9/10/1846.
2. See article, "Anti-Slavery League, the Evangelical Hypocrites and the Presbyterian Man-Stealers", ibid., 16/10/1846.
4. I. Jennings to M.W. Chapman. n.p.n.d. [Cork, 186?] Ms.4.9.2. v. 23, p. 47. Weston Papers. While Rebecca Moore in Manchester reported that many in Manchester had objected to the "strong language" Garrison had used there, Richard Allen's Quaker affiliations were revealed by the pleasure he took in Garrison's attacks on the "diabolical" Alliance. R. Allen to M.W. Chapman. Dublin, 17/1/1846. Ibid., v. 22, p. 125.
were of less immediate significance, given the good reputation acquired
by the Irish abolitionists during the famine. Yet at Garrison's
stormy meeting in Belfast one member at least of the audience had
expressed an interest in what Garrison had to say about the Evangelical
Alliance, and had indeed requested that the official records of the
proceedings of the Alliance be read out by Garrison: this was the Rev.
John Scott Porter, a leading member of the Reformed Presbyterian Church
in Belfast.

At the Reconstituent Synod of Ulster in Belfast in 1842, it had
emerged not only that there were Reformed Presbyterians who thought
that the slavery issue provided them with a means of demonstrating their
own superiority over the Presbyterian General Assembly, but that there
were many present who were concerned that in any bid to out-flank
the Presbyterians, the Synod of Ulster itself would run the risk of
alienating the American Unitarians. Moreover, in addition to these
two groups there was a third, composed of men who were less concerned
with tactical in-fighting against the Presbyterians and with giving
offence to their American brethren than with securing from their church
a genuine and consistent stance against the existence of American slavery.

1. Garrison's sympathy for Chartist aims did not become an issue
in Dublin, where resentment of what was taken to be his anti-
Catholic and anti-Irish views emerged as the most common repeal
reaction to his visit.

2. The use of the word "group" in this context does not imply
that there could be no overlapping between them: nor that a
Reformed Presbyterian who saw the slavery issue as providing
a means of scoring points against rival sects necessarily was
guilty of a hypocritical manipulation of the anti-slavery cause
for his own ends or those of his church alone. A similar
tri-partite division was evident among the Presbyterians where
Nelson was the leading force in the third category. It would
be difficult to label, for example, Dr. Edgar, as belonging
In Dublin, the most active and vociferous radical in the sister Church, the Unitarian, was James Haughton, together with two Unitarian Ministers, Dr. Drummond and Joseph Hatton, both of whom had been considered as being on the fringe of the Dublin "clique" by the visiting Garrisonians in 1840. Haughton felt that most Irish Unitarians were rather "smug" about reform, an opinion that was echoed by Webb who though attracted by the tenets of the sect saw that those in Ireland did little to help James Haughton or his daughters to collect donations for the Boston Bazaar. Relations between the Dublin Quakers and Unitarians were always strained. Haughton's father was a disowned Quaker, and Webb himself suspected that the Dublin Friends considered him to be tainted with Unitarian ideas. Haughton's emergence in 1837 as an active member of the U.A.S.S. may well then have acted as a disincentive for more orthodox Quakers than Webb to support that society, though Webb felt no similar compunctions about cooperating with a man whom he admired tremendously. Haughton's extraordinary energy on all fronts of the reform movement in Ireland ensured that both visiting and resident Unitarians, if they chose to remain complacent on the subject specifically to any one group, since, though he was willing to attend the meetings of Remond and at least the earlier ones held by Douglass, he cautioned restraint in any step which might threaten to sever relations with the American Presbyterian Church. Morgan again is also difficult to categorize: even his anti-slavery reputation seemed at times less a function of his anti-slavery activities than of the determination of the abolitionists to claim him, especially when he was elected Moderator in 1846, as one of their allies.

of American slavery, were certain to receive from Haughton an insistent demand that they mend their ways.

It was thus thanks to Haughton that when the Rev. S. May Jr, the American Garrisonian, arrived in Dublin in 1843, he found that his fellow Unitarians there had already drawn up an address to the Unitarian Church in America. ¹

This Address ² was comparatively innocuous compared to that sent by the Presbyterian General Assembly in 1846, though it aroused angry accusations from readers of the Unitarian Christian Register in Boston that it was "impertinent, intrusive, meddlesome" and apparently blind to the evils in British society, which, it was felt, should be sufficient to "tax" the Irish Unitarians' philanthropy. ³

Haughton continued to remind his fellow Unitarians in Dublin of the need to become actively engaged in the anti-slavery cause, and attempted, though unsuccessfully, to persuade them to grant the use of their Meeting House for anti-slavery and temperance meetings. He insisted that forms of worship should not be dispensed with completely, yet his readiness to try to understand the views of men such as Wright and in particular his readiness to criticize publicly any


2. Text in Christian Register (Boston), 2/9/1843.

3. Ibid. An editorial in the same issue declared, after second thoughts, that the accusations against unwarrantable Irish interference were unjustifiable, but added that remonstrances from Britain would be more effective when the condition of farm labourers there had been improved.
Unitarian whose views on slavery did not please him, increasingly
aroused the opposition of other influential Unitarians in Britain.¹

In 1845, for example, Haughton quarrelled with Dr. Parkman,
a visiting Boston Unitarian, in a manner which distressed many
Unitarians, including the editor of the London Enquirer, the Reverend
William Hincks, whose moderate policy on the anti-slavery question
Haughton, in company with other abolitionists,² was to condemn.

Haughton warned the Irish Unitarians that Parkman was "proslavery"
then offered him an invitation to dinner if he, Parkman, was an
abolitionist. Parkman replied he was not, in the "technical" sense
of the word, and Haughton accepted him as a guest on these terms,
then subsequently criticized publicly Parkman’s views on slavery.

Haughton’s behaviour on this occasion was praised by Douglass and
the National Anti-Slavery Standard, though the Enquirer and Parkman
reacted angrily against it.³

1. J. Haughton to the Rev. J. McAllister, Dublin, 22/10/1845.
"English, Irish and Scotch Letters Addressed to H.C. Wright", v. 1.

Religious Opinions on War, Slavery, and the Union". (Ph.D.

Haughton’s quarrels with Hincks, see, London Enquirer, 30/3/
1845, 1/11/1845. A letter from Haughton in the Irish Unitarian
Magazine (Belfast), v. 1, no. 9, September, 1846, pp. 264-271,
protested against those who had welcomed a convert to Unitarian-
lism who was living in South Carolina. The English Unitarian,
J.B. Estlin, protested against Haughton’s attempt to link geo-
ographical location with pro-slavery views, and felt that the
letter typified Haughton’s propensity to dissipate his anti-
slavery usefulness by his "inconsiderate mode of treating
subjects", and by his too-frequent appearance in print. J.B.
May Papers.
Driven on by the reaction of Hincks to these efforts, and encouraged by the campaigns against the Free Church and the Irish Presbyterians, Haughton persuaded the Dublin Unitarians to send a second address to the American Church. This congratulated those American Unitarians who had signed the "Protest against Slavery" in 1845, but regretted the failure of the Americans to reply to the Irish 1843 address and attributed this to that document's statements on slavery. Once again, this document was not replied to by the American Unitarians, and this resulted in a further letter of complaint being issued by the Unitarians in Dublin, in May, 1847.

Hitherto, Haughton's efforts had both embarrassed and angered Hincks and the American Unitarians. He quickly began to pose a

1. A Protest Against American Slavery, signed by one hundred and seventy-three Unitarian Ministers (Boston, 1845).

2. Address of the Irish Unitarian Christian Society to their Brethren in America (Boston, 1846).

3. National Anti-Slavery Standard, 29/8/1847. S. Hay, Jr. was considerably embarrassed at the Irish complaints, since the 1846 Address had been sent initially to him. A draft of a reply to the 1846 address, copied in Hay's handwriting, exists in the Hay Papers. Ms.B.1.6.v.3. p. 19. Received by Hay on 3/10/1846, it stressed that because of the local autonomy of the various Unitarian Clergy, the Church could not develop a unified response to slavery, and that no Unitarian could withhold fellowship, even from a slaveholder. Of a committee of eleven set up to prepare a reply, four declared themselves "content" with this draft; three, including Hay, said they were "not content". Hay wrote that the reason for the delay in replying had been the subject of the Irish letter-slavery. He told Haughton in the summer of 1847 that a reply had finally been prepared which was satisfactory, but this Haughton never received. J. Haughton to S. Hay Jr, Dublin, 30/8/1847. Ibid., p. 38.
problem for certain Reformed Presbyterians in Belfast also. If they did nothing to dissociate themselves from Haughton's activities, they too would encounter the same opposition and opprobrium that Haughton had faced: if they did, however, repudiate him, they would be open to the charge that their own anti-slavery commitment was but a hypocritical pretence. The difficulties of their position were compounded by the fact that the fervour of Haughton's letters of protest was increasing at exactly the same time as their own condemnations of the Evangelical Alliance and the Free Church of Scotland were becoming more strident. However, the most immediate factor explaining their urgency to prove not only the sincerity but the reasonableness of their anti-slavery views, was the way that the Presbyterians in Belfast seized on Garrison's speech in October to indicate that those who supported the campaign against the Alliance and the Free Church were in league with infidels and fanatics. Thus a letter written by John Scott Porter severely censuring Haughton's appeared in the Irish Unitarian Magazine in the month following Garrison's visit to Ireland. From Porter's point of view, answering Haughton's letter served his purpose admirably, since by rebutting its somewhat hysterical tone he was able to appear as one who deplored abolitionist excesses, even and especially among his own sect, and who sought the abolition of slavery by every sane and moral means. With a restraint that for him amounted almost to a retraction of his earlier comments, Haughton merely asked Porter to prove he was an abolitionist by joining the A.A.S.S. Porter's refusal to consent on this suggestion was yet another reminder to his readers what he thought of that organisation.

2. Ibid., v.1, n.11, November 1846. Porter countered Haughton's South Carolina arguments by suggesting that, given such a point of view, it would be equally valid to accuse Haughton of supporting drinking, gambling and the Roman Catholic Church, since he lived in Dublin.
3. Ibid., v. 2, n. 1, January, 1847, pp. 3-5.
Nevertheless, not all Reformed Presbyterians agreed with his, Porter's, views. This was confirmed in February, 1847, when the Irish Unitarian Magazine published an obituary of Thomas Clarkson which stated that the D.F.A.S.S. had been wrong to claim Clarkson as an ally since he had for many years ceased to take any part in that Society's affairs and that before he died he had acknowledged his love for Garrison and his "full and complete acknowledgement of the wisdom of the course pursued by the Old Organisation". This article implied not only that the D.F.A.S.S., in siding with the "New Organization body" in America, had been wrong, but that its actions had been dishonest. It also suggested that not all Reformed Presbyterians in the North of Ireland had been alienated by Garrison's visit to Belfast. 1 Disagreements within the Reformed Presbyterian Church itself on the slavery issue, however, reached a height in July, 1847, concerning an invitation from the American Church, and signed by Dr. Parkman, to send representatives to an anniversary meeting of American Unitarians in Boston, in May, 1848.

This invitation had already aroused some opposition at the meeting of Unitarians in England, especially since the accusations made by Haughton in particular against Drs. Parkman and Garnett had been instrumental in convincing abolitionist Unitarians in England such as the Rev. George Armstrong that the leading Unitarians in Boston were in fact loath to commit themselves to an active involvement in anti-slavery. 2 At the Annual Meeting of the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster in Belfast on 20/7/1847, Dr. Montgomery requested that a special meeting be arranged

1. Ibid., v. 2, n. 2, February, 1847, pp. 41-45. The article concluded by encouraging its readers to follow Clarkson's example. The editor of the Magazine was the Rev. George Hill of Crumlin, Co. Antrim. He had not been noticeably active in anti-slavery meetings or debates before.

2. See Report of the Twenty-Second Anniversary of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association at Hackney, 26/5/1847, ibid., v. 2, n. 7, July, 1847, pp. 242-244.
for the 22nd., at which the slavery issue and in particular the invitation from America, \(^1\) could be fully discussed.

At this second meeting, Dr. Montgomery began by condemning the letters from the American Presbyterians that had been read at the General Assembly in Belfast one week previously. \(^2\) Claiming that no body would dare address them, the Reformed Presbyterians, in such a manner, Montgomery stated that, whether or not the Free Church continued to refuse the money and was in turn treated by the Irish Presbyterians with "Christian Forbearance", the Reformed Presbyterians for their part would that day "purge" themselves of all participation in the "atrocities" of slavery. Montgomery then, however, criticized his "excellent friend" James Haughton for describing the 171 American Unitarians as hypocrites. Reading extracts from the \textit{Liberator} among other sources, he attacked these abolitionists who lacked both prudence and restraint and whose ill-considered descriptions and sweeping condemnations did little more than divide the anti-slavery ranks. Montgomery then proposed that a reply should be drawn up by a committee which would indicate that they would be delighted to accept the American invitation.

The Rev. John Scott Porter subsequently spoke against the "prophetic pleasures" which Haughton had taken in decrying the 171 American Unitarians who, in 1845, had differed only as to the means of effecting the abolition of slavery. Developing a theme he had merely hinted at in his letter to the \textit{Irish Unitarian Magazine}, Porter then accused Garrison at his Belfast meeting of having acted in the "worst taste" and in a manner whose "unchristian spirit...was enough to raise enmity to the cause." \(^3\)

\(^1\) Northern \textit{Whig}, 22/7/1847.
\(^2\) See p. 307. Isaac Nelson had met with no success in his efforts to persuade the General Assembly to set up a Committee to reply to the American epistles.
\(^3\) Northern \textit{Whig}, 24/7/1847.
Haughton, sending a report of this meeting to S. Hay Jr., commented that though neither Montgomery nor Porter were "anything near the mark of Garrisonian abolitionists", he hoped both were now nearer it than they once had been. Generally, however, the debate in Belfast had further convinced him that his influence with English and Irish Unitarians was declining. This judgement was more than justified. The Addresses sent by the Dublin Unitarians in 1843 and 1846 had been largely the result of Haughton's prodding, but his flood of letters to the Unitarian press in 1845-1846 had alarmed many Unitarians. Moreover, Samuel Hay was clearly embarrassed at finding himself the recipient of letters and formal addresses which rebuked his fellow Unitarians in Massachusetts. It was not until the summer of 1847 that he stated himself to be in agreement with Haughton's comments on Dr. Parkman. This delay meant that Haughton, until joined later by Armstrong, operated very much as a lone voice in the Unitarian community, while there seemed to be no available evidence to persuade men like Estlin that Haughton was not guilty of gross exaggeration in his descriptions of the anti-slavery opinions of the American Unitarians. This point was of some importance since even Montgomery at the 1847 Synod had revealed how disturbed he was at the allegations brought against the Americans; but the fact that Hay had corroborated Haughton's...
accusations against Parkman was not sufficient to outweigh the feeling in 1847 that the Reformed Presbyterians could not afford to be a party to the type of irresponsible vituperation that to them had been epitomised at Garrison's meeting and indulged in by Haughton. The anti-slavery issue had once led to angry quarrel between Porter and Montgomery; in 1847 they saw that it was a time to close ranks on the important issues both against their Presbyterian rivals and the radicals within their own camp. Nor was Porter unjustified in claiming that the decision taken by Montgomery was supported by the entire Synod. Dr. Leslie, Dublin Unitarian Minister and one of the committee which had signed the 1843 address, claimed that while that committee had not been treated with respect by the Americans, both Montgomery and Porter had been right to speak as they did since Haughton's "ardour and honest enthusiasm had carried him too far", even Hill, editor of the Irish Unitarian Magazine, while seeking to explain the circumstances that mitigated Garrison's conduct in Belfast, took pains to establish that "no union with slaveholders" could not mean, for a Unitarian, the withdrawal of Christian fellowship. This, he was assured, was exactly the position taken by Porter and the Unitarians in America who had signed the address of 1843.1 Porter,

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1. Annual Meeting in 1847, Dr. Parkman could no longer claim that Montgomery held views similar to his own. J.B. Estlin to S. Ray Jr. Bristol, 12/8/1847. Ibid., v.2, p. 54.

1. Irish Unitarian Magazine, v.2, n.9, September, 1847, p. 278; v.2, n.10, September, 1847, p. 340. Considerable confusion arose as to whether Montgomery had advocated the former interpretation. Porter insisted that he had and disented from it, recalling that in 1832, one of the office bearers in his congregation in Belfast, Robert McCann, was "an extensive holder of slaves", but that, since he had been such a man of integrity, no one had thought of denying him the right of fellowship.
Montgomery and Ledlie were entrusted with the task of replying to the American invitation and they were requested to include in the letter, a reference to the American slaves, acknowledging the exertions of the American Unitarians in their behalf, and urging them to continue their "benevolent labours". By March, 1848, however, the committee still had not met and the reply was drawn up by Montgomery and Porter, and signed by 48 Unitarian Clergymen, mainly from the North of Ireland. In accordance with its terms of reference, the reply was mild in tone though reprimanded any who condemned over-zealous abolitionists more than they did the slaves. Porter asked Unitarian ministers if they wished to sign, and in the event that they did not, to pen their own statement to Dr. Parkman. Haughton did neither. Porter also apologised to S. May Jr. if the address did not go far enough but stated that the Irish Unitarians could not go further than they saw their way to. He amplified on this statement, redolent of the Quaker epistles on slavery, by explaining to Estlin in Bristol that it did not meet the demands of the more "ardent A.S. spirits" among the Unitarians because of "its not excommunicating our American Unitarian brethren!" Estlin himself gave it a mixed response. He felt it was stronger than anything the English Unitarians had ever sent, saw it as "touching" the Americans on "some very sore points", and, while complaining of the ignorance it evinced of the "true state" of the anti-slavery movement, concluded

that it was a step in the right direction. As was inevitable from the conditions that produced it, the document sought not so much to please as many people as possible, but to offend as few. It gave another indication that the problem of American slavery provided a foreign focus for domestic rivalries. These primarily, though not exclusively, concerned the relations between the Churches in Ireland. Considerable ill-feeling in particular existed between the Reformed Presbyterian and Presbyterian Churches in the north of Ireland. The Non-Subscribing Presbyterians in May, 1830, re-constituted themselves as the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster, and they retained bitter memories of what they considered to be the shabby treatment they had received at the hands of the General Assembly. In August, 1846, Dr. Montgomery accused the Free Church of having abetted the Irish Presbyterians in the "robbery" from the Synod of money which, after the secession, it was entitled to. The fact that they considered themselves to be the victims of a theft prompted the Reformed Presbyterians to join the more vociferously in a campaign which saw the General Assembly as being

2. Haughton's draft of the 1846 Address was modified and made "milder" by the Dublin Unitarians before it was sent. Dr. Parkman in Boston, however, had immediately recognised it as Haughton's work. J. Haughton to S. J. May. Dublin, 29/3/1847. Ibid., v.3, p. 113.
3. Porter and Montgomery had frequently quarrelled, and most bitterly, on issues other than that of American Slavery.
party to still another robbery. The Presbyterians for their part remained unconvinced that the objective of the anti-slavery movement in Belfast was not in part a campaign supported by rival denominations to embarrass them. Especially in the Spring of 1846, when Standfield's quarrel with Morgan was accompanied by evidence that the anti-slavery committee was considerably enlarged, the Presbyterians realised that other denominations in Belfast would hardly view their discomfiture with dismay. At the General Assembly in 1846, it was clearly recognised that a substantial effort had to be made to prevent the Presbyterians from acquiring the moral stigma that would, thanks to be abolitionist campaign, accompany any sustained criticism of their stance on the slavery issue. And at Garrison's meeting, the editor of the News Letter showed his awareness of the importance of Isaac Nelson, who could serve the interests of those Presbyterians who objected to the campaign against the Free Church, by being seen as the keeper of the Presbyterian conscience and as evidence that the Presbyterian community was prepared to countenance a widely-diverging range of views among its own members. Similarly, any criticism of Haughton by Unitarians was invariably preceded by protestations about his worthy service to the causes of anti-slavery and Unitarianism. Not that such comments were necessarily insincere, but they presented subsequent disavowals of his views as a firm but gentle reprimand to a man who represented the finest traditions of his church but who had been led astray by his very seal.

Haughton's definition of what constituted pro-slavery behaviour was as broad as the irritation of those who fell within its compass was great. Nelson's immediate aims were more specific: he wanted
the General Assembly to repudiate the Free Church. Yet both men wanted
their Churches to take a definite stance against what they saw as the
iniquities of their American brethren. Here Nelson was more success-
ful, since the Address sent by the Assembly in 1846 resulted from the
pressure which the abolitionists had brought to bear and was the
firmest document ever sent by an Irish Church on the subject. Even
Haughton succeeded in prompting the Dublin Unitarians to send the
Addresses of 1843 and 1846, which, if they were "milder" than the
drafts initially submitted by him, would probably never had been sent
at all had it not been for his exertions. Neither the General Assem-
bly, however, nor the Remonstrant Synod, wished to pursue any course
which they feared might, in the former case, alienate the Free Church
and the American Presbyterians, and in the latter, annoy an ally which
was potentially capable of supplying enormous aid to a Church which
was numerically, financially, and administratively weak in Ireland.¹
Neither Church, moreover, wished to appear as if it was acting solely
in response to the pressures of other denominations or of its own
radical elements. The exclusion of Smyth from the General Assembly
seemed a major victory for Nelson, but despite his claims, that

¹. There was little effective administrative structure to coordinate
the efforts of the Unitarians in Dublin and the Reformed Pres-
byterians in Belfast. Similarly, that contacts between the Uni-
tarians in Dublin and America had been so poor, had been one of
the reasons why Haughton had chosen to send the 1846 Address via
his abolitionist friend, S. May Jr. The invitation from Dr.
Parkman in 1847 was one of the first signs that the Remonstrant
Synod had received that the Americans were at all interested in
them; and this was further explanation of Montgomery's reluc-
tance to mar these contacts at the outset.
Assembly continued to hedge on the no-fellowship issue. Haughton wanted the Unitarians to refuse Christian fellowship to slaveholders. Montgomery hinted that he might accept such a policy, but it was quickly denounced by both Porter and the Irish Unitarian Magazine, both of whom wanted to declare, on behalf of their Church, their abhorrence of Negro slavery, and do so in a manner which would not give the Americans offence. Haughton demanded more than he expected, and only partly as a result of the manner in which he did this, he got less than he had hoped for; and this was also true of Webb, Shortt and Nelson for their Churches.

Even the controversy with Dr. Smyth did not in the long run entirely benefit the abolitionists, since in 1853, when the Presbyterian Church in America was discussing its relations with the Scottish and Irish Churches, Smyth, recalling the circumstances of his trip to Belfast, declared that he had not been refused permission to participate in the Assembly, but that he had been warned by several friends that his feelings would be "injured" if he went there. Nor did he bear a grudge against the Irish Church, which, he claimed, respected their American brethren, and would have sustained them in 1846 if at all possible, but it had not been able to withstand "the tide

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1. Nelson later claimed that at the Assembly he had told the Minister who was about to propose Smyth's introduction, that if this happened, he, Nelson, would insist on a vote being taken, and that this threat resulted in Smyth's exclusion. Nelson, Slavery Supported by the American Churches, p. 13.
of popular fanaticism". Smyth's interpretation of events was at every level favourable to him personally, yet it was not entirely without substance, and his comments came at an important point in a debate in which many of the participants seemed convinced that the Irish Church's behaviour in the Free Church controversies indicated a sincere desire to sever relations with the Old School Presbyterians in America.

With the single exception of Father Kenyon, no Irish Clergyman was prepared to declare himself openly in favour of slavery. Many objected to what they termed abolitionist excesses, and also objected when such an attitude was described as pro-slavery. This was not for Haughton, however, a worthless epithet: any behavior or attitude that was not designed to destroy slavery, in his opinion, helped to bolster it. His was a point of view which quite intentionally made no concessions to such practical considerations as the ability of the Free Church to return the money or that of the willingness of the Irish Churches to risk offending their sister Churches in America. While Haughton succumbed to occasional bouts of despair at the opposition he aroused, the accusations that the demands he made were both irresponsible and impractical stemmed from a failure to understand his intentions: and it is partly within the terms of that failure of understanding that the complexity of the Irish Churches' response to American slavery must be viewed.

1. Report of Presbyterian General Assembly, Old School, (New York, 23/5/1853), in Anti-Slavery Advocate, v.1, n. 11, August, 1853. The American Presbyterians in this instance were concerned at the degree of support given to Harriet Beecher Stowe in Britain.
As it had done in Repeal circles, the slavery issue provoked great controversies within and between the Irish Churches in the 1840s, and as again with the Repealers, this was largely a function of their recognition of the schismas and debates which the slavery issue was causing among their American brethren. The Irish Wesleyan Methodists, for example, claimed, with some justification, to have taken a great deal of interest in the campaign against West Indian slavery; but, after hearing of the disputes among American Methodists on the slavery issue, their proceedings from 1836 onwards were almost completely devoid of any mention of slavery. Hence the abolitionists' attacks; and hence the Methodists' complaints that their role against West Indian slavery had been ignored, and that after 1836, misunderstood and misrepresented. The Quaker and Presbyterian Churches in particular had a recent history of division, and major ruptures had occurred, while the existence of the small Primitive Methodist Church would serve to remind Methodists also of the relatively unstable organizational structures of Irish Churches in the early Nineteenth Century. This was another important factor in determining the response of the Irish Churches to American slavery, since it made them more sensitive to the vulnerability of that response. Thus the Methodists were furious when they were criticised

1. The Nation supported the secession of the Free Church from the Church of Scotland, as an expression of Scottish willingness to achieve independence from England, and also welcomed Dr. Cooke's apparent backing for the Free Church. If this was an attempt to win over Ulster Presbyterian support for Repeal, it hardly succeeded, since Cooke remained hostile to O'Connell. The Nation—perhaps aware of the implications for its own policies—made no mention of the abolitionists' campaign to persuade the Free Church to return the money, though, ironically, the American abolitionists were so involved in the Free Church situation that they paid less and less attention to the doings of the L.N.B.A. from 1845 onwards. The Freeman's Journal had discussed the abolitionist campaign, but in terms of Garrison's anti-Catholicism, and Protestant outrage. Nation, 26/11/1842, 27/5/1843.

2. Especially, as seen, since these schismas almost inevitably involved a discussion of "first principles".
in front of Quakers, and determined that Douglass should also take the Catholic Church to task; hence also their suspicion that the Primitive Methodists in Belfast who supported the American abolitionists were motivated by more than merely a disinterested concern for the Negro slave.

Though the abolitionists did, in fact, succeed in arousing the interest of smaller denominations\(^1\) in the anti-slavery movement, and though the Anti-Slavery Society in Belfast did receive an accession of new, enlarged support as the campaign against the Presbyterian Church developed, the association of that Society with the doctrine of no-fellowship meant that it had little sustained attraction for those who were anxious to avoid the application of this to their own transatlantic brethren. The slogan, "Send Back the Money!" was directed against the Free Church of Scotland, and operated in Ireland, therefore, at one remove, since essentially the abolitionists there saw, as their primary objective, the need to persuade the Irish Presbyterians to bring pressure to bear on their Scottish allies. Though the abolitionist campaign in Belfast, therefore, never reached the levels of intensity and vituperation as that in Scotland itself\(^2\), the animosity aroused was sufficient, the abolitionists complained, to ensure that the Anti-Slavery Society in the city never subsequently recovered its earlier vigour.

The abolitionists remained convinced, however, that the American Churches were the "bulwarks of slavery", and for long felt their most

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1. These shared neither the scope of the transatlantic connections, nor the relatively entrenched domestic status of the larger denominations; and felt the less disinclined, as a result, to display their own anti-slavery commitments in contrast to those of the latter. For some indication that smaller Churches in the American South were "more liberal on racial and political questions" than major denominations, see, review article by L. Hillington, in Journal of American Studies, v. 7, n. 3, December, 1973, pp. 330-332.

2. For which, see, G. Shepperson, "The Free Church and American Slavery", in Scottish Historical Review, v.30, 1951, pp.126-143.
important task was to bring this to the attention of the British Churches, in the hope of persuading them to repudiate any connection with American slavery. It was a strategy which implied a strong confidence both in the good intentions of the British Churches and in the potential effect on strong sanctions against those in America. This confidence, however, did not last for ever. Richard Webb, for instance, introduced his Anti-Slavery Advocate to the British public in 1852 with a series of articles on the iniquities of the various American denominations; but by 1853 he was not sanguine about the good any Address from the Churches in America might do, since, he felt, it would not likely be signed by sincere men who would refuse fellowship to visiting "pro-slavery American churchmen".

Similarly, the abolitionists' strategies of urging "no-fellowship" and "send back the money" were later abandoned. In the 1850's, three Irish Churches received substantial financial aid from America. In 1851 the Catholic University of Ireland sent a deputation to the United States to solicit funds; in 1856 the Irish Methodists also sent a deputation to the United States, and some nine thousand pounds were promised them; and, finally, in 1860, a delegation of Belfast Presbyterians, led by Dr. Edgar, visited the United States.

1. See also, Address of the Committee of the B.F.A.S.S. to Christians of all Denominations in the United Kingdom, and Especially to Christian Ministers (London, 1853).

2. Anti-Slavery Advocate, v.1, n.1, October, 1852; v. 2, n.21, September, 1856.

and some six thousand pounds were reported to have been collected to aid in efforts to convert Irish Catholics. There was no concerted attempt to examine the sources of this American aid, though in the second case the gifts prompted great expressions of gratitude and regard from the Irish Methodist Church\(^1\) to the Methodist Episcopal Church in America whose record on the slavery issue had been condemned by abolitionists,\(^2\) while James Standfield in Belfast alleged that the Presbyterian deputation had collected money in the Southern States.\(^3\)

The fact that no "send back the money" campaign was launched against these churches testified, not so much to the failure of similar abolitionist efforts in the 1840's, but to the fact that the abolitionists themselves had re-defined their primary objectives.


2. Anti-Slavery Advocate, v.1, n.5, February, 1853. Webb in 1857 denied the statement made by two American delegates at the Methodist Conference in Ireland that the Methodist Episcopal Church was not pro-slavery, but no attempt was made beyond this to encourage, for example, the Irish Methodists to refuse the Americans fellowship. Ibid., v.2, n. 9, September, 1857.

3. Letter from Standfield, ibid., v. 2 , n. 42, June, 1860. The Presbyterian and Methodist Churches were anxious to capitalise on the religious revival which swept the North of Ireland in 1859. See, The Irish Evangelist (Dublin), v. 1, n. 1, October, 1859. The Northern Ireland revivals were encouraged by Charles Grandison Finney, whose revivalist activities in New York State had such an impact on the future of American abolitionism, and who was in England in 1859: they were deplored, however, by Isaac Nelson.
Chapter Five

The Famine: abolitionists and the condition of Ireland
As in Cork in the 1840's and Clogher in the 1850's, Irish Anti-Slavery Societies were often identical in composition to groups which had already formed for purposes of local charity work. Groups of people who were known to support local charities would be encouraged by activists in abolitionism to donate cash and gifts to the Anti-Slavery Societies also. Those who responded to such encouragement saw in anti-slavery a logical and legitimate extension of their interest in philanthropic activities. However, the abolitionist activists, that is, those who were Committee-members, and, more particularly, Office-bearers of the Anti-Slavery Societies, found that there was not always unanimous support for their attempts to secure aid for either abolitionists or slaves. It was felt by many that the objects of anti-slavery were, if not too intangible, at least too far-removed geographically from Ireland; in the Irish famine, indeed, most Anti-Slavery Societies themselves reverted exclusively to acts of local welfare. Moreover, anti-slavery as a reform movement was felt by many to be not only outside their traditional sphere of interest in local good works, but, with its associated riders, decidedly unpalatable in itself.

Activists in anti-slavery tended to be activists also in local philanthropic Societies, though this was not always the case. In Belfast, for example, James Standfield was active in no other Society,

1. J. Bewley (Secretary of the Cork A.S.S.) to J. Scoble. Cork, 12/7/1842. MSS. Brit. Emp. S.18. c.21/44.
while Calder was an office-bearer in only one other: he was Secretary for the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Louis Filler has implied that in specifying abolitionists' activities, "mere benevolence" should be differentiated from an interest in reform as such.\(^1\) It is difficult to distinguish the two completely as separate activities, while the word "mere" carried connotations which may mislead and distort, in the sense that it was arguably through their philanthropic activities that many of those who came to engage in support for anti-slavery sought to establish and maintain their status within their communities. Yet the distinction between benevolence and reform can be usefully employed with respect to the Dublin abolitionists in particular. Haughton engaged in a plethora of philanthropic concerns, ranging from a series of Benevolent Societies, to efforts to make the opening-times of Dublin Zoo more in keeping with working-class leisure-hours. He went further than this, however. With the other members of the H.A.S.S. he advocated a series of reforms which he hoped would not simply ameliorate the working of the social system but produce a far-reaching moral improvement in that system.

In the years following the London Convention of 1840, the anti-slavery organisation in Dublin remained very small; Richard D. Webb even referred to it rather ruefully as a "domestic clique", as opposed to the "Boston clique" of the Garrisonians in America with

\(^1\) Filler, *Crusade Against Slavery*, pp. 292-293.
Indeed most of the active abolitionists in Ireland at this time were either related to or close friends of Webb. Though the group was small, however, its range of reform interests was extensive. Both James Haughton and Richard Allen accepted it as a compliment when the highly conservative Dublin Evening Mail labelled them as "Antieverythingarians". Webb also itemised some of the various causes which he and his friends were interested in, when he described the Dublin clique as being "...ultraists—Testotallers, Abolitionists Non-Resistants—Speculative—They think what they please and (in safe company) say what they like".  

Webb, Haughton and Allen organised a regular series of weekly meetings at the Royal Exchange in Dublin, and a range of topics, temperance, peace, anti-slavery, and British India, were discussed in rotation. Again, the influence of foreign lecturers and ideas was considerable. Thus the American A.B. Wright spoke on temperance in 1842, H.C. Wright and, later, Elihu Burritt, encouraged the formation of the Hibernian Peace Society, James Haughton was influenced in his

4. Until 1846, that is, when the Royal Exchange was damaged by fire. Freeman's Journal, 17/9/1846.
5. Ibid., 11/11/1842.
6. Ibid., 21/1/1842.
opposition to capital punishment by the American reformer Charles Spear, while a talk by the Englishman Captain Claridge on that universal specific, cold water, led to the formation of the Dublin Hydropathic Society in 1843.

The audiences at the meetings of these Societies were mainly composed of what Webb called the "ragamuffins" of Dublin. The H.A.S.S. abolitionists thought of themselves as belonging to the middle-class, and Webb on several occasions declared that he thought of himself as a member of the "bourgeoisie". Their first organized contacts with the Dublin working class had been made in the Irish temperance movement, and it was largely through James Haughton that they maintained and built on these contacts.

After 1840, Haughton replaced Allen as public spokesman for the Dublin abolitionists. The Irish newspapers from 1840 to 1860 are shot through with letters from the Dublin Unitarian, touching on every question of public interest. The reform cause which he himself believed to be of fundamental importance was temperance, and, with Webb and Allen, he had been instrumental in the establishment of the Dublin Temperance Society in 1829, the Dublin Juvenile Temperance

1. Ibid., 5/1/1842, 28/6/1849.
2. Ibid., 12/7/1843. See also, R.T. Claridge, Hydropathy, or the Water Cure... (Dublin, 1843). In 1865 Webb was advised by his doctor that he was suffering from Angina Pectoris, and was advised to drink wine and regulate his diet. Finding this unacceptable, he repaired to a hydropathic institution in Cork where he underwent a course in "wet blankets, Turkish baths and fresh air". R.D. Webb to E. Quincy, nr. Cork, 20/9/1865. Webb/Quincy Letters.
Society in 1838, and later the Irish Temperance Union. He retained close contacts with such Dublin Societies as the Cuffe Lane Temperance Society and St. George's Patriotic Mart, and it was groups such as these, people whom Haughton had first encountered through the temperance movement, who constituted the "ragamuffin" audiences at the Royal Exchange meetings. At these meetings Haughton and his co-workers would emphasise that alcohol imposed a form of enslavement that ought to be abolished, and also that, given the improvement in Irishmen that was attendant on the assumption of teetotal principles, the moral stance taken by Ireland on the anti-slavery question could not be too elevated.

He believed that the inculcation of anti-slavery principles ought to play an important part in the plan to provide mental and spiritual instruction for the Irish poor. With Charles Corkran, Haughton had been instrumental in the formation of a Mechanic's Institute in Dublin, and he also had contacts with the one in Drogheda. In his attempt to create a unified Irish society within which different classes would acknowledge their common aims and interests, Haughton was frequently critical of the disdain shown by the upper classes to their "humbler fellow citizens". Above all, he was distressed by the fact that the

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1. Freeman's Journal, 19/7/1842. The close links between the anti-slavery and temperance reformers in Dublin, and the subordinate position accorded by Haughton to the former cause, is indicated by the fact that in the Irish Gazettes, the H.A.S.S. is not listed under a separate title in the sections on Benevolent Societies: instead, anti-slavery, with peace and British India, is listed as an interest of the Irish Temperance Union, the main officials of which were Webb, Haughton and Allen. Dublin Almanac and General Register of Ireland (Dublin, 1840-1850).

2. Letter from Haughton, in Freeman's Journal, 19/10/1840.

3. Letter from Haughton, ibid., 11/12/1840; 6/6/1846.

4. Letter from Haughton, ibid., 21/1/1842.
upper and middle-classes in Dublin seemed uninterested in the Royal Exchange meetings. This, he concluded, was primarily their loss; and in his attempts to bring cohesion to Irish society he came to rely increasingly on the efforts of the "humbler classes", through education, temperance and an adherence to higher moral values as these were indicated by a commitment to such causes as anti-slavery.¹

This had important implications for the organised abolition movement in Dublin. The Royal Exchange meetings provided a regular forum for the discussion of American anti-slavery in Dublin. When American abolitionists visited Dublin they normally spoke at these meetings before addressing the special meetings which were convened in the hope of catering to a larger and more 'influential' section of the community. J.B. Estlin, the noted Bristol abolitionist, would later state that "it is not kitchens and workshops that need Anti-Slavery agitation for America's sake, but our drawing rooms, the salons of the wealthy, and the libraries of the learned."² Haughton and Webb were frequently discouraged by their failure, as they saw it, to interest the type of people that Estlin alluded to, and after many years of disappointment, Webb in the 1850's would make a systematic attempt to organise the abolition movement in Ireland in a way that would appeal to the wealthier classes in Ireland. Yet these classes were reluctant

1. See, 'To the working people of Dublin' from Haughton, in Freeman's Journal, 18/12/1845.
to involve themselves with the abolition movement in the 1840's, and
apart from specific periods, such as when Frederick Douglass visited
Ireland, the audiences addressed by the Dublin abolitionists were
composed of the groups for whom Mechanics' Institutes had been built.
The Dublin abolitionists attempted to reach working-class audiences on a
scale and with a consistency unparalleled elsewhere in the British
Isles, and approximated to only in the Scottish abolitionists' campaign
against the Free Church of Scotland in 1846.

Webb and Haughton in particular were sensitive to the needs and
interests of their audiences. Haughton was aware of their likely
political affiliations (Webb in 1843 referred to them as "Dan's Own"),
and frequently alluded in his speeches to the support which O'Connell
was giving the movement to free the slave. Judging from the speeches
of many visiting abolitionists at these meetings, it seems likely that
Haughton had impressed on them beforehand the efficacy of this
approach. The abolitionists were also aware that their audiences'
interest in American slavery would not be unrelated to their broader
interest in America itself, which partly stemmed from their view of
the country as a possible destination of the Irish emigrant. Webb,
with his discursive approach and deep interest in and knowledge of
American affairs, was prepared to give speeches which, though purportedly

1. When O'Connell publicly repudiated Garrison in 1843, however,
Webb defended Garrison's views and character at the Royal
Quincy letters.
about American slavery, widened to a broader analysis of American life and immigration, and indeed presented a range of facts about climate conditions and employment prospects, which would have been of immense value to the prospective or potential emigrant.\(^1\) Webb and Haughton (and many other Irish abolitionists, especially after and during the Irish famine) became aware of the specific need to educate Irish emigrants to America in anti-slavery ideas, though only in 1852 would the abolitionists attempt to issue printed leaflets at ports of departure and at shipping agents' offices. These leaflets were the direct result of the desire of groups newly entered into the Irish anti-slavery movement to do something practical for the cause: the nature of the problem and the recognition that a practical and relevant solution must be found, however, had long been foreseen by the men who conducted the Royal Exchange meetings.

Webb and Haughton were careful to avoid blurring the distinctions which they felt existed between the three areas of actual or potential abolitionist support in Dublin: the activists like themselves; the audiences at the Royal Exchange who could under most circumstances be relied upon to attend meetings and to sign petitions arranged by the H.A.S.S., especially when these arraigned the conduct of the British government; and, finally, pools of middle- and upper-class sources which the Dublin abolitionists would try to draw upon in specific

\(^1\) Speech by Webb at H.A.S.S. meeting, 1/6/1842, in *Freeman's Journal*, 4/6/1842.
situations. With the exception of his later disillusionment with the Irish Repeal movement after 1848, Haughton remained confident that his social objectives would ultimately be realised. To him, set-backs were obstacles to be overcome, and he drew strength from his self-image as a lonely voice which would eventually be heeded. Webb, however, was by nature a less sanguine individual, given to self-deprecation and periodic bouts of despair at the likely outcome of the anti-slavery movement in general and at the position of the Dublin abolitionists in particular. More precisely, Webb tended to see the situation as one in which a small and dwindling band of abolitionist activists were ignored by the majority of the Irish people, who laughed at their enthusiastic preaching of utopian aims to a captive audience of men who were themselves unable by definition to offer much practical aid to a society which was growing increasingly short of funds, and who, according to the available evidence, seemed to renounce both abolition and the abolitionists when they did find themselves in a position when they could be most effective—that is, as immigrants in the United States of America.

The American Garrisonians praised the Dublin abolitionists for their activities at the Royal Exchange Meetings, and N.P. Rogers went so far as to publicly refer to the Exchange as the 'Faneuil Hall.'
of Ireland. Such statements, even when made to Webb directly (and the Garrisonians knew that most statements they made in their publications would be read by Webb), were not merely made with the intention of helping to dispel his doubts; the American Garrisonians were, it is clear, delighted at the attempts made by their Dublin allies to teach abolitionist ideas to the section of the Irish society which was most likely to provide the emigrants to America. Equally important a consideration however, was the Americans' determination to encourage people whom they considered to be among the foremost British advocates of their point of view. Certainly this opinion seemed justified, given, for example, the rejection by the H.A.S.S. of an invitation from the R.P.A.S.S. to attend a second Anti-Slavery Convention in 1843.

The invitation from the Broad Street Committee, which stated that the delegates would be expected to accede to the 'Principles' of the 1840 convention, provoked the H.A.S.S. into replying that the repudiation of the female delegates "had cramped the action of the last convention, neutralised its efficiency and introduced a narrow, party spirit" that was a slur on the moral qualities of the female sex and was quite out of place in the "anti-slavery assembly." Webb had been

4. Letter from R. Allen and James Haughton (Dublin, 24/4/1843) to Broad Street Committee, quoted in National Anti-Slavery Standard, 8/6/1843.
aware of the interest taken by the Garrisonians in the H.A.S.S.'s response to this situation, and with a certain flourish, the H.A.S.S.'s reply was quickly transmitted to Boston. The Garrisonians there were indeed quick to applaud their allies in Dublin who, it appeared, also kept the memories of 1840 very much alive.

It was to the surprise of the Boston clique, therefore, when Webb intimated—almost in the manner of a confession—that he had been unable to resist going to the Convention, in order to see men like Lewis Tappan, of whom he had read and heard so much, and whose sacrifices for the anti-slavery movement seemed considerably greater than his own. Webb often declared that subsequent events had assured him that he had made the right choice in 1840; he seldom quibbled at statements such as Quincy's reference to the Tappanites as thieves of the slaves' money; and he himself as later events would indicate, was capable of sustained personal vituperation against the Tappanites. Yet he was grateful for what he termed the "caution" in his "turn of


2. T. Davis to R.D. Webb. Providence, 12/6/1843. Ibid., v. 13, p. 33.

3. R.D. Webb to E. Quincy. Dublin, 16/8/1843. Webb/Quincy Letters. Quincy was led to profess wonder at Webb's "truly British curiosity".

4. Anne Allen felt ashamed when she compared Garrison's activities with her own "very easy drawing-room anti-slavery". A. Allen to W.L. Garrison. Dublin, 29/7[7?]. Ms.A.1.2.v.21, p. 38. Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison.

mind" when he heard men deprecating one another. He insisted on draw-
ing his own conclusions; and this, he added, was what he had been
doing in London. Webb was to make one further point however. He told
Quincy that in his opinion, "it is possible for a man to be very far
wrong and to do very bad things from good intentions...when a man has
acted however inconsistently from honestly bigoted motives...I don't
like to give him up. Show me that bribery or self-interest have had
to do with his conduct and I have no more to say". These remarks,
Webb concluded "are in defence of my stupidity, for such it must have
seemed to thee, in not at once coming into thy view about the New
York Committee and the New Organization generally." This was a point
made with all of Webb's firmness and sensitivity—qualities which were
very much required in his dealings even with Quincy who often reacted
with exasperation to what he felt were Webb's unnecessary and indeed
unjustified apologies for the Tappanites.¹

In the years following their first meeting in 1842, Webb's
attitude to Garrison was peppered with non-malicious irreverence. This
stemmed partly from his contacts with Edmund Quincy. The two men
clearly delighted in each other's style and wit, and it was Quincy
who first indicated to Webb, in good-humoured fashion, Garrison's
hypochondria, prevarication, and, later, the fact that Garrison had
recommended temperance cordials which, unknown to him, contained

¹. E. Quincy to R.D. Webb. Dedham, 26/3/1843. Ibid.
alcohol. The matter did not rest on this level however. Jokes about procrastination developed into the conviction on Webb's part that if the *Liberator* failed—as it often threatened to do—then Garrison's business and inattention to business would be primarily responsible. Webb was even more appalled by Garrison's support for O'Connell's Irish repeal movement, and for the Chartist movement in 1846. These, taken together with what he termed Garrison's "ridiculous fancy" in believing in the second Advent after sixty years, seemed increasingly to Webb to be the product of a mind which was "half informed" and "uneducated", and which was, therefore, incapable of seeing "the absurdity of changing a complicated state of things at once by the presentation of abstract principles".

However, Webb was imbued with the Garrisonian conviction that the immediatist outlook necessarily involved the reformer in the repeated statement of radical demands, which if impossible to implement immediately, nevertheless by their very nature elevated men's outlooks beyond the rather mundane level resulting from the compromises implicit in most social decision-making. Though he himself was frequently dismayed at the length of time taken for the reformers' programme to be accepted, and though he occasionally expressed misgivings

1. E. Quincy to R.D. Webb. Dedham, 26/7/1843; Dedham, 13/1/1853, Quincy/Webb Letters, The story of the temperance cordials would not, however, be thought of entirely as a laughing matter by James Haughton, who as early as 1842 had warned the Irish public that many of these cordials contained an alcoholic base. Letter from Haughton, in *Freeman's Journal*, 30/5/1842.


about the precise effect of rational persuasion, Garrison's views were not all necessarily seen by Webb as half-baked fantasies, produced by an ill-educated mind. Especially when these did not touch on Repeal and Chartism, there was a great deal in them that Webb admired and sought to emulate. With this combination of disquiet and admiration, there was in Webb an independence of judgement and mind that was to produce strong disagreements between himself and the American Garrisonians.

Webb was also well aware of the reluctance of many people to accept the ideas put forward by the Garrisonians. He told Quincy for example that if he had shown anyone in Dublin his last letter, there would have been considerable fuss at its contents which included views about clergy, church and sabbath, ...and thy ridicule of the ordinary mode of scriptural interpretation where so much pulling and pushing are required to reconcile things that are irreconcilable—the coming of the lord, the lawfulness of war, the fitness, under circumstances, of human sacrifices, and so forth. My mind has been slowly making its conclusions on these points for years past, and conscious of the extreme moderation of its progress, I cannot wonder that old...prejudices.

stick so stoutly in the minds of others. Webb was not surprised that the Garrisonians were repudiated by anyone who thought that they were attempting to "undermine his palladium of salvation" and who believed that it was "essential to his salvation that certain doctrines should be held". Webb added that "...the fact that bigotry is reasonable, natural and inevitable under the circumstances which nourish it, appears to me a strong argument for the doctrines to which the bigot clings." Garrisonianism, in Webb's view, was associated in the minds of many with heresy, and it was unreasonable to expect everyone to support this immediately when an alternative seemed so readily available. Moreover, the Garrisonians' vituperative rejection of one of those alternatives—New Organisation—gave even Webb himself cause for concern. By making a point of announcing their own enlightenment, Webb felt, the Garrisonians were simply alienating people.

Though he stressed that he himself only let his "light leak out" slowly, he was beginning to be regarded in Dublin as a "desecrator of the sabbath!—non-believer in hell!": if Quincy came to Dublin and visited Webb he, Quincy, would be instantly branded as one of "'those Americans!'". Once more, Webb and his wife had been warned by Dublin Quakers about their "anti-sabbatarian principles" and it appeared clear to him that the Garrisonians, by their interest in what the Tappanites had called "extraneous topics", were acquiring rather unsavoury reputations. For a man like Richard Allen the situation was at once more complicated.

and more simply: he was a close friend of Joseph Sturge and on his frequent cloth-buying trips to England he met with Sturge and supporters of the B.F.A.S.S. In 1841, indeed, he had visited the Broad Street offices and had been invited to be one of the delegation sent by the Society to consult the Foreign office about the Amistad affair.

Webb had few such contacts; what made him refer to "honestly bigoted motives" was his insight into the way in which many feared the ideas associated with Garrisonianism, and his personal experience in Dublin of the social and psychological sanctions imposed on him when he revealed his fascination with those ideas. The sanctions of which Webb had most experience came from the Quakers. It was his knowledge of their effect that led him to declare that while a man like Sturge was "narrow-minded and bigoted" he was also benevolent and kind-hearted, and to remind Garrison to thank William Swale who had amazed Webb by his 'great moral courage' in befriending Garrison and Wright, while remaining a prominent Quaker. Webb claimed that, if British abolitionists could do little that was effective for the American slave, American abolitionists were for their part often less than knowledgeable about, or sensitive to, the subtle forces that helped to shape the anti-slavery movement in Britain.

1. R.D. Webb to E. Quincy. Dublin, 16/10/1843. ibid.

2. Allen regretted that he had been unable to accept this invitation. Letter from X.Y.Z., in Irish Friend, v. 4, n. 11, November, 1818, pp. 171-172.

3. R.D. Webb to H.U. Chapman. Dublin, 26/2/1846. Ms.A.9.2.v.22, p. 26. Weston Papers; R.D. Webb to E. Quincy. Dublin, 2/5/1843. Webb/Quincy Papers. Webb's comments on Sturge were often tinged with regret that such a magnificent donator to reform causes should have been lost to the Garrisonians.
He was never simply an apologist for men like Sturge, but he certainly felt less uneasy when it was he and not Quincy who was issuing angry denunciations.

The domestic and transatlantic complexities of the situation within which the Irish abolitionists operated, clearly revealed themselves in the discussions about reductions in the sugar duties in the 1840's. Newspapers such as the Freeman's Journal revealed themselves as being concerned primarily, and to an increasing extent, exclusively with securing cheaper sugar. They insisted that English professions of concern with the slavery aspects of the issue, were spurious, and described those abolitionists who opposed the reduction as being blind to the miseries of the British poor. The Dublin abolitionists also protested against English investment in Brazilian ninos which used slave-labour. One solution would be to promote the sugar-beet industry in Ireland itself, but the H.A.S.S. members were clearly embarrassed.

1. The Freeman's Journal, 24/10/1842, interpreted Lord Stanley's rejection of Madden's report on English complicity in the slave-trade as being evidence for its contention that neither party in England cared one whit for the slave. For Madden's own account of this incident, see, R.R. Madden to Sir James Stephens. Lisbon, 8/12/1843. Ms.241.0.9, pp. 127-141. Madden Papers. Madden was appointed an honorary Corresponding Member of the B.F.A.S.S. in 1841, but continued to attend H.A.S.S. meetings when he was in Dublin. In 1849, Webb referred to him as "a good abolitionist as abolitionists go in these parts". Madden had cooperated closely with Lewis Tappan over the Amistad Affair and there is some indication that the Garrisonians—with no success—tried to convert him to their brand of abolitionism. H.W. Chapman To R.R. Madden. n.p.n.d. ibid., p. 207. Madden's anti-slavery poems were published in such works as The Liberty Bell (Boston, 1844), pp. 96-99, and W. Armistead, The Garland of Freedom. A Collection of Poems... (London, 1853), pp. 72-90.


3. Freeman's Journal, 02/1851. Allen's interest in the subject was clearly stimulated by the publication of the manufacture of
by statements in the press that they cared nothing for the privations of the poor in Britain. For the members of the H.A.S.S. committee, the issue provided both a test of their own adherence to principle and a focus for discussions in which they were forced into examining their own conception of these principles and, in particular, their acceptance or non-acceptance of the Garrisonian idea of non-resistance.

James Haughton was very much aware of the embarrassing position which abolitionist opponents of the reduction found themselves in. He declared himself to be a staunch free trader, but did not think that slave produce was "a lawful source of conscience for an upright people to be engaged in." He also rejected as unjust the accusation that the abolitionists had hypocritically aligned themselves with people who in fact cared nothing for the slave and even less for the British people.¹ Richard Allen on the other hand took almost the opposite

Best-Root Sugar in Ireland (Dublin, 1851), by William K. Sullivan, Professor and Chemist to the Museum of Irish Industry. In this book (and more particularly in Facts and Theories; or, Two Real Prospects of the Beet-Sugar Manufacture in Ireland (Dublin, 1852), pp. 35-38), Sullivan delivered a sustained condemnation of the slaveowners in Cuba and Brazil: slavery, he maintained was unprofitable, but once abolished, would lead to great slumps in sugar production. Therefore not only was it imperative to abolish slavery but to set up alternative supplies of sugar—"as from the sugar-beet crop in Ireland. Haughton's son-in-law Professor Neilson Hancock agreed with the first injunction but questioned the practicality of the second. W. Neilson Hancock, On the Prospects of the Sugar-Beet Manufacture in Ireland—a paper read before the Dublin Statistical Society, 16/6/1851 (Dublin, 1851). Three years later, Sullivan showed he had not accepted the free-produce arguments, when he hailed the rising British imports of American cotton as being "one of the greatest and important social facts presented by the history of modern commerce, as it shows an undoubted "improvement" in the physical condition of a large section of the human race". W.K. Sullivan (ed.), Monthly Journal of Progress (Dublin, 1854), pp. 124-125. The abolitionist retort to this would have been to query the implications of this rise for the slaves who laboured in the cotton fields.

¹. Letter from Haughton in, Irish Friend, v. 4, n. 6, June, 1841, p. 85.
view from Haughton, being anxious to avoid giving any impetus to slavery and the slave trade, but also worried because monopolies were "fraught with evil." 1 William Bell in Belfast, who had printed letters from both Allen and Haughton on the question, sided with Haughton and congratulated the B.F.A.S.S. on its opposition to any reduction in the duties, declaring that "all considerations of economic or political advantage should yield to the superior law of moral duty." Whatever side the abolitionists chose however, the statements of Allen, Haughton and Bell all indicated the abolitionists' unease at finding themselves in a situation where their reform commitments, far from undoing together in a syndrome of demands designed to actualize related aims, actually conflicted with each other. The result was, as Allen indicated, that the abolitionists themselves were deeply divided on the question.

As Richard Allen reported to H.W. Chapman, he and James H. Webb were "for free trade" while Haughton and R.D. Webb supported the B.F. A.S.S. 2 R.D. Webb and James Haughton, however, were rather more discursive than this, partly through temperament, and partly because they more than Allen had striven to understand, adopt and implement non-resistance principles as they had learnt these from their American allies.


Webb admitted to H.W. Chapman that while, like Allen, he would have no "marine police or preventive force", he was by no means convinced of the correctness of his position. His ironic comment that Allen was very proud of his "enlightenment" on the issue, however, also revealed that Webb was not convinced by the Thompson standpoint. This comment was more than merely frivolous. Allen was not a voluminous correspondent of the American Garrisonians, and in fact he broke what amounted to two years' silence, to declare his support for the proposed reductions. Webb was the Dublin abolitionist who was most closely in contact with the Garrisonians, and his position with regard to the duties, he was very much aware, could be read as a violation of the non-resistant principles which he had informed the Garrisonians that he was busy trying to adopt. Haughton on the other hand was in contact with the Americans far more frequently than Allen yet far less frequently than Webb: to a greater extent than Webb, then, he felt himself able to explain his views without being concerned that he was in some way failing or disappointing his mentors.1


2. The pressure exerted on Webb by his closer contacts with the Garrisonians in Boston was subtle but important: there was always in Webb a tension caused by his desire to reconcile his views to those of the Americans, and his wish to assert his independence of opinion: these tensions were often revealed in the way that his statements to his Irish and English allies on the one hand, and his American allies on the other, often differed greatly in tone. As shall also be noted below, Webb's range of American contacts was not only intensive but extensive: he could and did choose carefully what he could confide to whom; and similarly, what he derived from his various correspondences varied greatly from individual to individual.
Haughton, in short, did not prevaricate: he told H.W. Chapman that he and Webb did not agree with her. The question was not one of merely leaving the decision to the individual conscience. Haughton believed that all taxes, for example, were an infringement on this, which was why, he said, he advocated giving every man and woman 'of full age' the right to vote for representatives, who could be responsible to their constituents and who would therefore compose an elected assembly that was a "concentration of the voice of the whole people". Haughton agreed that British imports of American cotton underwrote American slavery, but he pointed out the difficulties of trying to ban this: all he wanted, he said, was to avoid a similar situation arising with respect to Brazilian and Cuban sugar. Nor did he accept H.W. Chapman's point that to be consistent Britain should cease trading with China, since he made a qualitative difference between oppression, which was the result of an imperfect knowledge of the laws of Nature and of human beings, and enforced human servitude.

What the non-resistants objected to was the appeal to Government; Haughton knew this, and it explained why he declared his support for a sweeping reform of Parliamentary representation. Even given the existing system, however, he felt justified in calling upon the Government to make no commercial treaty with Cuba or Brazil until they abolished slavery. Some two months later, in a public letter on temperance, Haughton argued that reformers needed no government action to make the people virtuous, that, indeed, "by coercion:

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it is, perhaps, impossible", but that he wanted the Government to take
the step of giving up all revenue from intoxicating drinks. There was
in short the difference to be made between negative and positive Govern-
ment action: an appeal to the Government was implicit even though the
reformer was only appealing for the Government to stand clear from evil.¹
"All social contracts", he wrote, "imply an ultimate recourse" to force.
His differences with M.W. Chapman stemmed from the fact that, as he saw
it, she was a non-resistant, while he felt a Christian could justifiably
employ "any amount of physical force which can be used in love and with
a sincere desire to benefit the wrongdoer"; more specifically he said
that the government had a "just right" in putting an end to the immoral-
ities of slavery, intemperance and war, and in prohibiting slave-produce.
Similarly, though very much opposed to capital punishment, he felt that
some punishment was necessary to prevent crime, preserve some order,
and to give civil magistrates some authority.²

Both Maria Weston Chapman and Henry C. Wright tried to impress
on Haughton and Webb that, from a non-resistant standpoint, they had
not been justified in appealing to the Government to ban slave-produced
sugar.³ The implications of such an argument would, Haughton replied,

1. Letter from Haughton, in Freeman's Journal, 8/8/1844; J. Haughton
Emp. S.18, c.103/62. In 1856, Haughton urged that the Government
adopt legislation similar to the Maine Law in America. Freeman's
Journal, 4/10/1856, 6/10/1856.

p. 79. Weston Papers.

3. Webb had already noted that he had practical experience of physical
force, in the sense that he lived with the presence of British
troops in Dublin, and that Wright had little such experience. This
may have made Webb the less willing to accept uncritically what
the Americans had to say about non-resistance as a theory.
undermine society; it was, moreover, standard practice for the H.A.S.S. abolitionists, who had campaigned against West Indian slavery, to appeal to the British Government on such issues as British India and Coolie immigration.

Webb and Haughton had shown that the relationship between the Garrisonians in America and Dublin could not be portrayed in terms of the former imposing their views on the latter. Yet neither Webb nor Haughton publicly supported O'Connell when he indicated his reluctance to see the duties lowered. Not only were they influenced by the opposition to their views expressed by the Boston abolitionists, but they realised that the debates about the sugar duties had aroused considerable antagonism towards the abolitionists in Ireland. They still felt it incumbent upon themselves to stand by their principles, but there were circumstances in which these were hard to define and when a public enunciation of these seemed curiously, indeed callously, abstract; and the deteriorating famine conditions in Ireland were certainly such a circumstance.

When the famine worsened, the Belfast abolitionists, led by R.D. Webb's cousin, Maria Webb, channelled their reform interests exclusively into famine relief work, and elsewhere in Ireland the abolitionists also participated in work of this kind. Richard Allen in Dublin served on the Friends' Central Relief Committee, and, on behalf of the Friends, Webb also undertook a journey to the South and West of Ireland to report

1. M. Webb to T.n.p. 15/2/[1847?] ibid., v. 23, p. 15. The Society Maria Webb founded was called the Belfast Ladies' Association for the Relief of Irish Distress.
on conditions there. Both Allen and Webb were able to utilize their contacts with American Quaker abolitionists to stimulate relief work among American friends for the Irish poor, while in his articles to the National Anti-Slavery Standard, Webb gave extensive coverage to the extent of the crisis in Ireland.

Haughton continued to find the problem of government aid very troublesome. In November, 1845, at a meeting of Dublin citizens in the Music Hall, he publicly objected to O'Connell's proposals that the Government spend one million pounds in relief work on the grounds that this was contrary to the spirit of free trade. And, in 1847, he and Richard Allen both said that any Government decision to prevent Irish grain being used in the distillation of alcohol would be an unwarrantable interference with private enterprise. What mainly troubled the abolitionists in 1847, however, was that Ireland was receiving aid from the slave-states in America, and many of them considered that such aid was linked to profits derived from slavery and was therefore morally unacceptable. This issue came to a head in March, 1847 when the Central Relief Committee decided to refuse money collected for Irish relief at the Queen's

1. "Sketch of a visit by R.D. Webb to the Counties of Mayo and Galway by design of the Central Relief Committee of Friends. Dublin, 5/5/1847," Ms. 4.0.35. Friends' Library, Dublin.


4. Ibid., 30/1/1847.
Theatre in London, though one day earlier, on 25/3/1847, it had decided to accept some eleven thousand pounds from America, two thousand five hundred pounds of which, came from Baltimore and Charleston.

The most bitter criticism of this decision came from the American, Henry C. Wright. In a pamphlet addressed to the Committee, Wright gave his reasons for condemning it: he did not quarrel with the decision to return the money collected at the theatre (some seventy pounds) but he did ask why the committee should have disclaimed being an anti-slavery society while acting like an anti-theatre society; the Committee had said that it had no evidence that the money actually came from slaveholders but Wright replied that they must have known that it came from a community whose greatest source of wealth was slavery; and the money, Wright claimed, was sent not out of genuine philanthropy but in an attempt to redeem the South's lost reputation in the world. The Committee, he concluded, stood "before the world as the almoners of known and acknowledged slave-breeding and slave-holding communities."

He adjured it to "SEND BACK THE PROCEEDS OF SLAVERY." 1

The H.A.S.S. committee in Dublin had naturally all supported the campaign in Scotland to force the Free Church to return the money, 2

1. Henry C. Wright, Slaveholders or Playactors, Which are the Greatest Sinners? To Joseph Bewley, Jonathon Flis, James Perry, Richard Allen, Henry Russell and others, the Central Relief Committee of the Society of Friends in Ireland (Dublin, 1847).

especially since it recalled to them their earlier demands made on O'Connell and the L.N.R.A. Haughton in particular had agreed with Garrison's contention that aid from the slave states would by definition taint and corrupt any source in Britain which accepted it, and much of the language that Haughton had used—in particular "blood-stained" dollars—reflected the depth of abolitionist conviction on this issue and would re-appear in the anti-slavery campaign against the Free Church of Scotland. George Thompson, in 1847, complained that the Central Relief Committee of Friends, by accepting aid from the American Southern states, had directly supported the position taken by the Free Church of Scotland. Haughton went further than this however. Despite his earlier, frequently-stated, misgivings on this question, he claimed that O'Connell and the L.N.R.A. had set the Free Church a "noble example" in refusing southern aid. With other abolitionists in Ireland, and mindful of the part he had himself taken in encouraging O'Connell to refuse Southern aid, Haughton argued that on grounds of consistency alone, the abolitionists in Britain should urge the Dublin Friends to emulate the stand which O'Connell was now stated to have taken against Southern contributions. Once again, the image of O'Connell which the abolitionists attempted to invoke and use contrasted rather sharply with the reality of his actions which they, the abolitionists, had earlier been quick to deplore.  

Firm protests were sent from abolitionists in Ireland, Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen to the Central Relief Committee in Dublin. Richard Allen—who had been cited by name as one of the Relief Committee members on the title page of Wright's pamphlet—wrote urging the Dublin Friends to refuse aid from the American South. The terms of his letter, however, indicated his acute discomfort at finding himself in a position where his philanthropic interests seemed to clash with each other. Allen realised that if the Committee refused aid from the South, very "serious" results would ensue: the American South would be "convulsed", and the Dublin Friends would be accused not only of hypocrisy but of actually "aggravating" the misery of famine-stricken Ireland. Allen maintained, however, that since the greater part of the aid which had been sent from South Carolina in particular, must have come from slaveholders, if it were accepted, the Dublin Quakers would be acting in a way not only detrimental to the cause of the slave but indeed beneficial to the slaveholders themselves, who would obtain a reputation for Christian benevolence that would militate against any attempts to persuade them of the error of their ways. In his letter, and in the Committee meetings themselves, Allen argued that the other members were insufficiently persuaded of the evils of slavery and inadequately mindful of Quaker anti-slavery testimonies: he himself was "most assuredly" convinced that the money and aid should be returned.1

James Haughton, spoke at a meeting of the Irish Confederation in Dublin and there condemned the Central Committee for becoming the "almongers to the women-whippers and cradle-plunderers of Baltimore and Charleston." Haughton was soon, however, reminded of the dangers that Allen had written of when his speech was interrupted with cries of "Three cheers for America" and "no slave-lectures here", and a protest from an American in the audience against Haughton's condemnation of his country. The Committee itself ignored the taunts from Wright and Haughton about the theatre money, and confined its replies to a discussion of the question of the money from the Southern States. In answer to complaints from the C.E.S. and the E.X.S., a statement was issued declaring that the Committee had found "no sufficient warrant" for refusing to accept the Southern aid.

Richard Allen was not present at the meeting which drew up the above answer to the abolitionists' complaints, though the decision itself would have come as no surprise to him since his own letter had been directed at a previous decision by the committee to accept the aid, some four weeks earlier. Nor is it surprising, given his awareness of the difficulties of the case, that he seems to have accepted the decision of the Committee without demur. No formal complaint was registered by the H.A.S.S. In part, this resulted merely from the fact that Allen, who was its secretary, had already submitted his protest as a member of

the Relief Committee; yet it also indicated the reluctance of the H.A.S.S. to formally commit itself to a course of action which not only careful reflection, but empirical evidence, suggested could bring the anti-slavery movement into real disrepute. Added to a fear of the possible consequences however, was a genuine awareness on behalf of many abolitionists of the theoretical complexities and practical difficulties involved in returning famine aid from a starving Ireland to a slave-South. Jane Wigham in Edinburgh, for example, reported that many anti-slavery societies were preparing to remonstrate, but she added that many of them felt the entire question was a very different one from that of the Free Church of Scotland; for one thing the Dublin Quakers had not gone to the American South with the specific intention of soliciting aid.¹

If such considerations precluded the H.A.S.S. from taking up any official stand on the question, they by no means prevented individual members from airing their opinions. And Webb and Haughton were soon made very much aware that the American Garrisonians considered that they were badly mistaken on the question.

This emerged in May, 1847 when the National Anti-Slavery Standard in New York published Richard Allen's letter to the Relief Committee, and then followed this with an editorial which strongly criticized the "minority" on the Committee, together with H.C. Wright, for assuming

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a course of action which could only bring "obloquy and contempt" on abolition-
ists, when no adherence to abolitionist principles was really involved at
all. The editorial stated that the Relief Committee had powers of dis-
tribution only, but had no discretionary power to question the source
of aid sent. If the refusal of the theatre money deserved the "contempt
of all high-minded men", its course in accepting aid from the American
South was by no means analogous to the position taken by the Free Church
of Scotland, and in short was totally justifiable. Even Allen had never
anticipated such harsh criticism coming from fellow Garrisonians, and
Haughton in particular must have been mortified to see the Standard
employing exactly the same metaphor of the pragmatic justification of
a drowning man in accepting aid from a wicked rescuer, that Father
Kenyon had used in his open letter to Haughton in the Nation, some four
months previously.1

In March, 1847, Webb had written Garrison requesting his opinion
on whether it would be incumbent on the Relief Committee to return the
money though there was no positive evidence that the donors were
slaveholders; and whether, if the donors were known to be slaveholders
it was incumbent upon the Committee to return the money if it in no
way sanctioned the existence of slavery.2 Four days later, Wright's
pamphlet appeared, and Webb, before receiving Garrison's reply, came


to the conclusion that the Committee should return the money. Further reasons for adopting this viewpoint were provided by evidence from several sources that seemed to justify James Haughton's contention that the American aid in general would have a disastrous effect on Irish anti-slavery testimonies, since it would make Irishmen think of America only in terms of gratitude and affection.¹

Garrison's letter, when it arrived, argued for a "tread line of demarcation" between the case of the Free Church, which he said had recognised slaveholders as Christians, and the Friends' Relief Committee, which had accepted aid from the slaveholders that had itself been given voluntarily without any sanction of slaveholding being either required, volunteered or understood.² Garrison was much less forthright than the Standard editorial, and added that "perhaps" he was indeed wrong. Haughton nonetheless retorted that even if "he was Garrison ten times multiplied, he is wrong on that point, and we are right."³ As a regular correspondent of the Standard, however, and therefore obliged to respond publicly to the American criticism of his viewpoint, Webb adopted the more circumspect course of choosing to seize on Garrison's guarded comments rather than the sweeping censure passed on the Dublin "minority" position by the Standard itself. He first welcomed Garrison's declaration

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1. J. Haughton to S. May Jr. Dublin, 29/3/1847. Ms.B.1.6.v.3, p. 13. May Papers. As well as Haughton's growing disenchantment with the Irish Confederation's attitude to American slavery, Webb could point to statements made for example by John Mitchel which bitterly rebuked those who asked the people of Skibbereen to help to pay to meet the cost of emancipating "fat negroes". See, Nation, 26/12/1846. Mitchel was later mortified when money was sent from Negroes in Demara; he saw this as further evidence that England had always done more for her colonial slaves than for Ireland.


of his views as evidence of the "openness and independence among Abolitionists", and then described the American aid as the most remarkable manifestation of national sympathy the world had ever seen: though he felt that money had been sent out of motives of "political calculation" and "contemptuous charity", the great majority of American donors, he believed, had sent their contributions out of benevolence. In March, 1847, Webb had directed his American readers' attention to the reports of the Relief Committee which itemized donations of £1200 and £1300 from Charleston and Maryland respectively, and had commented that not all of this was "honest money". In October however, Webb calculated that only a very small proportion of the American aid had come from the slave states, and of that, "but a small" proportion from slaveholders themselves: most of the money had, he declared, come from Southerners living in cities and not from slaveowners who generally had neither "sympathy or money" for others. Webb then stated that the money had been sent not out of charity but vanity, a need to present a display of a "lavish disposition", that was felt as much by mercantile Boston as much as it was by the slaveholders in the South, and which was barely reconcilable, in Webb's view, with the harshness displayed towards Irishmen in America.

The apparent confusion and contradictions in Webb's writings on this question were a product of the immense complications of the issue, not least of which stemmed from the fact that he was debating with men for whom he had the highest regard, and in a situation in which mailing delays and publication deadlines prevented any rapid or immediate exchange of views. There is substantial evidence to suggest that many others in Ireland on the fringe of the abolition movement gave their wholehearted support to the arguments put forward in Wright's pamphlet which had also done much to convince Webb. Yet even apart from the opposition from the Garrisonians in America, the practical difficulties implicit in requesting the Friends' Central Relief Committee to refuse the Southern aid and return that which had already been accepted, were enormous: as well as the money and ships required to send back the goods, the Relief Committee in fact had been so little prepared for the extent of the American aid which had arrived, that, in their account books, there was no printed column in which to list American donations. Even had they wanted to return the money or goods, it is difficult to see how the Relief Committee could have done it. Further practical difficulties presented themselves. Haughton objected to the part played by Henry Clay and John Calhoun in the American relief cause, and it is true that Calhoun was present at the meeting in Washington

1. See, for example, Mary Shackleton to H.C. Wright. Ballitore, 11/4/1847. "English, Scotch and Irish Letters Addressed to H.C. Wright", v. 2; Mary Gough to H.C. Wright. n.p.n.d. Ibid.; Deborah Gough to H.C. Wright. Limerick, 2/5/1847. Ibid.

D.C., on 9/2/1847, to organise American aid; yet every State of the Union was represented at this meeting and if Calhoun was elected a vice-chairman of the committee, so were thirty other congressmen and senators. Similarly, Henry Clay, in 1847, was prominent in the organisation of aid from New Orleans, yet the problems involved in deciding what was and what was not aid from slaveholders were compounded by the fact that much of the relief goods shipped from New Orleans came from the mid-west region. It was true that the Dublin Quakers, with their reputation for disinterested philanthropy, and with transatlantic contacts such as Jacob Harvey in New York, were entrusted with the task of handling and receiving almost all the American aid, but other sources such as collections made by Roman Catholic Bishops in America went straight to the Catholic clergy in Ireland: included among these was aid from the South; but this was never mentioned by the abolitionists, with the single exception of Webb who caused considerable stir in Catholic circles in Cincinnati by charging in the Standard that the Roman Catholic clergy were distributing aid in the west of Ireland to those who paid the highest prices.

Though many Irish Quakers objected to the decision taken by the Relief Committee, there was a strong tradition of mutual aid in times of distress between Irish and American Friends, and it is significant

3. Irish Friends for example had raised funds to help distressed Quakers in Pennsylvania in 1777, 1778 and 1784.
that once they had stated their objections, both Webb and Allen continued to work for the Central Relief Committee: even Haughton contributed £10, while Webb printed, and claimed to have edited and amended, the official Transactions of the Central Relief Committee which was written by his old friend, Jonathon P. In.

Despite this, however, and though Webb came to accept that those who saw no analogy between the conduct of the Free Church and the Relief Committee were not wilfully blind, both he and Haughton insisted that the amount of American aid, whatever its source, would ultimately have disastrous results for the American anti-slavery movement in Ireland. Webb was reluctant to appear as a man who would prohibit American aid from entering Ireland on the grounds that it would corrupt the souls of its famished recipients. Yet he remained unimpressed with the Standard's assertion that even if American aid silenced the voice of Irish anti-slavery, this was insufficient reason to discourage Americans from sending more help. But once again the divisions among the Irish abolitionists on this issue became apparent. Richard Allen told Maria W. Chapman that Ireland was grateful for American aid, since this was the type of gesture which in Allen's opinion led to international harmony. Isabel Jennings in Cork was active in famine relief in her area, and she

4. Two of her helpers, who had also helped in anti-slavery work, died as a result of the famine in 1847.
met with Captain Forbes of the Jamestown which had landed with a cargo of American aid. He was, however, extremely busy and she felt that it would have been "absurd" to question him on his anti-slavery views. She did, however, speak to one of his officers and reported his amusement when she advocated the Garrisonian position of dissolving the American Union. Unabashed by this, she added that when men undertook such philanthropic work, it proved that, whatever their present opinions, there "must be great material in them for anti-slavery."¹ Haughton on the other hand continued to view the warm receptions given the American relief vessels with great misgivings, especially when these prompted newspapers like the Nation, whose reluctance to espouse anti-slavery he was concurrently attacking, to present a series of articles contrasting American power and benevolence with British greed and weakness.² By September, 1847, Haughton's letters of complaint to the Nation had become so frequent that the paper could inform its readers that it had received yet another, which it did not print, but patronisingly described as a "rather lengthened argument not only against Slavery and Slaveholders, but against Irishmen receiving aid from slaveholders, or omitting, whenever they speak of America and the American War of Independence, to denounce and execrate the 'criminals' who have slaves in that country."

The Nation's decision to refuse to enter anew into this controversy, but


² See, report of reception in Dublin to Captain Clark of the American relief ship Victor, and attendant article, in Nation, 1/5/1847.
to indicate its own abhorrence of slavery by merely quoting extracts
from the American papers which Haughton had cited as evidence of the
"bestialities" of slavery, was clearly unsatisfactory to an abolitionist
who was imbued with the belief that, to be aware of evil and yet not
condemn it outright, was as great a sin as a refusal to recognize it as
such in the first place.¹

Not only the Standard but the "minority" themselves, had been
aware that their position could be open to the interpretation that they
were prepared to sacrifice the needs of the Irish people on the altar
of a hypocritical commitment to abolitionism. This accusation was in
fact rarely made, and for several reasons. In the first place, the
American Garrisonians had officially contributed to the relief of Ireland.
The Garrisonians in Boston transmitted £200 to Webb, which they described
as being "chiefly if not exclusively from old organisation" and which
they asked Webb to pass on to the Central Relief Committee: this Webb
did.² Garrison was also justified in pointing out that besides this sum
the abolitionists had also contributed with "the other portion" of the
American people, and that individuals such as the Hutchinson family had
sent on to Webb their individual contributions to Irish relief.³ Appalled
by the reports which Webb among others had sent of the extent of the
famine, the American abolitionists ⁴ clearly felt obliged to help, and

their feelings of obligation were strengthened in some instances by
their knowledge of the extent of English, Scottish and Irish financial
aid to the American anti-slavery movement. Webb and Allen were delighted
with this response to their letters and articles in the Liberator, and
Webb found it difficult to understand Maria W. Chapman's reluctance to
join in the relief work. He could accept it if she argued that she had
too many pressing concerns in America; but if her argument was that she
would not help people who were starving because of the fault of people in
their own country, then he warned her bluntly that she would find it
difficult to justify her position to the "satisfaction of ordinary appre-
hension".

Thanks to the aid which the Dublin abolitionists were able to
procure through their transatlantic contacts with the American anti-
slavery movement, and their identification with such well-known publicists of the miseries of the Irish Famine as the American Elihu Burritt,
little attention was given in Dublin to the "minority" position since
only Haughton tried to bring it to the public's attention, and at this
time the Nation and the Irish Confederation were treating him as some-
thing of a crank, whose statements of principle were something of a

1.6.v.2, p. 44. May Papers.

2. This extended to the procuring of recipes for food which could
be made from Indian corn, which Webb rightly claimed the Irish
people had no experience of using. E. Quincy to R.D. Webb.

3. See, E. Burritt, A Journal of a Visit of three days to Skibbereen,
and its Neighbourhood (London, 1847). Burritt—whose famed learning
failed to impress Webb—corresponded with Richard Allen during his

4. See, letter from Haughton, in Nation, 10/4/1847.
nuisance and not to be taken seriously, but whose reputation for philanthropy could, if linked to their cause, confer on them no little status. Moreover, it was clear that the "minority", had gone on working for the Relief Committee,¹ and therefore the abolitionists in Ireland, who tended to be identified as Quakers, largely shared, not in any opprobrium attendant upon a desire to refuse or return Southern aid, but in the general manifestation of gratitude and praise, which went out to the Quaker body in Ireland because of the important part they had played in organizing famine relief. Of particular importance, since it followed closely on the sugar duties controversies,² the abolitionists had shown that their reform interests and philanthropic concerns were not confined to the American Negro. And if reduced antipathy towards the abolitionists³ by no means implied increased sympathy for abolitionism, it did help the Irish abolitionists to overcome one obstacle in their campaign to inculcate anti-slavery principles in Ireland.

If it was ironical that the Dublin abolitionists, who had complained of Quaker apathy and antipathy, yet who had been associated in the public mind with the Quakers, should now share in the new sense of

¹ Webb in 1845 undertook another trip to Erris on behalf of the Central Relief Committee.
² For evidence of the tendency of the Repeal press before the famine, to assume that British Quakers were blind to social evils within Britain itself, see, Pilot, 15/9/1846.
³ Freeman's Journal, 11/12/1846. John O'Connell later wrote that Quaker Relief work in 1846 did much to redeem Irish Friends from his father's earlier, and justified, accusation that they cared much for the slaves but showed "themselves utterly regardless of the most miserable condition of the wretched bondsmen of their own country." John O'Connell (ed.), The Select Speeches of O'Connell, v. 1, p. 316.
gratitude felt to a group whose acceptance of Southern contributions they, the abolitionists, had deplored, James Haughton, the abolitionist with the most striking record of involvement in reform causes in Ireland, found it galling that he should, during the famine, be accused of being "...a grinder of the faces of the poor".

Haughton insisted that though it was in his interest, financially, to keep grain prices high, he was in favour of their reduction. Nevertheless, as Webb reported, he was soon accused of being "a forestaller, a monopoliser... a destroyer of provisions sooner than that prices should come down." Webb admitted that like other Corn dealers, Haughton had "lined his purse pretty well" in 1847, though Webb himself was apparently unconcerned at this, and predicted that the controversy would soon die down, as indeed it did. Six years later, however, John Mitchel in America resurrected the story in an attempt to discredit Haughton in particular and Irish abolitionism in general. Haughton, said Mitchel, had stored up grain and hoarded it like gold, till it rotted in his stores. The story was immediately denied by both Haughton and Webb, who added that corn dealers like Haughton had, in fact, done much to alleviate the sufferings of the Irish poor in the Famine. Haughton

1. Nation, 30/1/1847.

2. R.D. Webb to H.W. Chapman. Dublin, 12/6/1847. Ms.A.9.2.v.23, p. 29. Weston Papers. Haughton's attitude was certainly less callous than one English free-trader, the son of the abolitionist, the Rev. George Armstrong, who wrote that "we may congratulate ourselves on the famine, since it would cement good relations with America and secure the abolition of the Corn Laws. Francis Armstrong to S. Kay Jr. n.p.16/2/1846. Ms.B.1.6.v.3, p. 16. Hay Papers.

was mortified at the accusations in 1847, and also when they were repeated by Mitchel in 1854. But though they were, according to Webb, again made by a Whiskey maker in Dublin in 1854, who was angry at Haughton's persistent advocacy of temperance, they seem to have had no substantial effect in undermining Haughton's reputation for disinterested philanthropy in Ireland, and the incident does not militate against the general conclusion that the abolitionists received enhanced status from their work in famine relief.

The Irish famine affected the anti-slavery movement there in several important ways, the most obvious being the way that it led to the virtual prostration of the country; before it, all other matters seemed almost irrelevant.

The Irish abolitionists had long felt guilty about the size of their donations to the Boston Bazaar, and when the famine struck, letters were sent from Cork, Dublin and Belfast, explaining that due to the prevailing conditions, it was proving impossible to raise funds and contributions for the American abolitionists. ¹

Complaints and comments such as these were so common in the letters from Ireland to Boston, especially in 1847, that it must have been as much of a surprise to the Irish abolitionists as it clearly was to those in Massachusetts, when it was found that contributions from Ireland in that year exceeded the sum raised in 1846. This, the

Irish abolitionists acknowledged, was largely as a result of Douglass's exertions in Ireland. However, there was little they could do, in the years 1846 to 1859, to "keep anti-slavery before" the public.¹

Chapter Six

"Feeble anti-slavery instrumentalities":
new forms of abolitionist activity in Ireland
Notwithstanding the strident language of Wright and Haughton, the criticism of the Central Relief Committee never matched the level of intensity of the campaign against the Free Church. Nor did it provoke the degree of controversy which that agitation had aroused in Belfast. This was one occasion in which the Dublin abolitionists appreciated that, once their point had been made, there was still much practical work to be done, whether that point was accepted or not. Once more, however manichaean their conception of what constituted good and evil, they were made aware of the difficulties involved in any attempt to introduce the former of these states.

The abolitionists were prone to thinking that while they faced problems openly and tried to reconcile conflicting reform aims, others such as O'Connell were mere politicians capable of adjusting principle to suit the immediate demands of expediency. Such an attitude made them sound on occasion wilfully arrogant, and to their critics, exasperatingly self righteous, especially when these critics, like Mitchell, considered themselves to be both practical and idealistic. The abolitionists in Dublin were, however, acutely aware of their relative inability to determine the course of events and they tended to seize on these areas where they thought they could act most effectively. Often frustrated in their aims, they played out against and described as moral recalcitrance the same kind of tactical maneuvring and concern for the realities of the situation, which on many occasions characterised their own thoughts and actions. They sought to arouse a British audience, yet much of what they said and did was in order to encourage their American allies; and they operated in a British context to which they had to adapt what were often American ideas and ideals.
They never thought of themselves as applying double standards, but what is clear is that a man like Webb took a certain pride in explaining to his American allies what was feasible, and in exhorting his fellow-subjects in Britain to accept what he considered to be the best of the American notions that abolitionism had brought him in contact with. Such a situation meant that Webb was often forced into a delicate balancing act, with potential charms of British scorn and apathy, and American disapproval on either side. For anyone such as Webb, occupying a pivotal position in the transatlantic anti-slavery movement, these problems were further compounded by the way in which even different factions of the Garrisonians appealed for his support when they quarreled. In these circumstances it was difficult to create some form of anti-slavery organisation that would prove capable of providing a means of coordinating the regionally and ideologically diverse sections of Garrisonian support in Britain, and of sustaining and absorbing the stresses in the Old-Organised transatlantic relationship.

1. In 1845, for example, N.P. Rogers quarrelled bitterly with Garrison, whose friends sought to persuade Webb of Rogers's errors. Webb was obviously upset by this quarrel since he had thought highly of Rogers, but he came to the conclusion that Garrison was in the right. Webb, however, refused to accept the Garrisonians' abrupt dismissal of Rogers's contribution to the anti-slavery cause, and he insisted that he had made his own mind up on the incident, uninfluenced by what the Garrisonians had written him. N.P. Rogers to R.D. Webb. Concord, 12/8/1845. Ms.A.1.2.v.15, p. 53. Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison; R.D. Webb to M.W. Chapman. Dublin, 17/11/1845. Ms.A.9.2.v.22, p. 127; Weston Papers; letter from Webb, in National Anti-Slavery Standard, 18/10/1847; E. Quincy to R.D. Webb. Dedham, 25/3/1845. Quincy/Webb Letters; R.D. Webb to E. Quincy. Dublin, 31/3/1848. Webb/Quincy Letters.
In April, 1846, Webb was urged by Maria Weston Chapman to consider the possibility of holding some kind of anti-slavery convention for Garrisonians in Britain which Wright and Douglass could also attend. Webb's experiences of the B.F.A.S.S. conferences in London had not enamoured him of such meetings, which he said were generally attended by Clergymen who were quite ignorant about abolitionism. He could, moreover, think of a list of only some thirty people who would be interested in such a convention, while of these some were poor, some old, some busy, and some women who could not leave home easily. Though not persuaded of the practicality of the project, Webb suggested that the purpose of any gathering should be to provide the British Garrisonians with an opportunity for meeting each other, and for discussing the "best modes of action in concert for the future." These proposals were specifically made in rejection of the type of B.F.A.S.S. conference, which, according to Thompson, merely produced high-flowing resolutions for the benefit of the London press.

These preliminary discussions in April led to the formation of the Anti-Slavery League in August, 1846. This as Webb had proposed, was merely a gathering of a number of British Garrisonians at the Crown and Anchor Tavern in London, who met both to welcome Garrison and

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outline the course to be taken against the Free Church and the Evangelical Alliance. Garrison himself called it "a real old organised anti-slavery meeting, such as was never held before in this metropolis". ¹

Both Webb and James Haughton attended the meeting, though the latter had at first felt that money spent in travelling to London would have been better spent for anti-slavery purposes in Dublin itself. Webb's proposals, however, had in themselves indicated the precise dimensions of Garrisonianism in Britain: it was numerically small, its components (mainly in Dublin, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Bristol and Manchester) were geographically remote from each other, and it lacked both the capital and organizational framework of the B.F.A.S.S. Webb was not merely exercising his customary caution when he remarked that it was easier to set up the Anti-Slavery League than to keep it going.²

The absence of a cohesive anti-slavery organization with a central organizing committee, was however, perhaps of less concern to abolitionists who had objected to the B.F.A.S.S., and Webb could, in 1846, point to pockets of anti-slavery in Cork, Dublin, Limerick, Wexford and Waterford as evidence of the presence of committed anti-slavery opinion in Ireland itself. This, he saw, was primarily the result of Douglass's tour, and even in Belfast, he first concluded, the "tables were quite turned on New Broad Street."³


In February, 1846, during Douglass's visit to Belfast, a Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society had been formed by Maria Webb and others. A cousin of Webb's, she had long been considered by the Dublin abolitionist as typifying the readiness of the Belfast Quaker community to support the B.F.A.S.S. She and her husband, William Webb had entertained Wright in their home, where they had questioned him at length on his religious views. Later, when Douglass visited the city, he was kindly received by them, and William Webb became a member of the enlarged Anti-Slavery Committee. Maria Webb acted as corresponding secretary for the Ladies' Society, and this was an extremely important position in all anti-slavery societies since it meant that she handled all the incoming mail and wrote letters on behalf of a Society, the majority of whose members were concerned mainly with the practical matters of collecting funds and goods, and were content to leave the organizational and ideological affairs in her hands.¹

Although Maria Webb immediately wrote to Mrs. Chapman, by July she still had received no reply, and a second letter was sent requesting anti-slavery publications to be sent. From the Garrisonians' point of view, this may well have been a fatal delay, since it had been because of Douglass that the Belfast Committee had been established, and his influence over it was considerable.²

It caused considerable consternation among the Garrisonians in Britain, therefore, when Maria Webb wrote a second Address in September, 1846. This informed the "Ladies of Ulster" that there were indeed two "sections" of the anti-slavery movement in America, the A.A.S.S. and the A.F.A.S.S. The former was described as appealing solely to "moral suasion" and eschewing all political action on the grounds that it would compromise anti-slavery principles to participate in a political system which had been so clearly contaminated by slavery. The latter, on the contrary, were described as wishing to seek through the Liberty Party "the purification of the political fountain whence the laws emanate". The Address then revealed that the Belfast Ladies proposed to aid both groups since, it considered, both were furthering the cause of emancipation. It would do this by collecting funds and goods for both the Boston Bazaar and Douglass's Bazaar in Rochester, New York.¹ Not only did it promise to aid both sections but it identified Douglass as being part of the non-Garrisonian section.²

The Address seemed to present a favourable and equally fair analysis of the aims of both the A.A.S.S. and the A.F.A.S.S., but the Garrisonians did not welcome any description of their history, not even those alluding to their fearless bravery, which appeared in the same

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1. Address of the Committee of the Belfast Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society to the Ladies of Ulster (Belfast, 23/9/1846).

2. One month earlier Webb had confided to Quincy that he was fearful that Douglass would "topple over" into supporting the Liberty Party. R.D. Webb to E. Quincy. Dublin, 17/8/1846. Webb/Quincy Letters.
document as statements in praise of their old-organized rivals. Even Webb, who generally resisted any attempt to slander the Teppanites, opposed an address which appeared to advocate a bi-partisan policy, and which to Garrisonians seemed to contain evidence of a definite preference for the A.F.A.S.S. Garrison himself hoped in his visit to Belfast to persuade Maria Webb of her error, though with no success. She claimed that if they were to be successful in their ultimate purpose of introducing anti-slavery principles into the schools of Ireland, the Belfast Ladies would have to avoid, as a Society, presenting themselves as the "exclusive adherents" of either the A.A.S.S. or the Liberty Party, though individual members might inform themselves "as minutely as they please" about the various divisions in the anti-slavery movement in America. While admitting that many in Belfast thought highly of Garrison and his adherents, she added that the successful outcome of the campaigns against West Indian slavery and the Corn Laws had persuaded many of the benefits of an approach which involved the "union of moral and political action".

1. In particular, the references in the Address to the greater support given in the U.S.A. to the A.F.A.S.S.

2. R.D. Webb to W.L. Garrison. Dublin, 29/9/1846, 13/10/1846. Ms.A.1.2.v.16, pp. 95, 109. Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison. Webb told Garrison that Maria Webb knew Sturge and was "greatly disposed" to take his "view of things".

3. See, Maria Webb, Geography Simplified (Belfast, 1846). This primer for schools stressed anti-slavery and peace principles.

Mary Walsh, an Edinburgh Garrisonian, appalled that anyone could be so ignorant of anti-slavery as even to speak of the Liberty Party, consulted the Garrisonians in Glasgow, then wrote to Maria Webb. Her letter, however, in accusing the American Churches of being the main supporters of American slavery, contained a "somewhat incautious" phrase referring to the "annihilation" of the pro-slavery Church and Clergy. The Scottish Garrisonians were considerably dismayed when Maria Webb issued a circular containing the letter, which they were not in a position to retract and which presented their views in a most unfavourable light. When they demanded that Maria Webb publicly explain the misunderstanding they were informed that the Belfast Ladies' Committee would not meet until February, 1847. Maria Webb also replied to a similar complaint from Mrs. Chapman by assuring her that there was no intention in Belfast of even reconsidering the decision to aid both the Rochester and Boston Bazaars.

To the Garrisonians in Britain, Maria Webb's decision to publish Mary Walsh's letter and her own reply to it, confirmed their earlier suspicions that she had throughout 1846 merely been seeking a pretext for affirming her open hostility to the A.A.S.S., especially after Garrison's visit to Belfast. She had not, however, attempted to conceal her aims as much as the Garrisonians maintained. From the outset, the

Belfast Ladies' Society had expressed a desire to aid fugitives in Canada and elsewhere, and this had been stressed in all the subsequent publications. Moreover, the references to Douglass in the Belfast publications had also been similar to each other, though these did little to reassure Webb, since they suggested that one of the main achievements of the A.A.S.S. had been to rescue Douglass from "obscurity". Webb concluded that she had been swayed by the eloquent if pernicious tongue of Douglass. When her circular containing the Welsh letter was sent to Anna Richardson, who was organizing in Newcastle a fund to buy Douglass's freedom, this served to confirm Webb's suspicion that his cousin in Belfast cared more for Douglass than for anti-slavery.

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2. R.D. Webb to E. Quincy. Dublin, 2/3/1847. Ibid. R.D. Webb to A.W. Weston. Dublin, 14/9/1847. Ms.A.9.2.v.24, p. 49. Weston Papers; W.L. Garrison to [?] Boston, 1/4/1847. Ms.A.1.1. v. 4, p. 32. Anti-Slavery Letters from Garrison; Letters from Webb in National Anti-Slavery Standard, 6/5/1847, 21/6/1847. Webb opposed the attempt to raise a fund to buy Douglass's freedom, seeing in it, as did Lucretia Mott and Sarah Pugh, a recognition of slaveholders' rights. Garrison accepted this on principle, but could not understand anyone wishing to fix a "moral stigma" on Douglass's wish to call himself a free man. Webb admitted that had he been a slave he also would have liked to have been made free, but he long felt that any scheme to buy the freedom of slave families was essentially a total waste of anti-slavery funds. In 1852 he referred to Anna Richardson's efforts in this direction as her "slave-trade". Mary Betlin to M.W. Chapman. Ms.A.9.2.v.26, p. 68. Weston Papers.
Even Douglass's visit to Belfast, and the attack he made there on the Free Church and its Irish Presbyterian allies, had prevented many ladies who were otherwise prominent in philanthropic work from joining the Ladies' Society. Maria Webb concluded that if the Society were to identify itself with the Garrisonians—a course which for ideological reasons she herself was opposed to—it would be further weakened, though Douglass's own insistence that he remained an old-organized abolitionist and his activities in Scotland precluded her, in 1846, from any outright repudiation of the A.A.S.S. The capital she attempted to make out of Walsh's letter was directly aimed against these Garrisonians who, unlike Douglass, had alienated her with their religious views, and while she continued in 1847 to distribute the proceeds of the Belfast collections to Rochester and Boston, her accompanying letters reminded the Boston Garrisonians that the ladies in the Belfast Society deplored any "intolerant spirit of party" in the anti-slavery movement.

The effect of Douglass's visit had been to increase enthusiasm for the anti-slavery Movement where it had already existed, and in many cases to introduce it where it had not; even in Belfast, where the campaign against the Free Church had alienated many, the formation of the Ladies' Society testified to his influence. The Dublin abolitionists in 1846 were thus faced with a situation in which for the first time in

1. Douglass carried with him to America an anti-slavery Address which Haughton had organised at a temperance meeting in Dublin.
years the anti-slavery movement appeared capable of attracting wider support, and in which they knew that the American Garrisonians' ideas and attacks on their rivals within the movement both puzzled and offended many who were otherwise attracted to the notion of doing something practical and positive for the slave. In these circumstances and because of the disputes over the sugar duties and the Central Relief Committee, there was some suggestion that the Irish Garrisonians momentarily faltered in their allegiance to their American allies. In particular, they found reason to suspect that the latter had misrepresented the Liberty Party.

One source for these suspicions was the American authoress Asenath Nicholson, then in Ireland. Before leaving the United States, Miss Nicholson had asked Lewis Tappan to give her financial assistance for her proposed trip to Ireland, but, unable to do this, Tappan had instead given her a letter of introduction to Webb, whom he recalled meeting in London. When she eventually arrived in Dublin, she called on Webb and stayed for one week at his brother James's house, where she met the Dublin clique. As with all visiting Americans, she was questioned about the anti-slavery movement in America, and especially about the divisions in America. Her answers so perturbed Maria Waring and Lissy Poole, that they both wrote Tappan requesting more information,


2. And probably, considering her letter of introduction, more closely than many.
as did Miss Nicholson herself. Tappan in reply denied every accusation that the Garrisonians had made against the New Organization in 1840. A similar statement was also sent by William Goodell in response to a request from Maria Webb.\footnote{1}

Such Garrisonian stalwarts as Maria Waring and Richard D. Webb were thus in 1846 raising anew questions about the 1840 schisms.\footnote{2} Webb in particular was troubled by both Goodell's and Tappan's claim that the women's rights question had not played an important part in those divisions and that the A.A.S.S. represented less than one tenth of the abolitionist support in the United States. Webb still could not comprehend how Maria Webb could consent to give her support both to the A.A.S.S. and the Liberty Party, and was sure that the "morality" of that Party was "bad", but he was concerned that the Garrisonians had misrepresented the events of 1840, concealed their lack of support in America, and refused to accept that the Liberty Party supporters were sincere in their abhorrence of slavery.\footnote{3}

While further disputes over Maria Webb were effectively forestalled in March, 1847, when the Belfast Ladies' Society announced that it would not solicit its annual subscriptions or aid for the American

\begin{footnotesize}
\footnotetext[1]{L. Tappan to S. Poole. New York, 11/4/1847. Ms.A.1.2.v.17, p. 14. Antislavery Letters to Garrison. Tappan wrote that Miss Nicholson was not qualified to speak with authority on the 1840 schisms.}
\end{footnotesize}
abolitionists but would instead place a stall for that purpose in the week-long bazaar it proposed to hold for the relief of destitute Irish people, this was in itself an indication of the way in which the fad had affected the Irish anti-slavery movement. 1 Webb was dismayed at this decline in anti-slavery activity, and at the way in which Garrisonian support was dwindling. The Jennings sisters, whom Webb had once reckoned as firm supporters of the A.A.S.S., and who were still in 1847 prepared to declare, in opposition to Maria Webb, that no "party feeling or sectarian zeal" was "nourished" by the Garrisonians in America, began in 1848 to send contributions also to Douglass's Bazaar in Rochester. 2 Though the bulk of the Cork goods continued to go to Boston, Webb was displeased at what he took to be Douglass's exploitation for his own ends of the romantic interest felt for him in Cork. 3 When Douglass returned to the United States and incurred the Garrisonians' displeasure by setting up as editor of his own newspaper, the North Star, Webb sent to Cork, cuttings from the Garrisonian press critical of Douglass, but his efforts were resented there as an unwelcome intrusion and as typical of his persistent attempts to persuade the abolitionists elsewhere in Ireland to accept his way of thinking. 4 Cork welcomed the


abolitionist hegemony of Dublin as much as Dublin had done that of London. Though in response to the pressure from Dublin and Boston, some disagreement developed among the Cork abolitionists as to the wisdom of their decision, they decided to continue to send goods to Rochester, once, indeed, via the Boston Garrisonians themselves. Their justification for doing so, Isabel Jennings maintained, was that Douglass had been so instrumental in arousing anti-slavery sympathies in the city. This position was resented by those British abolitionists who remained committed to sending aid only to the Boston Bazaar, and they began to label the Jennings sisters as Douglassites,2 though some British Garrisonians decided not to make repeated complaints to the Jennings sisters, on the grounds that they feared that these might do more harm than good.3 Webb in particular felt that his earlier suspicions about Douglass had been more than confirmed by the latter's disputes with the Garrisonians in America. Webb admitted that Douglass had succeeded in arousing a great deal of interest in the anti-slavery cause in Ireland, but remained convinced that Douglass had used this only for his own selfish pecuniary ends. The tension that had grown up between the two men developed into a growing animosity, at least on Webb's part.4


4. Many of the comments which Webb received from the American Garrisonians on Douglass after his return to America were far from flattering, and therefore hardly designed to make Webb moderate his views. Abby Kimber, for example, felt that, given the propensity of the
From Belfast, F.A. Calder reported the existence of "an immense party either adverse or indifferent to "anti-slavery". Accusations against the Belfast abolitionists fell into two categories: firstly, that they had attacked the Free Church of Scotland; secondly—"alluding to H.C. Wright and W.L. Garrison's visits"—that they had not brought "proper" persons to advocate the cause. To offset this animosity, Calder and Standfield began to focus their attentions on Cuban and Brazilian complicity in the slave-trade, and with some success, since some eighteen Presbyterian congregations in Northern Ireland supported petitions to Parliament on this subject. Isaac Nelson, however, remained the only prominent Presbyterian Minister in Belfast who was prepared to condemn American anti-slavery. When Scoble, Standfield, and Calder visited Armagh in 1849, Calder remarked that the subject of anti-slavery was "quite new in the city".\(^1\) The Belfast Anti-Slavery Society also, therefore, experienced the general decline in interest in the anti-slavery movement, and, despite its continued status as an auxiliary to the B.F.A.S., it suffered from its associations with the ideas and campaigns of the Garrisonians.

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slaves to believe in witchcraft and the fact that the Irish Catholic immigrants were "very little removed from the slave in intelligence", it was astonishing that Douglass had been able to keep free from the "contaminating influence" of the Catholic religion in Ireland. A Kimber to Hannah Webb, Philadelphia, 20/4/1847. Ms. A.1.2.v.17, p. 50. Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison.

This slump was evident even in Dublin, where there was a noticeable decline in the number of weekly H.A.S.S. public meetings, although the Dublin abolitionists could still attract audiences for visiting American anti-slavery speakers such as William Wells Brown in 1849. Webb's arrangements for the Garrisonian meeting in London in 1846 had in itself indicated the small number of active abolitionists in Dublin: only he and Haughton had attended the meeting. Following the demise of the L.N.R.A., and his withdrawal from the Irish Confederation, Haughton took no further active interest in Dublin politics: this meant that though he continued to be prominent in activities such as land reform, he did not have the same access either to political platforms or political figures after 1847. His two daughters collected goods for Boston, though in Webb's opinion, they did this only to please their father whose anti-slavery views were ignored both by his relatives and the rest of the Unitarian Community in Dublin. Richard Allen's early interest in and energy on behalf of the anti-slavery movement had also steadily declined since 1844: as a Quaker, it was Garrison's condemnation of the Evangelical Alliance, rather than the Free Church of Scotland, which aroused his interest in 1846. In many ways, Allen's active involvement in the H.A.S.S. had puzzled many even of his fellow


2. Ibid., 22/3/1849, 25/4/1849, 26/10/1850, 2/1/1852. See, J. Haughton, Slavery Immoral (Dublin, 1847), and Philanthropos, Slavery, Not Immoral. Being a Letter to James Haughton (Dublin, 1847), which congratulated Haughton on having joined the Irish Confederation, though disagreed with his views on American slavery. Haughton's interest in politics vanished after the 1848 rising, and after finding that his decision to join the Irish Confederation had brought him into association with men such as Philanthropos.
Garrisonians, in view not only of his wealth but of his adherence to orthodox Quakerism and his friendship with such men as Sturges. As early as 1845 Allen was admitting that though he had once been an indefatigable writer of letters to the press on every reform subject he now rarely penned a letter. This was commented on by the American Garrisonians and when Webb began to describe Allen's increasing wealth and the visits abroad which he and his wife made every year, Lucretia Mott wrote several letters asking whether Allen had become too rich to care much for anti-slavery, and warning him against letting the "deceitfulness of riches...choke the Divine word, that it becomes unfruitful." Webb felt that Allen had, in fact, not interested himself so much in anti-slavery since becoming rich, but he knew that Allen was friendly to the cause and therefore had hopes that Allen, as his draper's business thrived, could be persuaded to donate more money to the anti-slavery cause.


Webb was pleased when Maria Waring moved to Kingston in 1847, since she was not only deeply interested in every aspect of the anti-slavery movement, but also the most munificent contributor to the Boston Bazaar in Ireland. She and Webb himself, his brother James and his wife, Hannah, together with James Haughton constituted the small band of anti-slavery activists in the Dublin area.

From 1847 to 1850, Webb's anti-slavery activities consisted largely in acting as postman and librarian for the British and American Garrisonians. In 1855, he explained to Edmund Quincy that there was hardly anyone else in Britain willing to take on this job, though there was little note of complaint in this remark, since Webb enjoyed his unique opportunity to read the literature that was sent from America, and, at a time when anti-slavery was moribund especially in Ireland, it meant that he could still busy himself in abolitionist activities of a kind.

Webb also continued to print anti-slavery material at his press in Dublin, while in 1846 he became the Irish correspondent of the National Anti-Slavery Standard, submitting regular articles to that newspaper until 1860. Anti-slavery had come to play an indispensable

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2. R.D. Webb to E. Quincy. Dublin, 5/5/1855. Webb/Quincy Letters. In 1860, in order to provide assistance for Thompson, the A.A.S.S. formally appointed him as their agent in Britain at five hundred dollars per year. Webb was, however, retained as their unpaid financial agent, and in the same year received 250 books and some 350 smaller packages for re-distribution in Britain. "Minutes of the Executive Committee of the A.A.S.S.", v.2, entries for 23/5/1860, 9/5/1861.

3. Lucretia Mott felt that Webb's letters dealt too infrequently with anti-slavery, while Quincy felt that Webb tended to confine himself too much to anti-slavery topics. Webb remarked that his biographer would inform posterity that letters and not articles
part in his life, and his transatlantic correspondence and friendships sustained him; although the practical effects of his labours in terms of freeing the slave, seemed to be small. 1

Gradually, Webb's earlier confidence in the correctness and validity of the Garrisonian standpoint returned. Partly this came about in reaction to the growth of further abolitionist societies in Britain, which were specifically hostile to Garrison's religious views. At a convention held in Hartford in 1848, both Garrison and Wright had claimed that the Sabbath was not Divinely ordained, and this and related pronouncements offended the views of many in Britain. In Glasgow, a New Female Association for the Abolition of Slavery was formed, which condemned Garrison's and Wright's religious views as anti-Christian and proposed to send no more donations to the Boston Bazaar. 2 Webb confided that he was distressed at the readiness of Garrison to "beard" the views of others at such events as the Sabbath Convention, and indeed gave as one reason for the fact that British anti-slavery had been

were his forte, but his pieces in the Standard delighted the American Garrisonians who pointed out that their worth was attested to by the frequency with which they were referred to and copied out in other American newspapers. E. Quincy to R.D. Webb. Dedham, 14/7/1846. Quincy/Webb letters. In 1848, the A.A.S.S. sent Webb 50 dollars to defray his expenses for sending contributions to the Standard, but Webb always was out of pocket as a result of the mailing he did for the Garrisonians. "Minute Book of the Executive Committee of the A.A.S.S.", v.2, entry for 18/3/1848.


"remarkably standstill" in Britain since 1846, the antipathy which the American had provoked on his visit. However, to the organizers of the New Glasgow Society he complained that the A.A.S.S. had no official connection with the Liberator, and should not be associated with either Garrison's or Wright's personal religious views. He reminded them that they had previously cooperated with Quakers in the Glasgow Emancipation Society, and made clear his own view that they were sacrificing the slave to their own religious bigotry: "For my part I should feel self-condemned were I to desert the cause on the pitiful plea that some of my fellow labourers have presumed to differ from me on points of belief. If I have a right to act the pharisee and indulge my own intolerance, let me say no more about the Spanish Inquisition and Laud's persecution."  

Webb was not, here, merely indulging in self-righteousness. His practical desire to see a strong, unified body of anti-slavery opinion in Britain was combined with a conviction that the A.A.S.S., composed necessarily of men of differing views on religion, had the best tactics and strategy for securing the overthrow of slavery. These two considerations were always present in Webb's mind. If there was


satisfaction to be derived from his conception of the Garrisonians as the custodians of true anti-slavery principles, he also wished to capitalise on any resurgence of interest in American slavery, and realised that many in Britain had a distinctly hostile image of the Garrisonians. 1

Such a resurgence took place after the passing of the Fugitive Slave Law in 1850, when the Dublin Quakers began to show signs of a willingness to participate in an anti-slavery society. After a meeting in Dublin, in February, 1851, which was addressed by the visiting Negro abolitionist, Henry Highland Garnet, 2 one Ladies' and one Gentleman's Anti-Slavery Society were formed in Dublin; these were predominantly Quaker in composition.

The H.A.S.S., which had been an anti-slavery committee rather than a society, had been virtually defunct since 1847, and though

1. And Webb, while deploiring the decision of the New Glasgow Society to aid not the Boston Bazaar but the efforts of the New York Vigilance Committee in helping fugitive slaves, later contributed some money to this same Committee. R.D. Webb to [Caroline Weston?]. Dublin, 20/4/1850. Ms.571. Boston Public Library. Webb justified this by stating that the lady who asked him for a donation, one Mrs. Massie from London, was a strong supporter of Garrison.

2. Freeman's Journal, 8/2/1851. Garnet had also lectured in Belfast. Webb did not approve of his advocacy of the use of political action against slavery, nor for his support for the free-produce movement, which Webb described as "quack medicine". Letter from Webb, in National Anti-Slavery Standard, 20/3/1851. After 1850, a number of escaped slaves visited Britain, and, in 1854, Webb was forced to warn the British public against Negroes in Britain masquerading as fugitives, after one had been exposed for doing this in Belfast. In 1853, the Rev. Edward Kelly visited Dublin. A Negro Baptist Minister in the United States, his father had been an Irishman, his mother a slave. Freeman's Journal, 8/4/1853; Anti-Slavery Advocate, v.1, n.20, May, 1854; E. Quarles, "Ministers Without Portfolio", in Journal of Negro History, v. xxxix, 1954, pp. 27-42.
Webb expected little from "a parcel of Quakers", he became Secretary, and James Haughton the Vice-President, of the Gentleman's Society. Webb was pleased to note Haughton's appointment in particular, since this suggested that the societies were not to be "sectarian or exclusive". He was also amazed when no member objected to Haughton's suggestion that the best way they could aid the anti-slavery cause would be to collect goods for the Boston Bazaar, since there had been so much talk among the Dublin Quakers not only of the Garrisonians' heretical religious views but their social radicalism. Webb agreed to act as Secretary on the condition that he would do nothing contrary to his former course, and he promised to do nothing on behalf of the Society without its prior approval. The President of the Ladies' Committee, moreover, was Mary Edmundson, sister of Eliza Wigham of the Edinburgh Female Anti-Slavery Society; Mary Wigham had married Joshua Edmundson of Dublin, himself related to Webb by marriage, and though Webb and she were not close before 1851, as a result, thought Webb, of his reputation as a heretic, she became a "staunch advocate" of Garrison and the A.A. S.S. With his wife Hannah acting as a "sort of wire-puller" to help

2. Eliza Wigham spent many holidays in Dublin, and eventually settled there in 1893. Eliza Wigham. A Brief Memorial (Dublin, 1891); R.D. Webb to A.W. Weston. Dublin, 11/12/1859. Ms.A.9.2.v.24, p. 117. Weston Papers; R.D. Webb to A.W. Weston. Dublin, 23/4/1852. Ibid., v. 26, p. 27. Related to both the Smeal and Wigham families in Glasgow and Edinburgh, Mary Edmundson served as another point of contact between the Scottish and Irish Garrisonians; as, of course, did the visits of Eliza Wigham to Dublin.
Mary Edwards, Webb was correct in prophesying that the Ladies' Society would be the more active of the two. The formation of the two Societies was testament to the remarkable degree of Irish interest in the fugitive slaves, as was the initial willingness of the Dublin Quakers to participate in organised anti-slavery, for the first time since 1838, with men whose views they had deep misgivings about. The tensions existing between the disparate elements in the Societies were not long, however, in revealing themselves. There was even a disagreement between Richard Allen, who did not want the societies disrupted by the introduction of "new grounds of dispute", and Webb, who felt that no good could come of any anti-slavery organisation which continually tried to "run away" from the "shadows" of these disputes. Allen had long been inactive in the abolition cause, and now he saw an opportunity of drawing for the first time on the philanthropic traditions and financial generosity of his fellow Quakers. If this was a powerful allurement to men who had constantly complained of a lack of both funds and support, Webb for one was not overly impressed by this sudden influx into the anti-slavery ranks. Disenchanted with the Friends as a sect, and with the stance they had taken on anti-slavery in the 1840's, Webb saw the members of the new Societies as "anti-slavery

1. Dublin Quakers whose attendance at Garnet's meeting marked their first public involvement with anti-slavery included Samuel Bowley, Jonathon Pim, Adam Woods, John Moss, William Doyle, Alexander Allen, and George Pullar. There is no evidence that such men represented a younger generation of Quakers who had little personal experience of either the divisions in Irish-Quaker history, or of the anti-slavery events of the 1840's.

2. There had been so few donations from Dublin to the Boston Bazaar in 1850, that these were sent to Cork for posting from there.
babies", part of whose education would consist of tests of their commit-
ment to true abolitionist principles.¹

In his next article in the Standard, Webb suggested that it would be better for the slave if the B.F.A.S.S. were "extinct". Two members of the Committee of the Gentleman's Society protested and argued that they should try to promote the cause independently of both the A.F.A.S.S. and the A.A.S.S. This, Webb replied, was impossible, and he at once drew up another letter which was specifically designed to test the sincerity of the Dublin Quakers by seeing how they responded to state-
ments that the close intercourse between British and American Friends had underlined the abolitionist testimony of the former, and that the epistles sent from the Dublin Yearly Meeting in 1851 had shown as much concern for the sufferings which the Americans would undergo in withstanding the operations of the Fugitive Slave Law, as for the slaves who would be its main victims.² Furthermore, as well as opening up what Allen had called "new grounds" for dispute, Webb invoked old ones when in his next letter to the Standard, he recalled the Indiana

¹ Letter from Webb, in National Anti-Slavery Standard, 20/2/1851.

² Ibid., 9/5/1851. Webb had told Mary Estlin that the Dublin Quakers would find this letter even "less agreeable" than the one criticizing the B.F.A.S.S. R.D. Webb to M. Estlin. Dublin, 18/5/1851. Ms. A.2.5.2.5, p. 03. Weston Papers. For the epistles Webb referred to, see, "Epistles of the Yearly Meeting of Ireland, 1822-1853", pp. 111-117. Ms.A.25. Friends' Library, Dublin. The Epistles to New York, New England, Indiana, Baltimore and North Carolina stressed the Irish Friends' concern for the difficulties which the Fugitive Slave Law imposed on American Friends: that to Philadelphia expres-
sed a more direct sympathy for the slaves themselves.
controversy and rebuked the "power of sectarianism" that he claimed had dictated the behaviour of British Friends on that occasion.¹

Webb was not, in short, prepared to countenance any attempt by the Dublin Societies to support all the various types of anti-slavery organisation, on the grounds that those who professed such "liberality" usually ended up as Liberty Party supporters.² He regarded the Dublin Societies as a type of anti-slavery "normal school",³ composed of pupils whose diligence he suspected, but who could, he hoped, at least be given the first steps towards an abolitionist education. There were elements of both condescension and sheer provocation in Webb's attitude.⁴ He saw himself as someone who had been tested in the trials of the 1840's, dealing with people who had failed those same trials and had come late to anti-slavery, with a concern for the slave whose sincerity had yet to be tested, and with a knowledge of both slavery and anti-slavery that was minimal. Webb's willingness to risk alienating the Dublin Quakers in this way stemmed from a combination of circumstances in 1851. He had developed a growing resistance to what he considered to be the intellectual restraints imposed by his membership of the Quaker

¹. Letter from Webb, in National Anti-Slavery Standard, 16/5/1851.
². This had become a kind of short-hand expression for Webb, used to denote any kind of abolitionist who was prepared to use political action.
³. Ibid., 7/10/1851.
Church. Throughout the 1840's, encouraged by Lucretia Mott, he had read wisely on religious matters, finding in the life and writings of Joseph Blanco White, for example, inspiration for what he saw as his own quest for religious freedom. In the early 1840's, Webb abandoned Quaker forms of dress and speech and by 1846 hardly ever attended a Meeting. His official withdrawal from the Society came in November 1851, when, in a letter which echoed his complaints to the Glasgow New Society, he informed the Dublin Friends that he would see "no halfway between the absolute submission to the authority claimed by the Church of Rome in the matter of religious opinion and the unshackled judgement which protestants sometimes assert for themselves." It was a decision that was not taken lightly—it came as a shock even to Lucretia Mott—since Webb was aware of the "social advantages" of

1. It was with Lucretia Mott of Philadelphia that Webb discussed most often his views on the Society of Friends. See A.D. Hallowell (ed.) The Life and Letters of James and Lucretia Mott (Boston, 1884), pp. 209-211, 226-229, 274-280. Webb attached a high importance to his contacts with the Garrisonians in Philadelphia, but was convinced of the greater importance of the Boston over the Philadelphia Bassar. He was unaware of the regional rivalries between the Garrisonians in the two cities, but when the latter asked him to organise contributions, he saw this as a good way of circumventing any British reluctance to help the Boston Bassar: Webb proposed that goods could be sent from Britain to Philadelphia, and from there sent on to Boston. R.D. Webb to A.W. Weston. Dublin, 5/7/1849. Ms.A.1.2.v.24,p.81. Weston Papers.


belonging to the Friends. Yet arguably, it was his awareness of the likelihood of his impending withdrawal from the Society of Friends that helps to account for the confident, almost swaggering tone of his letters to the Standard in the summer of 1851. This, and Webb's excitement at finding a group of abolitionist allies elsewhere.

Webb had first corresponded with the Bristol eye-surgeon, John Bishop Estlin in 1845, when he sent a copy of Weld's Slavery As It Is, to aid in the preparation of Estlin's pamphlet, A Brief Notice of American Slavery. Webb appreciated that Estlin had been offended by Garrison and Wright's religious views, and by Garrison's contacts with the Chartists in 1846; it is probable that Webb was also aware that Estlin had objected to Haughton's conduct with respect to Irish Unitarians in 1846-47. Yet he was glad to welcome such a man as Estlin into the anti-slavery ranks, and in general, the two men thought highly of each other.¹ They met in 1846, though seldom thereafter until 1850.

It was in 1851, however, that closer contacts were formed after Webb had visited Estlin and his daughter Mary in Bristol. Webb found that though there were great differences between him and the Unitarian Estlins, in terms of religion, class and nationality, he was somehow able to overcome these. Certainly the opportunity of a stronger friendship with the Estlins attracted Webb, who had frequently complained that his views had restricted the size of the social circle he had access to in Dublin itself. One of the main reasons why the Estlins proved so congenial to Webb was that he found that they paid more than lip-service to anti-slavery; indeed he described them as "by far the most efficient co-adjutants the cause has got... on this side of the Atlantic"; and, referring to Estlin's wealth, he added that this too was "a great help".

Lucretia Mott had demurred at Webb's decision to leave the Society of Friends partly because she feared that he would thereby reduce the effectiveness of his abolitionism. His withdrawal from the Quakers was, however, accompanied by a display of great energy in the abolition movement.

In February 1848, after long discussions, the Bristol and Clifton Auxiliary Anti-Slavery Society had decided to donate to the Boston


2. Her warnings that his children would suffer most from his decisions seems to have impressed Webb more, especially in light of evidence that his son, Alfred, was confused by what he learnt at Meeting, and what Webb said in criticism of those parts of the Bible which seemed to him to advocate erroneous doctrines regarding warfare and slavery. As early as 1843 Webb had stopped reading the Old Testament to his children; little that Garrison said about the Bible would, therefore, personally offend Webb. R.D. Webb to E. Quincy. Dublin, 16/8/1843. Ibid.
Bazaar as well as to its parent Society, the B.P.A.S.S., but it was not until February, 1851, when Mary Estlin was voted onto the Committee, that discussions started within the Society as to the relative merits of the A.A.S.S. and the A.P.A.S.S. Though it was decided on this occasion to pledge themselves "exclusively" to neither of the American Societies, eight months later, after they had been addressed by Mrs. Chapman, the decision was taken to disaffiliate with the B.P.A.S.S.; this was ratified in November 1851, when the word "auxiliary" was dropped from the title of the Society.¹ Webb was immediately anxious to help Mary Estlin in her attempts to manoeuvre the Bristol and Clifton Society into supporting the A.A.S.S., and with George Thompson, wrote a series of letters to the Bristol Examiner, reviving the old accusations about the conduct of the A.P.A.S.S. in 1840.² Both Sturge and, in particular, John Scoble, were incensed at the allegations made against the New Organisationists in America and Britain, and a flurry of pamphlets appeared in the Spring of 1852, in which Scoble,

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1. "Minute Book of the Bristol and Clifton Auxiliary Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society", entries for 3/2/1848, 6/2/1851, 12/2/1851, 2/1/1851, 11/1851. Estlin Papers. The strong resentment shown by the Bristol abolitionists about the failure of the B.P.A.S.S. to answer their complaints officially, provides further evidence of the importance of regional feelings in British Garrisonianism. Mary Estlin had been sending goods to the Boston Bazaar since 1844, and relations with the American Garrisonians were further strengthened through J.B. Estlin's friendship with his fellow Unitarian, S. May Jr. M.W. Chapman to M. Estlin, n.p. 1851.

Tsppen, Quincy and Webb all argued the merits of the split in the anti-slavery organization, the accusations about the theft of the Emancipator, the circulation of the letter against Collins, and the women's rights issue. Several times in the past Webb had shown himself to be concerned about the validity of the Garrisonian interpretation of the 1840 divisions, and he had even requested Quincy to send him any book which sought to defend the Tsppenites on that occasion.

In 1852, before he could write his pamphlet, he had to have a copy of Right and Wrong in Massachusetts sent to him, and to have Kendall Phillips explain once more the incident concerning the Emancipator. Tappan saw Webb's pamphlet as another example of the wild and unsubstantiated allegations that typified the Garrisonians in any debate, but for Webb it was a matter of urgency to try to counteract the moral revulsion felt by many in Britain against the Garrisonians with a

1. E. Quincy, An Examination of the Charges of Mr. John Scoble and Mr. Lewis Tappan against the American Anti-Slavery Society (London, 1852); Lewis Tappan, Reply to Charges Brought Against the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society..., with an Introduction by John Scoble (London, 1852); R.D. Webb, The National Anti-Slavery Societies in America (London, 1852).


5. Webb knew that even Estlin objected to Garrison's participation in the Bible Convention, though he added that Estlin's "bigotry" was of the "most modified" kind. Estlin's reaction was also shared by some members of the A.A.S.S. Anne Warren Weston told his daughter that Wright's "blasphemous Epithets and Expressions
re-statement of the highly-charged accusations concerning theft and dishonesty on the part of the American Tappanites and their British allies. Webb deleted many expressions from Quincy's pamphlet before printing it, since he felt these would be interpreted in Britain as purely malicious, and he insisted that he had sometimes "done violation" to his own indignation in order to present his viewpoint fairly, but this for the British Garrisonians was not a time for confessions of doubt, or for any equivocation: new allies had to be secured and the Tappanites rebutted. It was, for Webb, a period of enormous exhilaration, when his whole life as an abolitionist seemed to change from the time when his activities had been "easy sailing", consisting entirely of letters to the Standard and to his American friends; now he was "up early, in bed late, composing, printing, corresponding and engaged in the thick of the conflict with New Organization and Clerical Abolitionism." The aim was to reach an audience wider than the Estlins and their supporters in Bristol itself. Since 1840, Webb's audiences at the anti-slavery meetings in Dublin had been most frequently composed of the lower classes. By 1851, he had concluded

shock my own soul to the centre. It may be true that the Liberator is not the accredited ostensible organ of the association but its being the property, and under the control of and auspices of the President, identifies it with the out and out A.S. Societies, whether there or here". A.W. Weston to M. Estlin, n.p. 7/9/1850. Ms.A.7.3.p.4. Estlin Papers; see also, R. Quincy to R.D. Webb. Dedham, 9/3/1848. Quincy/Webb Letters.

1. R.D. Webb to A.W. Weston. Dublin, 23/4/1852. Ms.A.9.2.v.26, p. 27. Weston Papers. Webb's deletions in Quincy's pamphlet were small; they included the statement that a meeting of the A.P.A.S.S. could safely be held in Charleston, South Carolina.


3. The A.A.S.S. donated money towards the printing of Quincy's pamphlet, and Estlin financed that of Webb. Mary Estlin distributed both pamphlets to anti-slavery societies throughout Britain. Mary Estlin to A.W. Weston. Bristol, 27/9/1852. Ibid., v. 26, p.61.
that in Ireland, little could be done with the "ignorant, priest-ridden multitude": if, however, a "higher class", the "intelligent and the educated", could be "leavened" with anti-slavery principles, much could be done to offset the "mawkish sectarian way" New Broad Street had conducted the anti-slavery movement.¹

Possibly under the influence of Estlin, who had always stressed the importance of enlisting the aid of the wealthy and the educated, Webb began to consider proposals of setting up an anti-slavery newspaper. This, it was felt, would capitalize on the interest which Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin was arousing in Britain.²

It was Estlin who took the initial steps towards founding the paper. He established the Anglo-American Anti-Slavery Association in June, 1852 in order to organize it, and at first it was thought that Webb would furnish only a monthly leader,³ but by August it had been agreed that Webb would print and edit it for a while.⁴

The paper first appeared in October, 1852. Estlin had informed Garrison in June, 1852 that they did not mean to act "antagonistically",

¹ R.D. Webb to [Anne Warren?] Weston. Dublin, 14/10/1851, ibid., v. 25, p. 128.
² In 1841, John A. Collins had suggested that the H.A.S.S. committee start a newspaper devoted to anti-slavery and along the lines of the British India Advocate; Webb replied there was insufficient financial backing and general support for such a proposal. R.D. Webb to J.A. Collins. Dublin, 24/3/1841. Ms.A.1.2.v.11, p. 125. Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison.
and, therefore, would simply "ignore" both the B.F.A.S.S. and the Reporter initially: the Estlins also prepared the editorial statement declaring that the Advocate would not pledge itself to any particular abolitionist Society in America.¹ This clearly did not please Webb in Dublin since in the second issue he defined the paper's "position" by writing that he was "entirely convinced" of the "wisdom" of the A.A.S.S. in abstaining from all political action, on the grounds that many of the provisions of the American constitution had a "pro-slavery bearing."²

Webb was immediately persuaded by the Estlins to modify this statement, and in the third issue of the Advocate, he explained that he had never meant to imply that the paper would be pledged to the A.A.S.S. The Estlins were paying for the publication of the Advocate, and Webb was in no position to disagree with them: he promised, therefore, to his readers that the paper would follow an "independent course".³ This was applauded by the American Garrisonians themselves, who decided later against raising funds for the Advocate in order not to give the

¹ Anti-Slavery Advocate, v.1, n. 1, October, 1852.
² Ibid., v. 1, n. 2, November, 1852.
³ Ibid., v. in. 3, December, 1852. Mary Estlin described the statement in the second issue as "very uncalled for". Much as she admired the "disunionists", she insisted that "we are not going to be dictated to even by them", and promised that the activities of "voters as well as non-voters" would be given space in the Advocate. W. Estlin to M.W. Chapman, Bristol, 10/1/1853. Ms. A.9.2.v.27, p. h. This had always been Estlin's intention, and it was applauded by other abolitionists in Bristol. See, A. Tribe to [A.W. Heaton?] Bristol, 28/9/1852. Ibid., v. 26, p. 28.
appearance that it was the organ of the A.A.S.S. Mary Estlin felt that the Advocate should act circumspectly, in order to persuade readers that it was not put out by "simpletons" or dishonest people; in this way, she hoped, people would become Garrisonians without realising so, until they had been "thoroughly inoculated". If this statement did not suggest that the Garrisonians either in Britain or in America enjoyed a particularly high reputation, they were the first to support and welcome it as an important means of combatting their Tappanite rivals. Whatever the contradictions in the first three editorials in the Advocate, Webb's friends hardly needed reassuring that he would lose no opportunity of placing the A.A.S.S. in its "true light" before the public. The Advocate, if not "pledged" to the Garrisonians, would reflect Webb's attachment to the A.A.S.S., while it would remain "independent" in the sense that Webb had always interpreted that word: namely, sympathetic to the Garrisonians, yet willing to carry material favourable to non-Garrisonian abolitionists, and highly conscious that though read by Garrisonians and often addressed specifically to them, it would remain also responsible and responsive to a broader range of its British readership.


Estlin had initially envisaged the Advocate as lasting only for one year, but edited and printed in Dublin, financed in Bristol and published monthly in London, it lasted until 1862, the most important organ of British Garrisonianism. It was seen by Webb as a means of instructing the British public in the facts of American slavery and American anti-slavery, in order that their fears of the A.A.S.S. might be alleviated, and the attractions for them of the B.P.A.S.S. be reduced. These objectives, moreover, were seen as being even more important by the Garrisonians following the impact in Britain of Harriet Beecher Stowe’s Uncle Tom’s Cabin.

Webb’s own response to this book and its author provides one illustration of the complexities of the British reaction as a whole. He read it first in the National Era, and predicted for it a wide popularity in Britain. He thought the book was ably and "racyly written", but suspected that the hero was perhaps too much of a "miracle" of "goodness" and "natural refinements". There were, however, he was pleased to note, many other examples of the "negro race" introduced in the book, and "ample allowance" had been made for the influence of slavery upon them.

1. Webb had offered to help pay for it, but it was the Estlins who paid for any losses. The Estlins contributed much material for the early issues, but, increasingly, the bulk of the writing and editing was done by Webb himself, a task which grew increasingly large especially after Estlin’s death in 1855. Webb noted in 1857 that Mary Estlin considered it her particular function in the anti-slavery cause to pay for the Advocate. R.D. Webb to S. May Jr. Dublin, 9/1/1857. Ms.B.1.6.v.6, p. 45. May Papers.


It has been suggested that the novel upholds notions of Negro inferiority, and that the implications of Negro stupidity, docility and dependency were attractive to a society which had been influenced both by Carlyle and the abolitionists' claim that, under slavery, the Negro had been systematically deprived of religious instruction and education. Webb had condemned Carlyle's views, yet as his comments on Uncle Tom suggest, he, who had pointed out for fifteen years the horrors of slavery, could hardly avoid assuming that slavery had horrific effects on its victims.¹

The notion of Negro passivity, moreover, was clearly not consistently held by an author, one of whose major themes was the attempt of slaves to escape from slavery, and the conception of the slave as a victim of horrible cruelty, risking great dangers to escape from the hounds and the lash, evoked great sympathy among the readers of the book, as it had done ever since the passing of the Fugitive Slave Law. Webb himself appreciated that the fugitive could become a symbol of the evils of slavery, and, in 1857, requested Gay in New York to send him casts of fugitives and bloodhounds for the Advocate.² The Dublin Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society went further than this and began collecting donations for Societies set up to aid the fugitive slaves in Canada.³ Webb did not

1. The Dublin abolitionists refused to accept that Negroes were innately inferior, though Webb for one did feel that because of slavery and social prejudice, most American Negroes were "rather foolish and impractical; hence, perhaps, the rather patronising attitude which he often displayed to Remond and Douglass. R.D. Webb to R. Quincy. Co. Wicklow, 11/6/1851. Webb/Quinney Letters.


contribute towards this fund, insisting that the essential task was to aid the A.A.S.S. destroy slavery. However, the attraction of schemes to aid the fugitive was that they appealed to those who wished to do, and perhaps be seen to do, something positive for the widely celebrated victims of the Fugitive Slave Laws, and in a way that was not bedevilled by such Garrisonian accompaniments as, disruption of the American Union, vituperative attacks on rival anti-slavery organisations, and heretical attacks on the Clergy and Bible.

The first issue of the Advocate had expressed the hope that readers would not let the feelings aroused by Uncle Tom's Cabin to vanish without attempting to help the American abolitionists who were trying to abolish the evils "so powerfully exposed in that book". The motto of the Advocate was a quotation from the novel, and the first issue carried reviews from the London Standard criticising statements made in the Times that Mrs. Stowe was guilty of special pleading and emotionalism. Webb also criticised comments which Gavan Duffy had made in the Nation, ridiculing what he felt were the book's exaggerations. Yet Webb was

Harris to escape. The Quaker characters in the book had helped fugitives before, and one of their number, Phineas Fletcher, who had married a Quaker and is described as being less pious than the others, is prepared to countenance the use of arms to help George escape, and if the other Quakers do not approve of this, their reproaches are not excessively severe. Simon Halliday is prepared to help fugitives even if this means risking imprisonment, though he insists that it is slavery not the slaveholder, that he finds abhorrent.

2. See, Lord Denman, Uncle Tom's Cabin, Bleak House, Slavery and the Slave Trade, reprinted from the Standard (London, 1853), Hakens was praised for ridiculing the abolitionists in Bleak House but thanked for praising Mrs. Stowe's book in Household Words.
3. The Dublin University Magazine, v. IX, November, 1852, pp. 600-601, described the novel as an impressive and graphic exposure of the evils of slavery.
troubled because the novel, while describing slavery, said little of the efforts of those who wished to see it abolished, and because, in his opinion it evinced "a disposition" towards colonization. He also soon reached the conclusion that her influence in Britain would not "serve the true labourers" in anti-slavery work, to whom she had not been "magnanimous nor even quite mannerly". She had been invited to Glasgow by the New Organisation there, and had told Smeal that she disagreed "in some important respects" with the anti-slavery party to which he belonged, while in Edinburgh, she told Eliza Wigham of her support for the Free Soil Party, her disagreement with Garrison on many issues, her admiration for and gratitude to the A.A.S.S., her conclusion that Garrison's Liberator was an independent journal, and her opinion that donations could be made to the Boston Bazaar without fear that they would be misappropriated. At the time of Mrs. Stowe's visit to Edinburgh, there was yet no Tappanite organisation in the city, and it was the Garrisonians therefore, who benefited and could take the credit for her visit. Eliza Wigham indeed found no difficulty in accommodating herself to Mrs. Stowe's views. Richard D. Webb on the other hand, was astonished at the fact that Mrs. Stowe had been "hardly touched by the turmoil of the abolition

1. Letters from Webb, in National Anti-Slavery Standard, 22/7/1852, 30/9/1852; see, H.B. Stowe, Uncle Tom's Cabin, pp. 442-455.
4. "Extracts of letters received from Eliza Wigham during H.B. Stowe's late visit to Edinburgh containing some account of Anti-Slavery conversations held with her." Port. 58(4). Friends' Library, Dublin; the extracts are in Richard Allen's handwriting, indicating the interest shown by the British Garrisonians in her abolitionist affinities.
warfare". The irony of his additional comment that "we are for ever imagining that everybody sees the dust that we make — and that everyone's ears are filled with the noise of the shouting," confirmed, however, that the remarkable dexterity with which Mrs. Stone avoided identifying herself with either the old or new organizationists, if offending Webb, provided yet another reason for her success in Britain.

Harriet Beecher Stone did not visit Ireland, much to the disappointment of abolitionists in Cork, Dublin and Belfast. However, meetings were quickly arranged in Ireland which demonstrated the interest she had evoked there. In Dublin, a meeting was held in the Rotunda, in February, 1853, which was addressed by Allen, Webb, Naughton, Hadden, John O'Connell, William Webb, who with his wife Maria had moved to Dublin, and representatives of the "educated classes" which Webb had wished to interest in the movement, including the Rev. Dr. Abelschoner, later professor of German at Trinity College, Dublin. An address was read from the citizens of Dublin to the people of the United States, and William Webb gave notice that a fund was being collected to present a "suitable testimonial" to Mrs. Stone.

George Thompson, while fearing that Mrs. Stone had fallen into the hands of those who wished to denigrate the A.A.S.S., found consolation


in the fact that she had aroused the public conscience concerning American slavery, and it was upon this that the Old Organizationists relied for the success of their efforts. This was precisely the dilemma that the Garrisonians had to face. Madden, partly because of his travels abroad, had played little active part in Irish anti-slavery since 1841. John O'Connell had similarly been inactive since the demise of the L.N.R.A., while William and Maria Webb in Belfast had come out against the A.A.S.S. It was Maria Webb in particular whom Webb described as being a prominent advocate of the "penny offering" which had been sponsored in Britain by way of tribute and thanks to Mrs. Stowe. Webb considered this to be "a very paltry moral bellows" and argued in the Advocate that the sales of her book had already demonstrated the esteem in which she was held in Britain, and that the money could have been more effectively sent to the anti-slavery organizations in America than to someone who before she wrote her book, had shown little interest in the anti-slavery movement. Webb's views were not shared, however, by the Dublin Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society, who sent to Mrs. Stowe, one hundred and twenty sovereigns. Though Webb wrote that penny collections were being made in "several parts" of Ireland.

it is likely that the bulk of the money was raised in larger donations from the middle class groups who had come into the anti-slavery movement in larger numbers after 1850. These had provided the numerical and financial support that had allowed an anti-slavery Society in Dublin to publish yearly reports for the first time since the late 1820's, and in donating money to Harriet Beecher Stowe they were indicating their gratitude to a writer who had appealed on many levels to their interest in anti-slavery. William Webb was careful to point out that half of the money collected would be used by Mrs. Stowe for the anti-slavery cause as she thought best: those who gave could, therefore, be assured that their desire to do something practical, for example in providing education for fugitives, would be met. Romantic interest in the plight of the fugitive was expressed in donations of aid to help the Negro escape, while the fears which earlier demands for "immediate, unconditional emancipation" had aroused were avoided by concentrating on the need to educate him for that freedom.

1. H.B. Stowe, Uncle Tom's Cabin, pp. 455-458; speech by Haughton at Mechanic's Institute, in Freeman's Journal, 13/4/1853. Webb's fears that Mrs. Stowe supported gradualism were strengthened by the Stafford House Address, written by Lord Shaftesbury, and resulting from the close connections which Mrs. Stowe established with British aristocrats such as Lady Byron. In the Advocate of March, 1853, Webb welcomed this with "grateful emotion", but in his letters to America, defended those such as the Estlin who had objected to its gradualist leanings. M.W. Chapman, S.H. Gay, and S. May, Jr., all disagreed with him, and insisted that evidence of support from an influential section of the British public should be welcomed: Mrs. Stowe herself supported such an interpretation. National Anti-Slavery Standard, 11/4/1853, 29/7/1853; S. May Jr. to R.D. Webb. Boston, 31/3/1853. Ms.B.1.6.v.4, p. 53. May Papers; S.H. Gay to R.D. Webb. New York, 8/5/1853. Ms.A.1.2.v.22, p. 36. Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison; Letter from Mrs. H.B. Stowe to the Ladies' New Anti-Slavery Society of Glasgow (Glasgow, 1854), p. 2. Webb was eventually persuaded that Mrs. Stowe regretted any impression she had given that she advocated educating the American Negroes with a view to encouraging their voluntary removal to Liberia. Anti-Slavery Advocate, v. 1, n. 7, April, 1853.
Since 1840, the Irish abolitionists had known that there were many who were prepared to donate both money and gifts to help the anti-slavery cause while remaining, by preference, ignorant of the details of the disputes between the Old and New organizations; and that there were others who were alienated by what they did know of both abolitionist aims and rhetoric. The existence of these often over-lapping groups helps to explain the continued support for the B.F.A.S.S. in Cork and Belfast and Dublin after 1841, since their existence operated to produce a form of ideological inertia which manifested itself in favour of the status quo. They were on tap in that their support could be invoked on special occasions, particularly, and significantly, when the Negro abolitionists Ramond and Douglass visited, but they remained essentially anti-pathetic to the Garrisonians. Their assertiveness within the anti-slavery

1. In Youghal, for example, the Anti-Slavery Society, was presided over by the Quaker, Abraham Fisher, and largely consisted of members of his family. In 1845 it called on all Christians to join in an "emphatic and united" protest against slavery, and remained an auxiliary to the B.F.A.S.S. "Report of a Meeting of the Committee of the Youghal Anti-Slavery Society, 10/3/1845". Ms.Acc.1048. Boston Public Library; Annual Reports of the B.F.A.S.S. (London, 1847, 1855, 1859).

2. On the other hand, there were smaller pockets of people interested in working for the Boston Bazaar which did exist outside the main areas already mentioned. One of these was Tralee, where Mary Jameson worked very much on her own within her own community. In 1844, Webb asked M.W. Chapman to thank her for her help, but advised her to keep her letter "the plainer the better, for it is not likely she knows much of the ins and outs"; R.D. Webb to M.W. Chapman, Dublin, 3/11/1844. Ms.A.1.2.v.14, p. 68. Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison.
movement accompanied the development of certain aspects in British attitudes to the Negro which Carlyle's writings had indicated and encouraged, and to events within America itself which made even Webb question in 1850, the role of abolitionists who continued to refrain from political action. Harriet Beecher Stowe's visit to Britain did not create these developments in Irish anti-slavery, but it certainly catered to and strengthened them.

They were also not unique to Ireland. Thus the free-produce movement, which Webb felt was a feeble anti-slavery "instrumentality," experienced a new growth in support in Britain as a whole precisely because it appealed to those who wanted to personally disassociate themselves from the kind of cruelties which had been described in Uncle Tom's Cabin. Similarly, just as Henry H. Garnet's visit to Dublin had occasioned the formation of the two Dublin Anti-Slavery Societies, so the Glasgow Female Association for the Abolition of Slavery was formed in 1851 following the visit to Scotland of Dr. James Pennington and his advocacy there of the New York Vigilance Committee. The difference was that while the Glasgow Society protested specifically against those Old Organizationists

1. Anti-Slavery Advocate, v.1, n. 3, December, 1852. In 1853, Webb attended the B.F.A.S.S. annual meeting in London to see Mrs. Stowe, but was disappointed to hear her husband, Professor Stowe, proposing the free-produce movement as a means of abolishing slavery. Letter from Webb, in National Anti-Slavery Standard, 11/6/1853. His uncertainty as to how to react to Mrs. Stowe and the interest she evoked in Britain was not lessened by the often ambiguous reactions of the American Garrisonians to her. S. Pugh to S.H.Gay, Bristol, 5/11/1852. Gay Papers.

2. The Slave (Newcastle) championed the free-produce movement and was discussed in the Report of the Dublin Ladies' Society, p. 8; Cf. "Minute Book of the Bristol and Clifton Auxiliary Anti-Slavery Society", entry for 21/7/1853.
who "openly advocate abolition on infidel principles" and who entailed all those who cooperated with them in the "odium" which attached to their "irreligious views", the Dublin Ladies' Society contributed to the Ladies' Society in Toronto for the Relief of Coloured Fugitives, the Rochester Bazaar and the Boston Bazaar. The abolitionist papers which were circulated among its members were the National Anti-Slavery Standard, the National Era, Frederick Douglass's Paper, the Anti-Slavery Advocate, the Slave and the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Reporter. The most active officials in the two Societies were Webb, Haughton, Allen, Maria and William Webb, Hannah Webb and Mary Edmundson. All but Haughton were related to each other, and though they represented a remarkable disparity of views, they were able to accommodate each other's opinions and act within the same Society. Dublin, as opposed to Glasgow, could not provide reserves of interest in the anti-slavery movement large enough to sustain rival anti-slavery organisations, while there was as yet no inclination to form such organisations. Webb, for all his disdain and provocation, remained a member, while Maria Webb and others were given the opportunity of setting up separate subscriptions under the aegis of the Society for the fugitives in Canada.

Webb, as Secretary of the Ladies' Society, was able to obtain from the Committee, support for his protest against the A.P.A.S.S., which in 1851 absolved the visiting Hungarian Louis Kossuth from the necessity of declaring his views on the slavery issue in America, while the statement

in the 1852-1853 Report, that the Boston Bazaar was the "most central and important" of the American Bazaars indicated that the Garrisonians were still able to use their important positions on the Dublin Committees in order to provide some basis of organizational support for the Old Organizationists in Dublin. Indeed, the formation of the Dublin Societies was warmly welcomed by the Garrisonians in Boston. ¹

The situation of the anti-slavery movement in Ireland, however, remained far from satisfactory. The Dublin Ladies' Society continued to send money to Rochester, and to support a plethora of anti-slavery "instrumentalities" which in his opinion diverted energy and funds from the A.A.S.S. In Dublin, Maria Webb continued to try to persuade people to give to the Rochester Bazaar, which Webb noted was felt safer by those who shared the "dread of heresy" which was once more spreading through the anti-slavery ranks in Dublin. Mary Edmundson, the President of the Ladies' Society, remained "staunch for Boston", but Webb found it increasingly hard to keep himself from wishing Maria Webb "the kingdom of Heaven". If this remark denoted exasperation rather than anger on Webb's part, this was in part because by 1853 only roughly one sixth of the Dublin money went to Rochester. ² The Cork abolitionists

². R.D. Webb to A.W. Weston. Dublin, 10/11/1853. Ms.A.9.2.v.27, p. 76. Weston Papers. Articles to the value of £130 were forwarded to the Boston Bazaar in 1852; those sent in 1853 were valued at some £116, and in this year goods to the value of £21 were sent to Rochester. Only the Ladies' Society of the two formed in 1851 survived, essentially because much of the work done, involved the collection and parcelling of gifts. The size of the donations was larger than the H.A.S.S. had ever collected; this was evidence of Quaker generosity, and further reason why Webb should not break with the two Societies. Anti-Slavery Advocate, v.1, n.6, March 1853.
continued to send some of their gifts to Rochester and the Belfast abolitionists, alternating from year to year, also sent the proceeds of their sewing circle to Rochester in 1853. Mary Ireland's words in that year indicate the growing need of Irish anti-slavery. Writing to H.W. Chapmam, she passed lightly over the decision taken by Maria Webb in 1846: "Owing to a resolution entered into when we commenced working, but which I had entirely overlooked if I had ever understood it, the product of the Sewing Circle goes this year to Rochester." She commented too on her distaste for the vituperation of interclass abolitionist disputes: "your differences of opinion and the bitter words passing between parties grate harshly on the ear that listens for the harmony of reforming voices." And, especially, she made clear her disquiet at Garrisonian attacks on Douglass: "This defection of Frederick Douglass. Is he indeed treacherous to his long tried friends? His efforts in elevating the coloured people, were they well directed? The work seems a good one in itself..." Mary Ireland remained in communication with the A.A.S.S. in Boston, and wrote anti-slavery poems which she sent for sale at the Dawson. But anti-slavery agitation itself had collapsed in Belfast. Calder reported some increase in interest following the publication of Uncle Tom's Cabin, and Standfield had organised a meeting in January, 1853, to present an address to Mrs. Stowe. The A.A.S.S. and Garrison himself warmly welcomed


the Belfast meeting, but the Belfast abolitionists themselves again admitted that there were severe obstacles in the way of any attempt to create sustained abolitionist activity in the city. When the American Garrisonian, James Miller McKim, visited Ireland in the autumn of 1853, he found that his meetings in the city were poorly attended, and indeed, following his visit, the Belfast Anti-Slavery Society broke up. A meeting had been called by Standfield and Calder to discuss proposals that a lecturer be invited to try to stir up further interest, but this was poorly attended, and one speaker suggested that no lecturer was needed since Uncle Tom's Cabin had done the essential work of raising interest in the movement, and that instead, steps should be taken to raise funds to pay lecturers in America itself. Since no proposals were forthcoming concerning the methods of raising money, Standfield and Calder resigned, in the hope of encouraging younger men to take over. Mary Ireland felt that it would take a lecturer of Thompson's stature to make the Society "give any hope of a Phoenix from the ashes," but saw that it was precisely this lack of funds which had always bedevilled the secretaries who had consequently found themselves welcoming any speaker who expressed a willingness to visit the city, including Garrison, Douglass and Scoble. Especially


2. A recent exception had been in the case of Dr. Pennington, who had wanted to visit Belfast, but had not been invited, since there had been rumours among the abolitionists there, stemming perhaps from the criticisms made by the G.E.S. against Pennington, that he had been "untrue to the cause".


following the departure of Maria Webb for Dublin, moreover, the Belfast
Indies' Society had become increasingly moribund—Mary Ireland described
its members as "more willing to work than to rouse others—quiet domestic
females."¹ Webb concluded that anti-slavery had collapsed as soon as
the textile interests in Belfast realized the implications of their
commercial relations with the Southern States.² F.A. Calder had also
began to refer to Belfast as one of the "favourite towns" of the American
slaveholders. Noting the importance for Belfast mercantile life of the
muslin trade with America, and of the importation of both American cotton
and sugar from the Spanish Colonies. Calder commented that the city was
almost totally silent on the subject of American slavery, a state of
affairs which the Clergy, still affected by the "pestilential influence"
of the Free Church of Scotland, did nothing to change: in 1853, enclosing
a list of ministers to whom had been sent anti-slavery material, he
could describe only four as "staunch abolitionists.³

Webb, of course, still had his close contacts with the Estlin's in
Bristol, offering to print any document issued by them and to share the
cost of doing so. Like them, moreover, he was, initially, extremely
impressed with Scoble's replacement as the Secretary of the B.P.A.S.S.,

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   Weston Papers.

2. This concept accompanied similar strictures against John Bright, whom
   Webb identified with the Manchester Cotton Spinners, and of whom Webb
   said that his "Christianity is a commercial one. The marginal notes
   of his Bible are the prices of yarn, and the prospect of the cotton
crop." Anti-Slavery Advocate, v.1, n.5, February, 1853. For Bright's
   angry rejoinder and Webb's reply, see, ibid., v.1, n.10, July, 1853.
   Webb's quarrel with Bright may have made him more ready to denounce
   Bright's opposition to the Crimean War. Webb remained suspicious of
   the sincerity of Bright's abolitionist views, and publicly
   declared so, though when Webb died Bright acknowledged that he had
   received from Webb much valuable information on Irish affairs. J.
   Bright to T.H. Webb. Rochester, 7/1/1873. Port.30(29). Friends' Library,
   Dublin.

   Exp.S.18.c.24/131; c.21/137; F.A. Calder to C. Charnessovov. Belfast,
   19/10/1853, 22/12/1853. Ibid., v.29/21; c.29/21.
Louis Chauzovzow, and especially with his apparent willingness to give coverage to the A.A.S.S. and their supporters' activities in the Reporter. Webb met Chauzovzow in London with the Estlins, McKin, William H. Brown and George Thompson in 1853, and though he was not hopeful that there could be any fruitful alliance with a Society which still contained men such as Sturge, he appreciated the importance of the Secretary's position as a paid and full-time official who naturally wielded a great deal of influence over not only the Society as a whole, but his Committee. Though Webb's initial enthusiasm for Chauzovzow was shared by Estlin, Thompson and McKin, the American supporters of the A.A.S.S. were obviously concerned less with the Secretary's virtues than with the impropriety of their British allies conspiring with the men who had abetted in the crimes of 1840. Webb was anxious to avoid giving the impression that he was moving into an alliance with Broad Street, and it was almost with relief that he welcomed the break-down in the rapprochement at the B.F.A.S.S. conference in October, 1854. The relations between Chauzovzow and the British

1. "Minute Book of the Bristol and Clifton Ladies' Auxiliary Anti-Slavery Society", entries for 4/3/1852, 18/3/1853. The Bristol Society on the latter occasion described "the pleasure it experiences at again coming into sympathy" with the B.F.A.S.S.

2. Webb visited the Estlins on three occasions in Bristol, in 1852.


supporters of the B.F.A.S.S. illustrated the chronic weaknesses and divisions in the British anti-slavery movement in the early 1850's. His early attempts at appeasing the hostility of men like Webb failed, while a core of influential opinion within the B.F.A.S.S., represented by Joseph Sturge, continued to oppose any attempt to establish better relations between the Broad Street Committee and the A.A.S.S. and its British support. There was evidence of support in Ireland for closer ties: Mary Ireland, for example, welcomed any attempt to avoid the old "accusations and recriminations". But Webb suspected this type of response precisely because it seemed to him to indicate a lack of commitment to true anti-slavery principles.

British support for the A.A.S.S., moreover, was itself further divided. Societies in Manchester and Leeds added to its lack of geographical coherence, and this proliferation of small, weak units of Old Organisationists, made it impossible for any unified response to Chasenovszol's well-meaning overtures to evolve. As a result, bickering squabbles broke out among the British Garrisonians, after Thompson was accused in the Anti-Slavery Advocate of having betrayed the A.A.S.S. in his desire to cement a closer relationship with the B.F.A.S.S. The ill feeling eventually died down in 1856, but it indicated the level of frustration felt by the Garrisonians at their lack of organizational

1. Anti-Slavery Advocate, v.1., n.15, December, 1853; v.1, n.16, January, 1854; v.1, n. 17, February, 1854. Webb, however, retained contacts with the Manchester abolitionists through his relative, Rebecca Moore. Frederick Chasson, Thompson's son-in-law, established the Manchester Anti-Slavery Union in 1853, though this collapsed after allegations that it retained contacts with the A.F.A.S.S. Later in the Spring of 1854, Chasson and Thompson established the North of England Anti-Slavery Association in Manchester. Ibid., v. 1, n. 21, June, 1854.
strength, and their failure to channel the upsurge of British interest in anti-slavery after 1852 into sustained support for the A.A.S.S.1

While Parker Pillsbury, the visiting American Garrisonian, rather unrealistically interpreted Chernevovon's actions as representing the last efforts of a defunct organization to cling to existence on the coat-tails of the A.A.S.S. and its British allies, the Broad Street Committee did share in the general loss of support for the traditional British anti-slavery societies which had occurred by the mid-1850's. American slavery had become enmeshed in the complexities of the American party system, while the Crimean war absorbed the interest of the British public. For Webb, the excitement of 1852 quickly vanished. Abandoning his non-resistance principles at the outbreak of the war, he denounced the Peace Party in Britain as "absurd". American events continued to depress him, and the


2. In contrast to his earlier musings during the sugar duties debate, Webb wrote that "to expect any number of human beings to be non-
Nebraska Bill provoked his comment that while "we may be corrupt here... the depravity and abandonment of principle are amazingly palpable and undisguised" in the United States. Though the anti-slavery movement in Dublin had never seemed so well-furnished with financial and numerical support, Webb was far from sanguine about the long-term prospects for anti-slavery in general and the Old Organizationists in particular, while Maria Webb remained—as McKim discovered—in "the gall of bitterness" against the American Garrisonians, and while so much of the anti-slavery activity that did exist would, in his opinion, do little to secure the abolition of slavery.

resistant to all offences and to all attack, is in the last degree absurd. The Peace Man or the Quaker who does not object to the policeman or the magistrate has no business to object to the soldier...It seems to me that the spirit in which this war is undertaken in England is as unobjectionable as is possible in any such cases." In April, 1855, Webb confessed that he had been as "deluded" as anyone about the Crimean War and its tendency to end oppression in Europe. Letter from Webb, in National Anti-Slavery Standard, 21/4/1855.

Chapter Seven

Alternatives to O'Connell:
three Irish leaders and their response to American slavery
Largely influenced by the English radical, Joseph Barker, then he met in 1816, Webb became increasingly critical of the English aristocracy, especially after the famine.¹ He criticised it for its opposition to the anti-slavery movement, which he saw as being essentially middle-class in origin and composition.² In England, Mrs. Stone was popular not only with larger numbers of the middle-class than the British abolitionists had ever before interested in the anti-slavery cause, but with influential sections of the British aristocracy, including Lady Byron and the Duchess of Sutherland. Webb praised these two, but remained suspicious of the sincerity of the aristocratic interest in the anti-slavery movement, and was contemptuous of those who welcomed it unquestioningly. He derided the "abject deference and prostration before our titled aristocracy", which he saw as being the "bane of philanthropic efforts in England", and recalling that in 1816 he met the Garrisonians when they were "out of favour with the great people", he concluded that if Mrs. Stone had visited Dublin, she would have been "taken up with such a" Lord Carlisle and Archbishop Whately.³ When Lord Shaftesbury presided over B.P.A.S.S.


meetings while continuing to support the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, which the Advocate denounced as perhaps the "most formidable auxiliary to the slave power," this convinced Webb that the Broad Street abolitionists were selling out the slave in return for the prestige that might accrue to them from their association with the English nobility. ¹

It has been suggested that Mrs. Stone's extraordinary success with the aristocracy is partly explained by the social cachet she afforded through of associating with a literary celebrity whose work they could interpret as confirming the evils of republicanism and democracy, and as providing evidence that an aristocracy of caste was more reprehensible than one of social class. ² Webb's own admiration for America was declining in response to the many frustrations and delays involved in the abolition of slavery, and in response to the evidence which suggested to him that both North and South were involved in an inhuman conspiracy to keep the Negro enslaved. As early as 1847, he had remarked that while the abolitionists had once looked on America as the "glory of the world" and the "envy of surrounding nations," they had learned "pretty fast" that the United States were no longer a Republic; rather, they were "an oligarchy of the worst kind under the form of a commonwealth." ³

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1. Anti-Slavery Advocate, v.1, no. 25, October, 1854; V. 1, no. 28, January, 1855. Webb also protested against a meeting of the Turkish Mission Aid Society, which was held in Dublin in 1855, on the grounds that this was affiliated to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

2. Ibid., "Scottish Factor", pp. 507, 519; Furnas, Goodbye to Uncle Tom, p. 60.

Webb became increasingly disillusioned with the United States, and to "lotho" the spirit of mind which prevailed there; he felt that it "quenches the hope of mankind". ¹ When serfdom was abolished in Russia, a country which he had hitherto seen as epitomizing the worst of oppression in the world, it caused him to reflect further on the evils of the United States. In consequence of this, Webb began to revise his opinions of the merits of republicanism, and democracy itself. America's war with Texas, the passing of the Fugitive Slave Law, and the Nebraska Bill, all of these led him to suspect that the democratic process might simply involve the manipulation of the ignorant voter by unscrupulous politicians. ²

By 1859, Webb opposed any extension of the suffrage in Britain on the grounds that the evidence from America suggested that this could only lead to demagoguery and a sweeping decline in moral standards. ³ This involved, therefore, a remarkable reversal of precepts, stemming paradoxically, as James H. McKin suggested, from the fact that for twenty years Webb had been reading American anti-slavery newspapers, which were not, as the American abolitionist put it, a "source to go to for impartial statements" concerning American politics and politicians with respect to "freedom and slavery." ⁴ Webb not only lost his faith in the


excellence of American institutions, he became convinced of the
superiority of those in Britain.¹

The existence of American slavery had long been used in Britain
as an illustration of the evils of democracy,² and this indeed had pro-
vided a motive for many British reformers to see it abolished.³ Webb
in 1852 could not be described as dwelling on the enormities of Negro
slavery merely in order to expose the shortcomings of democracy or
republicanism.⁴ However, his disenchantment with America was growing
stronger at precisely the time when larger numbers of the Irish middle-
classes were interesting themselves in American slavery, and many of
these had been active in Famine relief work. Critics of O’Connell had
dissented from his sweeping condemnations of American society, and follow-
ing the aid that was sent from America, there was a strengthened determin-
ation to separate criticisms of America, from condemnations of slavery
itself. At the meeting held in the Rotunda to advertise the subscription

1. Though earlier convinced of what Cobden had written of the superiority
of American institutions in England, Ireland and America (Edinburgh,
1836), Webb wrote in 1859 that in America, the "truly patriotic and
enlightened portion" of the citizens were completely dominated by
politicians and slaveholders, who were able to exploit the mass of
the electorate. In no other way could Webb understand the continued
existence of slavery which the abolitionists had exposed as a moral
evil. For all his criticisms of the English aristocracy, Webb
also developed a more sympathetic liking for the class structure in
England which he felt gave British Society a coherence and degree
of civility which was absent from America. R.D. Webb to S.H. Gay.
Dublin, 7/1/1849. Gay Papers.

2. See, review of Henry Carey, The Slave Trade, Domestic and Foreign.
Why it Exists and How it may be Extinguished (London, 1853), in
Dublin University Magazine, v.XLIV, October, 1854, pp. 455-461; cf. arti-
cle on the American ballot, in Freeman’s Journal, 3/1/1854.

3. Thistlethwaite, Anglo-American Connection, chapters, 2,3,4.

fund for Mrs. Stowe, this feeling was strongly in evidence, as it was in
the Address from the citizens of Dublin.¹ Ten years earlier, Webb would
have shared their views about American charity, philanthropy and liberality;
now he could do so only with great misgivings. As Webb had told the
Dublin Quakers, so Allen reminded the audience at the Rotunda meeting
that sympathy for the slave should take precedence over sympathy for the
Americans who had to cope with slavery.

The sentiments expressed at this meeting were shared by many in
Ireland at this time.² While Irish emigration and gratitude towards
America created an interest in the country and in visiting American
speakers, it was difficult for the abolitionists to dwell on the evils
of American slavery when so much good-will otherwise existed towards
the United States.³

1. *Freeman's Journal, 15/2/1853; Anti-Slavery Advocate, v.1, no. 6, March, 1853.* One resolution declared that "the people of the United States were endeared to them by the ties of relationship, and the interest they had always evinced for the Irish people, and as they were convinced that slavery was disgraceful to the country and dangerous to the stability of her institutions, they deemed it their duty to hasten its abolition." The proposer of this motion declared he would not have been present if "one word of a hostile or disrespectful character was uttered against the American people". The Address specifically recalled the aid America had sent during the famine and the "asylum" America had offered to many Irish immigrants.

2. Closer means of communication between America and Ireland were established in the 1850's, with the laying of a transatlantic cable in 1857, and the building of a transatlantic packet-station at Galway, a proposal which Horace Greeley had supported during his trip to Ireland in 1851. *Freeman's Journal, 1/8/1851, 31/7/1857, 23/8/1859, 31/8/1858; Irish Quarterly Review (Dublin, 1851), v.1, n. 2, June, 1851, pp. 270-301.*

3. See for example the reaction of the *Freeman's Journal, 9/12/1851,* to Haughton's letter to Kossuth. The paper felt that Haughton had made too sweeping charges against the entire United States, and had ignored the resistance in the North to the Fugitive Slave Law. Haughton had advised Kossuth not to go to America; the *Freeman's*
Later, Webb hoped that because of the growth of nativist sentiment in America, an antipathy would develop in Ireland towards the United States, and cited the opposition of the Freeman's Journal to rumours of an imminent American attempt to annex Ireland, as evidence of this. The Freeman's Journal was indeed angered by the growth of nativism, and by the emergence of the Know-Nothing and Native American parties, but it saw these as another "form of Protestant Ascendancy", drawing on the anti-Catholicism fostered by the Massachusetts abolitionists, whose religious bigotry had frequently been assailed in the Irish press. Even when confronted with evidence of the development of nativist sentiment in the South, the Freeman's Journal, while deploring what it saw as the common stance taken by both slaveholders and abolitionists against the Irish-American Catholics, continued to trace nativist prejudice to Protestant, abolitionist, New England, and insisted that Haughton's suggestion that the Irish were resented in America because they were pro-slavery, essentially misinterpreted the basic animus of the American abolitionists' attitude towards the Catholic Irish.¹

There was even resentment in Catholic circles against the woman who had triggered off the upsurge of British interest in anti-slavery. It had been reported in England in 1853 that the Reading Committee of the Holy Inquisition in Rome had condemned Uncle Tom's Cabin as a

Journal replied that "with much greater force" Haughton might have asked him not to set foot in England, which was stained with Irish blood. The good-will also manifested itself in the equanimity which, for example, the Freeman's Journal, 23/12/1852, regarded rumours of a proposed annexation of Cuba by the United States: Webb would have viewed this as a deplorable accession to the Slave Power.

"damnable and pernicious work", and the **Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin**, containing statements offensive to Roman Catholics, was informed by the assumption that it was the natural province of the abolitionist to remonstrate only with the Protestant Churches on the slavery question.

To the extent that this necessarily involved criticisms of the latter, however, the book did appeal to those sections of Irish Catholic opinion which had expressed resentment against what was considered to be the anti-Catholic bias of much abolitionist literature.

Even the Catholic abolitionist, R.R. Madden, objected to what he called the "exceedingly offensive" remarks on Roman Catholicism which appeared in Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Sunny Memories of Foreign Lands*. He accused her of "sneering" at O'Connell's religious practices, and

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1. Reynolds's Newspaper, 18/9/1853. I have found no evidence to corroborate the statements made by F.J. Klinberg ("Harriet Beecher Stowe and Social Reform in England", in *American Historical Review* 1853, XLIII, n.3, April 1938, p. 545, fn. 11) that Uncle Tom's Cabin was ever placed on the Catholic Index.


3. Freeman's Journal, 4/6/1853. The review of her novel, *Dred*, in the Freeman's Journal, 19/9/1856, commented that it displayed all of the "vulgarity, profanity and the inconsistencies" of Uncle Tom's Cabin, and left her open to the charge of "gross misrepresentation". The novel's theme of slave-insurrection persuaded the reviewer that Mrs. Stowe should dwell on the difficulties involved in abolishing American slavery. The review was taken from the London Times, which had in turn taken it from the Edinburgh Review. In the Journal of the Church of Ireland, the United Church Journal and Literary and Theological Review (Dublin), v. 2, November, 1856, pp. 346-347. *Dred* was reviewed and was found to underline the shortcomings of the Voluntary system, since if a Minister was appointed to a congregation and supported by their voluntary contributions, there was little he could do to denounce a sin such as slavery, if he happened to be appointed...
commented that her remarks on the "idolatrous images of Saints" dis-
played the extent to which she had been swayed by the "contemptible
prejudice of English bigotry". Her conduct, he claimed, showed a dis-
graceful degree of religious prejudice, which looked both like "treason"
to a great cause and a great obstacle to those who were labouring to
persuade the Irish-Americans to support it. He greatly admired both
her and Uncle Tom's Cabin, but he felt that the way she had allowed
herself to be influenced by such anti-Catholic Englishmen as the
Reverend Hugh McNeill of Liverpool, could only undo the success she had
had in England.

to a slaveholding congregation, in which event, religion became
an "active agent of pure evil". For an earlier Irish short story
about slave insurrection in Jamaica, see, Maria Edgeworth, The

1. H.B. Stowe, Sunny Memories of Foreign Lands (2 vols. London, 1854),
v. 1, pp. 24-26, v. 2, pp. 325-326, 408-409. R.R. Madden to J.
1838, McNeill had claimed that the West Indies were to South
Carolina what Ireland was to Spain, and rebuked the British aboli-
tionists for their inconsistency in attacking Negro slavery but
not the enslavement of Ireland to Rome. Rev. H. McNeill, Anti-
Slavery and Anti-Popery: A Letter Addressed to Edward Cropper

2. Harriet Beecher Stowe's praise for the clearances carried out on
the Duchess of Sutherland's estates led to severe recriminations
in Scotland. Rice, "Scottish Factor", pp. 496-497. The
Freeman's Journal, 5/8/1851, had deplored the Scottish clearances,
but Mrs. Stowe's support for them never became an issue in Ireland.
There was a persistent strain of anti-Catholicism in Mrs. Stowe's
family. The series of anti-Catholic lectures delivered by her
father Lyman Beecher in 1834 incited the Boston mob to sack the
Ursuline Convent at Charlestown. In 1863, her brother Henry Ward
Beecher demanded of an audience in Edinburgh, who the worst
enemies of the Negroes in America were. The answer chanted by
the crowd—"The Irish Catholics". "The Irish Catholics," had
also been offered, if, one suspects, with slightly different
motivation, by O'Connell himself.
In Madden's absence from Dublin, the Irish abolitionist who was perhaps most sympathetically viewed by Irish Catholics was Haughton, who had not only supported the Repeal Movement, but, with his fellow Unitarians, had welcomed the increased grant to Maynooth College. However, even Haughton came under attack in 1853, when, with Richard Allen he was accused of having obtained control of the Dublin Mechanics Institute in order to introduce anti-Catholic books and socialist lecturers, and generally attempt to subvert the Catholic religion. This accusation indicated the existence of a growing resentment within the Mechanics' Institute, of the board of Management, and though the dispute was settled in August, 1854, the incident revealed the latent hostility felt even towards Haughton, and the suspicions held about his views of the Catholic religion. ¹ Haughton continued to appeal to Irish Catholics to uphold their anti-slavery traditions as these had been outlined for him by Madden, but these in turn tended to be accepted as evidence of Irish Catholic liberality and philanthropy, which could be used to berate detractors of the Catholic religion, whether in Britain or America.

There was little Haughton could do to allay the suspicions of newspapers.

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There was little Haughton could do to allay the suspicions of newspapers.

1. Freeman's Journal, 13/1/1852, 22/7/1853, 14/3/1854, 6/5/1854. Among the anti-Catholic activities which Haughton was accused of sponsoring was a series of lectures on the history of prostitution. Catholic sensitivities had, of course been heightened by the wave of Protestant protest that swept Britain following Pope Pius IX's Bull of September, 1850, dividing Britain into Bishoprics, at the head of which was the Archbishop of Westminster. Haughton had protested against the bigotry which this Bull occasioned.
such as the *Freeman's Journal*, while Webb for one remained both contemptuous and fearful of the Catholic Church.¹

There was a strong tendency for the abolitionists to assume that anti-slavery was in essence a Protestant activity. In the *Anti-Slavery Advocate*, for example, Webb commented on the close relations between America and Britain, that made British attempts to seek the overthrow of slavery almost a neighbourly obligation:

"There are probably no two nations doing so much by which each is moulding the character of the other as England and America. It would be surprising were it otherwise; similar in origin, language, and numerous municipal institutions; closely united by ties of consanguinity and commerce, and being the two great Protestant nations, their virtues and vices cannot but be reciprocally imported".²

This assumed that there was in existence a transatlantic community of interests, which was specifically Protestant in nature. The *Freeman's Journal*, in contrast, felt that as a consequence of the largely Catholic emigration from Ireland to America during and after the famine, the United States were "largely Irish". Garrison had told Webb in 1845 that it was the hostility of the Irish-Americans towards England which in part led them to support the South on all the issues of the day, but it was precisely the spectre of this hostility that the *Freeman's Journal*

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¹ Garrison did insist that he was opposed to any form of sectarian bigotry, but he shared with Webb the view that the Catholic Church could be taken as epitomising the type of intellectual subserviency which he detested. He was also given to expressing this view more graphically than Webb. Thus he felt that Protestants who accused a man of infidelity solely on the grounds of differing interpretations of the Bible, should crawl to Rome and "submissively kiss the great toe of the Pope". *Proceedings of the A.A.S.S.* at its Second Decade (New York, 1854). This was said during a debate on the aristocracies of Europe, in which category Edmund Quincy placed the Catholic Church. The abolitionist Theodore Parker expressed a racist contempt for both Irish-Americans and Negroes in the 1850's. H. Fallman, "Theodore Parker and the Abolitionist Role in the 1850's", in *Journal of American History*, v.LII, 1974, pp. 677-681.

was raising. Any castigation of the Irish-Americans on the part of the abolitionists would not be welcomed by those in Ireland who saw them as the custodians of Ireland's future, and, for the present, the donors of remittances to aid their less-fortunate countrymen at home.

Webb himself was specifically accused of wasting his energies in futile attempts to free the American slaves while remaining complacent about an even greater instance of slavery at home: the enslavement of the Irish people to "the arch enemies of human souls and his ready coadjutors, the Pope and the Jesuits". This accusation was accompanied by a flurry of related criticisms against Garrison's excesses in America, the union of church and state in England, which allowed for the suppression of dissenters and hence the flourishing of Popery, and the existence of legislation favouring the interests of the aristocracy and landed interests in Ireland. Webb replied to these by defending both Garrison and the British abolitionists, who he saw as being aware of British abuses, including the enslavement of the Irish to Rome, and anxious to reform any social evils in Britain. British abolitionists, he claimed, could not be accused of sharing a "maudlin philanthropy", while, if evils undoubtedly existed in Europe, at least the people were in "undisturbed possession of personal liberty", their wives, children and earnings:


never could the same be said for the American slave. 1

During the 1840's, conditions in Ireland had appalled the abolitionists themselves, and had provoked Madden to complain that he knew of no instance, including that of Negro slavery in the United States and the West Indies, where "justice" had been more "signally outraged" than in Ireland. 2 Frederick Douglass also reacted with horror to the conditions he encountered on his visit. Douglass wrote two letters to Garrison from Ireland, one describing his own feeling of elation at finding himself in a community which did not treat him as an inferior being, the other describing the scenes of poverty and want he had witnessed. Before he arrived in Dublin, Douglass confessed, he had supposed that much of what he had read in America about Irish conditions had been designed for the base purpose of casting aspersions on the British philanthropists, and for drawing attention away from the evils of American slavery. He still believed that Irish poverty was exploited

1. Anti-Slavery Advocate, v.1, n. 8, May, 1853. Webb later, however, rebuked Lord Shaftesbury for comparing the Roman Catholic Church with American slavery, though Webb's response should perhaps be seen in the context of his conviction that nothing was as bad as Negro slavery, and his general suspicions about Shaftesbury's abolitionist principles. Ibid., v.1, n.16, January, 1854.

2. R.R. Madden to W.S. O'Brien, Lisburn, 8/5/1846. Ms.436. Smith O'Brien Papers, National Library of Ireland. The Irish-born Chartists, Fergus O'Connor and Bronterre O'Brien, insisted in the 1840's that the abolitionists of Britain were thoroughly hypocritical in seeking the overthrow of slavery in America, while they remained indifferent to oppression at home. Both retained a strong hatred for American slavery, however, O'Connor seeing its presence as a disgrace to true republicanism. R. Harrison, "British Labour and American Society", in Science and Society, v. XXV, 1961, pp. 308-310.
by many in America who cared nothing for the Irish, but this belief did not lessen his horror at finding that the worst stories he had read were hardly exaggerated. He visited the huts of the poor in Dublin and its vicinity, and wrote of the misery, poverty and ignorance he had witnessed there:

"Men and women, married and single, old and young, lie down together, in much the same degradation as the American slaves. I see much here to remind me of my former condition, and I confess I should be ashamed to lift up my voice against American slavery, but that I know the cause of humanity is one the world over."

These were not the words of a man blind to the miseries of the Irish people. Douglass felt that the immediate and perhaps the main cause of the poverty in Ireland was intemperance, and whatever the merits of this analysis, it was an indication of his gratitude for his reception in Ireland, and of his desire to do something in return for the Irish people, that he took such an active part in temperance activities while in Ireland, though he had been warned that it was such an unpopular cause that he would injure his advocacy of anti-slavery if he continued to do so.

1. F. Douglass to W.L. Garrison. Montrose, 26/2/1846, in Porter (ed.) Douglass, v. 1, pp. 138-142. For a similar observation by another visiting Negro abolitionist, see, S.R. Ward, Autobiography of a Negro... (London, 1855), p. 379. Ward saw the "force" of blaming "Saxon rule" and the "Papal religion" for the conditions in Ireland, but also felt that much of the degradation there was "self-imposed". Like the Negroes, Ward wrote, the Irish had an obligation to rise above their present state.

2. In a lecture written after his visit to Ireland, Douglass suggested that the poverty in the south of Ireland was in part due to three causes: "Catholicism, the lack of foreign admixture, and diet". "Thoughts and Recollections of a tour in Ireland". F. Douglass Papers. Library of Congress. He remained an advocate of the Home Rule Movement, though he refused to attribute all of Ireland'sills to English misrule and denied that the relation of Ireland to England in any way resembled that of the Negro Slaves to other Americans before 1863, since he felt that Ireland under Parnell was in a position to dictate to England. F. Douglass to editor, Boston Pilot, n.p. 30/7/1886. Douglass Papers.

3. Haughton and Allen were Vice-Presidents of the Irish Band of Hope Union, which merged with the Irish Temperance League, and which in
Douglass in later years frequently drew parallels between the Negroes and the Irish, as for example after the New York Draft riots, when he rebuked the Irish rioters and reminded them that the penal laws against Catholicism had been as bad as the laws against Negroes in the border States, and that the persecuted Irish should have no truck with those who sought to persecute another people. Similarly, O'Connell's statement that the history of Ireland could be traced like the blood of a wounded man through the snow was frequently used by Douglass, not only to indicate the evils of Negro slavery, but to remind the Irish-Americans that they, the victims of oppression, should not themselves inflict it on the Negroes in America.

Webb felt that Douglass had exaggerated somewhat the extent of Irish beggary, and was perhaps less sensitive than the Negro abolitionist to the dilemmas involved in asking the Irish people, who had "so many wrongs to redress, and so much suffering to relieve at home" to even be aware of wrongs and oppressions abroad. Webb remained adamant that to see the

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2. Douglass, "Thoughts and Recollections". Farewell Speech of Mr. Douglass previous to embarking on board the Cambria... (London, 1847), p. 7. In the North Star, July, 1848, in an article entitled "What are the Coloured People doing for Themselves", Douglass quoted the motto of the L.N.R.A., "Hereditary Bondmen, know ye not, Who would be free, themselves must strike the blow?".
Irish poor as being more oppressed than the slaves in America, was the last refuge of pro-slavery sophistry in Irish and Irish-American thought. And, as Webb's preferences swung in favour of British institutions, these reinforced his animosity towards those who replied to British anti-slavery remonstrances with reminders of the poverty and oppression in Ireland. One of his initial complaints against Uncle Tom's Cabin was that, in his opinion, it had made the "virtual admission" that the Negro Slaves were not in a worse position than the labouring classes in Europe.

This issue had long troubled the abolitionists. Their promotion of texts such as Weld's Slavery As It Is, showed that they hoped to arouse public opinion against the horror of slavery partly by exposing the physical enormities inflicted on the slaves, in the form of whipping, branding, mutilation, and the separation of families. But here Webb suspected that the abolitionists were in danger of being trapped by their own techniques as publicists, for he did not believe that the physical cruelties of slavery constituted the moral evil of slavery. If the Irish were not whipped or branded, he agreed that in terms of housing, clothing and feeding, they were probably worse off than the majority of American slaves. Such statements in turn clearly provided ammunition for those who demanded that British abolitionists concentrate on social problems in Britain itself.

1. See, conversation between Miss Ophelia and St. Clare, in H.B. Stowe, Uncle Tom's Cabin, pp. 230-238.

Wendell Phillips had argued in 1848 that if the free-produce movement were to advocate the dis-use of all the produce of unpaid labour, it should also apply this rule to produce for which the labourer was unjustly paid—a category, suggested Phillips, that included the Irish linen workers.¹ In December, 1853, the question had been debated within the A.A.S.S., after Joseph Barker had argued that the American abolitionists, if they wished to convince, say, the Irish immigrants that they were speaking the truth about slavery, should recognise the essential similarities between slaveholders and the European aristocracy. Both Quincy and Phillips countered this by insisting that while the "tyranny" of the aristocracy was to be deplored, it could not be compared with that of the slaveholders. Furthermore, Phillips added, the abolitionists should expect no aid from English or Irish immigrants since there had been "no oppressed class of one nation that had ever been able to sympathise cordially, or to do anything effectively" for the sufferers from a different oppression under another government.²

These issues took on a renewed significance in the 1850s because in that decade critics of British abolitionist "interference" in American slavery increasingly pointed to injustices within Britain itself, in order to suggest both that these were worse than American slavery, and


2. Proceedings of the A.A.S.S. at its Second Decade, pp. 37, 51-57; for a similar expression of this sentiment, see H.R. Helper, The Impending Crisis of the South (New York, 1963), pp. 149-150.
that the British abolitionists preferred to indulge their reform interests in what the Nation had sneeringly referred to as "transatlantic philanthropy". When the Stafford House Address provoked a reply from the wife of ex-President Tyler, accusing the abolitionists in Britain of wilful blindness to oppression at home, this was interpreted as a logical extension of the Monroe Doctrine by the Dublin Evening Mail,¹ and though the American abolitionists pointed to Lord Shaftesbury's interest in factory reform as evidence against such a charge,² allegations continued to be made, especially following the depredations of the famine and the attendant migrations from Ireland, that the Irish were prominent among those groups who could be described as the "white slaves" of England, neglected by the hypocritical abolitionists.³

The abolitionists, for their part, were depressed at the evidence which continued to suggest that their efforts in Ireland were proving to be ineffectual, since the Irish-Americans, whose numbers had been swollen by the famine emigration, remained hostile to abolitionism.⁴ The Dublin abolitionists sought to remedy this by attempting to inculcate anti-slavery principles among actual or potential emigrants. The Dublin Ladies'...
Anti-Slavery Society printed in 1852 an "Address to Irish Emigrants" bound for America, which pointed out that the slaveholders refused to employ paid labourers in the Southern States since they preferred to keep slaves. The emigrants were warned that even if they went to the North, they would encounter there hostility, not only to the Negro, but to the abolitionists. The Address pointed out that "most" of the members of the Dublin Ladies' anti-slavery Society were Quakers, and the emigrants were asked to express any gratitude they felt towards the Irish Quakers for their work in famine relief by "befriending the persecuted coloured man, both free and enslaved". This pamphlet, four pages in length and written in English, was circulated at emigrant depots and shipping agents' offices in the South of Ireland. It claimed that efforts to influence the Irish emigrants were the most useful work the Irish abolitionists could engage in. Yet despite its careful wording, stressing that slavery was hostile to the economic interests of the Irish emigrants, its relevance to the needs and occupations of emigrating Irish families was questionable at best. Webb favoured any attempt to communicate anti-slavery sentiments to the emigrants, since he was aware of their potential importance in American politics and since the work gave a unique dimension and importance to Irish abolitionist activity at a time when many English abolitionists were concerned rather to show visitors to the Great Exhibition that Negro slavery was deplored in Britain. But he was not confident that appeals to Irish

1. To Irish Emigrants who are going to the United States of America. (Dublin, 1853). A Copy of this pamphlet, and many others relating to the Irish Anti-Slavery Movement, is contained in the Samuel J. May Collection, Cornell University Library.


3. Ibid., v. 1, n. 5, February, 1853.
emigrants would in any way influence their response to slavery and abolitionism when they arrived in the United States. He wrote that this response, rather, was shaped by the hostility of the immigrant to the Negro, arising out of "competition with them in the labour party," and by the tendency of the "most ignorant and depressed people to assume airs of superiority when they come in contact with others whom they are able to browbeat in return." In addition to this he feared that the Irish Roman Catholics were the tools of "the rampant, audacious, insolent" clergy in Ireland: this, he felt, made the Irish in America even more susceptible to the manipulations of a political structure which was in any event thoroughly corrupted by slavery.

Not only were the Irish abolitionists faced with constant reminders that the Irish Address of 1842 had failed to significantly alter the reaction of the Irish-Americans to the slavery issue, but in 1849, Webb's complaints against the Catholic Clergy of Ireland were intensified when allegations were made that one of the signers of that Address, Father Theobold Mathew, had failed himself to adhere to its entreaties while in the United States.


2. Webb felt it was not "unreasonable" for a Roman Catholic in America to claim that his church was opposed to abolition, but he argued that this was the fault of the Priests, and that the Catholic laity in a country with a free press were not necessarily disposed to intolerance. As an example of the illiberality of the Catholic Church in America, he cited Bishop Hughes's hostile reaction to Kossuth, which angered him as much as had the A.F.A.S.S.'s decision not to force Kossuth to declare himself on the slavery issue. Letter from Webb, in National Anti-Slavery Standard, 8/1/1852. All Hallows Seminary was established in Ireland in 1842 to train Catholic Missionaries for America. One of these, T.J. Butler, went to Chicago and there became a strong advocate of abolitionism. He served as chaplain to Malligan's Irish Brigade in the Civil War.
Father Mathew had been the single exception to Webb's comment that the Irish Roman Catholic clergy were opposed to reform of any kind: indeed, he often cited their reluctance to aid him, in illustration of his general thesis. The contacts between Mathew and the H.A.S.S. Committee had been made through their mutual interest in the temperance movement, and Haughton, Allen and Webb were all active in organizing the testimonial fund arranged for him in 1845. ¹ The Dublin abolitionists were delighted at Mathew's apparent opposition to the exclusion of the female delegates in 1840, and clearly felt that they had scored a major coup in securing Mathew's support and signature for the Irish Address in 1842. ²

Webb, however, remained distrustful of Father Mathew. Like Wright, he regarded the temperance pledge as a form of superstition, ³ and regretted what he considered to be Mathew's subservience to his Catholic superiors. ⁴

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1. Freeman's Journal, 1/3/1845. Father Mathew to R. Allen. 29/10/1844; 21/12/1844. Allen Family Letters, Friends' Library, Dublin. Webb asked the American abolitionists to donate to this testimonial, though Haughton hoped that all the American contributions would come from the "free states". H. Clapp to R. D. Webb, Lynn, 30/1/1845. Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison; letter from Haughton, in Freeman's Journal, 8/2/1845.

2. Webb had sent Mathew a book on anti-slavery in 1840, hoping to interest Mathew in the abolition movement, and to encourage Mathew to attend the 1840 conference in London. Mathew replied that the book was not at all necessary to "excite" his abhorrence of American slavery. Although he had had a "fixed resolution" to go to London, his activities in Ireland regretfully prevented him from doing so. Draft of a letter from Father Mathew to R. D. Webb. Mathew Papers. Capuchin Archives, Co. Donegal.


He stated that the abolitionists had little to hope from Father Mathew who would in the last resort be "led by priestly influences." In 1843, he reported that at James Haughton's house, Father Mathew had promised in a "half-joking way" to go to America and persuade the Irish-Americans to support the anti-slavery movement. Webb feared that if he did go he would be surrounded by "pro-slavery priests, and political leaders, who would do as they pleased with him." The abolitionists in Boston were later to pay tribute to the prophetic nature of this remark.

When Mathew landed in the United States, Garrison in the Liberator invited him to attend a meeting of the A.A.S.S. to celebrate the anniversary of the West Indian Emancipation Act. Mathew did not reply to this, and Garrison called on him in person to see if the invitation, which had been printed in the Liberator with the Irish Address, had been seen by the Irish priest. Garrison concluded from this interview that Mathew considered that signing the Irish Address had subjected him to a great deal of opprobrium, that the Bible contained no specific injunction against slavery, and that he would not be justified in turning aside from his mission "for the purpose of subverting Catholicism".

In a series of open letters to Mathew in the Liberator, Garrison sought to remind him that if he persisted in this attitude he could only benefit

slavery by encouraging the Irish-Americans, over whom his influence was
great, that they were justified in taking no part in the anti-slavery
movement. His controversy with Garrison had important repercussions
on Mathew’s stay in the United States, while the Garrisonians in Boston
clearly thought it would have a disastrous effect on their efforts
to win the support of the Irish-Americans. The report of the interview
suggested that Mathew considered the Garrisonians to be anti-Catholic
and this would further strengthen the animosity of the Irish-American
community towards them. It had been a tremendous fillip for them when
Mathew had signed the Irish Address, and now they felt their cause had
been abandoned by a man whom they had considered not only an important
ally, but a laudable philanthropist in his own right. It is this sense
of betrayal and disappointment which explains the bitterness of Garrison,
who had signed his first letter to Mathew, “yours for universal liberty
and sobriety.”

Life Told by his children (4 vols. New York, 1895-1899), v. 3,
pp. 247-290. Garrison’s sons suggest that Mathew was warned against
the abolitionists by Bishop Hughes, with whom he stayed before going
to Massachusetts.

2. Judge J.H. Lumpkin, President of the Temperance Society of Georgia,
had invited Mathew to visit. When the A.A.S.S. re-published the
Irish Address, Lumpkin demanded to know if it was genuine. Finding
Mathew’s reply unsatisfactory, Lumpkin withdrew the invitation.
Mathew accepted an invitation to take a seat in the House of Represen-
tatives, but a resolution to offer a similar privilege produced heated debate in the Senate, where Southern Senators protested
that Mathew was an ally of O’Connell’s. The motion, backed by
Henry Clay, eventually was carried. Later in 1851, Mathew spent
three months in New Orleans.

3. This was evident from the way that visiting American abolitionists
such as Douglass and Wright had expressed an interest in meeting
Mathew.

Not all American abolitionists, however, thought Garrison had acted wisely or charitably towards Mathew, and Amos Gibbons for one felt that neither the slavery nor the temperance cause had been furthered by the affair. 1 There was also some disagreement among the Irish abolitionists. The H.A.S.S. committee, like the A.A.S.S. had appreciated Mathew's value for the anti-slavery movement, and had sent copies of his autographs for sale in the Boston Bazaar. 2 They, too, felt that Mathew had betrayed both them and the cause. Haughton in particular was incensed at Mathew's conduct, while Webb declared that he was not at all surprised since it was one thing to sign an anti-slavery Address in Ireland, and another to remain true to anti-slavery principles in America. 3 Hannah Webb was much more sympathetic to Mathew, and the incident distressed her more than any other abolitionist controversy since that between Garrison and Rogers.

Though she conceded that Garrison was "right", she wished that he had been able to give some consideration for Mathew's advanced years, his benevolence and his "infirmities of mind". 4 In Father Mathew's home


2. R. Allen to M.W. Chapman, 1/12/1841. Ms.A.9.2.v.15,103. Weston Papers. Mathew seems to have realised his importance to the abolitionists, and commented that his opinions on American slavery had been often on the tables of the Boston Bazaar. This remark, made in the letter of 20/11/1846 already cited, also shows that at this time he expressed no concern about his identification with the A.A.S.S.


4. R.D. and H. Webb to [?n.p.n.d. Ms.A.9.2.v.24], p. 107. Weston Papers. Hannah Webb concluded her note with the comment that Mathew was a priest and that little could be expected from a priest's anti-slavery, who had already sacrificed his "pet cause" of temperance to the dictates of the Catholic Church. Webb himself declared that Mathew was not fit to "tie Garrison's shoes", while
town of Cork the abolitionists especially the Jennings family and William Martin, were Mathew's warm supporters in the temperance movement, and his personal friends. Isabel Jennings wrote supporting Father Mathew in his course of action, and declared that he was perfectly justified in concentrating on his temperance activities, in what had been a temperance mission to America. Although the Cork abolitionists made no reference to their disquiet in their letters to Boston, in 1854 Francis Jennings felt sure that Father Mathew had been correct in his attempts to avoid entanglement with the abolition question, and that Garrison had acted impetuously: 1 resentment against the treatment by Garrison of the Cork Priest may well have added to the determination of the Cork abolitionists to contribute goods to Rochester at this time.

When Father Mathew returned to Ireland he was presented with Addresses from the Metropolitan Temperance Society in Dublin and Cork Town Council congratulating him on his mission to America. 2 His supporters in Ireland clearly felt that he had been wise to try to stay clear of squabbles over the slavery issue, 3 and tended to interpret the reaction of both Garrison and the South as being entirely hysterical. 4

Elizabeth Pease remarked on Mathew's "paltry...cowardly...sinful conduct" in relation to American slavery. E. Pease to E.M. Decy. Darlington, 15/12/1849. Gay Papers.


2. Freeman's Journal, 3/12/1851.

3. Ibid., 31/8/1849; Cork Examiner, 19/12/1849.

There was thus a certain tendency to view the controversy with a certain bemused contempt, to deplore the actions of both the Northern abolitionists and the Southern temperance reformers, and consequently to do little else than wish a plague on both houses, which, rumours of secessionist activities in the South seemed to suggest, would stand together for little longer.  

The Cork Examiner, however, retained its strongest scorn for Garrison, whose conduct in this case was seen as being typical of his anti-Catholic and anti-American animus, and whose excesses had so alienated the South that it had begun to over-react, thereby producing the "vortex of excited feeling" into which Mathew had been invited to hurl himself.  

Mathew's refusal to do so was seen as essentially upholding the traditions of the Catholic Church on the slavery issue in America as these had been laid down by Church leaders such as Bishop England.  

The essence of this tradition was seen as being a conviction that slavery in all circumstances was evil, combined with a refusal to countenance either actions or utterances which would produce only further social discord. Moreover, though such a tradition precluded any active

1. Ibid., 2/1/1850, 22/5/1850.
2. J.F. Maguire saw Father Mathew as having been trapped between the "Scylla" of abolitionist extravagance on the one hand, and the "Charybdis" of Southern sensitivity on the other. It was the former group, noting "from the unthinking zeal of a partisanship which would make no allowance for the peculiarity" of Mathew's position, "and the exclusive character of his mission", that particularly annoyed the biographer; Maguire, Father Mathew, pp. 75-77.
3. Webb agreed with this interpretation, writing that Father Mathew in the U.S.A. had represented "not inaptly the policy which the Catholics pursue" on the slavery issue.
agitation against slavery, it was felt that the Church's granting of
"practical equality" in terms of worship, had won for it a "regard" among
the slaves that no other denomination enjoyed. 1 To the abolitionists
in Dublin such thinking was entirely spurious, since it denied what was
the essence of the abolitionist conviction, namely the compulsion to
proceed from the perception of an evil to efforts to secure its immediate
abolition. Though Haughton remained prepared to praise Mathew's temper-
ance work, 2 he continued to cite Mathew's behaviour towards the abolition-
ists in America as a disgraceful slur on a great reformer's career. 3

As a result of Father Mathew's visit and that of Kossuth, the
abolitionists tended to stress increasingly O'Connell's role as an
Irish Catholic leader who had remained true to the principles of the
Irish Address, and as a European nationalist leader who was prepared to
sympathise with the oppressed in other lands. 4 This became even more

2. Freeman's Journal, 22/6/1853. Samuel R. Ward, who was convinced
that the Catholic religion was, happily, "doomed" in Ireland, regret-
ted that he did not get an opportunity to meet Father Mathew in
Cork. The two had met in Ohio in 1851 and Ward noted that differences
"in religion were of no moment to me as compared with the great
work" of temperance reform. At least one anti-Catholic abolitionist,
therefore, continued to hold Mathew in high esteem. Ward, Auto-
biography, p. 361.
see, H. Wilson, Father Mathew, the Temperance Apostle: an Address
(New York, 1873).
4. Letter to Louis Kossuth, pp. 20-49. Letter from W. Phillips in
National Anti-Slavery Standard, 30/8/1849.
pronounced in 1854 when O'Connell's critic in the Repeal movement, John Mitchel, vigorously defended Southern slavery in the United States.

Webb had always admired the Young Ireland group in Dublin for their adherence to principle, which he contrasted with O'Connell's submission to expediency. Influenced by Barker's radicalism, he could not help sharing Mitchel's conviction that the maintenance of an aristocratic form of Government was inconsistent with the measures necessary to the prosperity of Ireland. Though his hostility against the Irish landlord class persisted through 1848, however, he saw the conditions in Ireland as being the product of "centuries of" mismanagement rather than of the actions of the then British Government, whose step in suspending Habeas Corpus after the abortive Irish rebellion of 1848 he applauded.

Webb's reaction to the leaders of the 1848 rebellion was, therefore, somewhat divided. He condemned the rebellion itself as rash and foolhardy, but he could not help admiring Mitchel, especially the latter's conduct at his trial in 1848, when, faced with a "packed" jury, Mitchel had refused to disgrace himself by either "mendicancy or blarney":

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1. Letters from Webb, *ibid.*, 22/10/1846, 21/9/1848.


3. Letters from Webb, *ibid.*, 1/3/1849, 21/5/1849. Webb's defence of the British Government was applauded by J.B. Estlin, but the Dublin Quaker was not entirely convinced of the good intentions of English people towards his country. He felt that Harriet Martineau for example, typified in her writings many "English notions... about Irish inferiority and ingratitude". He defended Barker, whom Harriet Martineau had criticised for writing a poem she felt was disrespectful towards Queen Victoria. He concluded his remarks by commenting that he was "only an Irishman—and that is a huge only in England". Letter from Webb, *ibid.*, 13/9/1849. J.B. Estlin to S. May Jr. Bristol, 2/10/1848. MS.B.1.6.v.2, p. 81. May Papers; R.B. Webb to H.W. Chapman. Dublin, 19/9/1849. Ms. A.9.2.v.24, p. 92. Weston Papers.
opposed to O'Connell, Mitchel had neither "bowed to the priests...nor picked the people's pockets."\(^1\) Webb and Haughton both abhorred the hostility which had been displayed by the Young Ireland and later Irish Confederation leaders towards the abolitionists in America and Ireland.\(^2\)

James Russell Lowell, writing in the *Standard*, had seen the Irish rebellion of 1848 as providing an opportunity for the American abolitionists to re-state their case on the conditions in Ireland in relation to the abolition movement. With reference to proposals that attempts be made from America to attack and free Ireland from English rule, Russell proposed that, by the same reasoning, attempts should be made to promote an uprising among the Negro slaves in the South: here, Lowell was implicitly criticizing those Americans who professed to seek freedom for Ireland but who hypocritically did nothing to secure it for the slave, while reminding his readers that, despite allegations to the contrary, the American abolitionists did not advocate or seek to forestall a bloody insurrection in the South.

Secondly, Lowell commented on the "fashion" among "some persons" to argue that the condition of the Irish and English labouring classes was worse than that of the slave, either because they sincerely held this view or because they wished to offer an "apology" for their

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pro-slavery views. Lowell did not deny that in the previous two years, as far as the "circumstance of food" was concerned, the Irish people had been worse-off than the slave, but he argued that there was a great fallacy in comparisons made between the condition of the slave and that of the Irish poor: this was, that while it was generally granted that men could not be happy and starving at the same time, neither were "they elevated to a state of perfect bliss by a bellyful of honey". This was precisely the point Webb was making, when he had described references to the physical conditions of the slaves as not being central to the abolitionist critique of the sin of slavery. It was, however, disputed by many in Ireland itself, who, like Mitchel, saw in the abolitionist argument merely evidence of their hypocrisy.

When Mitchel escaped from captivity he settled in America in 1853, and became editor of the Citizen newspaper in New York. Webb had already shown his concern at the effect which the views of the Young Ireland leaders would have on the Irish who emigrated to America, and had criticised Joseph Brennan, former journalist with the Irish Folio, who in America had written warning the abolitionists in Cork that if they continued to protest against the Fugitive Slave Law they would endanger trade with America and help a movement which could only end with the destruction of the Union. James Haughton, who through his political

activities in Ireland knew many of the Irish leaders now in America, also wrote to T.F. Meagher, urging him and his fellow exiles to disclaim all use of physical force in America and not to remain silent on the slavery issue. Haughton, faced with the examples of Kossuth and Father Mathew, and knowing the views of many of the Young Irishers on the slavery issue, was fearful lest the Irish exiles betray Ireland's anti-slavery traditions in the United States. Mitchell immediately reacted to Haughton's letter by describing it as being like most of the thousands the Irish abolitionist had written on the subject from the land which knew the greatest slavery. Labelling Haughton as a "good sort of non, though a nonorganise", Mitchel accused him of having hoarded corn during the Irish famine.

This accusation was denied by Haughton in the Dublin Nation, and Mitchel was asked by Mrs. Stoue's brother, the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher,

2. For an indication of Mitchel's contempt for what he took to be the entirely spurious motivation for Britain's desire to put down the slave-trade, see, J. Mitchel, Jail Journal (Dublin, 1913), pp. 159-160. One abolitionist, scornful of the way that Mitchel had escaped from exile, wrote in the Anti-Slavery Advocate, v.1, n.19, April, 1854, "John Mitchel, Felon, having felt the Whip, is candidate for slave-drivership. He'll take good care his slaves shall never slip."
4. Ibid., 11/3/1854; Citizen, 29/1/1854; "A Letter to John Mitchel". Container 18, Henry Ward Beecher Papers. Library of Congress; Anti-Slavery Advocate, v.1, n. 18, March 1854. R.R. Madden also tried to convince Mitchel that, as an advocate of freedom for Ireland, he was occupying a "false position" in assailing the abolitionists, and in denying that slavery was inconsistent with Christianity. R.R. Madden to J. Mitchel, Dublin, 1/9/1854, Ms. 21.0.9, pp. 181-192. Madden Papers. Madden insisted that if he had been a Roman Catholic, Mitchel could not have held such views. Haughton was, for his part, possibly encouraged to sustain his reason-assignments against Mitchel by his knowledge of his links, through his father, a Reformed Presbyterian Minister, with the Unitarian movement in Ireland.
if he could be "an American slaveholder, without apostasy from the grounds
which he took against the English Government." The New York Tribune and
the Ohio Anti-Slavery Bugle answered in the negative, but Mitchel, while
reminding his readers that he was not a slaveholder but a fugitive from
English injustice, declared that there was no inconsistency in his views.

James H. McKim felt that as a result of his attack on Haughton, Mit-
chel was "dead, politically, socially, and editorially", though as Joseph
Barker noted, it was more probably Mitchel's onslaught against the presti-
gious Beecher, the way that he had given offence to newspapers such as
the New York Tribune, by his sentiments in favour of slavery, coupled with
his feud with the Catholic hierarchy in New York, that prompted Mitchel
to leave for the South.

He had been influenced by Carlyle's writings, not only on the
Negro, but on the shortcomings of Nineteenth-Century civilisation. While

p. 7. Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison. Joseph Brennan also con-
tributed an article to the Citizen rebuking Haughton. Cavanagh,
"Brennan", p. 60.

in Edinburgh, in 1863, and found him a "fine fellow": R.D. Webb to
W.L. Garrison. Dublin, 28/10/1863. Ibid., V. 31, p. 156b.

National Library of Ireland.

4. Carlyle was Father Kenyon's favourite lay author, and was read and
praised by Mitchel when the latter was in exile. Sillard, Martin,
p. 43; J. Mitchel to Mrs. Mitchel. Bermuda, 5/3/1862. Ms. 326,
Hickey Collection. For the influence of Carlyle on pro-slavery
Southern opinion, see W.S. Jenkins, Pro-Slavery Thought in the Old
South (Chapel Hill, 1935), pp. 133-134, 200, 305-308.
in exile in Bermuda, Mitchel had described the United States as epitomising these short-comings, being a country where the main national characteristics seemed to be "an unnatural and morbid activity", and which, despite its boasts of religious freedom, paid an excessive devotion to the "Great God Dollar". He saw Southern Society, however, as essentially avoiding the bustle and cultural sterility resulting from the commercial acquisitiveness in the industrial North, and slavery he viewed as an indispensable and laudable institution, of benefit both to the slaves and the slaveholders alike. He had developed what he called "a diseased and noncanonical hatred of progress", and would, rather, to see people "going back". The South, in his view, offered him such an opportunity, and he replied to those in Ireland, such as Gavan Duffy, who deplored his views on slavery, by warning them against the pitfalls of the Nineteenth Century, which had led many to call,"irreconcilable", sets of sentiments between which men in other centuries had seen no discrepancies. That his views could be described by his critics such as Beecher as inconsistent, he found "incomprehensible", and he advised his friends in Ireland, "when any of your taunting friends ask you again (as you say they do) 'What do you think of Ireland's emancipation now? Would you like an Irish republic with an accompaniment of slave plantations?'—just answer quite simply—Yes, very much. At least I would so answer—and I never said or wrote anything in the least degree inconsistent with such a declaration."

1. Carl Sandburg described such analyses as "chivalry" as opposed to "shovelry".

These and similar sentiments appalled the abolitionists, since Mitchel not only sought to justify slavery but accused the North of practicing far more cruelty with its industrial economy, than the slave-holding South. They hoped, however, that Mitchel's views, and his manner of expressing them, would so disgust his former friends and colleagues in Ireland as to promote further support for the anti-slavery movement. Certainly Mitchel's ideas were strongly opposed, not only by Duffy, with whom he had already quarreled, but by such close friends as his brother-in-law and former contributor to Mitchel's United Irishman, John Martin. Mitchel, in the face of many protests, refused to palliate or extenuate his doctrines, and even when Martin sent "solemn remonstrances" from Ireland, Mitchel continued to advocate the revival of the slave-trade from Africa.

Mitchel himself was aware that his former friends in Ireland thought him "crazy or depraved", but Haughton took Mitchel's views with

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1. It was the expression as well as the content of Mitchel's ideas that appalled the abolitionists. The New York Tribune noted that Mitchel "proposes his theory of negro importation in a gay, rollicking, humorous spirit, in which the blood-thirstiness of the Thug is agreeably dashed with the overflowing humour of the Hibernian." Quoted in Anti-Slavery Advocate, v.2, n.26, February, 1859.

2. J. Mitchel to Mrs. R.D. Williams, Knoxville, Tennessee, 16/2/1858. Hickey Collection. Mitchel felt that his former colleagues in Ireland were unanimously opposed to his views, and appears at times to have consciously set out to provoke and shock them. J. Mitchel to Miss Thompson. New York, 21/4/1854; Stonington, 26/8/1854. Mitchel Papers. Father Kenyon himself felt that it was "monstrous" to propose the re-opening of the slave-trade. W. Dillon, Life of John Mitchel (2 vols. London, 1888), v. 2, p. 106.

In 1856, the Freeman's Journal published Mitchel's analysis of the American Presidential elections, in which Northern abolition sentiment was described as a product of "British cant and Yankee flunkeyism", and which said that know-nothings "like abolition, sprang from the loins of Exeter Hall, that fruitful mother of abominations". The paper had already claimed that nativism was closely allied with abolitionism, but commented, on this occasion, that neither time nor exile had modified Mitchel's "extreme opinions". Freeman's Journal, 16/3/1856.
great seriousness, since he was convinced that he was bringing Ireland into disrepute. Evidence of hostility towards Mitchel's views in the United States confirmed Haughton in his belief that American antipathy towards the Irish stemmed not from religious prejudice, but from contempt for their views on slavery. While O'Connell lived, Haughton wrote, the "open shamelessness" of the Irish-Americans had been held in check, but only Duffy, John Martin, and William Smith O'Brien remained as "unsullied names" among Irish leaders.

O'Brien had taken no active part in the Irish anti-slavery movement, though he had attended the annual meeting of the Aborigines' Protection Society with O'Connell, in London, 1841, and was invited to become Vice-President of the Institut d'Afrique in Paris, whose aims were to "protect," "enlighten" and "civilize" the African race with the help of European Governments, and the practical experience of missionaries and travellers.

Though Smith O'Brien joined the Young Ireland group and was exiled for his part in the 1848 rebellion, and though he had dissented from

3. H. de Saint Antoine to W.S. O'Brien. Paris, September, 1840. Ms. 1/31. Smith O'Brien Papers. National Library of Ireland. In 1842 he was invited to join a Society established by some members of the Aborigines' Protection Society, to "investigate the history of man". R. King to W.S. O'Brien. London, 10/11/1842. Ibid.; Reviewing J.C. Prichard, The Natural History of Man... (London, 1843), the Irish Review, v.19, n. 37, September 1845, pp. 67-68, found in the book evidence that the nations of the earth were of "one blood and one family", but also claimed that a biblical curse on the Negro had resulted in his bondage, dark "hue", and inferior "sensuous" condition, and made his present physical and moral condition more understandable "to the believer."
O'Connell's attacks on American slavery, the abolitionists in Dublin never associated him with the views on slavery held by men like Mitchel and Kenyon. In 1856, O'Brien gave his first published views on American slavery, when he described the conditions of the young slaves in America as being infinitely superior to those of the young children in the mines and factories of England, but noted that slavery was "a disgrace" to the United States, which could claim, in other respects, that it presented the "most perfect organization that the world has yet witnessed for the maintenance of social liberty". He wrote that England was "responsible for introducing slavery into America, appreciated the difficulties involved in abolishing slavery, and agreed with those who "reprobate a reckless disregard of the existing circumstances" of the slaves on the part of those who "vindicate their natural rights", but he argued that it should be the duty of American statesmen to secure the eventual freedom of the slave, and in the meantime to mitigate the sufferings incidental to their position. He was compelled to admit that recent Acts in America had restricted the rights of the Negroes rather than promoted their "eventual liberation".

These views attracted criticism, in both America and Ireland. His American publishers inserted a note to their edition of O'Brien's book, reminding readers that the existence of American slavery was a consequence not only of American but of African antecedents, since when

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1. R.D. Webb to E. Quincy, Dublin, 7/11/1851. Webb/Quincy Letters. J.R. Lowell had remarked in 1848 that O'Brien, as a landlord, was unlikely to support the sweeping land reforms which Mitchel had seen were needed in Ireland. Anti-Slavery Papers, pp. 129-130.

the African was enslaved he was but a "savage": it was not for the "savage", this argument continued, to claim or be given the freedom of the "civilized", though if the slaveholders failed to fulfil their obligations as the "master class" in civilizing the slaves for freedom, the majority of the citizens in the state, or even a foreign power, could rightfully compel them to abandon their claims of ownership. 1 An Irish reader of the Dublin edition disagreed with everything O'Brien had written on the question of American slavery: though he felt that the cruelties inflicted on slaves should be prevented, and all Negroes hanged, he insisted that slavery was not inconsistent with natural or revealed religion, and that O'Brien had failed to point out the "real slavery" and cruelty in the world, in particular that inflicted on Irish tenant farmers and helpless emigrants. 2

There was also much in O'Brien's statements that would prove suspect to those abolitionists who feared that Uncle Tom's Cabin had occasioned widespread support for a gradualist approach to anti-slavery. Yet Webb felt that O'Brien, as a participant in the 1843 rebellion, was capable of wielding some influence with the Irish-Americans, and though he and O'Brien differed greatly in their anti-slavery views, O'Brien at least had declared his detestation of slavery in the United States. Webb accordingly requested O'Brien to write to the Irish-Americans appealing to them not to support the Democratic candidate, Buchanan, in the 1856 Presidential elections. 3

3. R.D. Webb to W.S. O'Brien. Dublin, 16/8/1856. Ibid., Ms. 445. Webb reminded O'Brien that after his trial, a meeting had been held in Webb's house, presided over by Sherman Crawford, to protest against O'Brien's sentence. Before O'Brien left Ireland, both Webb and Haughton had visited him in prison. O'Brien had read Uncle Tom's Cabin in captivity.
O'Brien had already been informed that Irish-American opponents of slavery, and of Buchanan, had welcomed his book, and, accordingly, he addressed a letter to T.F. Meagher, in which he expressed surprise that he and Mitchel and Dohany belonged to the pro-slavery party. Dohany replied in August, 1858, insisting that while Mitchel and Meagher were pro-slavery, he was not; however, because the constitution "distinctly recognised" the existence of slavery, and upheld the doctrine of State's rights, the Democrats refused to interfere with Southern slavery. Dohany saw the anti-slavery party as being entirely irrelevant to the main issue in the United States, which was not the morality but the locality of slavery. Dohany himself supported the claim of the South in Kansas in the new territories. If O'Brien disagreed with these remarks, they did not cause any rupture in his relations with his former allies now in America, who encouraged him to visit the United States in 1859, when Meagher was present at the welcoming ceremony arranged for him in New York.

Though the New York Herald feared that of the two classes of European immigrants in America, O'Brien fell into the second category, that of distinguished men such as Mitchel whose first act had been to

3. New York Express, 21/2/1859. This and subsequent newspaper references to O'Brien's visit to the United States are taken from Ms. 23.M. 62, Royal Irish Academy, a volume containing an account of O'Brien's tour in America.
assail the government which gave him hospitality and to "sigh" for a slave plantation in Alabama. O'Brien insisted from the first that he refused to become involved in politics, and that he was interested only in studying the institutions of the country and the conditions of the Irish-American immigrants. This insistence, which in Kossuth's case had affronted the abolitionists, in 1859 gave concern mainly to the Irish-American welcoming committees who were uncertain as how to address him. From New York, he travelled to Washington, D.C., where he was entertained by W.H. Seward, and A.H. Stephens, and where, with Mitchell and Meagher, he met President Buchanan in the White House.

O'Brien thanked Buchanan for the efforts he had made on behalf of the Irish exiles when he was ambassador to the Court of St. James, and told the President that he intended to accept the many kind invitations he had received in Washington to visit slave plantations in the South. Buchanan congratulated him on this decision, on the grounds that slavery was a domestic institution, which fed and clothed its slaves in a manner far superior to the European peasantry; when O'Brien replied that it would be easy for the slaves to be better cared for than his countrymen in Donegal, Buchanan reminded him of his Donegal ancestry.

1. New York Herald, 22/2/1859. The first category was that of poor immigrants, who resembled the second group in their susceptibility to the wiles of American "political sharks".


3. T.F. Meagher to W.S. O'Brien. New York, 1/3/1859. Ms., [n.d.]. Smith O'Brien Papers. Seward (1807-1872), was Senator from New York, and later Secretary of State in Lincoln's cabinet. Stephens (1812-1883), Congressman from Georgia, was later Confederate Vice-President.
Mitchel and his associates were delighted to find that O'Brien was thus prepared to meet "statesmen of all parties", and in particular they hoped that O'Brien, while carefully presented as a visiting Irishman, who refused to interfere with the institutions of America, would, through his exposure to the hospitality of leading Southerners, find that the South was not that "dreadful land of chains and cowhide whips" portrayed in abolitionist literature such as Uncle Tom's Cabin. Similar reasoning probably also accounted for the hospitality which O'Brien was to receive from the native-born champions of the Cotton Kingdom, who were becoming increasingly sensitive to diplomatic considerations and who did not seem to have been unaware of the benefits to their cause which a good press from O'Brien might bring.

During his tour through the South, O'Brien visited the plantations of Senator Toombs of Georgia, Senator Hammond of Georgia, and Representative A.H. Stephens of Georgia. Mitchel had accompanied him as far as Richmond, Virginia, where O'Brien had visited the slave-market, the "only institution incidental to slavery" that had as yet produced any "painful impressions" on his part. Hammond's plantation in particular impressed him. He observed a religious service for the slaves there, and found the arrangements

2. The Irish-American added the following postscript to the report from the Washington Star of O'Brien's interview with Buchanan: "It is but justice to Mr. O'Brien to say that the above was published without his knowledge or consent, as he is anxious to avoid...every allusion that might be construed into an expression of political opinion on the domestic institutions of the country, leaning towards any party whatever". His acceptance of a dinner invitation from Seward was seen as evidence of his wish to inform himself of different opinions and attitudes "in reference to the institutions" of America. Washington Star, 8/3/1859.
"very patriarchal, and very different from the picture conceived by the imaginations of those who read anti-slavery works. Hitherto, I have seen no evidence of coercion—no rancour of spirit—no unkind disdain—evidenced towards the slaves in the South." In particular, O'Brien was impressed with the friendly relations between the slaves and their masters, and on visiting a slave estate with Stephens, he found that if he had to find fault with this "champion of the Slaveholders", it would be more on the grounds of his "excessive indulgence" towards the Negroes than of "severity". This he contrasted with the attitude displayed towards servants in Europe, and he added, in a note to his wife: you "know how anxious I am to cultivate the kindly sympathies of our tenants and labourers, but I confess that I am outdone by the barbarous Slave-driver of the South".

When O'Brien wrote to Mitchel that he had found a perfect spot in Kentucky if ever the latter realized his "aspiration" for a plantation, Mitchel was confident that this indicated, not a certain irony, but O'Brien's admiration of slavery, and cited O'Brien's response, in his letters to Ireland, in defense of his own.


2. J. Mitchel to Mrs. R.D. Mitchel. Washington, 1/5/1859. W.S. O'Brien to J. Mitchel. Louisville, 16/4/1859. Ms.L146. Smith O'Brien Papers. (This letter is marked, "not for publication."). Mitchel had given O'Brien a letter of introduction to an Irish-American slaveholder, who arrived at his home one evening to find O'Brien sitting in the yard, "with a dozen or two of young Negroes dancing and beating "Drum and Banjo" to amuse him." Mitchel was told that
O'Brien insisted to his wife that he did not agree with Mitchel's views, and that his experiences in the South had not "converted" him on the subject of slavery. However, they certainly confirmed his views about the dangers involved in immediate emancipation and also persuaded him that much of what he had read about the atrocities of slavery in abolitionist literature was untrue. He now felt sure that the Negroes were a "light-hearted race who do not feel the limitation of bondage as we should feel it...they are docile and susceptible to strong attachment". He greatly doubted that immediate emancipation would benefit the Negroes, and he felt that the difficulties involved in such a measure had been exasperated by the abolitionists, whose "misrepresentations" of the Southern slaveholders had retarded rather than advanced the cause of Negro freedom. While he could see no good reason why the good qualities he had observed in the Negroes should not thrive in conditions of freedom, he argued that the question had best be solved by the "process of time", whereby the "middle states" in America would be led to establish "perfect freedom" within their borders, and a haven for the Negroes. If such a suggestion necessarily begged the question of the willingness of the slaveholders to free their slaves, he was sure in any event that the "fanaticism" of the abolitionists could only create stronger feelings in the South against emancipation.

O'Brien, "although not approving of slavery in the abstract, that is of White Men as I understand, was I think obliged to acknowledge from what he saw that Slavery of the Negroes in the South was a blessing to them and to us...I only wish you could see him and hear him talk what he thought of it". (Cannell White?) to J. Mitchel. n.p. 10/2/1859. *Ibid.*, Smith O'Brien told his wife that White, who was from Tipperary, and who had among his family papers, a letter describing Mrs. O'Brien's parents' wedding, had promised to send a hogshead of sugar to the O'Briens in Ireland.

On his return to Ireland, O'Brien delivered lectures on his impressions of his American trip, which had lasted three months, and during which he had travelled some seven thousand miles. He described his visits to the homes of Harrod, Toombs and Stephens, whom he called "three of the most distinguished of the Southern Statesmen", and pointed out that to his surprise, he had found that the Irish-Americans occupied as high a social position as men of any other "race": as proof of this he cited the slave-plantations owned by Irish-Americans that he had visited, and the fact that Buchanan was of Irish stock. It was not, however, the condition of the Irish-Americans, but slavery, which he felt that his audience would first like to ask him about, and he told his listeners that he would speak to them on the subject with the same freedom as the slaveholders themselves had encouraged him to use when conversing with them on the topic. He stressed his "invincible repugnance" for slavery, which he described as being irreconcilable with the Christian religion, and which would prevent him from ever settling as a resident in a slave State. He advised the South to take steps to encourage the slaves to work for their freedom, and in a phrase which suggests his readiness when in Dublin to examine more critically the arguments of those who sought to justify slavery, he recommended that Southerners cease to "cling to... hereditary delusions as to the beatitudes of slavery." His Irish

1. The lectures were published in pamphlet form. See, Lectures on America by Mr. Smith O'Brien, delivered in the Mechanic's Institute, Dublin, November, 1859 (Dublin, 1860). O'Brien declared that he had decided against writing a book on America because too many had already been published by English writers who had abused American hospitality and then returned to write works in order to amuse their English readers and ridicule the Americans.

2. O'Brien, Lectures on America, pp. 16-21; Freeman's Journal, 23/11/1859. In comparing O'Brien's response in the South to his words in Dublin, it would be instructive to recall that in the Deep South O'Brien...
audience could be left in little doubt, if White had not been, that what O'Brien was talking about was Black slavery, and that he did not approve of it.

Father Mathew, Mitchel and O'Brien had responded to American slavery and anti-slavery in different ways, reflecting the different times and circumstances in which they visited America, and their different views on Negro slavery. Father Mathew was anxious not to be identified with Garrison, and wanted to concentrate on temperance activities. Mitchel, embittered against abolitionism, saw in slavery an alternative to the industrialised tyranny of the Nineteenth Century. O'Brien was flattered by his reception in the South, and on the plantations of his hosts he had found that slavery was not so cruel as he had been led to think, but later in Dublin he had shown that he could not with any reasonable accuracy be viewed as a public spokesman for those who sought to justify, condone or defend slavery. The Irish nationalist press in particular had seen in Garrison's reaction to Father Mathew evidence of the anti-Catholic prejudice and crazed fanaticism of the more radical abolitionists, and while dissenting from Mitchel's actual defence and advocacy of slavery, it found its own views on slavery echoed in O'Brien's Dublin lectures, in his insistence that the South take steps to secure the liberation of the slaves, and that much time was needed in which to prepare and educate the Negro for his freedom.

had found slavery to be a "paternal institution", and that Mrs. Stowe had written of slavery in Kentucky: "Whosoever visits some estates there, and witnesses the good-humored indulgence of some masters and mistresses and the affectionate loyalty of some slaves, might be tempted to dream the oft-fabled legend of a paternal institution and all that." H.B. Stone, Uncle Tom's Cabin, p. 9.
The Dublin Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society distributed five thousand copies of their Address to the Emigrants in 1850, but despite occasional evidence to the contrary, Webb saw the Irish emigrants as continuing to be almost inevitably, "accessions" to the slave-power in the United States. The Negro abolitionist William G. Nell, writing in Douglass's North Star, maintained that the opposition of Irishmen in America to the Negro was "not so much a Hibernianism as an Americanism," and this sentiment was often uttered by Douglass himself. Webb saw the merits of this, but felt that there were elements in the Irish situation which also accounted for the behaviour of the Irish-Americans: one was the tyranny of the Catholic priests which kept the Irish in a state of ignorance, and the other was the utter failure of Irish leaders since O'Connell to instil anti-slavery principles among their adherents. This was why the Irish abolitionists had taken such an interest in the visits to the United States of Mathew, Mitchell and O'Brien.

The evidence which O'Brien offered in his lectures for Irish-American attainments was essentially irreconcilable with what Haughton


2. See review of Charles Casey, Two Years on the Farm of Uncle Sam, in Anti-Slavery Advocate, v. 1, n. 2, November, 1852.


4. In the Anti-Slavery Advocate, v. 2, n. 13, January, 1853, Webb again stressed that in his opinion employment and status rivalries were crucial factors in determining the Irish-American response to the Negro.

5. For an example of Wobb's continued criticism of the Young Irelanders on this issue, see, Anti-Slavery Advocate, v. 2, n. 2, February, 1857. Mitchell's defence of slavery was later condemned by John Elliot Cairnes, in Macmillan's Magazine, v. 12, August, 1855, pp. 337-338.
had written of the disgrace Irish-Americans had brought to the name of Ireland. Moreover, there remained much in the lectures that Webb saw as being typical of the flaws implicit in post-Stowite abolition.

However, the abolitionists in Dublin made no comment in public or private about O'Brien's talks. Partly this indicated their belief that O'Brien had served abolitionism as well as any Young Irelander could have been expected to do. At least he had said that he would not live in the American South, and had described slavery as being inconsistent with the Golden Rule. If he was by no means an O'Connell, neither was he another Mitchel, and the Dublin abolitionists could recall how Steele and John O'Connell had themselves declared they would act with respect to American slavery if they visited the United States.

However, O'Brien had not confined his talk to the subject of slavery. He had talked at some length of the threatened disruption of the Union. He had urged the South to desist from all talk of secession, and had advised the abolitionists in the North to avoid further provocation of the South, which he felt could only lead to further retreatment and disruption. Reports of his lectures were followed one month later in the Freeman's Journal with news of John Brown's raid. Perhaps the main reason, therefore, why the Dublin abolitionists remained silent on O'Brien's lectures was their belief that in what he had referred to as the "process of time", the impending crisis in the United States

1. And with a manner of address that suggests that he had had from the first at least some inkling of the calculations Toombs, Stephens, Mitchel, and Hammond had made about the possible consequences his trip might have for the image of the South.
was fast approaching, and in a way which made the pronouncements of Irish leaders on the slavery question, an irrelevancy.¹

¹ Anti-Slavery Advocate, v. 2, n. 37. January, 1860. Haughton was on the platform of the Mechanic's Institute to hear O'Brien's lecture.
Chapter Eight

Strife and Reconciliation in Irish anti-slavery organizations
The Committee of the Dublin Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society held nine meetings in 1853, though Webb, in the Advocate, reminded Quakers that memorials, support for the free-produce movement,¹ aid to fugitives and donations to Negro schools were all very well, but they did not assail slavery in the manner and spirit of such Friends as Beneset and Woolman.²

Webb also criticized Harriet Beecher Stowe for using some of the money that had been collected for her to set up schools for free Negroes in the United States, and this led Frederick Douglass to query whether this complaint stemmed not from a Negro abolitionist, but from a rich British reformer whose children's education had been well provided for.³ Webb was loathe to advertise the Rochester Bazaar in 1853, and in 1854, the Anti-Slavery Advocate specifically declared its support for the A.A.S.S., rejecting political abolitionism and Frederick Douglass.⁴ The difficulty of adhering to this position,

1. One member established a depot of free-produced goods in Dublin.

2. Anti-Slavery Advocate, v. 1, n.7, April, 1853; v. 1, n.8, May, 1853; v.1, n.9, June, 1853.

3. Ibid., v.1, n.10, July, 1853. Webb had described the North Star in 1851, as "pretty stupid", but felt that Douglass had shown a willingness to discuss fairly his disagreements with the Boston abolitionists; he realised that Douglass was "impatient of the aristocracy of the Boston clique" -- a phrase which shows that he was aware that the Boston Garrisonians tended to assume that they, and they alone, were correct in all anti-slavery matters. Webb's own experiences had suggested to him that this was not the case. Webb's daughters had recently been sent to a school in London recommended by Harriet Martineau. R.D. Webb to E. Quincy. Dublin, 22/8/1851. Webb/Quincy Letters.

as Webb realised, was that there was a great deal of support for Douglass within the Dublin Committee, and this at a time when the Advocate was in any event in danger of closing down. However, in May, 1855, the Advocate again refused to support the Rochester Bazaar, which, it claimed, merely sustained Douglass in his attempts to "deprecate" the A.A.S.S. Webb felt he could not condone the narrow and "exclusive" spirit which Douglass had indulged in against Garrison: the Advocate, he insisted, upheld the Old Organized tradition of welcoming abolitionists of differing religious views as allies in the struggle against slavery.

By May, 1855, Webb was reporting to Maria W. Chapman in Boston, that though Douglass's adherents in Ireland were doing as much "mischief" as they could, large donations would be sent to the Boston


3. Anti-Slavery Advocate, v.1, n.27. December, 1854. It was at this time that the rumours that Douglass had been given a garret to sleep in at Webb's house were revived. Webb was furious, and wrote of Douglass that he "outwitted all the New Organised Herods in bitterness, extravagance, and malignity." R.D. Webb to S.H. Gay. Dublin, 1/3/1855. Gay Papers. However, Webb insisted that he must try to be fair to Douglass; he thought that three-quarters of Douglass's My Bondage and My Freedom was the finest
Bazaar, and that though the "battle" against American slavery would be chiefly fought on American soil, the British abolitionists still could play a role in helping to determine the best way of waging that fight. However, even Webb in 1856 began to question the practicality of the A.A.S.S.'s continued advocacy of disunion. He fully agreed with the Garrisonian standpoint that the Constitution was a pro-slavery document, and that abolitionists should continue to avoid any participation in a political process which was designed to uphold slavery. Yet, given the political, trading, commercial and transport links between the North and South, Webb could not see how a disruption of the American Union could possibly be effected. He advised the American Garrisonians to spend more time in showing the American people that what they had long advocated could, in practical terms, be accomplished; otherwise, he warned, they would be "merely beating the air".

material on slavery he had read, but that the remaining quarter was a dishonourable attack on Garrison and his other former friends. George Thompson's review of the book in the Emprise was castigated by Parker Pillsbury, for failing to condemn Douglass's remarks on Garrison. R.D. Webb to Rev. S. May Jr. Dublin, 21/12/1855. Ms.B.1.6.v.5, p.92. May Papers; P. Pillsbury to S. May Jr. Glasgow, 6/9/1855. Ibid., v.5, p. 77; Anti-Slavery Advocate, v.1, n.42, March, 1856.


Letter from Webb, ibid., 27/9/1856; Anti-Slavery Advocate, v.1, n.50, November, 1856. Webb felt that additional difficulties in effecting a dissolution, were the "reverence" felt by many in the North for the Union, and the fact that the South needed the Federal Government's support for slavery. In 1852, during the excitement of the propaganda campaign against the Tappanites, Webb had stated that, in his opinion, no sincere abolitionist could oppose the disunion policy. R.D. Webb to M.W. Chapman. Dublin, 9/1/1852. Ms.A.9.2.v.26, p. 3. Weston Papers.
Webb's letters caused some consternation among American supporters of the A.A.S.S., precisely because they seemed to indicate that Webb had failed to understand elementary concepts in Garrisonian strategy. If disunion was opposed on the grounds of its impracticability, it was argued, similar considerations would have prevented the establishment of the Liberator and the A.A.S.S. itself. In the Standard, it was stated that the abolitionists had always considered it "as the very essence of our plan, that we had no plan", and that it was the abolitionists' duty merely to show the evil character of the Union, in the knowledge that when the time was right, the means for dissolving it would "summarily take care of themselves".

The Old Organizationists in America responded with such speed and seriousness to Webb's letters because, especially after Estlin's death, and the suspicion that had arisen following Thompson's relations with New Broad Street and his review of My Bondage and My Freedom, they regarded Webb as their foremost champion in Britain. They


2. Webb conceded that these arguments had "signally defeated" him and he employed them in the Advocate to show the wisdom of the Old Organizationists. Letter from Webb, in National Anti-Slavery Standard, 3/1/1856; Anti-Slavery Advocate, v.2,n.1, January, 1857.

3. In 1858, Webb asked the Executive Committee of the A.A.S.S., if the Advocate should not be discontinued and the money spent on it sent directly to the A.A.S.S. He was told that by continuing the Advocate, he was helping the anti-slavery movements in the best possible way. "Minutes of the Executive Committee of the A.A.S.S.", v.2, entry for 23/2/1858. That the Advocate continued in existence was due to Mary Estlin's financial support.
considered his support the more valuable, moreover, because of the growing support for Douglass, who, with his English friend, Julia Griffiths, they now regarded as the most dangerous threat to the popularity and prospects of the A.A.S.S. in Britain.

In 1849, Webb had known of Julia Griffiths only that she was "monomaniacal" about Douglass, and he feared that she would eventually estrange him from his old friends in America. She had corresponded with Isabel Jennings in Cork, requesting aid for the Rochester Bazaar, and informing the Cork abolitionists that she had raised some seven hundred dollars to pay off Douglass's debts. Rumours had begun to spread among the abolitionists about her relations with Douglass and her decision to go to Rochester, and there is some evidence that the British Garrisonians were using these rumours in order to promote disquiet among Douglass's friends.


2. I. Jennings to M. Estlin. Cork, 24/3/1851. Ms.A.9.2.v.25, p. 72. Weston Papers. Isabel Jennings wanted to know if the "injudiciousness" Mr. Estlin feared in Julia Griffiths, was in "Anti-Slavery matters" or in "matters more nearly related to F.D." Webb in 1855 indicated his own disapproval of an article in the Liberator which contained "imputations" about the relationship. He did, however, believe that Douglass had been "imprudent and unkind" in introducing Miss Griffiths to his house, against his wife's wishes. Douglass, Webb feared, had been over-impressed with the flatteries of young women in Britain, which led to his bitter reaction to the prejudice he had encountered on returning to America. R.D. Webb to Rev. R.L. Carpenter. Dublin, 30/3/1855. Ms.A.1.2.v.25, p. 22. Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison.
In January, 1856, a letter appeared in the *Glasgow Chronicle*, written by Julia Griffiths, enclosing copies of the resolutions made at the Hartford Bible convention, and accusing Garrison and his supporters of "impracticable principles in politics and infidel principles in religion". This letter horrified Webb who saw it as a blatant attempt to discredit the Old Organizationists, and particularly Parker Pillsbury, who had arrived in Dublin in March, 1854, to lecture on behalf of the A.A.S.S.

Webb admired Pillsbury but felt that he had been much too severe on Thompson during the alleged rapprochement with the B.F.A. S.S. and suggested that Pillsbury's imperfect education had led to a "want of tact in the selection of his illustrations" for his arguments. Pillsbury in turn found that Ireland did not provide a "soil" for anti-slavery "culture", and reported to S. May Jr. that Webb was busy at work, that Allen was a little affected by "Douglassia", and that Haughton was absorbed in efforts to secure the introduction of a Maine Liquor law in Ireland. He was also appalled to find in Belfast "all sorts of creatures travelling in the name of American Anti-Slavery, and picking the peoples' pockets"


for Vigilance Committees, Canada missions, and coloured schools in the West Indies. 1 Pillsbury traced his difficulties in Ireland to one source, Maria Webb, to whom he reacted with a vituperation that was equalled, perhaps, only by her own comments about him. By April, 1855, he had decided that she was a "perfect jezebel of a being". In Belfast he "saw the slime of that creature, as you can sometimes track a reptile on the ground in a wet morning." 2 At a Committee meeting there, Mary Ireland had brought up the subject of Douglass, and Pillsbury had given him a "pretty thorough castigation": the Belfast abolitionists still donated goods to Rochester and Boston, —in 1855 it was the turn of Rochester—but Pillsbury felt that after his meeting, if anyone in the city continued to give goods to Rochester, they were "worthy" of Douglass, and the A.A.S.S. was better off without them. 3

Pillsbury had been warned by the few friends of the A.A.S.S. in Dublin, that if he appeared to act in too "partisan" a fashion, those donations which they were still able to obtain from the supporters of Douglass, would no longer be forthcoming. It was


precisely as such a partisan that he began to be viewed in Quaker circles. After evidence had been found to disprove allegations he had made that American Quakers owned mortgages on slave-property, he acquired the reputation of being not only a fanatic but a liar. Webb reported that the "Godly and the orthodox" were keeping the American "at arms' length" in Dublin. ¹

It was a letter from Garrison himself that brought the growing animosity against Pillsbury into the open. The Advocate had issued several statements urging that sectarian differences not be allowed to disrupt the unity of the abolitionist platform, and Garrison, probably influenced by the letters Pillsbury had written to America complaining against Maria Webb, took up the question personally with her, by asking her opinion of the comparison Mrs. Stowe had made between cooperating with infidels in anti-slavery, and uniting with them in extinguishing a dangerous fire. ² Maria Webb replied that Mrs. Stowe's illustration was in fact not a true parallel. She had no objection to the bodily labours of infidels, but she did object to helping "infidel" lecturers, such as she took all the paid lecturers of the A.A.S.S. in Britain, including Parker Pillsbury, to have been for the past years. Some of these lecturers,

¹. R.D. Webb to E. Quincy. Dublin, 5/5/1855. Webb/Quincy Letters. Webb asked Quincy to send any evidence that might substantiate Pillsbury's allegations, and in the Anti-Slavery Advocate, v. 1, n. 29, February, 1855, supported Pillsbury's claim that English Friends had not maintained their testimony against slavery.

². The reference is to be found in H.B. Stowe, A Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin, p. 538.
she claimed, had gone with Harriet Martineau "into the abyss of atheism", spreading views which had done nothing but harm to the anti-slavery movement in Ireland, and causing such distress to the families of those they contaminated. While admitting that not all the Garrisonians could be described as infidels, she had noted in the Liberator\(^1\) that, while sacrilegious articles from Barker appeared without comment, temperate letters from Luigi Teppan were introduced with "sarcasmic bitterness". She recalled that, as Corresponding Secretary of the Belfast Ladies' A.S.S., she had corresponded with the Teppanites and had become convinced that the A.S.S., more than any other philanthropic society she had encountered, was supported by men who indulged only in "self-glorification": it was, she claimed, the A.A.S.S. and not the A.F.A.S.S. which had departed from its original principles.\(^2\)

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1. Which she had glanced at in Richard Allen's study, where they had lain unopened while he was on holiday on the Continent, in 1854.

It was feared in Garrisonian circles that her allegations of infidelity in particular would aid Julia Griffiths, who had organized twelve Societies in Britain in support of Douglass and the Rochester Bazaar. Pillsbury was further infuriated when Maria Webb sent him an eight-page letter which he described as a "shelly outrageous product"; this, while admitting that his course of action in Britain had hitherto been "shelly unobjectionable", accused him of hypocritically refusing to admit his pernicious views, and warned him of the consequences of his conflict.1

Bitter memories of the 1841 disputes in Britain were revived still further after Sturge was accused of circulating this second letter, in an "underhand manner, to do its assassin-like work".2

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2. S. Hay Jr. to R. D. Webb, Boston, 6/4/1856. Ibid., v. 6, p. 27.
Maria Webb became a Committee member of the Irish Metropolitan Ladies' Anti-Slavery Association that was formed in November, 1856, in Dublin. This acknowledged the existence of the Dublin Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society, whose aims it described as being to spread anti-slavery information among emigrants, and to aid the fugitives in Canada. The New Association claimed that the Society declined to accept charge of any bazaar contributions, and defined its own aims as being to help the fugitives get to Canada. The Association came into being as a result of "representations" from Julia Griffiths, and gave support to the Rochester Anti-Slavery Society and to Frederick Douglass's Paper.

The Association maintained that the principles of both the anti-slavery Societies in Dublin harmonized, and that only the "localities" they selected were different. It was not true that the Dublin Ladies' Society refused to accept bazaar goods, however, while the Association specifically declared its sympathy for those in America who were endeavouring by "Christian means" to secure the over-throw of slavery, and the "improvement and education of the coloured people". This and other references to Christian abolitionism
indicated the continued antipathy felt towards the Garrisonians such as Pillsbury.  

The Committee of the Association was not predominantly Quaker in composition, suggesting the readiness of middle-class groups other than Friends to support an anti-slavery organization in Dublin, that was specifically established to support "Christian" abolitionists in their efforts to aid the Fugitive Negro. Similarly, the Association showed the willingness of Irish Friends to join with people of different denominations in anti-slavery work.  

1. In November, 1857, Professor H.G. Allen lectured on anti-slavery in Dublin, where his meeting was chaired by the Dublin Congregationalist Minister, Dr. William Urwick, who praised the work of "Christian" abolitionists such as Dr. Beecher, and claimed that "Infidelity" could never accomplish abolition. The Anti-Slavery Advocate, v.2, n. 12, December, 1857, took this as a direct reference to Garrison and, pointing to the way Garrison constantly quoted from the Bible, defended him from the charge of infidelity. Dr. Urwick, though strongly opposed to slavery, did not play any really active part in the movement against American slavery before 1851, and his statement at Allen's meeting indicates that a possible reason for this was his suspicion of the views of the Old Organizationists, in Dublin and America. Freeman's Journal, 19/7/1852, 3/2/1851. Allen, an American Negro, lived in Ireland from 1866-1860, lecturing and giving tuition. He also published The African Poets, Horton and Placido (Waterford, 1850). Webb reported that Allen had been in "terrible financial trouble", owing to his inability to find suitable employment in Ireland, and that it was thanks to Mary Edmundson that he managed at all. R.D. Webb to C. Weston, Co. Dublin, 6/3/1859. Ms.A. 9.2, v.29, p. 65. Weston Papers; A Short Personal Narrative of William G. Allen...resident for the last four years in Dublin (Dublin, 1860), pp. 9-11, 30.  

2. Four Quakers had become members of the Committee of the Belfast A.S.S. in 1846, and Allen and Webb had also worked with non-Quakers in the H.A.S.S.
was a broader base of support for the Association than the Old Organizationists had ever managed to attract in Dublin, and since Maria Webb was one of the three Committee members who organized the Irish contributions for the Rochester Bazaar, the formation of the Association provided a fillip for Douglass's cause in Ireland.

Julia Griffiths also won the support of the Clogher Anti-Slavery Association, which had been formed in 1853 as an auxiliary to the Glasgow New Association for the Abolition of slavery, and which had auxiliaries of its own in Killifaddy and Pintonia. The Clogher Association provided financial aid and bazaar gifts for the Glasgow New Association, to be used by it to aid the fugitive slaves under the protection of the New York Vigilance Committee; it also, through its contacts with William Arnaud in Leeds, tried to promote visits from "celebrated coloured lecturers" such as Professor W.G. Allen. The subscription lists for the Clogher Association amounted to £20 in 1856.

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1. *Formation of the Irish Metropolitan Ladies' Anti-Slavery Association, with a Report for the Irish Contributors of 1856 to the Rochester Anti-Slavery Bazaar* (Dublin, 1857), pp. 1-5, 8-15. Significantly, this was printed by Robert Chapman, who had been a partner of Webb's until 1853, and who was a more orthodox Quaker than Webb.


3. This amounted to £20 in 1856.


in 1857 indicate the new sources of support which the anti-slavery cause could attract in Ireland. The official and Committee members of the Association included one Member of Parliament, six Justices of the Peace, and five Ministers of religion, including the Dean of Clogher. In the Fintonia auxiliary, the officials included one Member of Parliament and three Ministers of Religion. The affairs of the Association, however, were very much in the hands of its treasurer, Mrs. R. Waring Maxwell, who kept in close contact with the B.P.A.S.S. in London, and the New Association in Glasgow. The Clogher Association was mainly supported by Protestant ladies interested in engaging in good works—by far the largest proportion of the Association’s money in 1857 went to support a local school for deaf and dumb children. After hearing from Julia Griffiths the Society also gave donations to the New York Vigilance Committee, to schools for educating Negroes in Canada as advocated by S.R. Ward, and goods worth £27-8-6 to the Rochester Bazaar.

1. Second Annual Report, p. 44 S.R. Ward, after having visited Glasgow at the Invitation of the New Association there, met the treasurer of the Clogher Association, in June, 1855, in Armagh. In the Advocate, Webb was somewhat derisive about the way Ward had taken pains in his autobiography to point out the aristocratic support he had received in Britain, and wrote that such contacts would have been denied to a Waite man of Ward’s station. In Ireland, Ward’s main support came from Independent Ministers, though he was pleased to note that Ministers of the Church of Ireland were also prepared to attend his meetings, and that in Sligo his meeting was also attended by the Right Hon. John Wynne, who was “connected with the first families of the Irish aristocracy”. In Cork his meeting was chaired by Sir John Gordon, the Lord Mayor, and attended by a number of Professors from the University. Anti-Slavery Advocate, v. 1, n. 41, February, 1856; Ward, Autobiography, pp. 312-330, 365-369.

Webb in the Advocate made no mention of the Clogher or Irish Metropolitan Associations, nor of Julia Griffiths' or Maria Webb's letters rebuking the Garrisonians. However, in an obvious reference to Maria Webb, he did remark that the A.A.S.S. had found its best friends and its most bitter enemies among the Dublin Quakers. The former group were seen as admiring the Old Organisationists' catholic approach to the anti-slavery movement, the latter as dissenting from the A.A.S.S.'s refusal to exclude those of differing religious views. His response to the continued growth of support for Douglass was to raise anew the issue of the American abolitionist's relationship with Julia Griffiths.

Webb stated that as late as February 1857, she had held a mortgage on real estate belonging to Douglass in Rochester, as security for a balance of money due to her by him; this, Webb alleged, was the real reason she was in Britain soliciting financial aid for Douglass.  

Webb had originally heard rumours of this allegation from Quincy in 1853, though the American had been careful to add that he

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1. Privately, he did say that this was designed to "turn Scotch hair into porcupine quills".
3. Ibid., v. 2, n. 7, July, 1857.
could not confirm them. After publishing this article, Webb sent to Boston for evidence of the proof of his allegations, and it emerged, after a legal search of the Clerk's Office of Monroe County, in Rochester, that in August, 1849, Julia Griffiths had held a mortgage to secure one thousand dollars, but that in March, 1853, she had given legal notice that the said mortgage was fully redeemed by Douglass. In April, 1858, Webb confessed that he had been mistaken in suggesting that Julia Griffiths had a "pecuniary interest" in the affairs of Douglass, though he made no apology for his initial statement to this effect. Douglass reacted bitterly, and Webb was not helped by the fact that Garrison in the Liberator had decided to make no mention of the incident, nor by May's advice that Webb take as much notice of Douglass as he would a "very small, noisy one". Richard Webb, Jr. arrived home from the United States in 1859, bearing the news from Frederick Douglass that he hoped Webb bore him no ill-feelings for his strictures on the mortgage allegations, but Webb received this information coldly, knowing that his dispute with Douglass had increased

2. Anti-Slavery Advocate, v.2, n.16, April, 1858.
his standing with the Garrisonians in Boston. In Dublin, however, Maria Webb's husband William had written an angry note to the Advocate, which Webb declined to publish but which contained the information that Richard Allen was also offended by the way Webb had treated Julia Griffiths. Webb had done little to persuade their opponents that the Old Organizationists could be relied upon for honesty or even restraint.

There was a considerable legacy of interest in Douglass as a result of his labours in Ireland, and to those in the 1850's who were interested less in the ideological aspects of divisions in the anti-slavery movement than in engaging in practical work to aid Negroes in general and fugitives in particular, the attraction of Douglass was that his name was known, he had himself risen from servitude to become an editor, and that the proceeds of articles sent to Rochester could be directed by this prominent Negro to aid the fugitives. A further reason for supporting Douglass was that those who did so could be assured that their work was in no way associated with the kind of irreligious notions that the Garrisonians had been alleged to hold. Julia Griffith's advocacy of the Rochester Bazaar was designed to appeal to the type of interest in American slavery that had emerged in the 1850's. Thus the Irish Metropolitan Association had support from lady organizers in

1. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Reporter, v. 6, n.4, April, 1850, pp. 95-96.
Augher, Belfast, Cork, Clonmel, Thurles, Waterford, and Counties Mayo, Donegal and Tipperary,\(^1\) while in Dublin, Richard Allen had contributed to the Rochester fund in 1856 and 1857, and the Jennings sisters collected for it in Cork, in 1858.

It was his knowledge of the precise attraction of Douglass for British abolitionists that prompted Webb’s reluctance to accept Maria Weston Chapman’s decision in 1858 to hold no more anti-slavery bazaars in Boston.\(^2\) Webb agreed that if instead of gifts, the British abolitionists sent cash donations, there would be much saving in freight dues and labour. However, he was aware of the appeal which collecting and donating goods to bazaars had for the British abolitionists. There was no doubt, he wrote, "that the donors reaped a real benefit in the consciousness of having done something to prove their faith by their works on behalf of a great and good cause." He realised that the old method helped to sustain a feeling of personal involvement in anti-slavery among the donors. It was for this reason that Webb felt that though the change to cash donations might be financially advantageous, it would in the long run be to the detriment of the Old Organized cause. Webb was not confident of his ability to "mend the mischief"

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1. *Ibid.*, v. 6, n. 5, May, 1858, pp. 143-144.

2. Many American Garrisonians shared Webb’s misgivings about the decision, while his resentment at the peremptory manner in which it had been made is indicated by his remark that "it is well that the little handful of workers on this side are so fully persuaded of the superior wisdom and better means of judging possessed by our friends in Boston." R.D. Webb to [?], Dublin, 31/3/1858. Ms.A.9.2.v.29, p. 54. Weston Papers.
that had been done, especially since there was almost universal opposition among British Garrisonians to the proposed changes, and given the fact that the Irish Association in 1856 had seen it as being to their advantage to claim that the Dublin Society accepted no goods for Bazaars.¹

Nevertheless, Webb and Harriet Martineau issued a signed Appeal on behalf of the A.A.S.S. in October, 1858, explaining that the financial crisis in America in 1857 had hastened the decision to end the Bazaar, which had long been recognised as being merely a "convenience" for the "luxurious and light-minded" at the expense of those who were earnestly labouring for the abolition of slavery.²

In Dublin, largely through the efforts of Webb, Mary Edmundson,³ and James Haughton's daughters, a sum of over fifty-five pounds was sent to Boston, and a box of articles worth some twenty pounds was sent to the Philadelphia Bazaar.⁴ Only five pounds had been sent on behalf of the Dublin Ladies' Society as such, which also

1. Prompted by Mrs. Chapman, he suggested that the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society were continuing their bazaar, and that British donors to the A.A.S.S. could either send money to Boston or goods to Philadelphia. Anti-Slavery Advocate, v.2,n, n.16, April, 1858; v.2, n.17, May, 1858.

2. Appeal on behalf of the American Anti-Slavery Society (n.p. 30/10/1858)

3. The Dublin Garrisonians were encouraged by the visits of Elizabeth Pease Nichol in 1857, and Mary Estlin, Eliza Wigham, and her brother John, in 1858. John Wigham, the director of an Edinburgh bank which had failed as a consequence of the financial crisis in America, married the daughter of Jonathan Plu, Webb's school-friend. Webb had visited the Glasgow Garrisonians in 1842.

4. Annual Report of the Dublin Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society for the year 1858 (Dublin, 1858), p. 15 fn. In 1858, the Irish Metropolitan Association, in an attempt to avoid the heavy customs duties placed on the goods sent to Rochester in 1857, instead held a bazaar of their own in Dublin, and sent the proceeds of this to Julia Griffiths. Such a solution had not occurred to Webb, or, at least, had not been taken up by him. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Reporter, v.6,n.5, May, 1858, pp. 113-114.
sent contributions to James Hiller McKim's Philadelphia Vigilance Committee and to Thomas Garrett, a Quaker in Delaware, to aid their respective efforts on behalf of the fugitives, while a further donation had been sent to W. J. Bailey, editor of the Free South in Newport, Kentucky. The 1858 Report declared that the Society still had the "fullest confidence in the A.A.S.S.'s "judicious" disposal of funds sent to it, but the sum in question was small in comparison to that sent to aid the fugitives, which could be seen as producing tangible effects, and as providing a sense of vicarious participation in the excitement and dangers of the Underground Railroad.

In 1859, the Dublin Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society also donated money to McKim and Garrett, though in that year the bulk of the funds raised by the members went, on behalf of the Society, to the A.A.S.S., while goods to the value of forty-five pounds were sent to the Philadelphia Bazaar. The Dublin Garrisonians could, therefore, claim that the tactic of collecting goods for the Philadelphia Bazaar had been a successful one, and they had shown


2. See, editorial insertion in letter from Thomas Garrett to Mary Edmundson. Wilmington, 28/2/1858, in Annual Report for 1858.

that, despite their earlier fears, they were still able, while operating from within the Dublin Ladies' Society, to procure substantial financial assistance for the A.A.S.S. 1

However, despite the presence in Dublin of two anti-slavery organizations, there was a marked decline after 1850 in the type of acrimonious bickering that had characterized the relations between the opponents and supporters of the A.A.S.S. in the mid-1850's. When the American Garrisonian, the Rev. S.J. May, visited Ireland in 1859, he found that he was given a "most cordial" reception in Dublin, and Webb was surprised to find that Maria Webb accepted everything that May said about Frederick Douglass and Julia Griffiths at a small meeting of the abolitionists of Dublin, in Mary Edmundson's house. 2 The diminishing tensions between the two anti-slavery organizations was also indicated by the 1860 Report of the Dublin Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society, which gave notice of the activities of the Irish Metropolitan Association, and noted that the objects and aims of the two Societies "need not come into collision". 3

1. The Anti-Slavery Advocate, v. 2, n. 27, March, 1859, welcomed the success of the new Subscription Anniversary which had replaced the Boston Bazaar.


Similarly, when Sarah Parker Remond, sister of Charles Lennox Remond, visited Ireland in 1859, James Haughton welcomed her on behalf of the Dublin Ladies' Society, yet her meeting at the Rotunda in March was attended by many members of the Metropolitan Association. When she travelled south to Waterford, Clonmel and Cork, memories of Douglass's trip to these towns were revived, and her remarks on the complicity of their Churches in American slavery annoyed Methodists, Quakers, and members of the Church of Ireland there. 1 Webb was challenged in the Advocate to substantiate Miss Remond's accusations that the Society of Friends were "compromised" on the slavery question, but though the issue could still produce much ill-feeling, this was no longer on the scale of such animosity that earlier lecturers such as Douglass had provoked. 2 Webb's own comments on Douglass at this time, show how earlier tensions had abated. He disapproved of Sarah Remond speaking on the same platform as Douglass at an anti-slavery meeting in Wakefield arranged by the Leeds Young Men's Anti-Slavery Society, and regretted Douglass's continued hostility to the A.A.S.S., but the tone of these statements was mild in comparison with the vituperative


statements that had appeared in the *Advocate* on Douglass in previous years. 1

Garrison's supporters in Ireland had not remained wholly un influenced by the new currents in British anti-slavery that had emerged in the 1850's. Webb did not respond to these trends in the same way as Richard Allen, who had paid yearly subscriptions to the B.F.A.S.S. since 1848, and who in 1856 was prepared to donate to the Rochester Bazaar. He continued in the *Advocate* to point to the A.A.S.S. as the foremost champion of the slave, 2 and to display the distrust of centralization which was so prominent in the British Garrisonian impulse. When it was suggested in February, 1859, that to replace the proliferation of autonomous provincial societies, a National Anti-Slavery League should be formed, Webb argued that only the B.F.A.S.S. could provide the central administrative machinery that was a prerequisite for such a league, and questioned the wisdom of provincial societies surrendering their

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1. *Anti-Slavery Advocate*, v.2, n.38, February, 1860; v. 2, n.39, March, 1860. *S. May Jr.*, on hearing in 1859 that Douglass was going to England, felt that Webb would "keep an eye on him, unquestionably." *S. May Jr. to R.D. Webb. Leicester, 15/9/1859*, MS.B.1.6.v.7, p. 62. May Papers. While Webb had earlier questioned the sincerity of Dr. Cheever's commitment to anti-slavery, in 1859 he was prepared to assist in organizing aid through a Dublin Congregationalist Minister—presumably Dr. Urwick—for Dr. Cheever's Church in New York. Webb's reason for doing so was his belief that while Cheever had elected not to work with the abolitionists, no abolitionist should refuse to work with him. Cheever's visit to England in 1860 was welcomed in the *Advocate*, and when he visited Dublin in 1861, the abolitionists there arranged for a number of his pamphlets on slavery in relation to the American Churches to be purchased and sent to religious libraries in the city. Letter from Webb, in *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, 30/4/1859; *Anti-Slavery Advocate*, v.2, n.44, August, 1860; v. 2, n. 56, August, 1861.

2. Ibid., v. 2, n. 40, April, 1860.
independence to a metropolitan Society "almost as lifeless as themselves". Webb argued that it would be preferable for local societies to adhere energetically to the principles of the A.A.S.S., otherwise they would be little better than pro-slavery organisations: it was for this reason that he regretted to see that in their 1859 Report the Leeds Young Men's A.S.S. made no mention of the A.A.S.S.¹

Nevertheless, Webb's comments on the B.F.A.S.S. increasingly became phrased in terms of regret rather than condemnation, and by 1860 the Dublin Ladies' Society was itself circulating B.F.A.S.S. tracts on the slave-trade.² Despite the persistence of Webb's support for the A.A.S.S., therefore, there is evidence on many levels³ that the antagonisms among the British abolitionists had lost much of their intensity in the period 1850-1860, in consequence of the fundamental changes in British anti-slavery which had occurred in the 1850's, and which, as the abolitionists became absorbed by events in the United States themselves, in turn meant that there was less desire to sustain earlier animosities. In 1857, Webb had

1. Ibid., v. 2, n.26, February, 1859.

2. Annual Report for 1860, p. 6. Among the anti-slavery pamphlets which the Dublin Ladies' Society had for consultation in 1860, was Autobiography of a Fugitive Slave, by Mattie Griffith. She visited Dublin in October, 1850, and greatly impressed Webb, and also Miss Estlin who found her very different from the kind of abolitionist she was used to: "I was amazed to find how much more we accorded in tastes and opinions, owing to her Southern training...". M. Estlin to J.H. McKinn, Bristol, 4/8/1861. Miller McKinn Papers, Cornell University Library.

3. See, British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Reporter, v. 6, n. 10, October, 1858.
maintained that he had no alternative to defending men whom he had always supported and who were now, once more, accused of infidelity, but he confessed that he had little liking for the "squabbling" which had distinguished Irish anti-slavery in that year, and which had resulted in such ill-feeling between families and friends. Webb preferred active disunity to passive unity under the D.F.A.S.S., but he felt he was not so "juvenile" as to imagine that people "at our time of life" were likely to change their opinions of the A.A.S.S.¹

This was a period in which Webb reported a remarkable slump in anti-slavery activity, both among the working classes and the "intelligent".² Thus the London Emancipation Committee, formed by Chesson and Thompson in June, 1859, had been established as a Committee which would "perhaps" hold a yearly meeting on the first of August, and this provided further indication of the numerical and organizational weakness of the British Old Organisationists.³

That the inaugural meeting of this Committee was addressed by Louis Chamerovszow, did not, moreover, provoke any comment from

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1. R.D. Webb to William Webb. Dublin, 21/6/1857. Estlin Papers. Edinburgh University Library. Webb had long been conscious of the way his anti-slavery opinions had alienated both his friends, and his relations in Dublin. This letter to Julia Webb, his husband suggests that, as Civil War approached, and the feuds between the British abolitionists struck those involved as being of declining relevance, Webb felt less inclined to perpetuate, or exacerbate, these domestic tensions.


It was only visits by such abolitionists as Sarah Parker Remond which prompted any reaction in Ireland, and in this situation, renewed attacks on the opponents of the A.A.S.S. in Britain, would, he felt, be counter-productive in every sense. It was for similar reasons that Webb confided that he did not deem it advisable for Garrison to visit Britain in November 1859. There was no man that Webb would have personally liked to see more, but he suggested that Garrison's propensity to say whatever he chose upon every subject, many of which were "regarded with great distrust by the leaders of public opinion or a majority of them" in Britain, would result in his "pulling down with one hand" what he built with the other. It was not merely the failure of the British people to

1. In the Advocate, v. 2, n. 44, August, 1860, Webb defended Chamerovzow when he was accused by Nicholas Murray, an American Old School Presbyterian then visiting Belfast, of being a foreigner devoid of English social graces, who was paid a stipend for annoying gentlemen such as he, Murray.

2. 1856 had marked the high point of the Clogher Association's strength, being the first year in which enough money was available to print a report. In the same year, however, Mrs. Maxwell Waring complained of the difficulty she had in even persuading her Committee to meet, while following her husband's death in 1856, she herself began to devote less time to anti-slavery matters. I. Maxwell Waring to L. Chamerovzow. Killyfaddy, 18/8/1866, 13/12/1856, 29/1/1861. Ms. Brit. Exp. S. 18, c.159/04; c.159/05; c.34/33.

3. S.J. May had noted that William Smeal and Elizabeth Pease Michel lamented "as much as we do the extravagance" of Wright and Pillsbury, and Webb also, in 1860, concluded that the two, by making no attempt to "conform to the company" they met with in Britain, "did not do as missionaries to the fastidious, censorious, and not too zealous or sympathizing English". In a way that suggested a radical change from his approach in the early 1850's, he added that this group must be "won and not repelled". R.D. Webb to S. May Jr. Dublin, 23/5/1860. Ms.B.1.6.v.15. (Additional Letters to S. May Jr.)
respond to the Old Organizationists that depressed Webb in this period, however. He was also appalled by the seeming failure of the abolitionists to inculcate anti-slavery principles in the Northern States. It was for this reason that he interpreted John Brown's raid as an honourable and exceptional example of anti-slavery zeal, which suggested that not everyone in the North was a tool of politicians or the upholder of a corrupt Union.

Webb's first information about Brown came naturally from the American abolitionists such as S. May Jr., who, if convinced that his plan at Harper's Ferry had been idealistic and impracticable, nevertheless depicted Brown as a man who had been driven to excess by the Slave Power, and who had displayed throughout his imprisonment and trial the most remarkable personal integrity and courage.1 At first concerned that Brown's conduct in Kansas had not been undeserving of some reproach, Webb was assured that Brown was a martyr, and in no sense a criminal.2

Webb and Haughton sent money to aid Brown's family after his execution,3 but like S. May Jr. and J.H. McKim, Webb felt that

1. S. May Jr. to R.D. Webb. Leicester, 31/10/1859. Ibid., v. 7, pp. 63-64.
3. Webb also provided shelter and medical aid for an American called John Wilson (or Martin), who claimed to have taken part in the raid on Harper's Ferry but who turned out to be a degrader of an American insurance company and a fugitive from justice. R.D. Webb to J.H. McKim. Dublin, 29/12/1861. McKim Papers.
James Redpath's *Life of John Brown* placed too much emphasis on Brown as a fighting man, and he considered the book to be totally unfitted to appeal to English readers.\(^1\) Webb, therefore, planned to write a biography of his own, compiled from materials contained in Redpath's book and other articles that had appeared in the anti-slavery press, but compressing the incidents relating to Kansas, and omitting all of Redpath's "adjectives, epithets, reflections and transcendentalism."\(^2\)

Webb planned to construct the book by providing only minimal editorial comment, and to let his selection of speeches and documents speak for themselves. In the process of compiling the material with his wife, Hannah, Webb became "saturated with veneration" for Brown, whom he described as America's greatest man.\(^3\) Webb knew of course that Brown was no advocate of moral force, and Quincy had in February, 1861, informed him privately that at the previous annual meeting of the A.A.S.S., many abolitionists of "the Kansas and John Brown sort were armed",\(^4\) but Webb had displayed a certain

\(^1\) *Anti-Slavery Advocate, v. 2, n. 43, July, 1860.*


elasticity in his non-resistance views in the past, and his book, he felt, was a "creditable reminiscence" to Brown. 1

The interest which John Brown's raid had aroused in Ireland provided a great deal of publicity for the abolitionists, much of which was not flattering to them. The Freeman's Journal felt that the raid had been so foolish as to cast doubts on Brown's sanity, and, denying that Brown had been "murdered by slaveholders", it asserted that he had been legally convicted of "treason against the laws". Moreover, it castigated those abolitionists who had earlier aided or encouraged Brown, thereby confirming suspicions that they were "singularly deficient" in judgement, and had ruined the "noblest" of causes with their "violence at home and the language of their missionaries in England". The Freeman's Journal then upbraided England for its "unjustifiable interference" in the American slavery question, and pointed not only to the difficulties but the dangers involved in an immediate emancipation of the slaves. The "rights and interests" of the Slaveholders ought, it argued, to be recognised, and attention paid to finding some way of reconciling the "prompt, or gradual, extinction of slavery", with the maintenance of the Union. 2 In Belfast, also, Mary Ireland

1. For evidence of the way the A.A.S.S. welcomed Webb's book, see, "Minutes of the Executive Committee of the A.A.S.S.", v. 2, entry for 31/10/1861. Mary Estlin paid for the cost of printing and publishing the book. It was she who had originally urged Webb to take up the project, after she had found Redpath's "unreadable". H. Estlin to J.H. McKim. Bristol, 8/10/1861. McKim Papers.

2. Freeman's Journal, 30/12/1859.
found that the raid on Harper's Ferry had been viewed as little more than an attempt to provoke insurrection among the slaves, and she wrote to ask Mollin to provide assurances that any aid sent from Belfast would be used to assist only "self-contained slaves." In underlining its own concern for the survival of the American Republic, the Freeman's Journal had criticized the American abolitionists for their "Abolition devotion" to the Union, but Webb, on the contrary, was puzzled at the degree of support given by the former disunionists to the Lincoln Administration. He viewed Lincoln's election as a most hopeful indication of the "progress" of public feeling in the North, though Lincoln's past record on the slavery issue did not impress him, and he felt that the Republican Party would do little to interfere with slavery where it already existed. What Webb hoped for was the accession of the South, which would leave the free north as a haven for the fugitive, and allow the development of anti-slavery feeling in the North to develop unimpeded by feelings of attachment to the Union. He was surprised, however, to find that many of the

1. M. Ireland to J. M. Mollin, Belfast, 30/10/1859, 2/11/1860. Mollin Papers. Mary Ireland had formed a Juvenile Anti-Slavery Society composed mainly of school-children in Belfast who collected goods for the fugitives. The Gentlemen's Anti-Slavery Society had long been "dormant" in the city, while she commented that though the Ladies' Society was "galvanised occasionally" it badly needed "new blood."

supporters of the A.A.S.S. in America showed great "gratification" when the Civil War did break out.¹ Webb was "heartily glad" that the dissolution which he had long advocated, had at last occurred,² and he could not understand how any Garrisonian could now defend a war to maintain the Union. This basically was the attitude which led to Webb being regarded, in his own phrase, as a "political heretic" by many of his American friends.³

Webb had in 1861 been replaced by Harriet Martineau as British correspondent of the Standard,⁴ though in the Advocate he further annoyed abolitionists such as James M. McKim when he supported her criticisms of the Morrill tariff, on the grounds that this would only facilitate trade between England and the South, which he had already recognised as a factor which seriously compromised Britain's willingness to offend the South on the slavery question.⁵ This


4. In one of his last letters to the Standard Webb gave indication that he approved of Sir William Gregory's argument that Britain should recognise the South, and that he was convinced of the sincerity of Gregory's anti-slavery views. Letter from Webb in National Anti-Slavery Standard, 6/7/1861.

prompted McKim to comment that Webb as a "British abolitionist" seemed to be sensitive to British weaknesses but critical of America's, though Webb in turn insisted that he was an "Irish" abolitionist and, therefore, able to view the controversy in a detached way.¹

Webb argued in the Advocate that the anti-slavery convictions of the British people would be fully seen if and when the North declared its intentions of abolishing slavery in the South. As it was, however, he did not believe that the Union could ever be established on its former terms, and in the absence of any evidence that the North was at all interested in the Negro slave, he stated that there was some case for arguing, "for the sake of humanity", that Britain should work for the success of the Confederacy rather for that of the North.²

Such sentiments aroused strong protest from the Boston correspondent of the Advocate, S.J. May, who, like Harriet Beecher Stowe, insisted that the North was fighting what was "virtually" a war for emancipation, and that because it was no longer in collusion but indeed in collision with the South, it deserved Britain's support. Webb did admit that there was a powerful and influential


class of merchants and manufacturers in Britain who sympathized with the South, but claimed that their voices prevailed only because there was so little to convince British abolitionist opinion that the North was seriously interested in freeing the slaves.

When the Federal Government stopped the British steamer Trent and removed James M. Mason and John Slidell, both Confederate Commissioners, the dispute between Webb and McKim in particular became more heated. Webb deplored the action of the Federal Government and also the failure of the Northern abolitionists to recognize what he considered to be a flagrant interference with British neutrality. McKim contended that the central issue was the "continuance" of America's existence, and that to settle this, the South would have to be subjugated, but this struck Webb and Mary Estlin as implying that abolition was to be merely an incidental by-product of the war to save the Union.

1. Webb hoped that the growth in production of free-produce cotton in different parts of the world would remove the "only ground" on which any sympathy could arise in England for the South.

2. Ibid., v. 2, n. 57, September, 1861; v. 2, n. 58, October, 1861; v. 2, n. 60, December, 1861.

3. Ibid., v. 2, n. 61, January, 1862; v. 2, n. 62, February, 1862.


5. Mary Estlin was amazed at the extent of "national pride" shown by abolitionists whose lives had hitherto been dedicated to the overthrow of America's "fatal sin". M. Estlin to J.N. McKim. Bristol, 8/10/1861. McKim Papers.
James McKim replied by declaring the abolitionists had never expected anything other than "temporary" dissolution: "We knew that collision would come, than abolition, and then, we supposed, reunion. But we are having all three together." McKim was annoyed at Webb's failure to criticize those in Britain who spoke out in favour of the South, and felt that Webb's whole response to the Civil War had been conditioned by the fact that he, Webb, was not a "democrat." Webb was prepared to admit that the "domination of mere numbers" was a "bad element" in the American political system.

If it prevailed in Ireland, Webb thought, the majority would vote for the "popes and the inquisition", while in the American North, it accounted for the fact that the majority allowed themselves to be "bemboosed" by the slaveholders. His anger was aroused at what he took to be the American abolitionists' failure to transcend "foolish national prejudices", while McKim, for his part, considered that Webb's support for the Palmerston Government's decision to send troops to Canada, confirmed that Webb too was guilty of succumbing to chauvinistic calculations of national interest. McKim advised Webb to stop reading American newspapers.


and instead to study such upholders of the American political system as de Tocqueville, Cobden and Bright. ¹ Webb, however, remained convinced that the British system, which invested power in the intelligent and educated middle classes, was superior. ² This prompted McKim to repeat his statement that Webb's attitudes stemmed from his distrust of "the people", and that Miss Estlin and Webb disagreed with the majority of the American and even English abolitionists on the subject of the war. ³ After a final exchange of letters in the Spring of 1862, the correspondence between the two men did not resume until March, 1864.

By September 1863, Webb admitted that he had become "surely puzzled" to know what to write about the Civil War, since he had found it difficult to say anything about the Free States without danger of being misrepresented and regarded by former friends as their enemy. His opinions also led to some estrangement between him and S.J. May, which was not resolved until 1864, and it was

2. v. 31, p. 97 A. Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison. McKim had already warned Webb against accepting uncritically Pilsbury's strictures on the Lincoln Government. These, McKim wrote, were "calculated to confirm wrong impressions".
3. Haughton agreed with Webb and Mary Estlin, and wrote letters to the Liberator, condemning the Old Organizationists for having made a "grand mistake in policy, and a sad mistake in principle", in supporting "violent measures". Anti-Slavery Advocate, v. 2, n. 71, November, 1862.
only to Edmund Quincy that Webb continued to correspond regularly, 
and to repeat his opinions on the course of the war. These opinions 
changed when Lincoln gave notice in September 1862 that he would 
publish an Emancipation Proclamation in January, 1863. Webb had 
early deplored Lincoln's advocacy of colonization, and though 
he recognised that the Proclamation was essentially a war measure, 
he declared that he and other abolitionists could be "heartily 
glad" of it.¹ Though this did not abolish slavery as such, but 
merely freed slaves in those States still in rebellion, the 
Emancipation Proclamation allowed Webb to see that if the North 
was not fighting to liberate the slave, at least the war fought 
by the North would inevitably result in the abolition of slavery. 
In consequence, he became more willing to admit the extent of 
British support for the Confederacy, and more vituperative in his 
denunciation of this.² 

Webb, however, continued to oppose any attempt by the North 
to subjugate the South by military means. He claimed that the 

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¹ Anti-Slavery Advocate, v. 2, n. 71, November, 1862; v. 3, 
n. 2. February, 1863. In the belief that slavery was now 
doomed, and the work of the abolitionists thereby accom-
plished, the Advocate was discontinued some months after 
the Emancipation Proclamation was signed.

² Ibid., v. 2, n. 72, December, 1862; v. 3, n. 5, May, 1863.
the imposition of a military despotism on the South would destroy
the institutions in the Northern States and in Canada. Webb did
not write as one who was "enamoured" of these institutions,¹
but the disruption of the Union was, in his opinion, a penalty that
would have to be paid for the "great curse" of slavery.²

Webb argued that a dissolution of the Union was to be welcomed,
and that the North should only take steps to contain Southern
aggression. These views were shaped by three factors: first, the
opposition from many of his closest American friends to his
original suggestion that the North should let the South secede;
secondly, his recognition of the initial military success of the
South; and finally, the support given to the notion of contain-
ment in John Elliot Cairnes, The Slave Power (Dublin, 1862).

Cairnes became Professor of Political Economy at the Univers-
ity of Dublin in 1856, and held this post for five years. Webb
had first become acquainted with him in 1859, when he provided
some books to help Cairnes prepare a course of lectures on slavery
at the University.³ Webb later reported with some satisfaction
that he had played an important part in the publication of the

1. He did add that these had an "excellence" which Europeans
found it hard to appreciate, and which were well suited to
the conditions found in the Industrial North.


See, A. Weinberg, John Elliot Cairnes and the American Civil
War (London, 1968)
Slavery Power, in that he had supplied much of the information and material without which Cairnes could not have written the work. He also provided Cairnes with introductions to Harriet Martineau, who had important literary contacts in London, as was acknowledged by Cairnes himself. Webb also made suggestions, which Cairnes accepted, about the lectures on slavery on which the Slavery Power was based, and it was Webb who printed the book. Cairnes's intention in writing the work was not so much to trace the growth of slavery in the United States, as to show the "political dominion" which sprang from slavery in the South, and to show the British public the "kind of power" the North had to contend with. He argued in the book that the North should not attempt to invade and conquer the South, but should merely try to confine it, and prevent further aggression and expansion on its part by containing it east of the Mississippi river.

This argument was accepted by Frank Harrison Hill, abolitionist editor of the Northern Whig, and by Harriet Martineau. The

American abolitionists also praised the book for the way it described the type of enemy the North was contending against, but there were objections to Cairnes's thesis. Webb had foreseen that few of his American abolitionist allies would support the notion of containment, and he himself suggested objections to Cairnes's proposals: in particular, he felt that Cairnes's ideas would require the maintenance of a standing army and navy and the establishment of customs houses along the frontier with the South.

Webb was, therefore, aware that there were practical problems involved in the containment policy, and since he realised that this was not likely to be implemented by the North, he tended, as the Civil War progressed, to accept that the North was winning and to wish it continued success. He still found it difficult to comprehend how the American abolitionists could be enthusiastic for the war, however, and at the end of 1865 was not confident that there could be any "satisfactory reconstruction" of the Southern States.

1. G.W. Curtis to J.R. Cairnes. New York, 16/11/1862. Ms. 8948. Cairnes Papers. It was decided to postpone publication of the Slave Power in Harper's Magazine, because it was felt that the work advocated a dissolution of the Union.


3. R.D. Webb to E. Quincy. Cork, 8/12/1865. Webb/Quincy Letters. Cairnes had accepted at an earlier date than Webb the argument that though the "bulk" of anti-slavery feeling in the North was based on "purely political ground", in that it was designed to break the political power of the South rather than to free the slave, this was perhaps as "high a ground" as any nation could be expected to act upon. Thompson agreed with Webb that the abolitionists in the North would be embarrassed by any allegations that their support for the war would cease if slavery were abolished by the South, but resembled Cairnes rather than Webb in his enthusiasm for the notion that "Union is...the only sure road to Emancipation". O. Thompson to R.D. Webb. London, 23/6/1863. Ms. A.1.2.v.32, p. 39L. Anti-Slavery Letters to Garrison; Autobiography, Memories, and Experiences of Honore Daniel Conant (2 vols. Boston, 1908), v. 1, pp. 412-420.
Chapter Nine

Conclusions
Conclusions

Anti-Slavery wielded a plethora of attractions for its adherents. It was supported, by, among others, evangelicals, utilitarians, those who saw common cause between the Negro slave and the Irish peasant, the outraged humanitarian, those who sought to uphold Ireland's honour, those who felt that their social status was upheld by their participation in good works, those determined that neither the Republican nor the Democratic idea, nor the American experiment, would be sullied by Black slavery, those concerned less with the slave than with the abolitionist shortcomings of their own rivals. This made for a disparate grouping of interests and concerns, yet it can be said that the abolitionists, with their American counterparts, composed a transatlantic community, fused together by common ideological and class interests. Sympathetic to the Garrisonian perception of a non-exclusive anti-slavery platform, Webb's attachment to the American Old Organization had been strengthened by the reaction of the B.F.A.S.S. in 1840; thereafter, his relations with his American allies had provided him with the means to transcend the social and intellectual dimensions of his life in Ireland. When it was requested that Webb's anti-slavery letters be sent to add to the Weston and Chapman collections in Boston, Alfred Webb complied, in the knowledge that his father's interest in American slavery had been appreciated most by the abolitionists in Boston. After visiting America in 1869, Webb noted that though he had spent over sixty-five years in Ireland, and some eight months in the United States, he was better known by reputation, and certainly in terms of greater personal intimacy,
in America.\textsuperscript{1} As early as 1849 he had remarked that he despised
the Republic, hated the President, but loved the Republican postage
stamp; twenty years later, his bill for postage to America was still
larger than the amount he spent on clothes.\textsuperscript{2} The relationship
between the Old Organizationists in America and Britain were
frequently strained by misunderstandings and misinterpretations,
and Webb in particular saw the difficulties involved in adapting
Garrisonian ideas to British society and habits of thought. Initially,
he had professed a high regard for American institutions, but he
did not relish the prospect of introducing democratic precepts in
Ireland, while his immersion in American abolitionist literature
did not persuade him of their efficacy in the United States.\textsuperscript{3}

\begin{enumerate}
\item R.D. Webb to E. Quincy, Dublin, 19/12/1869, 18/8/1870, 29/10/1870.
  Webb remarked that "here... I know of nobody so American as
  myself... who draws so much of his intellectual and social
  enjoyment from American sources". During his visit to America
  Webb fell on board a steamer on the Great Lakes, and it is
  clear that he never wholly recovered from the effects of this.
  In 1872, when Webb's health was declining rapidly and when his
  reading now included Thomas Paine, Garrison remarked: "I could
  wish that he had a stronger assurance of the life beyond the
  grave than he seems to entertain." W.L. Garrison to S. May Jr.
  from Garrison. It is worthy of note that one of the most
  prominent British leaders of a reform movement which relied
  to a great extent on an appeal to the Christian impulse should
  have been so critical of contemporary religious thought.
  Despite his renunciation of the Quakers, however, Webb was in
  1872 buried in a Quaker cemetery outside Dublin.

\item R.D. Webb to A.W. Weston, Dublin, 1/12/1869. Ms. A. 9, 2, v. 24, p. 117.

\item Webb's preference for limited monarchy was strengthened by
  what he saw in America, where he deplored the support given
  to the Fenian movement. R.D. Webb to A.K. Foster, Dublin,
\end{enumerate}
Webb did not see the situations in Ireland and America as being homologous. Yet the development of his ideas showed that he thought in terms of a paradigmatic framework that was transatlantic in nature. Following the demise of the Advocate in May, 1863, Webb realised that he had become a "very insignificant private in the anti-slavery ranks". With Cairnes, he had become a Committee member of the Emancipation Society in London, but he knew that it was men such as Cairnes himself, Goldwin Smith and J.S.Mill, who were the foremost spokesmen of the day on American affairs. Webb frequently pointed out to the American abolitionists that he was an intimate friend of Cairnes, perhaps in order to underline his own continuing importance in the anti-slavery movement, but there was no longer the same need for the earlier form and frequency of contact between the abolitionists in Dublin and Boston, while Webb's views had in any event alienated many of his erstwhile friends. However, personal contacts were maintained after the Civil War, and reformers in both countries continued to sustain each others' interest and participation in reform causes. This was shown in the Freedman's Aid movement, and also in the way that Webb procured financial assistance from his American Old Organized friends for the relief of French peasants injured in the Franco-


Prussian War. 1 After 1865, Webb remained absorbed in American
cultural and political affairs, and was a regular reader of and
commentator on the American press. This tradition of a reform
impulse that went beyond national boundaries was upheld in the
career of his son, Alfred Webb. He was active in the Irish Home
Rule movement, 2 fought to eradicate the Indian opium trade with
China, and in December 1894 his interest in international affairs
and reform was indicated when he was elected President of the tenth
Indian National Congress.

James Haughton also continued to interest himself in American
affairs. His importance in the transatlantic movement has been
underestimated, at least in comparison with Webb's, probably
because he was not such a prolific correspondent of the American
abolitionists. If there was a discernible difference in the out-
looks of the two men, it lay in Haughton's greater readiness to
find a focus and context for his interests in Irish affairs. He
never used American slavery merely to illustrate his schemes for
Ireland; but to a greater extent than Webb he thought in terms of
how his ideas on America could be applied to Ireland. Hence the

1. For evidence of continued contacts between the families of
the American and Dublin abolitionists, see W.L. Garrison to
D. Webb, Potteryville, N.Y., 17/6/1908, Port. 9(17).
Friends' Library, Dublin; and for S. May Jr's tribute to
Webb's anti-slavery services, see, Deborah Webb, "Reminiscences
Deborah Webb also visited her father's friends in America,
and Webb visited Garrison in Paris in 1867.

2. He was treasurer of first the Irish Home Rule League under
Isaac Butt, and then of the Irish National League under Parnell;
in 1890 he was elected M.P. for West Waterford. Like his father,
Alfred Webb both perpetuated the Irish Quaker reform tradition
(for example, in his advocacy of moral force), and was more
radical than most Quakers of his day (as in his advocacy of
Home Rule).
range and extent of his participation in Irish public affairs, and the urgency with which he campaigned; hence also his greater fame, and no doubt notoriety in Ireland itself. If we are, however, tempted to suppose—by, for example, his obsession with American affairs, his attempt through the Advocate to reach a predominantly non-Irish audience—that Webb had detached himself from much of Ireland, his own qualifying comments must be recalled; his insistence to the American Garrisonians that he was an Irish abolitionist; his reminder to English Garrisonians that he shared little of their sympathies for what Parliament in London had done or had not done with respect to Ireland from 1846–1849; his claim that much in Ireland itself, such as the Catholic religion and the presence of British troops, had helped to shape his ideas. The abolitionists' belief that their work would both reveal and elevate Ireland's moral standing was an extremely important consideration in Irish anti-slavery, especially for Haughton and O'Connell, but also for Webb. He initially responded to the Draft riots in New York, for example, by expressing relief that they had been the work predominantly not of native Americans but of "Catholic Irish", whom he now saw as the most dangerous element in American society, the tools of corrupt politicians and unscrupulous priests such as Archbishop Hughes. In this way he sought, perhaps, to lessen

1. Webb died in comparative obscurity; Haughton's funeral, in contrast, was attended by large sections of the public.

the resentment that his strictures on native sentiment in the North had provoked among the abolitionists. However, so bitter was the animosity which the riots aroused in American abolitionist circles against the Irish-American participants that Webb found himself defending the good name of Ireland by remarking that he found it difficult to reconcile the riots with the fact that the Irish at home were, in contrast to the English, peaceful and law-abiding.¹

Given his wife’s comments about “easy drawing-room anti-slavery”, and his own gradual withdrawal from active anti-slavery, it was perhaps ironic that it was Richard Allen who most aptly illustrates the post-bellum interest shown by the Irish abolitionists in America and in the American Negro. He travelled to America in 1883. There he visited Fisk University, where he heard the famed Jubilee Singers perform, and met Frederick Douglass in Washington D.C. He visited numerous black educational and religious institutions in the South, and indeed received a threatening letter from a group called the "White Caps" in Petersburg, Virginia, which warned him that "white ladies" in the district had been made "somewhat uneasy" owing to his having become "very intimate with the coloured race."²

The American abolitionists also welcomed their relationship with their British allies, finding in it a moral support

¹ Similarly, when he was informed that many Irishmen had played a reprehensible part in suppressing the riots in Jamaica in 1865, Webb stated that he found it hard to square this with the moral values upheld by the Irish in Ireland. R.J. Webb to E. Quincy, Cork, 8/12/1865. Webb/Quincy Letters.

² Wigham, Allen, pp. 212-231; Port. 5E(24), Friends’ Library, Dublin.
and identity of interests which their Southern detractors labelled as traitorous. British abolitionism thereby helped to polarise antipathies in the United States, and to that extent was a factor contributing to the situation leading to the Civil War. In Ireland itself, the question of foreign interference in domestic institutions, was exacerbated in complexity by the range of American interest in Ireland, and, in particular, in the Repeal movement. The debate on this question often became a semantic labyrinth, but the abolitionist contention showed that they refused to be bound in their thinking by national boundaries: they argued that oppression knew no political frontiers, and that they had a moral obligation to uphold the cause of the Negro slave. Garrison's denunciations of the American Union, and the attempts made to attract British support for the dissolution campaign, however, presented this idea in terms which even many British Old Organisationists found unpalatable. O'Connell did not care to become embroiled in it, though it was O'Connell, who frequently lambasted the Garrisonians, and who stood closer politically to English reformers like Sturge than to the H.A.S.S. members, who more than any other British abolitionist infuriated the South.

The Irish abolitionists had seen themselves as a type of pressure-group, providing information on American slavery, and attempting to encourage public bodies to adopt and maintain anti-slavery principles. The difference with the West Indian campaign

1. Though George Bradburn and others remained perturbed by Webb's "eraze" about Catholics and politics in America.
was that there was now no such body as Parliament, through which they could act directly. They did, however, try to function by holding anti-slavery meetings, influencing the Irish press, and by endeavouring to sway the opinions of organisations, in particular the L.N.R.A. and the Irish Churches, which themselves were of importance in Ireland and in the United States. Abolitionism in Ireland was almost exclusively a middle-class movement. In composition it was mainly Protestant, in Dublin, Dissenter. The abolitionists in Dublin did try to make contacts with the working classes, but this effort was vitiated by their middle-class horizons and preoccupations.\(^1\) Demographic facts further delimiting abolitionist activity were that the Irish abolitionists were urban-based and English-speaking; they could but try to contact and communicate with the emigrant at that most unpropitious of places and times, the port of departure. Anti-slavery, as an idea, had provoked little hostility in Ireland, in the sense that few actually defended, condoned or justified the existence of American slavery. However, the activities of the abolitionists, and the notion of immediate emancipation, were resisted, primarily because these were seen as a threat to the American Union and the maintenance of domestic and transatlantic relations, while the concept of immediatism carried undertones of militant urgency which many found offensive. As the debates within the L.N.R.A. and the Irish

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Churches showed, the American slavery question became entangled in, and a focus for, domestic quarrels, and though in this process, the plight of the Negro was seldom lost sight of by O'Connell himself, the slave did tend to become a referent, by which the shortcomings of opponents were exposed, and also the plight of the Irish highlighted. The havoc resulting from the Irish famine led to a prolonged slump in the Irish anti-slavery movement, while the condition of Ireland question as a whole led to controversies about the complacency and hypocrisy and sense of priorities of the abolitionists, in which the Irish-Americans in particular, were active participants. The abolitionists pointed to their record in famine relief to show that they could not be accused of wilful blindness to misery at home, but on the question of priorities, they seldom succeeded in persuading their critics of the soundness of their course, especially as these critics argued that abolitionist policy, to the extent that it injured or insulted America, was in any event detrimental to Ireland. Especially in the Nationalist and Irish-American press, the conviction remained that abolitionism was English, and not Irish in inspiration; and also anti-American and anti-Catholic in nature. The abolitionists, for their part, despite the contributions of such Catholics as Madden and O'Connell, did tend to assume that anti-slavery was the natural province of a Protestant reform community. Against this might be placed the intrepidity with which Garrison actually entered a Protestant community, Belfast, and there confronted the most entrenched of Presbyterian orthodoxies; and the blatantly sectarian ends to which his visit was put by the Catholic press in Dublin.
Activists such as Webb were deeply involved in the intellectual component of abolitionist hermeneutics, but for others the ideas held by abolitionists were often repellant, and there were those who wished only to give financial assistance and provide bazaar gifts. They saw their role in anti-slavery as being a logical extension of their interest in local good works, and their interest in the Negro did not necessarily imply, as the activists realized, any interest in anti-slavery schisms or ideologies. In the 1850's, British abolitionism altered in character, and there was a decline in support for even the type of anti-slavery represented by the B.F.A.S.S. In Ireland, the abolitionists were successful in retaining American slavery as the focus of this new interest, but though Webb in the Advocate sought to uphold the claims of the A.A.S.S., post-Stowite abolitionism resulted in an upsurge of support for Douglass, fugitives, and Negro education. In the 1850's, there was no such body as the L.N.R.A., with a well-developed administrative structure and extensive American contacts, which the abolitionists could seek to work through and influence; and after the experiences of the previous decade, there was no sustained effort to influence the Irish Churches. There were, in short, fewer avenues through which the abolitionists could channel their activities; their impact was dissipated in strength, and they chose the necessarily more nebulous path of seeking to influence educated opinion through the formal means of an abolitionist press published in London. Irish anti-slavery in those circumstances became more remote and self-absorbed, while the relevance of the debate as to which group of abolitionists were the accredited custodians
of anti-slavery writ declined in importance still further as events in America itself swung towards Civil War. The clamour of excitement that so invigorated Webb in 1851-1852 was replaced in the mid-1850s by what appeared to him as merely cacophonous squabbling about personalities and the relative merits of different bazaars. There was greater financial and numerical support for the anti-slavery movement, and the abolitionists for the first time printed yearly reports, but Webb felt this accession in strength had been acquired at the expense of direction and principle. As the Civil War approached, moreover, there was less to sustain feuds among the abolitionists, and for the first time since 1840, there was a semblance of harmony in the anti-slavery ranks.

Bourgeois in their social analysis, crass in such instances as their treatment of Douglass in the 1850s, frequently disingenuous in their response to O'Connell, the Dublin Garrisonians knew that their ideas were abhorrent to many, but advocated them as integrated concepts in a campaign of moral reform. The B.F.A.S.S. chose abolitionist disunity rather than accepting Garrisonian notions, which, it felt, would simply demolish the British anti-slavery movement; even the Broad Street Committee lost support in the 1850s because of the popular identification of traditional anti-slavery activity with Garrisonian excesses. Similarly, the Belfast A.S.S. lost support because it too was identified with the Old Organisationists. Yet it was the energy and vigour of visiting American Garrisonians which swept abolitionists such as Standfield into a more committed attack on the Free Church, and it was this attack that so infuriated the Presbyterians: Garrisonian views on
the sabbath and a paid ministry would not have become such a
cause of great controversy, if the Garrisonians had not been the
foremost critics of the Free Church and its Presbyterian allies.
The Dublin Garrisonians, in turn, did not see it as their role to
conciliate and appease, but to define standards by which the
refractory would be judged, and the converted sustained. The
American abolitionists were anxious to enlist the support of the
Irish-Americans; hence the high value which they placed on Irish
abolitionism. This was value as conceived by the abolitionists
themselves. A factor in any estimation of their importance, it was
but little related to the impact, achievements and influence of
the Dublin Garrisonians, who had been successful in presenting anti-
slavery as a subject which the L.H.R.A. and the Churches could not
ignore, but whose achievements, even and especially in their own
estimation, fell far short of their aims. Critics of the abolitionists
reacted in a varied manner, placing them in a category that
ranged from well-meaning idealists to pernicious anarchists.
However, though Webb and Haughton frequently bemoaned their lack of
financial and administrative support, their awareness of their weak-
ness and disorganization was balanced by their perception of their
brand of abolitionism as a spearhead of moral improvement, their
despair at their failure to influence the Irish-Americans, by their
conviction that the future would bear out their ideas about women's
rights, non-resistance, and Black slavery.

Irish interest in the American Negro did not entirely
abate in Ireland during the Civil War. Mary Edmundson and,
later, Anne Allen, collected funds during the Civil War for the
fugitives, while Levi Coffin visited Ireland in 1864, and though he had taken part in the Indiana secession in the 1840's, his appeals on behalf of the freedmen were supported by many Irish Quakers. He was invited to speak in the Dublin Meeting House, and before he left Ireland he was given two hundred pounds which had been collected by the Quaker community. Yet there was much that was valid in Webb's assessment that of the Irish press, only Hill's Northern Whig remained true to abolitionist principles.

Indeed anti-slavery attitudes as a whole in Ireland were subsumed in the general reaction to the Civil War, in which Meagher fought for the North, Smith O'Brien favoured Southern secession, Mitchel lost two sons fighting for the South, and the Irish in New York rioted against the Draft Laws, and after which Mitchel himself was imprisoned by the Federal Government. Abolition was not won peaceably, but the Irish abolitionists saw the war as a curse inflicted because of the failure to listen to the anti-slavery crusaders.

Yet the slavery issue had played an important and often

1. Reminiscences of Levi Coffin (London, 1879), pp. 681-689. In Belfast, the Committee formed to support Coffin's appeal on behalf of the freedmen was also mainly composed of Quakers, but included Drs. Henry Cooke and John Edgar.

2. J. Heron, Celts, Catholics and Copperheads: Ireland views the American Civil War (Columbus, 1968).

3. O'Brien protested against Meagher's enthusiasm for the War and against his advice that Irish emigrants should enlist with the Federal armies on landing in America. O'Brien insisted that it was not a war for emancipation, and that thousands of Irish-Americans had already died needlessly. Letter from O'Brien, in Limerick Chronicle, 5/11/1863, Ms. 3375. O'Brien Papers. See also, Dr Cahill, To the People of Ireland on the American War (Dublin, 1861), and Dr Cahill, "To His Imperial Majesty, Napoleon III", in Curtin, Lectures of Cahill, p. 366.
crucial role in the relations between Ireland and America. Beginning in the Autumn of 1840, and more particularly, from the Spring of 1842 until O'Connell's death in 1846, weekly debates over the nature and implications and consequences of American Negro slavery constituted a remarkably large part of the Repeal Association's proceedings. The issue of slavery emerged as a test of the Repealers' morality, ethics, reasonableness and grasp of practicalities; resulting controversies on the precise nature of these produced in turn important divisions among Irish and Irish-American Repealers. The American abolitionists for their part displayed a great interest in and curiosity about Ireland, which provided in its own way a test of their views about religion, nationalism, oppression, and through the impact of the Irish-American immigrants, their very conception of the nature of American society. Thus the Irish and the Irish-American dimension was of great importance for the campaign against American slavery. It drew from great abolitionists such as Garrison the parallels that could be made between Repeal and anti-slavery, and from not only men such as John C. Cobden but from great humanitarians such as Douglass, and in his own very different way, Brontë O'Brien, comparisons between the worst of the conditions endured by peasant and slave; it ensured that when O'Brien visited the South he would be given a warm reception by important Southern dignitaries in 1859, but also that among those arranging that reception were Mitchel and Meagher; and, it provided both the provincialism that helped provoke the Dublin Garrisonians' rejection of the Tappanites, and the setting in which O'Connell's internationalism could flourish.
The memory of O'Connell's contributions to anti-slavery remained usable. The Bostonians in charge of the O'Connell Centenary celebrations who were so anxious to elicit the tributes of Garrison, Whittier and Phillips were typical of those Irish-Americans in post-bellum America who were hardly unaware that there was more to be gained by dwelling on O'Connell's rather than their own reactions to the Negro. For their part, the abolitionists also felt that appeals to O'Connell's memory could achieve such changes as more generous Irish-American reactions to the Negro, and less corrupt ward politics. More than this, however, men such as Garrison and Phillips remained aware that O'Connell was the single most prominent champion which the American anti-slavery cause had won outside the United States. This was freely admitted by Phillips who, like Douglass, clearly recalled his debt of gratitude to O'Connell when he supported the cause of Charles Stuart Parnell.

O'Connell's abolitionist record may also have continued to serve as an example to such Irish-Americans as John Boyle O'Reilly, who had been closely associated with the O'Connell Centenary Celebrations in Boston, and who, especially after Phillip's death, was seen by many American Negroes as their foremost white champion. He arrived in Philadelphia in 1869 after escaping from a British penal settlement in Australia. Six years later he became editor of the Boston Pilot, the newspaper which had so opposed O'Connell's abolitionist activities. Initially he defended the Pilot's pre-war stand on slavery, but especially after a tour of the South in 1885, and possibly in response to ideas he was exposed to in his role as "mediator between Irish and Puritan Bostonians", he
emerged as a firm and energetic supporter of the Negroes' struggle for equality.¹

O'Connell had taught the abolitionists much, including their first lessons in non-violent agitation.² Historians have subsequently neglected the fact that his internationalism, his concern for the oppressed throughout the world, were not only central to his credo as an abolitionist, but integral to his life and career, though even his contemporary detractors such as Webb testified to the importance of his role in the transatlantic anti-slavery movement, and to the uniqueness this imparted to Irish abolitionism.

1. Much more so than, for example that other Irish-American, Patrick Ford, who had learned to be a printer and a journalist on Garrison's Liberator. T.M.Drown, Irish-American Nationalism, 1870-1890 (Philadelphia,1966)pp.xv-xvi. It is possible that some of the methods and style of journalistic sensationalism that were so evident in Ford's Irish World were learnt from working on Garrison's paper.

2. The tactics of Irish agitation continued to have some relevance for the American Negro, it was felt. Thus one correspondent of O'Reilly's Pilot, recalling the Irish boycott against landowners, suggested the efficacy of a similar approach against those Whites who discriminated against American Blacks. J.R.Bette, "The Negro and the New England Conscience in the days of John Boyle O'Reilly", in Journal of Negro History v.31,n.4,October,1966,pp.246-261.
Appendices
Appendix I

British and American Anti-Slavery Visitors to Ireland, 1830-1865
Appendix (1)

British and American Anti-Slavery Visitors to Ireland, 1830-1865

1833. Elliott Cresson.
1837. George Thompson.
1839. William Dawes.
1840. James G. Birney; George Bradburn; William L. Garrison; Abby Kimber;
James and Lucretia Mott; Wendell Phillips; Nathaniel P. Rogers;
Sarah Pugh; John Scoble; Henry B. Stanton.
1841. John A. Collins; Charles L. Remond.
1842. James S. Buckingham; Moses Grundy; Henry C. Wright.
1843. James C. Fuller; H.H. Kellogg; Samuel May Jr; H.C. Wright.
1844. H.C. Wright.
1845. James M. Buffum; Frederick Douglass; the Hutchinson Family; H.C.
Wright.
1846. F. Douglass; W.L. Garrison.
1847. William W. Brown; Charles Gildin; John Scoble.
1851. Henry H. Garnet.
1852. John B. Estlin; Mary Estlin; Harriet Martineau; S. Pugh.

As indicated in the text, visiting abolitionists played an important role in Irish anti-slavery. Not all of those mentioned in the list engaged in anti-slavery activities in Ireland. Samuel May Jr., for example, stayed only four days in Dublin, but he remained a regular correspondent of the Dublin Garrisonians, and was important in Haughton's attempts to influence the Irish Unitarians and Reformed Presbyterians. The English radical James Silk Buckingham lectured on America while in Ireland, and spoke at temperance meetings arranged by the H.A.S.S. members. Webb saw him as an example of an English reformer whose anti-slavery views had been blighted by exposure to American society, though O'Connell frequently referred to Buckingham's writings as proof of his contention that the Irish-Americans' response to slavery was deserving of reproach. Harriet
1853. James M. McKim.
1854. Parker Pillsbury; Samuel R. Ward.
1855. P. Pillsbury; S.R. Ward.
1857. Elizabeth Pease Nichols.
1858. S. Estlin; Eliza Wigham.
1859. Samuel J. May; Sarah P. Remond.
1860. Mattie Griffith.
1861. Dr. Cheever.
1864. Levi Coffin.

Martineau stayed at Webb's house, as did most of the abolitionists on this list who visited Dublin, and her religious views so offended Webb's Catholic maid that the latter left Webb's employ. Webb also visited Harriet Martineau at Ambleside. Though the relations between the two were frequently strained they were both leading British Garrisonians, and continued to exchange, for example, materials relevant to her anti-slavery pieces in the Daily News. Similarly, Mary Estlin never attended anti-slavery meetings while in Ireland, but her visits helped to sustain her friendship and cooperation with the Dublin Garrisonians. As the case of Asenath Nicholson showed, all visiting Americans of importance who came into contact with the Dublin clique were quizzed as to their views on slavery, with important consequences for Irish abolitionism. Another example was Amasa Walker (1795-1875), economist, co-founder of Oberlin College, and Massachusetts Senator. He visited Ireland in 1843, following the Peace Convention in London that year to which he had been a delegate, and Webb was pleased to find that he disliked the Tappanites in both America and Britain. The Conventions in London in 1840 and 1843 account for the number of visitors to Ireland in those years; thus in 1843, Walker was accompanied to Dublin by the Rev. H.H. Kellog, who had attended the 1843 Anti-Slavery Convention as a delegate from the Illinois Anti-Slavery Society. Individuals on the fringe of American Garrisonianism also visited Ireland, though their visits were important, not so much for Irish anti-slavery, as for demonstrating the extent of the abolitionists' transatlantic contacts. Among this group were A.C. Spooner, who arrived with a letter of introduction from Garrison, but who horrified Webb by chewing tobacco, E.M. Davis, son-in-law of theotts, Thomas Davis of Rhode Island, and Edmund Quincy's sister Anna and her husband. They visited in 1843, 1846, 1842 and 1856, respectively.

Henry Coleman, (1785-1845), the American agricultural reformer also visited Dublin, with a letter of introduction from Garrison, in 1843.
Appendix II

Composition of the enlarged Committee of the Belfast Anti-Slavery Society in 1846
Appendix (2)

Composition of enlarged Committee of the Belfast A.S.S., in 1846

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Occupation, where known</th>
<th>Religion, where known</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Robert Workman</td>
<td>Muslin manufacturer</td>
<td>Quaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Standfield</td>
<td>&quot;Gentleman&quot;</td>
<td>Church of Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Webb</td>
<td>Muslin manufacturer</td>
<td>Quaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Fraser</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maxwell Sanders</td>
<td>Cotton merchant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James B. Ferguson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Hodgins</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edwin Blow</td>
<td>Paper manufacturer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Millen</td>
<td>Teacher of Classics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Pim</td>
<td>Wine and Tea merchant</td>
<td>Quaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John McVicker</td>
<td>Tailor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Boyd</td>
<td>Bookbinder</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samuel Hunter</td>
<td>Surgeon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Rose</td>
<td>Clerk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isaac Nelson</td>
<td>Minister</td>
<td>Presbyterian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James R. Neill</td>
<td>Jeweller</td>
<td>Presbyterian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Rogers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Sources: Northern Whig, 10/2/1846; Martin's Belfast Directory for 1846. Standfield, Calder, Webb, Nelson, and Neill were the most active of the Committee members. With his wife Maria, Webb later settled in Dublin. Neill corresponded with the Garrisonians in America until the late 1850's. Standfield and Calder acted as joint secretaries of the Committee.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name cont'd.</th>
<th>Occupation; etc.</th>
<th>Religion, etc.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James McTier</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.A. Calder</td>
<td>Retired Naval Officer</td>
<td>(Church of Ireland?)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix III

Select Biographical Guide
Adams, John Quincy. 1767-1848.
President and Congressman: 1836-1841, argues in Congress against laying on table of anti-slavery petitions; 1841, argues in U.S. Supreme Court on behalf of *Amistad* Captives.

Allen, Anne.
Wife of Richard Allen; supporter of A.A.S.S., and collector for Boston Basear; not so prominent in Irish abolitionism in the 1850s.

Allen, Richard. 1803-1886.
Draper; co-founder of the H.A.S.S.; Secretary of the Irish Temperance Association, 1840-1846; visits U.S.A., 1863.

Allen, W.O.
Formerly teacher of language and literature at Central College, McGrawville, N.Y.; eventually installed as master of the Caledonia Training School at Islington.

Barker, Joseph. 1806-1875.
English printer; former Methodist minister; meets Garrison, 1846.

Beecher, Henry Ward. 1813-1887.
Presbyterian clergyman; brother of H.B. Stowe.

Beecher, Lyman. 1775-1863.
Presbyterian clergyman; 1834, series of sermons against Catholicism led to sacking of the Ursuline Convent at Charlestown by the Boston mob; first President of Lane Seminary.

Beneset, Anthony. 1713-1784.
American Quaker abolitionist.

Bennett, James Gordon. 1841-1918.
Editor, New York Herald.

Birney, James Gillespie. 1792-1857.
Former shareholder; 1832, commissioned as agent by the American Colonization Society; nominated for President by the Liberty Party in 1840 and 1843.

Bradburn, George. 1806-1880.

Brennan, Joseph. 1829-1857.
Wrote for *United Irishman* and *Irish Felon*; emigrates to U.S.A.; settles in New Orleans.

Bright, John. 1811-1889.
M.P.; Quaker; visits Ireland, 1849, 1852; champions North during Civil War.
Brown, William Wells, c.1816-1884.
1843-1849: lecturer for Western New York A.S.S.; and then
M.A.S.S.; historian and author; visits Britain, 1849.

Brownson, Creates, 1803-1876.
Protestant minister, converted to Catholicism in 1844.

Buckingham, James Silk. 1786-1855.
M.F. 1832-1837; 1837-1841 visited America. Editor, author
and lecturer.

Buffum, James Needham, 1807-1887.
From Lynn, Mass.; Vice-President of the Friends of Social
Reform, a Fourierist organization.

Burke, Edmund. 1729-1797.
Politician; author.

Burritt, Elihu. 1810-1879.
"The Learned Blacksmith"; editor; 1846 forms the League
of Universal Brotherhood; organized international peace
Congress; champions cheaper international postage.

Cairnes, John Elliot. 1823-1875.
Author; economist; appointed Whately Professor of Political
Economy in Dublin, 1856; 1859, Professor of Political
Economy and Jurisprudence at Queen's, Galway; 1866.
Professor of Political Economy at University College, London.

Calhoun, John C., 1782-1850.
U.S. Senator from South Carolina.

Carlyle, Thomas. 1795-1881.
Author; writings include "Occasional Discourse on the Bigger
Question" and Letters on the Slave Trade; visits Ireland, 1816,
1819; is of opinion that Mitchell (q.v.) is most likely
to be hanged, but that they could not hang the immortal
side of him.

Chalmers, Thomas D.D., 1780-1847.
First Moderator of Free Church of Scotland, which separated
from the Church of Scotland in 1843; author and economist.

Chapman, Maria Weston, 1806-1885.
1840, elected to Executive Committee of the A.A.S.S.;
active as abolitionist author and editor, and in Boston
Female A.S.S.

Chichester, Arthur. 1806-1880.
M.P. for Belfast, 1832-1834; son of George Augustus, 2nd
Marquess of Donegal.

Clapp, Henry. 1811-1875.
Editor and lecturer; supports Rogers (q.v.) in latter's
quarrel with Garrison.
Clarkson, Thomas. 1760-1846.
English abolitionist; author; leading opponent of British slave trade and slavery in the West Indies.

Clay, Henry. 1777-1852.
U.S. Senator from Kentucky.

Cobden, Richard. 1804-1865.
Author; M.P.; leading opponent of Corn Laws; visits U.S.A., 1835, 1836-1837, 1859.

Collins, John Anderson. 1810-1879.
General agent of H.A.S.S.; founds Fourierist settlement in America.

Colver, Nathaniel. 1794-1870.
Baptist Minister; abolitionist opponent of Garrison in 1839-1840.

Irish Presbyterian Minister; 1829, receives degree of D.D. from Jefferson College, U.S.A.; leading opponent of O'Connell, Unitarianism and Repeal.

Corkran, Charles L.
Neighbour of R.D. Webb's (q.v.) in Great Brunswick Street, Dublin; editor; member of H.A.S.S.; prominent in temperance reform.

Crawford, William Sharman. 1761-1861.
M.P. 1835-1852; radical in politics; champions, in place of O'Connell's Repeal movement, schemes for a federal Parliament.

Cresson, Elliott. 1796-1854.
Champion of Colonization.

Cropper, James. 1773-1840.
English abolitionist; author.

Davis, Thomas Osborne. 1814-1845.
Journalist, essayist, poet; helps found Nation, 1842.

Dawes, William. 1799-1888.
Visits Britain in 1839 with John Keay (q.v.) to collect funds for Oberlin College.

Dickens, Charles. 1812-1870.
Author and editor; visits U.S.A. in 1842; a vociferous opponent of slavery there.
Dohny, Michael. 1805-1861.
Author; member of Young Ireland party.

Douglass, Frederick. 1817-1895
1841 becomes agent of the M.A.S.S.; edits North Star for 17 years; after Civil War becomes Secretary of the Santa Domingo Commission, Marshal and Recorder of Deeds of the District of Columbia and finally United States Minister to Haiti.

Duffy, Sir Charles Gavan. 1816-1903.
M.P.; author; co-founder of the National; friend of Thomas Carlyle (q.v.); 1855, leaves for Australia; 1871, appointed Chief Secretary of Victoria; 1873, is made K.C.M.G.

Edmundson, William. 1627-1712.
Prominent in establishment of Friends in Ireland; visits America and adjoining Islands, 1671-1672, 1675, 1677, 1683.

Ford, Patrick. 1835-1913
Worked as youngster in offices of Garrison's Liberator; 1870 founds Irish World; active supporter of Irish Land League.

Fox, George, 1624-1691.
English founder of Friends.

Fuller, James Canning. 1793-1847.
English Quaker abolitionist who moved to New York State in 1831.

Garnet, Henry Highland. 1815-1882.
Former slave; Presbyterian Minister; agent of A.A.S.S. until 1843.

Garrison, William Lloyd. 1805-1879
Abolitionist author, and editor of Liberator; founder member of A.A.S.S. of which he was elected President in 1843.

Gay, Elizabet J.Meall. 1819-1907.
Philadelphia Friend; 1840 attends London Convention; 1845 marries S.H.Gay (q.v.)

Gay, Sidney Howard. 1814-1888
Journalist and author; 1848, editor of National Anti-Slavery Standard.

Goodell, William. 1792-1878.
American abolitionist editor; supports political action against slavery.
Greely, Horace, 1811-1872.
Editor of New York Tribune; prominent supporter of the Free Soil movement and Republican party in the 1850s.

Grimes, Angelina, 1805-1879.
Abolitionist and supporter of women's rights.

Grimes, Sarah, 1792-1873.
Abolitionist and supporter of women's rights.

Haughton, James, 1795-1873.
Corn and flour merchant; co-founder of the H.A.S.S.; prominent in Dublin reform, especially temperance circles.

Hopper, Isaac T, 1771-1852.
Quaker abolitionist active in underground railroad.

Howard, George W.F. seventh Earl of Carlisle, 1802-1864.
Brother of Duchess of Sutherland; M.P.; sometime Chief Secretary for Ireland; 1841 visits North America; 1855-1858, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

Howitt, Mary, 1799-1888.
Quaker authoress and abolitionist; translator.

Howitt, William, 1792-1879.
Abolitionist and author; frequently wrote for the Liberator.

Jackson, Francis, 1789-1861.
President of H.A.S.S.; for many years V.P. of A.A.S.S.

Keep, John, 1781-1870.
Congregational minister; 1835, President of the board of trustees at Oberlin.

Kelley, Abby, 1811-1887.
Secretary of Lynn Female A.S.S.; descendant of Irish Quakers.

Kenyon, Father John, ?-1869.
Parish Priest of Templederry; contributor to Nation and bitter opponent of O'Connellites.

Killin, W.O. 1806-1902.
Presbyterian minister; Professor of Church History and Pastoral Theology in the Assembly's College, Belfast; President of same, 1869-1902.

Leveson-Gower, Harriet E.G. Duchess of Sutherland, 1806-1868.
Family prominent in Highland Clearances, she in bed-chamber crisis; her daughter Elizabith (1824-1878) married the Duke of Argyll in 1846.
Lowell, James Russell. 1819-1891.
Author; educator; edits Atlantic Monthly, 1856-1861; American Ambassador to the Court of St. James, 1880-1885.

McDuffie, George. 1790-1851.
Congressman, Senator and Governor of South Carolina.

McKim, James Miller. 1810-1874.
Presbyterian Minister.

Madden, Dr Richard Robert. 1798-1886.
Author; 1836 was appointed Superintendent of Liberated Africans and Judge Arbiter in the Mixed Court of Commission, Havana; testified at Amistad Case in America in 1839, at which he insisted that a group of Negroes, who had been charged with murder and piracy for over-running a slave ship, were not in fact Cuban slaves but African slaves illegally held in slavery there; in 1841 was employed as Special Commissioner of Inquiry into the British settlements on the West Coast of Africa.

Martin, John. 1812-1875.
M.P.; journalist; visits U.S.A., 1839, 1869; founds Irish Felon, 1848; exiled but pardoned, 1856; succeeded as M.P. for Meath by Charles Stuart Parnell.

Martin, William.
Cork Quaker; delegate to 1840 Convention; reputed to have first persuaded Father Mathew (q.v.) to take up temperance activities.

Martineau, Harriet. 1802-1876.
Authoress; visits U.S.A., 1833-1834.

Mathew, Father Theobold. 1790-1856.
Temperance Crusader; visits U.S.A., 1849-1851.

May, Jr. Samuel. 1810-1899.
Cousin of Samuel J. May (q.v.); Unitarian Minister; 1847, general agent of the M.A.S.S.

May, Samuel Joseph. 1797-1871.

Meagher, Thomas Francis. 1823-1867.
Exponent of the right to bear arms; founder member of Irish Confederation; 1848, exiled, 1852, escapes; helps Mitchel (q.v.) found Citizen; serves in Civil War, eventually as Commander of the Irish Brigade; appointed Secretary of Montana Territory by President Johnson.

Mitchel, John. 1815-1875.
Author; solicitor; journalist; founds United Irishman, February, 1848; escapes from exile 1853; 1854 founds Citizen (New York); 1857-1859, edits Southern Citizen (first in Knoxville, later in Washington, D.C.); 1862 returns to South from Paris; 1865, arrested by Federal Government.
Montgomery, Henry D.D. 1788-1865.
Founder of Remonstrant Synod of Ulster; approves Roman Catholic Emancipation but not Repeal.

Morgan, James. 1799-1873.
Belfast Presbyterian divine; Moderator of the General Assembly, 1816-1817.

Moore, Robert R.R. 1811-1864.
Dublin Barrister; 1840, prominent in H.A.S.S. circles; becomes lecturer for Anti-Corn Law League; alights with Rebecca Fisher (q.v.)

Mott, James. 1788-1868.
Present at founding Convention of A.A.S.S.; visits Britain, 1840; author.

Mott, Incertia. 1793-1880.
Founded Philadelphia Female A.S.S.; visits Britain, 1840.

Murray, John. d.1819.
With William Sesal (q.v.) for many years co-secretary of the G.E.S.

Nelson, Isaac. 1809-1888.
Presbyterian Minister in Belfast, 1822-1880; Nationalist M.P. for Mayo, 1880-1888; author, feels 1859 revival is a "delusion".

Author; M.P.; 1829 fights duel with Tom Steele; 1843, joins L.H.R.A.; 1848, exiled; 1854, pardoned.

O'Connell, Daniel. 1775-1847.
M.P.; forms Catholic Association, 1823; forms Loyal National Repeal Association, 1840.

O'Connell, John. 1810-1858.
M.P.; son of Daniel.

O'Connor, Feargus Edward. 1794-1855.
Physical force Chartist; 1837, founded the Northern Star in Leeds.

O'Reilly, John Boyle. 1814-1890.
Journalist; poet (for O'Connell Centenary celebrations in Boston); deported to Australia because of his Fenian affiliations; escaped to America in 1869; edited Boston Pilot.

Paton, Catherine.
Treasurer of the Glasgow Female Anti-Slavery Society; sister of Andrew Paton (1805-1864); member of the G.E.S.
Pease, Elizabeth. 1807-1897.

Benjamin, James W.C.
In Britain for several months in 1849 and 1851, hired as a lecturer by the Glasgow Female New Association for the Abolition of Slavery.

Phelps, Amos. 1804-1847.
Pastor of Trinitarian Church in Boston; quarrels with Garrison in 1839-1840.

Phillips, Wendell. 1811-1884.
Prominent reformer; on executive committee of A.A.S.S.; implored by wife at London Convention in 1840 not to "shilly-shally".

Pillsbury, Parker. 1809-1898.
One-time Congregational minister; general agent of the A.A.S.S. and later, of the A.A.S.S.; editor.

Porter, John Scott. 1801-1880.
Irish divine; 1830 elected as first Moderator of the Remonstrant Synod of Ulster; author and educator (one of his pupils was Dion Boucicaut, the dramatist).

Pugh, Sarah. 1800-1884.
Philadelphia Quaker abolitionist.

Purvis, Robert. 1810-1898.
Philadelphia abolitionist.

Quincy, Edmund. 1808-1877.
Son of Josiah Quincy; helped edit Liberator and National Anti-Slavery Standard; Corresponding Secretary of A.A.S.S.; 1851-1853; Vice-President A.A.S.S., 1853-1859.

Ramsay, James. 1733-1789.
English Clergyman and abolitionist author.

Remond, Charles Lennox. 1811-1873.
Agent of A.A.S.S.

Remond, Sarah Parker.
1856, spoke on behalf of A.A.S.S. in New York State; 1871, receives degree of Doctor of Medicine from the Medical School in Florence, Italy.

Rogers, Nathaniel Peabody. 1794-1846.
New Hampshire lawyer and editor; 1838, begins Herald of Freedom.
Scoble, John. ?c.1810-?
Secretary of B.F.A.S.S., after Tredgold (q.v.); visits Ireland, 1840, 1849; 1852 becomes Director of Dawn Institute in Canada; returns to England in 1867.

Scott, Orange. 1800-1847.
Methodist Minister in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

Sligo, Peter Howe, Second Marquis of. 1809-1845.
Governor of Jamaica.

Smeal, William. 1793-1877.
Abolitionist, editor; Quaker, grocer; with John Murray (q.v.) for many years co-secretary of the G.E.S.

Smith, Gerrit. 1797-1874.
New York State landowner and philanthropist.

Smyth, Thomas. 1808-1873
b. Belfast; 1834 appointed Minister of the Second Presbyterian Church of Charleston, S.Ca.; author.

Novelist; author of Uncle Tom's Cabin.

Sturges, Joseph. 1793-1859.

Tappan, Arthur. 1786-1865.
President of A.F.A.S.S. in 1840.

Tappan, Lewis. 1788-1873.
Treasurer of A.F.A.S.S. in 1840; persistent abolitionist critic of Garrison.

Tennent, Sir James Emerson. 1804-1869.
M.P. for Belfast, 1832-1845 (with interruption).

Thompson, George. 1804-1878.
Abolitionist lecturer and editor; 1831, becomes lecturing Agent of the London A.S.S.; edits Empire; visits U.S.A., 1835-1864.

Tredgold, J.H. 1798-1842.
First Secretary of the B.F.A.S.S.

Vincent, Henry. 1813-1878.
Moral Force Chartist.

Ward, Samuel Ringgold.
One-time Pastor of Congregational Church of South Butler, New York; visits Britain as Agent of the Anti-Slavery Society of Canada in 1853.
Webb, Alfred. 1834-1908.
Son of R.D. Webb; M.P., author; reformer.

Webb, Deborah. 1837-1921.

Youngest son of R.D. & Hannah Webb.

Webb, Hannah. 1809-1862.
Wife of Richard Davis Webb.

Printer and bookseller; Co-founder of H.A.S.S.; edits Anti-Slavery Advocate; author; journalist.

Webster, Daniel. 1782-1852.
New England Lawyer and U.S. Senator.

Whately, Richard. 1775-1863.
Archbishop of Dublin; author.

Whittier, John O. 1807-1892.
American Quaker poet and abolitionist.

Wigham, Eliza. 1820-1899.
Edinburgh abolitionist, related to Smeal and Webb families; sister of Mary Edmundson (q.v.); spends her last years in Dublin.

Williams, Roger. c.1603-1682.
Clergyman; 1630, emigrated to America; after quarrels with Puritan authorities in Massachusetts, he founded the earliest Rhode Island settlement in 1636.

Woolman, John. 1720-1772.
Prominent American Quaker and early opponent of slavery.

Wright, Eliza. 1804-1885.
Secretary of the New York Anti-Slavery Society, and appointed (in December, 1833) corresponding Secretary of the A.A.S.S.; in 1839, edited the anti-Garrisonian Massachusetts Abolitionist; prominent actuary.

Wright, Henry Clarke. 1797-1870.
1835 joins New England A.S.S.; 1836, one of agents of A.A.S.S.; helps edit the Non-Resistant.
Bibliography
Bibliography

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2- Printed Letters, documents, speeches etc.
3- Newspapers.
4- Magazines, Journals, Monthlys.
5- Pamphlets and Addresses.
6- Anti-Slavery Reports.
7- Theses.
8- Articles.
9- Primary Books.
10- Secondary Books.
11- Almanacs and Directories.
(1) **Manuscript Sources**

a) **American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Mass.**
   A.K. Foster Papers

b) **Boston Public Library**
   Chapman Papers; Estlin Papers; Garrison Papers; Journals and Commonplace Books of H.D. Wright; May Papers; Minutes of the Executive Committee of the A.A.S.S.; Philps Papers; Webb/Quincy and Quincy/Webb Papers; Weston Papers.

c) **Columbia University Library**
   S.H. Gay Papers

d) **Cornell University Library**
   Journal of Rev. S.J. May, 1859; Miller Mckim Papers

e) **Edinburgh University Library**

f) **Friends' Library, Dublin**

i. **Correspondence**

   Allen Family Letters; John Pim Barcroft Correspondence; Greene Family Correspondence; Grubb Letters; Leadbeater-Shackleton Collection; Lecky Letters; Miscellaneous letters to Richard Allen, J.M. Harvey, Thomas Pim, J.G. Richardson, Henry Russell, John Sanderson, Deborah Webb and R.D. Webb; W.R. Wigham Papers; Wright Family Papers.
ii. Diaries, Commonplace Books and Journals

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