THE DECLARATORY ACT (1892)

AND THE FORCES OF CHANGE

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A Thesis for the Degree of Master of Theology

Researched Within the Faculty of Divinity

Submitted September 1980.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the course of researching and writing this thesis I have received the assistance, encouragement, and understanding of a number of people and I take this opportunity to acknowledge their help.

I am indebted to the Rev. Ian A. Muirhead, M.A., B.D., who was Senior Lecturer in the Department of Ecclesiastical History until his retirement. He supervised my studies and continued to show interest in them and offer encouragement when my period of supervised study ended and also after he had retired.

I received the willing assistance of the staff of Glasgow University Main Library and Divinity Library, and New College Library, Edinburgh.

I appreciate, too, the consideration of the Faculty of Divinity and the Senate in granting an extension of one year to my time of study to make up for time lost during a lengthy illness.

Not least in value is the help and encouragement I have received from my wife. Her willingness to undertake the tedious business of transcribing notes and passages from books was a valuable help.

In acknowledging the help of those mentioned above, I acknowledge too, that none of them bear any responsibility for any deficiencies in the finished work.

CONTENTS

SUMMARY

This thesis examines the forces which influenced the thinking of the Free Church of Scotland and led it to pass the Declaratory Act Anent the Confession of Faith in 1892. The examination is conducted within certain limits. With regard to the period covered in the examination, it is limited to roughly 25 years preceding the Act. It was during this period that the main influences which led to the passing of the Act fully asserted themselves. One authority who will be cited in the Introduction dates the movement from 1860. However, on occasions it will be necessary to go outside this period in order to outline the start of forces which came to full force during the period being examined.

A further limit is the nature of what is examined. The Declaratory Act indicates a shift in thinking and beliefs and so the influences which have to be examined have to do with ideas and thinking. Consequently people considered in this work are only considered from the point of view of how they or their ideas influenced the thinking of others.

In order to appreciate the strength of the influences which brought this change in credal subscription it is necessary to understand what a great change was wrought in a comparatively short time. To this end the introductory chapter shows how firmly entrenched the Westminster Confession of Faith was in the Scottish Churches especially the Free Church; and how little sign of opposition or desire for change there was prior to the period being considered.

In chapters II and III, forces which influenced the movement towards change are examined. In chapter II the forces examined are influences which were radical in their nature and so would appear to be obvious influences for change. In this chapter there is an attempt to get the strength of their influence in perspective

and this shows that most of these things were not as influential in Scotland as contemporaries thought.

The influence of radical forces examined in chapter II is brought further into perspective by the examination of a conservative force in chapter III: evangelicalism. This examination will show that in some important aspects evangelicalism was departing from the theology of the Westminster Confession as well as the more obviously radical forces. Thus, it is shown that evangelicalism, as much as radical influences, influenced the move towards the Declaratory Act.

Chapter IV shows the Hyper-Calvinist understanding of the Westminster Confession of Faith. This represents the old and generally correct interpretation of the Confession when strictly interpreted, as it once was. By comparison with the position revealed in this chapter it can be seen how far evangelicals as well as radicals had moved from the theology contained in the Confession.

Unless radicals and evangelicals alike had admitted they had erred and returned to an interpretation of the Confession such as is seen in chapter IV - which clearly they could not do. - then some solution had to be found which would not only ease troubled consciences, but make the situation with regard to the relationship of Free Church ministers and elders to the Confession a more honest one.

The question of how adequate a solution the Declaratory Act was, is outwith the scope of this thesis and the work is concluded with a final assessment of the extent to which the various forces examined influenced the move towards creed revision. It is stressed that some of the radical forces did not have the direct influence contemporaries imagined but they did create an intellectual climate in which more direct forces could exert their influence. The final point, and the main one which this thesis seeks to make is that the apparently conservative force of evangelicalism was in fact an important influence

towards change and one which has been greatly underestimated.

ABBREVIATIONS

Notes have been placed at the end of each chapter. For ease of reference, the following abbreviations will be used throughout the notes when referring to these works which will be cited more frequently than others.

Alexander Moody Stuart - Stuart, M. - Alexander Moody Stuart: a Memoir

Annals - Ewing, W. - Annals of the Free Church of Scotland, Vol. I

Bonar: Diary - Bonar, M. (ed.) - Andrew Bonar, D.D.: Diary & Letters

Cairns - Macewan, A.R. - Life & Letters of John Cairns

Cambuslang Revival - Fawcett, A. - The Cambuslang Revival

Confession - The Westminster Confession of Faith

Cox - Cox, J. (ed.) - Practice and Procedure in the Church of Scotland (Fifth Edit.)

Drummond & Bulloch - Drummond, A.L. & Bulloch, J. - The Church in Victorian Scotland

F.C. Proc. - Proceedings & Debates in the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland

Henry Drummond - Smith, G.A. - Life of Henry Drummond

"Hyper-Evangelism" - Kennedy, J.; "Hyper Evangelism: Another 'Gospel' Though a Mighty Power."

Modern Revivalism - McLoughlin, W.G. - Modern Revivalism: Charles Grandison Finney to Billy Graham

Moody without Sankey - Pollock, J.C. - Moody Without Sankey

Rainy - Simpson, P.C. - The Life of Principal Rainy - Vol. I

Robertson Smith - Black, J.S. & Chrystal, G.W. - Life of William Robertson Smith

"The New Declaratory Act" - Stuart, K.M.; "The New Declaratory Act and proposed new formula for the Free Church of Scotland.

The United Presbyterian Church - Blair, W. - A Handbook of the History and Principles of the United Presbyterian Church.

"The Westminster Standards" - A.C. Cheyne; "The Westminster Standards: a Century of Reappraisal"

Trinity College - Mechie, S. - Trinity College Glasgow: 1856-1956

Whyte - Barbour, G.F. - The Life of Alexander Whyte, D.D.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction -
The Westminster Confession of Faith:
a Well Established Creed.

The Westminster Assembly of Divines began meeting on 1 July 1643. In 1647 they issued the Westminster Confession of Faith, and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms. As the title page of the Church of Scotland's edition of the Confession stated, the Westminster Confession of Faith was then "Approved by the General Assembly 1647, and ratified and established by Acts of Parliament 1649 and 1690, as the public (sic) and avowed Confession of the Church of Scotland".

The Confession which was adopted thus by the supreme ecclesiastical court and approved twice by the supreme civil authority became the confessional standard of Scottish presbyterianism. The terms of subscription to it became more and more rigid with each political and religious conflict and crisis in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, until, by 1711, all those who wished to enter the presbyterian ministry or hold lay office in the church had to subscribe to the Westminster Confession of Faith without reserve. On taking office they had to profess publicly that the Westminster Confession of Faith was the confession of their personal faith, and sign a formula which contained this confession.[1.]

One exception to this in Scottish presbyterianism was the Evangelical Union which demanded no credal subscription. This was natural for two reasons. Firstly, the person around whom the Evangelical Union formed - James Morison - did not intend, initially, to form a separate denomination. More important, however, is the fact that Morison was expelled from the Secession Church, in 1841, for holding views which

were deemed to be contrary to the credal standards of that denomination. Foremost among their standards was the Westminster Confession of Faith.

After his expulsion Morison worked out his offending ideas in a calmer and more systematic way, rejecting what the Calvinism of the Confession taught on such matters as predestination and election. In turn the Evangelical Union was generally shunned by other presbyterian bodies, as were those associated with it. For example, during the Moody-Sankey campaign in Glasgow in 1874, the organising committee would not allow any members of the Evangelical Union to take any official part in the movement. Earlier, too, in 1859, when Charles Grandison Finney - whose theology was more akin to Calvinism than Moody's - came to Scotland, other presbyterian churches would not co-operate with him because he preached in churches in the Evangelical Union.[2.]

However, the division in Scottish presbyterianism associated with James Morison is unique among the divisions which occurred among presbyterian churches from 1690 onwards. It is unique because the Evangelical Union is the only presbyterian denomination which came into being as a result of opposition to, and dissent from, the teaching of the Westminster Confession. Where the Confession can be regarded as a primary cause in other secessions, the seceders were not opposed to it. They were seceding because they believed the majority remaining in the parent church were departing from some aspect of the Confession's teaching, and that such a departure was unjustified. This was the case with the Auld Licht Burghers and the Auld Licht Antiburghers.

Following the Breach in the Associate Synod, in 1747, over the legitimacy of their members taking the Burgess Oath, a great deal of thought was given in both of the resulting groups of Burghers and Antiburghers to the question of compulsion in

matters of religion. The religious aspect of the Burgess Oath which would be burghers in Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Perth were required to take, raised the question of what right the civil magistrate had to impose particular religious beliefs or religious forms on any one.

Before long this question was broadened out to consider the extent to which even the church had the right to impose belief on people. The question of the church's right to impose conformity of belief arose because, in questioning the rights of the civil magistrate in religious matters, they were questioning a position adopted by the Reformers, the Covenants, and the Westminster Confession of Faith. All held that the civil magistrate had a duty and a right to act in certain matters of religion, albeit under the guidance of the church.

Before the end of the eighteenth century many had come to the conclusion that compulsion in religious matters was wrong. This in turn led to candidates for ordination and admission to other offices in the church having qualms of conscience about subscribing to confessional standards which seemed to contain the principle of compulsion. Consequently, in the 1790's, the synods of both denominations were faced with demands to amend the formula, which licentiates and elders had to sign on ordination, so that it would be in line with the 'new light' which many now had on the matter of compulsion in religion.

Both synods tried to meet all shades of opinion in solving the problem. The Burgher Synod sought to deal with the matter by passing a Declaratory Act in 1797, which was prefixed to the formula and became known as the Preamble. The Antiburgher Synod acted in 1804 by producing a revised version of a document called the Judical Testimony. This document had been produced in 1736 by the original group of seceding ministers and was, in effect, the manifesto of the Secession Church.

These moves led to secessions from both synods by small groups of ministers and elders who rejected the 'new light'. They became known popularly as the Auld Licht Burghers and the Auld Licht Antiburghers, while those from whom they seceded became known as the New Licht Burghers and the New Licht Antiburghers.

For the subject under discussion, the interesting point which comes out of this split is that although the Auld Lichts considered the New Lichts to have departed from their confessional standards, the New Lichts did not. They still considered themselves to be as true to the standards as any Auld Licht.

This fact comes out in the wording of the Burgher Synod's Preamble. It stated, "That, whereas some parts of the standard books of this Synod have been interpreted as favouring compulsory measures in religion, the Synod hereby declare that they do not require an approbation of any such principle for ordination."[3.] In other words the Synod declared the matter of compulsion in matters of religion to be an open question, the answer to which depended on the way a person interpreted the relevant sections of the confessional standards.

The Antiburghers went even further. They declared that chapter XX of the Confession ("Of Christian liberty, and Liberty of Conscience") precluded the later chapter (Chapter XXIII, "Of the Civil Magistrate.") being interpreted as favouring compulsion in matters of religion. Concerning this troublesome chapter XXIII, the Synod declared, "They approve of no other means of bringing men into the Church, or retaining them in it, than such as are spiritual, or were used by the apostles and other ministers of the Word in the first ages of the Christian Church, persuasion not force, the power of the gospel not the sword of the civil magistrate, agreeable to that most certain and important doctrine laid down in the Confession itself, chapter XX section 2: 'God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from

any doctrines and commandments of men which are in any thing contrary to His Word, or beside it, in matters of faith and worship; so that to believe such doctrines, or obey such commands out of conscience is to betray true liberty of sonscience and reason also.'"[4].

Both Synods were offering precedents which placed the Confession in such danger that they would have trembled at the prospect, if it had occurred to them. They had, in effect, shown opponents of the Westminster Confession two ways round it: either follow the New Licht Burghers and re-interpret an offending section to get a more acceptable version of the doctrine concerned (an approach advocated later within the Free Church, but curiously by supporters of the Westminster Confession of Faith in the face of radical moves against it by opponents[5].); or else, follow the New Licht Antiburghers lead, and appeal to what the Confession said about the Christian's liberty of conscience in order to dissent from what it said elsewhere. The fact that they were oblivious to the possibility of any one doing such a thing is due to their total loyalty to the Westminster Confession of Faith, and their absolute conviction that they were propounding a solution to the problems which had arisen, which in no way departed from the teaching of the Confession. Further, their loyalty to the Confession was so matched by all other presbyterian bodies[6]. and all but a small minority of individuals, that they never envisaged a situation arising where there would be widespread demands for the revision or the complete abandonment of the Confession.

There was no significant change in this situation during the first half of the nineteen century. The burning issue which troubled the Scottish church during this period was not the Confession but patronage, and this resulted in the largest and most traumatic secession in the Scottish church: the Disruption. Once again the seceders were in no way opposed to the Confession. They stood solidly by it. Indeed as members of the Evangelical

party they were more wholehearted in their support of the Confession than the Moderates who now made up the majority in the disrupted Established Church. Thus, in their first General Assembly the newly formed Free Church stressed their adherence to the Westminster Confession.

In his opening address in Tanfield Hall,, Chalmers made it quite clear that they stood by the Confession's teaching on the establishment of religion, a point they regarded seceders to have departed from in adopting the Voluntary principle. He declared, "The Voluntaries mistake us if they conceive us to be Voluntaries. We hold by the duty of Government to give of their resources and means for the maintenance of a gospel ministry in the land...though we quit the Establishment, we go out on the Establishment principle - we quit a vitiated Establishment, but would rejoice in returning to a pure one. To express it otherwise - we are advocates for a national recognition and national support of religion - and we are not Voluntaries."[7].

The following day another Free Church leader, Dr. Buchanan, made an even more explicit declaration of the newly constituted denomination's total adherence to the Westminster Confession. He said, "We do not separate from the Confession of Faith, which we do truthfully and assuredly regard as the sound and Scriptural exposition of the word of God. We do not separate from the standards of the Church's policy, which we venerate as founded on and agreeable to God's holy word. These, Sir, are with us on the table of the Free Presbyterian Church. God's word is lying before our Moderator. The ancient laws and constitution of the Church of Scotland are entire."[8].

In view of their attitude to the Confession of Faith, the members of the Free Church Assembly must have been most gratified by the words of the Rev. Denham (sic) of Derry, leader

of a deputation from the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. His deputation had been commissioned to convey the greetings of the Irish Presbyterians to the Church of Scotland, but when the Disruption occurred they found themselves wondering which body was the correct one to attend. They settled for the Free Church and Mr. Denham explained this decision when he addressed the Free Assembly. "We were sent," he said, "to the Church of Scotland, holding the principles which our fathers held, and for which our fathers suffered. These principles we believe to be contained in the Confession of Faith... and we have no hesitation in coming to the conclusion that this Assembly, and those who adhere to it, are those who hold the true interpretation of the Confession of Faith; and therefore we are compelled to come and lay our commission on your table, because you are the persons and the party who hold the views which we recognise as the standards of the Church."[9.]

In the face of such strong declarations of loyalty to the Confession, and their contemporaries recognition of that loyalty, Professor A.C. Cheyne is more than justified in saying of the Evangelicals who formed the Free Church, that "...their devotion to the Standards was unimpeachable; it was indeed, one of the most obvious enthusiasms which they carried into the Free Church, and helped to establish that body's early reputation for rigid - not to say immobile - orthodoxy in the first decades of its existence".[10.]

This, then, was the presbyterian tradition in Scotland: complete acceptance of, and adherence to, the Westminster Confession of Faith as the credal standard of the presbyterian denominations. There were, of course, some who had reservations about certain aspects of the Confession. But they were a minority, and the way in which the majority dealt with 'dissidents' - such as Morison in the Secession Church, and John McLeod Campbell and Edward Irving in the Established Church -

merely emphasises how strong the tradition was. It was this tradition - almost two centuries old - which the Free Church publicly and freely avowed as soon as it came into being. Furthermore, as Professor Cheyne points out, the sincerity of their firm adherence to the Confession was obvious for at least ten years.

Yet in a little over thirty years[11.] the Free Church moved from this position of standing firmly in the 200 year old Scottish tradition of complete adherence to the Confession, and passed their Declaratory Act whereby "...diversity of opinion is recognised in this Church on such points in the Confession as do not enter into the substance of the Reformed Faith therein set forth..."[12.] The relative speed with which this change in theological position was made is all the more surprising when one realises that there were few obvious signs of opposition to the Westminster Confession of Faith in the Free Church prior to 1860.

One incident which took place during the previous two years - 1858-59 - could have given some inkling of things to come, but few people saw what it could foreshadow. This was the Glasgow College Case, in which Professor Gibson of that College instigated proceedings against some of his students for holding doctrines which he alleged were dangerously unsound.[13.] The case went as far as the General Assembly of 1859, but the Assembly agreed with the College Committee who had investigated the affair, that no heresy existed and that the matter was "...simply a misunderstanding such as may occur among men substantially holding the same view - substantially agreed as regards the essential doctrines, but such as may be magnified, and magnified to an extent, by human prejudice and human infirmity."[14.]

James Begg who moved the motion against the students did not agree, but the large majority by which his motion

was defeated (246 votes to 124)[15] shows that even the majority of his contemporaries thought it was a case which should never have been brought, even at college level. Two of the students involved in the case later gave outstanding service to the Free Church. Archibald Henderson became Junior Principal Clerk of the General Assembly.[16] Robert Howie was a convener of the Assembly's Home Mission Committee and also made a notable contribution to the work of church extension in the Free Presbytery of Glasgow.[17] However, had they lived both Begg and Gibson would have felt that their suspicions regarding these men in 1859 had been justified; for in the debate on the Declaratory Act in the General Assembly both Howie and Henderson spoke strongly in favour of the Declaratory Act. In fact, Howie seconded Rainy when the Principal moved the Act.[18]

The same year that the Glasgow College Case was taking up an inordinate amount of the Assembly's time[19] many parts of Scotland were experiencing a religious revival which lasted into 1860. In certain aspects of this movement the theology of the Westminster Confession of Faith came under pressure, but only a few Hyper-Calvinists realised this fact. The rest of presbyterian Scotland was able to reconcile the theology and the events of the revival to the theology of the Confession.[20]

It was only Hyper-Calvinists such as Gibson and Begg who could see in the Glasgow College Case and the 1859-60 revival a threat to the theology of the Confession; but they were a minority. The rest saw the College Case as ludicrous which, of course, it was; and the revival was welcomed by many who were as staunch in their adherence to the Westminster Confession of Faith as Begg and the others. Thus the indications are that any forces at work before 1860, which might have been inimical to the Westminster Confession of Faith, were unobtrusive and not generally recognised.

In proceeding, now, to examine influences from the 1860's

onwards which led to the passing of the Free Church Declaratory Act in 1892, these more subtle forces will be examined as well as the more obvious things which caused dissatisfaction with the Westminster Confession of Faith, such as the scholarly results of Higher Criticism. For although the results of radical scholarship often seemed at variance with the theology of the Confession, it is my contention that the results of radical scholarship alone could not have moved the Free Church so quickly from its entrenched position of traditional acceptance of the Westminster Confession, to the passing of the Declaratory Act. The theology of the scholar takes longer to find its way down to the ordinary church member than the theology of the evangelist and the popular preacher. Consequently, had the work of academic theologians, alone, been responsible for bringing about the Declaratory Act, the time lag between the publication of their new ideas and the acceptance of those ideas by the general church membership would have been greater.

NOTES

1. The process leading up to this situation is outlined in "The Westminster Standards", pp.200f.
2. Modern Revivalism, p.210f.
3. The United Presbyterian Church, p.57.
4. "The Westminster Standards". p.204; following D. Woodside: The Soul of the Scottish Church, p.255.
5. E.g., F.C. Proc., 1889; p.136.
6. It is true that not all the presbyterian bodies regarded the New Lichts as loyal to the Confession. The Auld Lichts who ultimately seceded from the two Synods were not the only ones who criticised what the Synods did. They were attacked by the press and criticised by members of other denominations in a way which verged on the hysterical at times. For example, Dr. William Porteous of Glasgow published a pamphlet entitled The New Light Examined in which he claimed the Secederes were not only abandoning their principles but also plotting to overthrow the government and subverting the order of civil society (The United Presbyterian Church, pp.57f, pp.59f.). However, such attacks merely emphasise the point that at this time all presbyterian denominations and the vast majority of individuals were well and truly thirled to the Confession; and divisions in Scottish presbyterianism over the Confession arose out of a desire to preserve it, not change or abolish it.
7. F.C. Proc., 1843; p.12.
8. Ibid., p.27.
9. Ibid., p.15.
10. "The Westminster Standards", p.202.
11. Professor Cheyne suggests 1860 as the date from which the controversy over the Westminster Confession of Faith really began. ("The Westminster Standards", p.212).

12. F.C. Proc., 1892; p.146.

13. Trinity College; chapter 4.

14. F.C. Proc., 1859; p.75.

15. Ibid., p.75.

16. Annals, p.184.

17. Ibid., p.187; James Barr, Lang Syne; pp.67f.

18. F.C. Proc., 1891; pp.85f, pp.91f.

19. It occupied the whole of a morning sitting and, after an adjournment, from 7 p.m. the same evening until after 3.30 a.m. the next morning. (Trinity College, p.25.)

20. For fuller discussion of this, see below pp.61ff.

CHAPTER II

New Ideas and their Proponents:
The Agents of Change?

The nineteenth century saw many new discoveries in science, and new ideas in philosophy and theology which seemed to challenge extant, orthodox Christian beliefs. Indeed, in philosophy, there were those who challenged the rationality of any religious belief; while science produced results which some saw as undermining the foundations and assumptions on which orthodox Christianity was built, thereby calling the whole system of doctrine into question. Consequently these areas of new thought and discovery - especially in theology - seem to be obvious areas which would exert the sort of force which would lead to a Christian denomination departing from a strict adherence to a credal position adopted centuries before.

Those who were ultra-orthodox or evangelical[1.] in their theology were, certainly, ready to denounce some of the scientific developments, and virtually all the philosophical and theological developments, as a threat to orthodoxy and injurious to faith. In the course of several heresy trials held in the presbyterian denominations in the nineteenth century, and in the course of the many theological controversies concerning similar points to those at issue in the trials, Darwinism, Rationalism, the 'New German' theology or Higher Criticism were all held responsible - to a greater or lesser degree - for the dangerous theological tendencies which the orthodox detected. Ultimately, however, it was Higher Criticism which was held to be chiefly responsible.

Take, for example, the following statement by Kenneth Moody Stuart, son of the outstanding Free Church evangelical preacher: Alexander Moody Stuart. It is fairly typical of those opposed to the Declaratory Act. Kenneth Moody Stuart

was so opposed to the Declaratory Act that he continued the fight against it even after it had been passed, and the following quotation is from a public lecture against the Act. In the lecture - later published as a pamphlet - he castigated the the forces which he held responsible for it being passed and which, he believed, would be spread further as a result of the Act. The evil which he condemned was, he said, "Originally located in Germany and Holland, where rationalism had long reigned supreme...it was imported into this country, and popularised by the able advocacy of Prof. Robertson Smith and others who were associated with him in the movement. It concerned itself chiefly with the criticism of the Holy Scripture - or Higher Criticism, as it was called - the conclusions of which were subversive of the doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture as it had hitherto been taught and believed among us..."[2].

The other modern trends which were held up as damaging were not harried with the same determination as Higher Criticism and its proponents. While the supporters of orthodoxy did not regard Darwinism, for example, as right or even harmless, they did not subject it to the sort of sustained attack which Higher Criticism received. In fact, evoluntionary theories never aroused a theological reaction in Scotland comparable to that in England, which is characterised by the confrontation between Samual Wilberforce and T.H. Huxley at the 1860 meeting of the British Association in Oxford.[3].

While Darwinism was cited by the orthodox as an influence responsible for the movement towards credal revision, it was never put forward as the main influence. It tended to be thrown in as one of a number of damaging forces at work. Acknowledged - by the orthodox - as something contrary to sound Christian doctrine, it was used more like an example, or illustration, of the dangerous forces at work against orthodox belief.[4]. Having cited Darwinism thus, the writer

or speaker would generally move on to a fuller denounciation of the real bête noir: Higher Criticism.

Darwinism:-

The reasons why Darwinism did not rouse any fierce controversy in Scotland are not clear. In connection with other theological matters of a controversial nature, A.R. Vidler has made a plausible suggestion as to why the Scottish churches became embroiled in these matters at a later date than other countries. He has argued that when Higher Criticism, for example, first began to make an impact else where, the two main Scottish churches were too involved with the Disruption and its consequences to give much attention to new developments in theology.[5.] This is not the full explanation for any delayed reaction by Scottish churches to theological developments. In particular, it does not fully explain the limited reaction to evolutionary theories. Nevertheless, this pre-occupation with ecclesiastical, rather than theological matters, in the Established and Free Churches, does provide part of the reason for the Scottish response, or lack of response, to Darwinism.

This is further born out if a comparison is made with the United Presbyterian Church. Although interested in the issues at stake, the United Presbyterians were not involved, themselves, in the trauma of the Disruption; and it was in this denomination - as Vidler, rightly, points out - that the new theological ideas first began to produce a desire for a more flexible relationship with the denominations credal standards: the Westminster Confession of Faith.[6.] When this desire was met by the United Presbyterian Church passing a Declaratory Act in 1879, there is an indication that evolutionary theories were among the things which led to it. In declaring that "...liberty of opinion is allowed on such points in the standards, not entering into the substance of the faith...",

the example which is given is "...the interpretation of the 'six days' in the Mosaic account of the creation..."[7].

Thirteen years later, when the Free Church passed its Declaratory Act, there is no reference in it comparable to that in article 7 of the U.P. Act. Controversial interest in Darwinism, such as it had been in Scotland, was well passed by 1892. There is nothing in their Declaratory Act to indicate that the Free Church had even heard of Darwin and evolution, let alone been influenced by them.

Indeed, even the appearance of what seems to be a concession to evolutionary theories in the U.P. Declaratory Act has to be qualified. It has to be remembered that evolutionists were not the only ones who could not accept a literal interpretation of the six days of creation. Those who accepted the results of Higher Criticism could not accept the creation story in the Bible as literal historical truth; but their conclusions were based on theories concerning the authorship and compositon of the book of Genesis, not on scientific theories concerning the origin of the world.

It was not necessary for a man to accept scientific theories of evolution in order to be persuaded by the theological theories of Higher Criticism. Most, if not all, of those who accepted the results of Higher Criticism, did accept the plausibility of evolution; but in general they did not see it as relevant to theology. This, of course, is understandable. Once they had adopted an understanding of that part of the Bible, containing an account of creation, which did not require it to be accepted as literal, historical truth; then it did not matter if scientists brought forward ideas concerning creation which were different from the Bible story. Consequently, among Scottish Christians there was a general attitude of indifference to evolution as a matter which affected theology.

In the main, Scottish Christians seem to have been able

to live with the concept of evolution without finding it any great problem to their faith. Those who adhered to a literal interpretation of Genesis ignored it, presumably, except for some voluble ultra-orthodox ministers who denounced when a suitable occasion arose[8]. but seldom felt the need to initiate a sustained attack against such ideas. Those who accepted the theory of evolution may have been puzzled by the difference between the scientists' theories and the Genesis account of the origin of man; but if they were it did not seriously harm the faith of many and, when it came, the results of Higher Criticism resolved any dilemma they felt.

A further help to any who had problems reconciling evolution and Genesis - especially if they tended to be orthodox and evangelical in their outlook - was the work of Hugh Miller and Henry Drummond. These two are the only Scottish writters to regard the theories of evolution as being sufficiently important to theology to merit writing major works on the subject. Both were regarded as outstanding figures in the evangelical section of the Free Church and so, one might assume, they would not accept evolution. In fact, both sought to show the compatibility of the Bible and evolution. Also, both must be judged unsuccessful in what they attempted.

Miller did not go the whole way with the evolutionists. Rather than accept the concept of evolutionary development he argued that each new species was a special divine act of creation. With regard to the vast time of creation which geology had revealed and which was so at variance with the idea of all things being created in six days, he suggested that the six days of creation were each of unknown and indefinite length.

Footprints of the Creator and Testimony of the Rocks were popular and had a large sale. They did much to make ordinary people aware of the vast time scale revealed by geology and of the many species of animal life which had existed during that

time.[9] In their main aim of demonstrating the compatibility of science and Genesis they were not so successful. Moderates were not interested in Miller's theories and his fellow evangelicals, while sympathetic to his aims, were sceptical about his conclusions. It is doubtful if Miller's theories gained much more acceptance than the explanation of fossils put forward by some who were totally opposed to Darwinism, and who argued that fossils were creatures drowned in Noah's flood.

Henry Drummond's works on the subject[10] are more sophisticated than Miller's but ultimately they failed, too, to achieve what the author was aiming at. In the case of his earlier work, Natural Law in the Spiritual World, the extent of his failure is seen in the way in which many who gave an initial welcome to the book rapidly changed their opinion. The most obvious example of this is the change of opinion by an Anglican theologian, Alfred Lyttelton. In 1883, when Natural Law was first published, he wrote a glowing review of it for the Spectator. In the course of his review he said that "...no book of our time (with the exception of Dr. Mozley's University Sermons) ...showed such a power of relating the moral and practical truths of religion, so as to make them take fresh hold of the mind and vividly impress the imagination."[11] In the opinion of Drummond's biographer, George Adam Smith, this Spectator review was extremely influential in bringing the book to the attention of the public at large and ensuring an even larger sale.[12] Yet Smith claims that Lyttelton is also the author of an article, published anonymously in the Church Quarterly for January 1884 (barely six months after the Spectator article), which is quite hostile in its criticism of the logic behind Natural Law.[13]

Lyttelton's second opinion - and that to which others came after giving Natural Law a euphoric reception at first - is the more accurate assessment of the book, when it is judged from the point of view of what Drummond claimed to be trying

to do. The fault of the book is summed up by Drummond's biographer. "Its main argument rests upon a couple of unproved, and, in the opinion of many, impossible assumptions. And," he adds, "Drummond himself became discontented with it."[14].

The initially favourable reception which Natural Law received can be attributed to two things: the desire for someone to resolve the dilemma which science, particularly geology, was posing for conservative Christians; and the devotional nature of the main part of the book. The main chapters of the book contain devotional writing of the highest order. Indeed, the devotional nature of Natural Law is such that it continued to be of value and to be widely read at that level, long after it had been shown that it had failed in its attempt to reconcile religion and science in the way the author intended. To the end of his life Drummond continued to receive letters from people, expressing their thanks for the practical Christian help and encouragement they had received from Natural Law.[15].

The devotional nature and practical Christianity of the main part of the book is due to its origins. All the chapters had originally been delivered as addresses to the largely working class congregation of the Possilpark Mission, in Glasgow, where Drummond was missionary from April 1878 until the Free Church General Assembly raised it to the status of a full charge in 1882. The scientific content of the addresses came about through a feeling on Drummond's part that he had, hitherto, been keeping science and religion in two separate and watertight compartments. This, be concluded, was both wrong and ultimately impossible. In his own experience he had found the two mingling naturally, to the great benefit of religion.[16]. The benefit to religious thought and experience is born out by the response to the book as devotional literature.

However, after they had been delivered in the context of worship, Drummond sought to use the addresses for a purpose

for which they were not originally written. A revised selection of the addresses was appended to a preface in which Drummond stated his theory of the relationship of the natural to the spiritual world. Holding that the spiritual laws controlling an individual's religious experience had comparable laws in the natural world, he argued that there was direct continuity between the laws which governed the spiritual world and the natural world, even that they were identical.[17.]

When critics got over their delight at finding a book which, the preface claimed, set out to show the compatibility of Christianity and modern science; and when they ceased to be carried away by the richness of devotional material in the body of the book, they discovered the dichotomy which existed between the preface and the rest of the work. The book did not demonstrate the thesis set out in the preface, and the logic of that thesis was ably shown to be faulty by writers of all shades of scientific and theological opinion.

It is interesting to note that Natural Law had a disproportionately smaller sale in Scotland than elsewhere. To a considerable extent this can be attributed to the fact that Drummond's ideas on this subject were known in Scotland before he ever found a publisher for his book. He had tried out his idea in theological circles in Scotland and it had not been well received. On one occasion he delivered a paper to the Glasgow Theological Club, setting out the principle contained in the preface to Natural Law. Drummond recalled later that only one member dissented from the general condemnation which greeted his paper. Of that criticism he wrote, "Some of the criticisms were just and helpful, others mercilessly severe." One unnamed member, whose opinion Drummond respected, clearly thought the ideas was rather cranky. He put it in the same class as an eccentric pamphlet entitled "Forty Reasons for the Identification of the English People with the Lost Ten

Tribes."[18].

Despite such trenchant criticism from people whose opinions he respected, Drummond held to his ideas. He took encouragement from the one person who dissented from the general condemnation of his paper. He encouraged himself, too, with the fact that the membership of the club was "...almost exclusively of men who worked from the philosophical rather than the scientific standpoint."[19]. Nevertheless, Drummond's hypothesis was already known and rejected in learned circles in Scotland before Natural Law was published. This fact, along with the lower level of controversial interest in evolution in Scotland, is reflected in the lower interest in and sale of the book in Drummond's home country.

It was not until ten years later that Drummond produced his second major work on science and religion: the 1893 Lowell Institute Lectures in Boston, published the following year under the title The Ascent of Man. This time gap does not mean that Drummond had lost interest in the subject of evolution for a time. The question of evolution was one which had interested him from his student days;[20]. and during the period between publication of the Natural Law and his appointment as Lowell Lecturer this interest - which he was naturally able to pursue in his post as Professor of Natural Science in the Glasgow College of the Free Church - was maintained. The subject was often the one he chose to speak on at religious meetings.

As a result of this interest he alienated some extreme fundamentalist Christians. His acceptance of the concept of evolution was repugnant to them. They were unimpressed by Drummond's criticism of Darwin for denying the existence of God and his contention that Darwin's theory of evolution was faulty because it failed to recognise the divine design behind the universe, and God's sovereignty over it and the evolutionary process.[21]. The fundamentalist rejection

of Drummond led to extreme and petty behaviour. Some conservative Christian magazines stopped reporting anything Drummond said,[22] and when he was in America to deliver the Lowell Lectures some attempted to persuade D.L. Moody to ban Drummond from addressing a conference at Northfield. It is a tribute to both Moody's breadth of sympathy and his humility that he refused to ban Drummond, giving as his reason that "...the Lord had shown him that Drummond was a better man than himself."[23]

Clearly such extreme conservatives were not going to be impressed by The Ascent of Man, for Drummond had not moved in any way from his acceptance of evolution, and his conviction that it was completely compatible with the Christian faith. Neither had he moved much from the idea set out in Natural Law that comparable laws govern both the natural and the spiritual world.

While it is the effect of Drummond's ideas, rather than the ideas themselves, which is important for the subject being considered here, we may note briefly the radical change which had taken place in Drummond's approach to the subject since publishing Natural Law. In Natural Law he had been trying to establish the continuity of laws between the natural and spiritual realm by an unsuccessful attempt to show that physical processes were carried into the realm of the spiritual and ethical. In The Ascent of Man he attempted to establish his thesis by demonstrating the reverse. He was able to show, with some success, ethical and spiritual influences at work in areas which others would have regarded as being regulated purely by physical laws.[24] This concept was better received than that set out in Natural Law. So, too, was Drummond's departure from the rigid and artificial divisions which he had drawn in the first book. Despite his claim that the lectures which formed the bulk of Natural Law had arisen out

of Drummond's concern about the artificiality of keeping science and religion apart, in that work he drew a very rigid line between the natural and spiritual worlds. It was so rigid as to effectively hold the two apart in a way which was similar to the approach Drummond criticised.[25] In The Ascent of Man he treated the natural and spiritual realms in accordance with what he claimed for them: that they are not two separate and unrelated spheres, but both parts of the divine creation and as such it is artificial to separate them.[26]

This complete change in approach to the subject is described by George Adam Smith in terms of a "...complete recantation of the principal philosophical heresy of Natural Law..."[27] The result was that The Ascent of Man was received much better than Natural Law. Despite the fact that the inadequacies of the earlier work had scientific and theological critics waiting to subject The Ascent of Man to careful, and in some cases hostile, examination as soon as it was published, even some of Natural Law's severer critics were favourably impressed by this second book.

However, no matter how warm the reception for The Ascent of Man, or the greater plausibility with which Drummond sought to demonstrate his thesis, he still did not succeed in what he was trying to do. He had contributed a valuable, but at the same time tentative, step towards finding the relationship between science and religion, and between evolution and creation as a divine act. But there was a basic weakness in Drummond's approach to the whole subject and the weakness was theological not scientific. Apart from some minor points[28] the science in The Ascent of Man was accepted by scientists as being quite sound. Yet a scientist, rather than a theologian, was the one who pin-pointed the theological weakness in Drummond's work.

Professor McKendrick, then holder of the Chair of Physiology in Glasgow University, wrote: "We doubt if Professor Drummond himself fully realises the tremendous consequences that must flow from a complete acceptance of the theory of

Evolution as applied to man (body, mind, soul, religion, sin, death, the future) as we are at present advised. A thorough-going evolutionary view demands a new theology, and such fundamental questions as the origin of sin, human responsibility, the taking of our nature by the Son of God (as implied in the doctrine of the Trinity), the possibility of miracle, the possibility of future life for the individual, will all need to be re-stated and to receive fresh answers."[29].

Drummond did not realise that the consequences of what he was trying to do could be as far reaching as Professor McKendrick believed. He certainly did not see the need for the formulation of a new theology to accommodate evolution, for although he was not a fundamentalist, Drummond was basically conservative and evangelical in theology.

More will be said of Drummond as a conservative evangelical in the next chapter. However, with regard to what he was attempting to do in Natural Law and The Ascent of Man, his theological conservatism meant that he was not trying to reconcile new scientific knowledge with new theology formed in the light of it. In seeking to show the compatibility of science and religion, Drummond was trying to show that the new science was compatible with an old or existing theology. It was not - as will be seen later - a theology of the Hyper-Calvinism of the Westminster Confession. But it did have its roots in the fundamentalism of that theology, and its development owed nothing to the new scientific discoveries.

Drummond's theological position, which was well known by his extensive evangelistic work, and further demonstrated by the high devotional content of the two books we have been considering, had an important influence on the attitude of conservative Christians towards the problem which evolution seemed to pose for Christianity as they understood it. Hugh Miller had a similar influence though Drummond's influence

was greater. They had the effect of convincing conservative Christians that science posed no threat to their accepted theological position. They did not succeed in providing a conclusive demonstration of this; but the very fact that men of recognised evangelical principles and theology could accept the concept of evolution to a lesser (in the case of Miller) or greater (in the case of Drummond) degree, was an encouragement to believe that in time the compatibility of modern science and conservative theology would be clearly demonstrated.

In the case of Drummond's works there were some, of course, who did accept that he had demonstrated the compatibility of the two, even with Natural Law. It is probably the case with the latter, though, that they were wanting to be convinced of this fact before Drummond even put pen to paper. For others the critical acclaim which The Ascent of Man received from both learned theologians and scientists would enable them to accept that Drummond had gone as far as was necessary for them to accept that evolution did not pose any threat to Christianity, or require them to revise their theology. After all, the great evangelist, Professor Drummond had not revised his theology!

Ultimately those who found Darwinism and modern science a barrier to religious belief were not those inside the Church, not even (as I have sought to show) those conservative Christians who accepted that the case for evolution was convincing. It was those outside the Church who had the problems. It was those thinking people in both the intellectual and newly educated working classes, who had not yet thought their way through to Christian faith, who found the apparent imcompatibility of science and Christian doctrine a barrier which they could not overcome. Hugh Miller, perhaps more than Drummond, was aware of this fact and tried to meet the problem in his writings.[30.]

However, when the Free Church finally passed the Declaratory Act, like the United Presbyterian Church before them,

they were not seeking to meet the philosophical and theological problems of those outside the Church. The Declaratory Acts were to meet the theological scruples of church members; and by the time the Free Church passed its Declaratory Act, there seems to be no evidence of Darwinism causing any one to have scruples about accepting the Westminster Confession of Faith.

"Rationalism" :-

We may turn briefly to the possible influence of "rationalism", now. Kenneth Moody Stuart referred to it in the quotation given above, but rather as a cause of what he saw as the real threat to orthodoxy - Higher Criticism - and not as a direct, major threat in itself. However, even in treating rationalism in this way, Moody Stuart and those of like mind, were giving it credit for a greater influence on creed revision in Scotland than it actually had.

At this point it is as well to be clear about what is meant by "rationalism".

Those claiming the orthodox position used "rationalism" in a highly pejorative sense. In the nineteenth century rationalism became equated with agnosticism and atheism, a position arrived at by some thinkers through the process of reason or rational thinking. While those who were accused of introducing rationalism into theology were neither atheist nor agnostic, their extreme opponents regarded their position as almost as bad, and ultimately leading to atheism. Consequently, they were prepared to have them equated with atheists, for in the eyes of the orthodox both posed a grave danger to faith. In the context of theology, however, rationalism was the belief that reason was the source of the knowledge of God. Theological rationalism of this kind was not new: it can be traced back as far as Aquinas.

Now, the existence of philosophical and theological rat-

ionalism can be accepted as existing in those parts of the continent where the approach to biblical study, later known as Higher Criticism, began. It can be accepted, too, that men of rationalist tendencies on the continent were involved in this new approach to the Bible: studying it with all the current literary and historical methods with which other literature and historical documents would be studied. But it was not necessary to be a rationalist to adopt Higher Critical methods. Also, the Higher Critical approach had an appeal for more than those of a rationalist turn of mind. No where is this better illustrated than in Scotland.

From the time that Scottish students of theology began to come into first hand contact with continental - to be more precise, German - theological scholarship, there was a general reaction against the rationalism being expounded. The first students to come into first hand contact with German theology in any great numbers were students for the ministry of the Secession and Relief Churches, from the 1840s onwards.[31.]

This came about through the peculiar (in both senses of the word!) system of theological education these denominations had. Initially the student attended an arts course at one of the universities in the normal way. The theological course which followed this was spread over five years, but the theological 'session' only lasted for seven weeks each year. The instruction was given by professors who, for the rest of the year, were engaged in full time pastoral ministries.[32.] It was not until 1876 that the United Presbyterian Church established a theological hall with a full-time staff and a theological course lasting three years, with an academic session extending from November to April.[33.]

Until that time, the ways in which students used the ten months between 'terms' varied. Some, of course, found employment. Some attended the theological lectures given

in the universities to students for the ministry of the Established Church. A considerable number, however, went - at least once during their course - to study at one of the German universities.[34] Among this latter class of "landlouping students of divinity" was John Cairns, who spent a session at Berlin, from 1843-44.[36]

Although Cairns' most lasting contribution to the Church in Scotland was as the great ecclesiastical statesman of the United Presbyterian Church, in his day he enjoyed, too, a reputation as a theologian of liberal sympathies. He understood and taught the modern trends in theology and philosophy to his students[37] and, at times, to his congregation.[38] Further, at the end of his theological course he had serious scruples about subscribing to the Westminster Confession of Faith. A two month study of the Confession, in preparation for his licensing, led him to doubt, to the point of discarding, a number of the articles. It was only after his presbytery offered him explanations concerning the points which troubled him, that Cairns felt able to subscribe to the Confession when he was licensed in February 1845.[39]

Yet Cairns - the man with liberal theological sympathies and doubts about parts of the Confession - was quite scathing in his rejection and denounciation of the rationalism he encountered during his studies in Germany. Writing from Berlin, less than a year before his struggle with the Westminster Confession, he said: "Neither my theology or my philosophical creed are giving way before rationalism and German metaphysics...The Hegelian direction is still the prevailing one in the university. Nothing worse in point of philosophical solidity or theological purity could possibly be conceived. The fundamental identity of the world, the human soul and God - which this system works out by a miserable process of logical jugglery - of course cuts up Christianity to the roots, though there have not been

wanting theologians who have struggled to ingraft the Christian peculiarities on this barren and poisonous stock..."[40]. To another friend he wrote: "I have learned much and will learn more from the erudition and speculation, abortive and otherwise, of the Germans; but my system of doctrine and plans of active spiritual life are, and are likely to be in all essentials, perhaps in all particulars, unchanged. The more I see the historical basis of evangelical Christianity assaulted, the more impotent do the mining and storming implements and devices of old and new rationalism appear..."[41].

Cairns' rejection of rationalism is paralleled in younger men who made significant contributions to Higher Criticism nearer to, and during, the period we are immediately concerned with. While none may have rejected it in such conventional evangelical terms, it can still be shown that they were not rationalists in the pejorative sense that the orthodox used that term. They were all men of profound religious faith. Further, although all of them accepted the necessity of rational thinking in all theological matters, and that reason could not be divorced from the search for knowledge of God; none espoused pure theological rationalism: i.e. a belief that reason alone was the source of the knowledge of God.

Perhaps the most telling illustration of this fact is William Robertson Smith, who was seen by the orthodox as the arch-apostle of Higher Criticism. When taking his arts course at Aberdeen University, one of Smith's teachers was Alexander Bain, Professor of Rhetoric and Logic. Bain's philosophical approach was utilitarian and anti-mystical. His philosophical reasoning had led him to reject religion and he was generally regarded as an atheist in Free Church circles. He was an outstanding figure in his field of study and an able teacher. Smith gained much from studying under Bain, who in turn regarded Smith as the most brilliant pupil he ever had.[42].

However, as Smith's biographers rightly point out, he was Bain's pupil, never his disciple.[43.] Probably the greatest benefit Smith received from Bain was the stimulation of being confronted with ideas which were antagonistic to those Smith had absorbed and accepted from his conventional Free Church background. Yet having faced these ideas openly, and honestly thought them through, he came to quite different conclusions to Bain. So much so, that a paper of Smith's which was read to the Royal Society while Smith was still a student at New College, was regarded by his old professor as a deliberate insult to his school of thought. Smith denied that there was any such intention.[44.]

Smith and Bain had a high regard and mutual respect for each other which increased with the years, but it was a respect which was maintained from opposing philosophical positions regarding the question of religion.[45.] Indeed, Bain's continuing regard for Smith says a lot for the older man's generosity of character, for on more than one occasion his ideas received rough and ungenerous treatment from Smith. Even Smith's biographers describe his attitude and published contributions to the debate which his Royal Society paper sparked off, as that "...of a not too generous philosophical opponent."[46.] However, it was Smith's nature to maintain and assert his beliefs in the most uncompromising way, and his seemingly severe treatment of Bain is a reflection of his complete rejection of Bain's philosophical rejection of religion; and his own, equally complete, adherence - not simply to a religious philosophy - but to Christian faith.

Smith did not subscribe to pure theological rationalism either. In 1867 and 1869 he spent the summer months studying in Germany, and on both occasions he quite deliberately decided against studying in Heidelberg; although on the first occasion his father - a Free Church minister - suggested it.[47.] His

reason, on both occasions, for not going was because of Heidelberg's reputation for rationalist teaching.[48] The leading theologian at Heidelberg at that time was Rothe, described in 1867 as being "...at this time the most notable man in the Rationalist side...", and that year Smith "...felt 'some hesitation in exposing himself to the most rationalist teaching in Germany'..."[49]

By 1869 Smith had come around to reading and giving serious consideration to some of Rothe's ideas, even accepting some of his views on the supernatural. He expounded these in a paper entitled Christianity and the Supernatural which he delivered to the New College Theological Society in January 1869.[50] In the summer, however, he sought to avoid the rationalism of Rothe's Heidelberg, again, and decided to go to Göttingen. There he attended lectures by Albrecht Ritschl, to whom he was given a personal introduction.[51] Ritschl impressed Smith very much. His opinion of Ritschl's lectures was that they were "... far the best course he had ever heard."[52] Ritschl, whose teaching is described by Smith's biographers as "...a sort of shrewd ecclecticism which leaned decidedly to Calvinistic orthodoxy",[53] lectured on subjects which would have appealed to any evangelical Free Churchman: Conversion, Good Works, and the Assurance of Grace. He dealt, also, with the Visible Church and in the course of that infant baptism, giving a justification for that sacrament which would have satisfied the most orthodox Free Church minister.[54] Smith was largely in agreement with most of what Ritschl said on these subjects and found the greatest benefit of the course to be the way "...it enabled him to bring to clear consciousness ideas which had long been familiar to him, but which 'we often rather feel than are able to express with sharpness.'"[55]

This concurrence of ideas between Ritschl and Smith extended to their belief in the fact of a supernatural divine

revelation. Early in his career, Ritschl had broken away from the Hegelian school of Tubingen and his mentor there, Baur, and was not of that school of German rationalists "...who deny supernatural inspiration and prophecy altogether."[58.]

Smith not only illustrates the fact that rationalism was not a sine qua non of the Higher Critic; he possessed, too, the type of mind which the methods of Higher Criticism would appeal to, and it was a type of mind which was very common among Scottish ministers and theologians of the last century. Smith had a very scientific mind.

It has to be said, of course, that Smith's scientific powers - like his powers of Old Testament scholarship - were exceptional, and no one alse possessed such outstanding ability in both. His scientific ability was such that he could - if he had chosen - followed a career in either physics or mathematics,[59.] and in either field might have been equally distinguished, but less controversial than he was in the field of Old Testament studies.

During his last two years at New College, he helped to support himself by working as assistant at Edinburgh University to the distinguished physicist, Professor P.G. Tait.[60.] The main work of such an assistant was correcting minor examination papers and supervising the students in the laboratory.[61.] However, before long Smith was engaging in some original scientific research of his own;[62.] publishing scientific papers;[63.] and lecturing to a group of Tait's students whom the professor had virtually made Smith's responsibility.[64.]

The fact that Smith's real love in life was theology, was illustrated frequently when lecturing to his group of students. Among the group was one who became famous in the field of literature: Robert Louis Stevenson. Stevenson had no real interest or apititude for science, and other students from the group have recalled that when he lost interest in a lecture (which was frequently) he would side-track Smith, with the greatest

of ease, into discussing some point of theology.[65]

However, such a theological mind, which had received scientific training, too, and had a bent for science, would clearly be attracted to the scientific, analytical approach involved in Higher Criticism. Further, Smith was not alone among Scottish clergy in having this scientific background in their intellectual make-up; for science - mathematics, physics, chemistry - was an integral part of the arts course at Scottish universities.[66] They were of such importance in the arts curriculum that the career of the great Alexander Whyte was almost cut short at the undergraduate stage when he failed a chemistry exam.[67] Many more candidates for the Scottish ministry, however, excelled in science subjects. Indeed, a considerable number were helped financially during their theological studies by bursaries and prizes awarded for their performance in the sciences during their arts course.[68]

Given the rejection of rationalism by Scottish ministers and theologians, the thing which was likely to make Higher Criticism attractive to Scots (apart from the new light and understanding which the method cast on the Bible)[69] was the analytical approach which was congenial to minds which had received part of their intellectual moulding in the analytical methods of science.

It is, indeed, ironic that the orthodox were so busy 'witch-hunting' among continental rationalism, to explain the attachment of Scottish scholars to Higher Criticism, that they failed to realise there was a possible cause nearer home. It was a cause which was an integral part of the traditional education of Scottish ministers. It was so traditional that many of the orthodox would have defended that method and the arts curriculum with as much passion as they used to denounce Higher Criticism and rationalism as the root cause of it.

Higher Criticism:-

Since, as I have sought to show, Darwinism and rationalism were not as influential, as the orthodox claimed, in bringing about the Declaratory Act; the question arises, 'How accurate were they in their assessment of Higher Criticism as the major cause?' The answer appears to be that they were nearer the mark here, although not as near as they thought in that - as we will see in the next chapter - many of them failed to recognise another force which was at work. In addition, they certainly over-estimated the influence of the man they saw as the prime culprit in this field: William Robertson Smith.

To begin with Smith was not the man who first introduced, or to quote Kenneth Moody Stuart, "...imported into this country..." Higher Criticism. As we have seen the 'landlouping students of divinity' from the Secession and Relief Churches were familiar with continental critical scholarship from at least the 1840s, and many - like John Cairns - were introducing the results of such scholarship into their sermons, even though on occasions the results scandalized members of their congregations.[70.]

Smith can not even be blamed, or credited as the case may be, for introducing German critical scholarship to Free Church students. The man who pioneered the teaching of Higher Criticism was A.B. Davidson. He was appointed assistant to the legendary 'Rabbi' Duncan in 1863;[71.] because despite the old man's saintliness and learned reputation, he was a quite inept teacher and the Free Church authorities were concerned about how little the students were learning in Old Testament studies.[72.] Alexander Whyte's description of Duncan gives the contrast of fine personal qualities coupled with complete incompetence as a teacher: "...he taught nobody Hebrew, but of all men of my time he was most truly a genius. He could not manage his class, but gave an impetus to thought with every word he uttered".[73.]

In contrast to the strict view of literal inspiration

of Scripture which Professor Duncan had, Davidson's approach to the study of the Bible was that of the continental scholars. He expounded his view on how the Bible should be approached in the preface to the first part of his Commentary Critical and Exegetical on the Book of Job which was published in 1862: "The books of Scripture, so far as interpretation and general formal criticism are concerned, must be handled very much as other books are handled. We do not speak here of the solemnity with which we handle the books, knowing them to be the Word of God, and bow under their meaning so soon as it is ascertained, but of the intellectual treatment and examination of them during the process of ascertaining their meaning. That treatment and examination must be mainly the same as the treatment we give to other books."[73a.]

It was this teacher and teaching who influenced a great number of Free Church ministers and future Old Testament scholars. In his class they received their first introduction to Higher Criticism, and from this class came a number of distinguished Old Testament scholars who spread the influence of the teaching they first received from Davidson, and who made their own contribution to the study of the Old Testament. Although Smith may have been Davidson's most famous pupil, he was not the only one who achieved fame. A year or two behind Smith at New College were Andrew Harper - later professor of Hebrew at Melbourne - and W.G. Elmslie - later professor of Hebrew in the Presbyterian College, London. Like Smith, both acted as Davidson's assistants for a time. In 1875, George Adam Smith entered New College and came under Davidson's influence.

All these men were willing to acknowledge Davidson's influence on them. Robertson Smith, for example, near the end of his life was asked for a list of books which had influenced him. He supplied a list of four theologians "...who came into my mind at once as leading influences..." Davidson was the first

to be mentioned.[74] George Adam Smith for his part said, in his biography of Henry Drummond, that Davidson's course of lectures to first year students on the Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch, "...started...the great movement of Old Testament study which was characterised Scottish Theology during the last thirty years."[75]

Others who made their mark outwith the field of Old Testament scholarship were also influenced by Davidison. He had a profound effect on Henry Drummond, for example. His biographer says that he took very full notes of Davidson's lectures.[76] Another friend and biographer of Drummond's - J.Y. Simpson - says it was Davidson "...who began the process of weaning him away from the more or less mechanical views of inspiration..."[77]

It was his fellow academics and those who accepted Higher Criticism, though, who recognised the great influence Davidson had in spreading and popularising it. The orthodox did not see him as a threat in the way they saw Smith. This is because Davidson's views were never brought to the attention of the whole church - or indeed the whole country - in the way that Smith's were. This is partly due to the different nature of the two men. Davidson was a retiring, even timid man, with no inclination for the limelight or controversy. Smith, while he did not actually seek either, had an unhappy knack of arousing controversy and when that happended he did not hesitate to participate to the full. Again, although Smith did not seek the opportunity but initially wrote the articles which caused so much trouble, by invitation; when his offending ideas were published in the Encyclopaedia Britannica, they were appearing in a more popular and widely read medium than any of Davidson's ideas had.

At the end of the day, however, Smith probably did not advance or popularise Higher Criticism as much as his critics claimed; certainly not among the laity whose support was

essential to pass the Declaratory Act. Smith's appearances before the courts of the Free Church from 1876 to 1881 might have become a means whereby the general churchmember could have become better informed about Higher Criticism. In fact the proceedings did little to commend Higher Criticism to those who were not already well versed on the subject. In reading the accounts of the Robertson Smith case the deepest impression which is made, is made - not by the theological issues at stake - but by the personalities involved: Begg, contending for the old orthodoxy; Rainy, contending in a near Machiavellian way for the peace of the church; and the irascible character of Smith himself. It seems clear that the thing which tipped the balance against Smith in the Free Church was not the views he held, but his personality.

As we have already seen Smith was "a not too generous philosophical opponent."[78] But being a controversialist by nature he pursued his point in a way which led him to do and say things which were at the least tactless and undiplomatic and at worst could be construed as malicious by those who suffered as a result. Thus to refer again to the controversial debate which followed his Royal Association paper; the public debate eventually reached a point when the main protagonists had tacitly agreed to abandon it,[79] yet after that time Smith allowed a revised version of his paper to be published in France "with all the hits sharpened up to absolute ferocity"[80].

This controversial nature and inherent tactlessness is evident from the very beginning of the agitation against him. In a letter published in the Daily Review in which he rejected allegations of holding views which were not orthodox, he aimed a vicious and irrelevant blow at Professor A.H. Charteris of the Established Church- Charteris was generally believed to have been the author of a review in the Edinburgh Evening Courant of 16 April 1876 which condemned Smith's article "Bible" in the Encyclopaedia Britannica, and which brought Smith's

'dangerous' views to the attention of the Free Church orthodox.[81] In his letter to the Review, Smith described the author of the Courant article as one "...whose malevolence was probably dictated by ecclesiastical jealousy of the Free Church, and who expressed himself with so little knowledge and so great an air of authority that one seems to hear the voice of a raw preacher thrust for party ends into a professor's chair..."[82] Some of his strongest supporters felt that these comments were unfair to Charteris and irrelevant to the point at issue. Even Smith himself had qualms about it, for within days of writing he confided in a letter to his father: "It was perhaps a fault to point so clearly to Charteris.[83]

At the same time Smith began to alienate Rainy: an alienation which eventually ended with them as opponents. When Begg intimated to the Free Church College Committee - a month after Charteris's article in the Courant - that he intended to raise the matter of Smith and his article "Bible" at the next assembly; Rainy and Smith's friends in the college were anxious to deal with the matter at the committee level and Begg himself indicated that he would have accepted a satisfactory resolution of the matter at that level. The committee seem to have been unanimous in their opinion that as it stood the article "Bible" could be misconstrued and cause anxiety among the faithful. They felt to counteract this, some positive statement by Smith affirming his Christian faith was necessary. In this they were not alone. As the storm clouds gathered his old professor, A.B. Davidson, urged that he do "something positive" to make clear what Davidson was assuming - and assuming correctly - that what Smith had written in "Bible" was not the whole story and was not Smith's complete view of the Bible.[84]

While Davidson may have had some sort of public statement in mind, all the College Committee wanted was a private assurance to them which they could use to justify their

decision to take no action over the offending article, and for their continued support of Smith as one of the Church's professors. However, Smith was not prepared to do this and thought Rainy was asking him to go too far in what he wanted in a statement. Writing to his father of his interview with the Committee's representatives Smith said, "I had rather a difficult task yesterday. Rainy evidently thinks that I have been rash and, therefore, culpable and after a great deal of beating about the bush suggested that I might write a letter to the College Committee affirming my soundness in the faith and my regret at having given so much uneasiness, etc., etc. He thought I might go so far as to say that under the circumstances I was ready to reconsider my position both as to matter and manner. I of course, declined to do any such thing..."[85].

It is most unlikely that Begg would have been satisfied, even if Smith had complied fully with Rainy's suggestions; but at least at this early stage there was the opportunity to get the full support of the College Committee at his back, for the time when Begg and the orthodox party did bring the matter before the Assembly. He would have also gained the support of many who, while conservative, were not as ultra-orthodox as Begg; and although they may not have shared Smith's critical views they would not have been against him if they had been sure of the soundness of his basic Christian faith.

A good illustration of this latter fact is the support Smith received from Alexander Whyte. While Whyte was interested in the results of Smith's work and professed to have benefitted from them,[86]. he never adopted Smith's critical position;[87]. yet he publicly defended Smith throughout and in 1881 Assembly he moved an unsuccessful counter motion to Rainy's. But Whyte was a personal friend of Smith's and through that friendship knew of Smith's profound Christian faith and the basis of faith on which all his scholarship rested. Others did not and by his approach to the case denied others the opportunity

to learn what the conservative evangelist Whyte knew, and which - even without the ties of friendship - allowed him to support Smith with a clear conscience.

While Smith clearly thought - and his biographers claim - that Rainy was asking him to compromise his conscience and his principles, what Smith's letter to his father after his interview with Rainy indicates is that they both had a different conception of what was happening. While Rainy was perhaps asking Smith to go too far in what he suggested; he saw quite clearly - as did Smith's friends - that they were dealing with a potentially dangerous situation which had to be defused even, in Rainy's view, at the sacrifice of some principles by Smith. However, at this stage Smith saw it as no more than another academic controversy, such as had taken place over his Royal Society paper. This came out in the way he told his father that any statements be made would be public (hence the letter in the Daily Review); and that he would not make such public statement until his accusers came forward with definite accusations. In fact, he made it clear to Rainy that he thought the College Committee's duty was to demand such definite accusations from his accusers, instead of urging him to make compromising statements.[88.]

While the College Committee were satisfied themselves with the soundness of Smith's faith, there was rather a lack of enthusiasm about the support of some of the members thereafter. No doubt they felt frustrated at Smith's refusal to give them the evidence they wanted, both to justify their action and to enable them to help him. Rainy, in particular, was annoyed at Smith's failure to grasp the seriousness of the situation and co-operate for his own sake and for the peace of the Church. Thus, at the Commission of Assembly later that year; although Rainy defended Smith ably against suggestions that he be libelled for heresy, he finished on a note that foreshadowed Smith's ultimate fate. He ended by agreeing

with Begg's assessment of the church's rights over its professors; but took it even further than Begg ever did, by claiming the church's right to consider a person's right to retain office if the church lost confidence in that person's teaching, even although that which caused the loss of confidence was such that the church "...was not prepared to lay a libel for heresy..."[89].

The gulf between Smith and Rainy became an irrepairable breach after Rainy's final attempt to obtain from Smith the sort of statement which he believed was necessary to take the heat out of the situation, by allaying the fears of all but Begg's sympathisers, who were a minority. To this end he drafted a letter of the sort he thought Smith should write, qualifying the misleading impression "Bible" had made, affirming his belief in the Bible as the inspired word of God, and expressing regret for any anxiety he had inadvertently caused.[90]. As Rainy's biographer admits, this was a strange, even naive thing, for Rainy to do. Even if Smith had adopted the letter everyone in the Free Church would have recognised the true author of it.[91]. Apart from which, not even the good offices of Alexander Whyte, through whom Rainy sent the draft and the suggestion, could persuade Smith to write the sort of ameliorating letter Rainy wanted.[92]. The point remains, however, that those who wanted to help Smith found their task made more difficult by the man himself. This meant that the impression he made on those inclined against him or neutral to begin with, was quite damaging to his cause.

Smith never really changed his position or his conception of the affair as he saw it at the time of his interview with Rainy in May 1876. It was an academic controversy and so he looked to his opponents to declare their academic objections to his position; then in the manner of academic controversy as Smith understood it, and in which he was so effective, the theological issues could be debated in published articles and

letters in appropriate journals. It was this seeking for his opponents to state their position that led Smith to demand that they should libel him (i.e., bring a formal charge of heresy against him stating the grounds for it).

However, when Smith did this he effectively agreed to the debate being largely conducted and the final outcome determined within the judicial system of the presbyterian church. In doing this he allowed the debate to be moved from the free and unfettered atmosphere of academic debate with which he was familiar, to the less familiar and more constricted atmosphere of ecclesiastical law. By dint of his brilliant mind, Smith proved as able an advocate and ecclesiastical lawyer as he was a scholar. But the theological issues involved could not be as fully debated, when full attention had also to be given to 'processes,' 'libels,' 'propositions' - major and minor; questions of relevance,' 'probation,' 'appeals,' etc., etc. The theological points at issue were often lost sight of among the ecclesiastical law.

In the conduct of the case, too, Smith often marred able advocacy by apparently offensive and deliberately wounding attacks on his opponents. In the 1878 Assembly, for example, he almost undid the effect of a brilliant and ultimately successful speech in his defence, by an apparent attack on Dr. Begg. Referring to an earlier statement by Begg, that the offender's views had people "trembling for the ark of God," Smith claimed that it was more appropriate to tremble at the word of God, as he himself did. Further, he argued, the only Bible character who trembled for the ark of God was Eli, "...a worldly ecclesiastic." Carnegie Simpson says the phrase "a worldly ecclesiastic" was delivered with a kind of shriek and in a moment there was pandemonium in the Assembly, with cries of acclaim being met with shouts of protest, and Begg's face turning white.[93.] On calmer reflection even those who had cheered felt the comment

to be unjust as whatever his faults, Begg was not a worldly man.[94]

However, the interesting point which Simpson makes about this utterance which ultimately lost Smith more sympathy than it gained him, is that it never occurred to Smith that the words would be applied to Begg. He adds, "... it was not Smith who fitted them mercilessly on Begg, but the House."[95] Simpson also gave an insight into Smith's intellectual and oratorial ability. He records that Smith delivered his entire speech with no other notes than a scrap of paper on which he had scribbled "tremble <u>at</u> the word of God - not tremble <u>for</u> the word of God - Eli."[96]

It was this combination of brilliance and naivety which characterises so much of Smith's behaviour throughout life and which led to him being misunderstood by so many people. It is this which led to his biggest blunder of all during the protracted case against him and which - more than any merit in the case against him - led to his downfall. This was his failure to say anything about a forthcoming article, in the 11th volume of the <u>Encyclopaedia Britannica</u>, at the time he was admonished by the 1880 Assembly for writing in a way similar to that article about to be published.[97]

Smith had actually written the article "Hebrew Language and Literature" the previous year and given the editors it sometime in September 1879.[98] The 11th volume of the <u>Encyclopaedia Britannica</u> should have been published before the time of the 1880 Assembly but Lord Kelvin was late submitting his contribution to it: an article entitled "Heat".[99] Within the Free Church, Smith's article generated more heat than the great scientist discussed in his article. Although, as Smith's biographers rightly pointed out, "Hebrew Language and Literature" did not contain much that Smith had not said already; the appearance of the article seemed to indicate that he was not at all repentant, and that his speech of humble acquiescience

and acceptance of the Assembly's admonition less than a fortnight before, was in fact a hypocritical act. Clearly Smith could have done nothing to stop the publication of the Encyclopaedia Britannica. This could have been accepted. It would probably have been accepted - as his friends claimed - that in the emotion he felt at the Assembly's decision he forgot about the article.[100] But the point which his opponents seized on and which his friends could not explain[101] was that he had another ten days between the Assembly decision and the publication date in which to remember and say something about it. It seemed a clear indication of contempt for the church and no intention of mending his ways in the slightest.

It may be that Smith did forget the article. The more likely explanation is that it did not occur to him that it would cause the furore it did, or that people would see anything unworthy in his actions. Smith researched and wrote from the purest of motives. He published in good faith and he expected people to receive his work in the same spirit in which he did it. But he lived continually at an intellectual level so high above every one else, that he could not appreciate the effect which his writings might have on men of lesser intellect. Further, he had a profound and very conventional Christian faith which was both the inspiration and the basis of all his scholarship. In his inaugural lecture at the Aberdeen College he declared, "This process (Higher Criticism) can be dangerous to faith only when it is begun without faith - when we forget that the Bible history is no profane history, but the story of God's saving self-manifestation."[102] Since his work was rooted in faith, Smith could not see how anyone felt it a threat to their faith.

The controversy surrounding Smith and his case certainly made people in general aware that there was such a thing as

Higher Criticism, but the level of the controversy and its involvement in the ecclesiastical judicial process blurred the theological issues so that it was not a platform for clarifying them and effectively propogating them. Further, the character of Robertson Smith - or, rather his character as it appeared to those who did not know him well - meant that he was not a particularly good commendation for Higher Criticism.

What the Robertson Smith case did was leave the way open for others to pursue the same lines of enquiry within the Free Church, teaching Higher Criticism to the students, and for those students - as ministers - to use the results of it in their preaching. Robertson Smith's case was not the last heresy case in the Free Church, but it was the last successful one.

With decline in the likelihood of being prosecuted - or at least, prosecuted successfully - for heresy, preachers felt more at liberty to make use of the results of Higher Criticism. At the same time there was also a maturing of their attitude towards its use. They got beyond the stage when they felt they had to discuss, in their sermons, the authenticity of certain verses,[103.] the authorship of the books, etc. Instead, they began preaching the practical spiritual insights and the fuller understanding of the Gospel which came with fuller understanding of the nature of biblical revelation and prophecy.

Walter Chalmers Smith is a good example of this maturing process. In the 1860s he rushed in where angels would have feared to tread with a series of sermons and later a book - <u>The Sermon on the Mount</u>. The discourses were intended to be spiritually edifying, but in the course of them he dealt with some of the more academic points raised by Higher Criticism in a way which showed more confidence than ability. As a result his opinions were made the subject of an enquiry by the Free Presbytery

of Glasgow. This enquiry, which J.R. Fleming described as "...the racking experience of nearly a year in the ecclesiastical torture chamber..."[104] culminated in Smith appearing before the General Assembly in 1867. There, a move by Begg, which would have culminated in a libel for heresy, was defeated by a censure motion moved by Rainy. Rainy's motion and his speech in moving it were harshly critical of "...the extremely unadvised tone and style that characterised these sermons."[105] Apart from the errors, which although "substantial" were not judged heretical, Rainy criticised the carelessness of expression and what he considered the inappropriate "...manner in which the sentiments contained in them are thrown out - in an easy, confident and jaunty style..." which "...as in some other parts of the case, there is an element of irritation and provocation so that I have found some difficulty in relieving and discharging my mind, so as to confine myself strictly to the business... (of) looking simply at the merits of the evidence, and not allowing ourselves to be swayed by impulses of that kind."[106] Rainy's seconder was equally critical and suggested that part of the trouble was that Smith had made a stupid mistake in the basic exegesis of one of his texts and proceded to build on that error.[107]

From this whole process W.C. Smith emerged a much wiser minister as is illustrated by this quotation from a sermon preached to divinity students seven years later: "I remember with sorrow, and now unavailing regret, that not only were some precious years of my own ministerial life wasted, because I thought only of dealing with doctrines instead of dealing with souls; but what was of far more consequence, those sheep entrusted to me were not fed with food convenient for them, while I, forsooth, in fancied wisdom, which was sorry ignorance, was handling theological disputes instead of healing diseases. Many a time, in these later years, I have wished I could gather that little flock - they were only a little flock, and well

for me they were not more - but I have longed that I could give them one year of faithful service now, so as to make up in some measure, for the years unprofitably wasted."[108].

To avoid such a mistake Smith had offered them this advice by paraphrasing 2 Timothy 4:5 ("Do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry."): "...see that you are not dragged into mere controversies, where you have to do with the intellect rather than the conscience. Your special business is to evangelise. Your work rather to save the world than to save the truth. Of course the instrument by which the world is to be saved is truth. Of course, therefore, you must not neglect it, for your power is gone when it is lost. Still, the instrument is less than its use; to keep it pure and perfect is not your final object, but to handle it for the salvation of men...Clearly subordinate the maintenance of truth to the salvation of the world. The two things, doubtless, go together; but the one is only the means, the other is the end. Therefore, see that you are not so much taken up about the purity of the truth that you have no time or strength for its use in the salvation of men."[109].

As Smith recognised, salvation and the truth as the instrument of salvation is a very fine distinction indeed. It is the sort of distinction which came through the use of Higher Criticism[110]. and orthodox elements would have objected to it. Nevertheless, what Smith said here points to the direction and tenor of the preaching of those who made use of Higher Criticism. The emphasis was on the practical theological implications for people's faith and living, not on scholarship, and people were to listen to it. Academic points of criticism could turn people away from the preacher, either because they saw no relevance in it for their life and faith, or because of a conservative reaction against criticism of the Bible they believed in. But preaching on practical, spiritual and ethical

matters which seemed to have new depths and insights, through the new insights the preacher had received through Higher Criticism, had a definite appeal. In this way the results of Higher Criticism found their way into the religious life of the Free Church and became an influence in the faith of its members.

NOTES

1. As will be seen from subsequent chapters, evangelical and ultra-orthodox theology was not one and the same thing; a point which those described here as ultra-orthodox realised better than the evangelicals.
2. "The New Declaratory Act", p.4.
3. A.R. Vidler - The Church in an Age of Revolution, pp.116ff.
4. F.C. Proc., 1889; p.149.
5. A.R. Vidler - The Church in an age of Revolution, p.169.
6. Ibid.
7. Declaratory Act of the United Presbyterian Synod; article 7. See Cox, p.412.
8. C.f. above p.14.
9. Drummond & Bulloch, p.231.
10. Natural Law in the Spiritual World, published 1883. The Ascent of Man, originally delivered as the Lowell Institute Lectures at Boston in 1893 and published as a book in 1894.
11. Henry Drummond, p.212.
12. Ibid., pp.212, 222.
13. Ibid., p.222.
14. Ibid., p.136.
15. Ibid., pp.215f.
16. Ibid., p.137.
17. Ibid., pp.140ff.
18. Ibid., 148.
19. Ibid., pp.148f.
20. Ibid., p.45.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid., pp.420f.
23. Ibid., p.421.
24. Ibid., pp.429f.

25. Ibid., p.430.

26. Ibid., pp.430f.

27. Ibid., p.431.

28. Ibid., pp.433f.

29. Ibid., p.437.

30. Drummond & Bulloch., p.229.

31. Cairns, p.150.

32. Ibid., p.109.

33. Ibid., pp.626f.

34. Ibid., p.109f.

35. Ibid., p.150.

36. Ibid., pp.148ff.

37. Cairns was Professor of Dogmatics and Apologetics from the establishment of the United Presbyterian Theological Hall in 1876 until shortly before his death. Prior to this, from 1867, he had occupied this chair along with the pastorate of Wallace Green U.P. Church, Berwick-on-Tweed.

38. Cairns, p.319.

39. Ibid., pp.211ff.

40. Ibid., p.157.

41 Ibid., pp.156f.

42. Robertson Smith, p.34.

43. Ibid.

44. Ibid., p.109.

45. Ibid., p.35.

46. Ibid., p.119. See, too, Smith's speech against Bain's candidacy for the post of Assessor to the Lord Rector of Aberdeen University in 1880. Ibid., pp.391ff.

47. Ibid., p.85.

48. Ibid., pp.85, 103.

49. Ibid., p.85.

50. Ibid., p.103.

51. Ibid., p.110.

52. Ibid., p.115.

53. Ibid., p.111.

54. Ibid., p.111ff.

55. Ibid., p.113.

56. Ibid., p.103.

57. Ibid., p.111.

58. Ibid., p.87.

59. Whyte, p.202.

60. Robertson Smith, pp.101f.

61. Ibid., p.106.

62. Ibid., p.107.

63. Ibid., p.109.

64. Ibid., p.107.

65. Ibid., pp.107f. This did not mean that Smith was not a competent lecturer in science. He managed to impart the basic scientific knowledge which he had to teach the students and - unlike Stevenson - some of them did go on to make distinguished contributions to science.

66. Whyte, p.67.

67. Ibid., pp.67f.

68. e.g., Robert Howie, one of the students involved in the Glasgow College Case, who was an outstanding mathematician. In fact, in one of the essays which so offended Professor Gibson he claimed - probably with his tongue in his cheek, though Gibson failed to realise that - that "...the Fall could not have been so universal in its destruction, as it left the mathematical faculties intact." - See James Barr - Lang Syne, p.67.

69. This, of course, is the greatest attraction which Higher Criticism would have, but this fact was not seen by the orthodox who would accept neither the methods nor the results, and so could only explain its acceptance in terms of the other things which made it attractive. In fastening on rationalism they picked the wrong explanation as far as Scots were concerned.

70. A student who was attached to Cairns' church as home missionary during 1847-48 has left an amusing account of a visit to an elderly lady, who had still not recovered from the shock of hearing Cairns declare, the day before, that a particular verse was not part of God's word. She was scandalized as the suggestion but because of her high regard for Cairns was prepared to accept that he was right. See Cairns, p.319.

71. Annals, p.52.

72. Whyte, p.106.

73. Ibid., pp.106f.

73a. Robertson Smith, p.77.

74. Ibid., p.534.

75. Henry Drummond, p.44.

76. Ibid.

77. J.Y. Simpson - Henry Drummond, p.37.

78. See above p.30.

79. Robertson Smith, p.116.

80. Ibid., p.111.

81. Ibid., p.188f.

82. Ibid., p.197.

83. Ibid., p.199.

84. Ibid., p.199f.

85. Ibid., p.192.

86. Whyte, p.217.

87. Robertson Smith, p.185.

88. Ibid., pp.192f.

89. Rainy, p.327.

90. Ibid., pp.324ff.

91. Ibid., p.327.

92. Ibid., pp.328f.

93. Ibid., p.338.

94. Ibid., p.339.

95. Ibid.

96. Ibid.

97. Ibid., pp.370ff: Rainy, pp.376ff.

98. Rainy, p.377 fn.

99. Robertson Smith, p.371.

100. Rainy, p.377.

101. Smith's biographers, one of whom - J. Sutherland Black - was assistant editor of the Encyclopaedia Britannica at the time he submitted the article "Hebrew Language and Literature, make no secret of their admiration for Smith as a scholar and friend; yet they offer absolutely no explanation for his silence about the article. See Robertson Smith, p.371.

102. Robertson Smith, pp.128f.

103. C.f. John Cairns; fn. 67 above.

104. J.R. Fleming - History of the Church in Scotland: 1843-74; p.219.

105. F.C. Proc., 1867; p.147.

106. Ibid., pp.147f.

107. Ibid., pp.161ff.

108. W.C. Smith - "Ministerial Work: Not Theologising but Evangelizing"; p.12.

109. Ibid., pp.6f.

110. It should be said, too, that there were those who used Higher Criticism who would have drawn back from making such a fine distinction, or at least questioned the value of it.

CHAPTER III

Evangelicals and Evangelism: The Agents of Conservatism?

Kenneth Moody Stuart, whose analysis of the forces leading to the Declaratory Act was quoted at the beginning of the last chapter, was following directly in his father's footsteps in taking the stance he did. Alexander Moody Stuart was an outstanding and respected figure in the evangelical party in Scotland. Father and son were at one with regard to Robertson Smith, too. Alexander Moody Stuart had been involved in the opposition to Smith. His opinion of the views Smith taught was that they "...were erroneous in fact and dangerous in their tendency, and should not be allowed to be taught in our theological halls to candidates for the holy ministry."[1.] He published a book - The Bible True to Itself - which was, in substance, speeches he had made on the subject of Robertson Smith and Higher Criticism, and which was intended to refute the views of Higher Criticism.[2.] While he argued most convincingly that Higher Criticism and the view of the Bible held by his school of thought were incompatible, he did not really show why Higher Criticism was wrong and his view right.

Another outstanding figure in the evangelical party, and a close friend of Alexander Moody Stuart, was also in action in the Robertson Smith affair; and some of the entries in his diary show the concern with which the evangelicals viewed Smith and his views. Andrew Bonar was moderator of the General Assembly of 1878 and so was not able to take part on any side during Smith's first brush with the Assembly, but he does record his satisfaction with the outcome: "Came home full of thankfulness, because the most perplexing case we have had, that of Prof. Smith, has so far been dealt with well..." The result of the case against

Smith and Marcus Dods (who fell foul of the orthodox that year too) was, he records, "satisfactory."[3.]

By the following year things were not so satisfactory and although the floor of the Assembly and ecclesiastical controversy were generally unfamiliar and unwelcome ground to him he was persuaded to move the motion against Smith. In this he was really being the mouthpiece for Sir Henry Wellwood Moncrief who had actually framed the motion which was put forward in Bonar's name.[4.] "Fain would have I escaped the duty," he protested; but by that time Bonar, and other evangelicals, were seeing the whole business as a direct threat to God's faithful people. "I thought," wrote Bonar, "of Mordecai to Esther, 'If thou holdest thy peace' (iv.4)"; and having found such a divine warrant for speaking proposed the motion against Smith, although "...I was not at all at ease..."[5.]

By 1880 he was seeing the Robertson Smith case as a satanic threat to the Free Church. "The most anxious time since the Disruption...Prayer for the outpouring of the Spirit, and the checking on the evil at this Assembly. For Satan is trying to wile away ministers and people away from the great, glorious Gospel."[6.] In keeping with the great spiritual battle against Satan, which Bonar now saw in this case, his contribution to the conclusion of the battle, in 1881, was prayer for the more active contenders for truth. "Yesterday and Tuesday were days of very great anxiety in the Assembly, but have ended well. We are praising the Lord. I was enabled, remaining at home, to give two nights to simple prayer for those fighting in the valley."[7.]

In the light of such clear opposition to Higher Criticism on the part of the evangelicals, it would be easy to fall into the trap of seeing them as part and parcel of the forces which resisted any credal change and adhered completely to the theology of the Westminster Confession of Faith. One might be tempted

to see as one group, people such as Alexander Moody Stuart and Andrew Bonar on the one hand, and people such as James Begg and John Kennedy of Dingwall, on the other hand. This is not the case, although the extent to which evangelicals were aware of this varied; especially with regard to the Westminster Confession of Faith which, in general, they claimed to accept completely.

The difference between evangelicals and those who were Hyper-Calvinist in theology - like Begg and Kennedy - will be seen fully in the next chapter, but a brief illustration may be given here. It shows that even on points where they were agreed, the value and emphasis they placed on them revealed their thinking to be quite different.

When opposition arose in the Free Church to the plans for union with the United Presbyterians, both Moody Stuart and Bonar took an active part in that opposition which was ably led by Begg.[8.] The point at issue was the principle of church establishment which Begg and his followers held to be a fundamental principle of the Free Church from its inception.[9.] Those opposed to the union feared this principle would be lost under the terms which seemed to be coming out of the negotiations. Moody Stuart and his evangelical followers felt that in the union this principle was going to be so altered that they would be surrendering part of the "crown rights of the Redeemer", namely his headship over the nation: the complement to his headship over the Church.[10.]

However, while Begg and his followers saw full establishment as they way by which those 'crown rights' were ensured; Moody Stuart and the evangelicals considered the public endowment side of that question a minor point, and they would have been content with some form of public recongition of Christ's headship over the nation, as opposed to the legal establishment others looked for.[11.] By 1882 Bonar was so indifferent to

the establishment question that he left a sitting of the General Assembly because they began debating disestablishment. He preferred to spend the time visiting Ormiston and places round about it which were associated with the reformer George Wishart.[12.]

With regard to the relationship of evangelicals to the Westminster Confession of Faith, we find that in the nineteenth century - and in particular during the period being considered here - evangelical theology moved into a position quite irreconcilable to any orthodox interpretation of the Westminster Confession. This move had been coming for a very long time however. From soon after the Confession received the official approval of the Church of Scotland, there had been a tension between evangelical belief and the Westminster Confession of Faith. This first showed itself in the Marrow Controversy at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Indeed, since The Marrow of Modern Divinity was written at the same time as the Westminster Assembly,[13.] it can be said that it was a tension which existed from the beginning.

The basic and unresolved tension between the Westminster Confession and what evangelicals were moved to preach centred upon Christ's Atonement. The teaching of the Confession on this subject indicates that the benefits of Christ's Atonement are limited to certain people (the Elect), and that even before God created the world he had decided who the elect would be, and who would be damned. Thus the Westminster Confession of Faith III : v states: "Those of mankind that are predestined unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid...hath chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory..." As for the others: "The rest of mankind, God has pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of his own will, whereby he extendeth or withholdeth mercy as he pleaseth...to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath for their sin..."[14.]

This sytem of salvation was based on the doctrine of the sovereignty of God - a doctrine accepted by Christians whether Calvinist or not - but the concepts of election and predestination which the Confession worked out from the sovereignty of God produced an attitude of fatalism rather than faith in many people. They were also difficult for many people to reconcile with their concept of God as revealed in Jesus Christ; infinitely loving. Inevitably the system was attacked. In 1742, when he fled from the predestination of presbyterianism and took refuge in the Scottish Episcopal Church, an Edinburgh shoe-maker, Duncan Innes, protested that the Hyper-Calvinist scheme of salvation was like "...a State-Lottery where there a great many Blanks, but very few prizes; where every one must venture, but only a certain number can be successful..."[15]. He claimed that all this doctrine did was "... to fill the Heads of some with groundless and presumption Hopes, fancying themselves to be among the Number of that happy Few...it is equally destructive to such as may have a melancholy Turn of Mind...by instigating them to despair of GOD's paternal Goodness, as not being among the Number of the Elect."[16].

These things troubled evangelists within the Church of Scotland who, unlike Innes, were not prepared to abandon Calvinism and the Westminster Confession, so when Thomas Boston discovered The Marrow of Modern Divinity and brought it to prominence it seemed to provide the answer evangelicals were looking for. There they were reminded that Jesus had commissioned his disciples to preach the gospel to every creature: "...that is, go and tell every man without exception that here is good news for him,Christ is dead for him, and if he will take Him and accept of His righteousness he shall have Him."[17].

Although they firmly believed the Marrow doctrine was compatible with the Westminster Confession, predestination and all, others disagreed and the Marrow Men were attacked from

two sides. Hyper-Calvinists claimed the doctrine was Arminian, Moderates claimed it was Antinomian, but both agreed it was against the Confession, and pressure on the Marrow men from the Moderates almost produced a secession.[18] When the Secession came in 1731 it was not over the Marrow doctrine, but Erskine and the others associated with him subscribed to the Marrow doctrine and this was the doctrine they carried into the Secession and was to be found in all the different branches of the Secession when the Secederes began to fragment.

One of the clearest illustrations of the continued influence of Marrow doctrine in the Secession churches, and the irreconcilable tension in it, is the document produced in 1828 by the United Associate Synod of the Secession: the "Testimony." The "Testimony" said, "...that 'Christ died for the elect to secure their redemption,' so far as the purpose of God and His own intention is concerned, but that that death has also a relation to mankind sinners /this phrase and another, 'sinners of mankind', were common Marrow expressions/ being suitable to all, and sufficient to the salvation of all."[19]

Expressed this way the Secederes appear to have been trying to have things both ways. It begins with a belief in election, but goes on to express, too, belief in the efficacy of Christ's death for everyone. They got into this situation because they still claimed to be orthodox Calvinists adhering to the Westminster Confession of Faith. Because of this they did not see the in-built tension in asserting the Confession's doctrine of election and predestination while preaching to troubled souls that Christ was offered to all 'mankind sinners' and able to save any who had faith to him. It was this tension within evangelical theology which led to the oft repeated sneer in the nineteenth century, that Scottish evangelicals were Calvinists in their studies and Arminians in their pulpits. It was certainly true that

the peculiar doctrines of the Confession were not particularly prominent in the sermons of the leading evangelical preachers. What Drummond and Bulloch said of Andrew Bonar and Robert Murray McCheyne is generally true of them all; namely, that if all the copies of the Westminster Confession of Faith disappeared their writings would give no clear indication of its contents.[20.]

However, the inherent tension in this evangelical theology frequently showed itself, especially in the Secession churches. A number of ministers were deposed when they strayed too far to that side of their theology which taught the universal offer of salvation. The best known of these is James Morison who, in 1841, was deposed by the United Associate Synod before his ministerial career was properly underway.

Morison is of special interest - not simply because of the denomination which grew around him - but because he shows how easily the evangelical theology could fall off the tightrope it had stretched between Atonement as understood in the Confession, and the desire to preach the universal nature of God's offer of salvation.

In 1840 religious revivals occurred in a number of parts of Scotland, notably at Kilsyth. James Morison, not yet ordained, was a zealous evangelical and extremely active in the revivals, both speaking and writing evangelical pamphlets. Both his preaching and writing showed a clear divergence from the traditional, and hence orthodox, theology his church subscribed to. He was eventually deposed for disingenuousness - breaking an earlier promise to suppress the sale of one of his most popular pamphlets; and heresy - he was regarded as a universalist.[21.]

The problem with Morison was, in the first instance, that at the time of his expulsion from the United Associate Synod, his views were not fully worked out or systematically expressed. They were the utterances and writings of an evangelist working in a situation of such urgency that his first and only concern

was the saving of souls, not the fine points of theology and careful theological expressions. This led to things being expressed in a way which would not have happended if there had been more time for thought.

However, even when such time was available and he was able to reflect on his position, Morison still finished up at odds with the Confession of Faith and the Calvinism it expressed. He was not a universalist, but tended to Arminianism. Above all, he was some one who could not work within the tension which existed between the evangelicalism of the Marrow and the rigid Calvinism of the Confession. This problem revealed itself in a practical, evangelical situation. Morison then followed the evangelical doctrines and took them to what he saw as their logical conclusion, and that logical conclusion was incompatible with such teaching as predestination and election. It was in such practical evangelical situations that the tension in evangelical theology continued to show itself and be resolved, often without the evangelists being over conscious of the resolution.

The whole problem of evangelism and Calvinism as understood in the Confession came into sharp focus again when Scotland was swept by a wave of religious revival during the years 1859-60. All three of the main presbyterian denominations assiduously monitored the events and progress of the revival, and joyfully reported on the numbers who were being converted. Yet conversion - the generally accepted sense of the word, and it was widely used in that sense at the time - just could not happen if what the Confession said was true. God had decided who was to be saved. In his own good time he would make them aware that they were of the elect. However, in the words of the Confession, this was effectual calling which is different from conversion. Nevertheless, the Church of Scotland, the Free Church, and the United Presbyterians offic-

ially thanked God for this movement[23.] in which people were told - especially by lay evangelists - that salvation was freely available to all, and encouraged them to seek it.[24.]

However, the presbyterian churchmen saw nothing anomolous in the situation. It is clear from the debates in the Free Church General Assembly concerning the revival, that they regarded themselves as being in the midst of a Calvinistic revival. For example the Rev. William Nixon of Montrose said in 1860, "Calvinist teaching was every where being honoured in this revival in America,[25.] and in the United Kingdom, as well as among ourselves."[26.] Further, "The converts, in proportion to the satisfactory evidences of their change, are uniformly and remarkably Calvinistic."[27.] They were not unaware that some of the doctrines which were abroad were not Calvinist, but they did deny that they were a product of the revival. They were held to be due to people with unsound views taking advantage of the revival to spread their ideas among new converts.[28.] Thus it was claimed that Morisonianism was widespread, semi-Pelagian views were being progated, and questions being raised about election and the extent of the atonement.[29.] The Plymouth Brethren were another problem,[30.] and concern was expressed that the tracts and hymns being used "...contained sometimes much that was unsound and misleading to the souls of men."[31.]

Yet although they might regard the 'heretics' alluded to above as opportunists jumping on the revival bandwagon, Free Churchmen such as Nixon must have been aware that most of the leading and respected evangelists with whom they co-operated and gladly used, believed in immediate salvation and the availability of that salvation to any one who believed in Jesus. They openly preached along these lines. To this seeming anomoly Nixon had an amazing answer: "In so far as any not Calvinistic on certain points are employed it is that part of their teaching on which

they agree with us that is blessed, such as the doctrine anent the utter depravity of our nature and the work of the Holy Spirit."[32.] In other words; it did not matter too much if the occasional piece of erroneous theology was preached, God would only bless the bits which were sound Calvinism!

Nixon's claim may sound absurd, but there were certain features in the revival which contemporaries could have used to justify the view that it was Calvinist. For example, one of the reasons for contemporaries believing that this religious movement was a genuine revival and not just a wave of religious emotion, was that they believed it had not been brought about or furthered by any special human efforts other than increased prayer.[33.] If a rigid Calvinist accepted that these converted during the revival had undergone this spiritual experience without the action of some special human agency, then he could see this conversion as God's "appointed and accepted time", as the Confession put it, to "effectually call" these converts who were, in fact, some of the elect.[34.]

A further comfort, to those who wanted to see the revival as soundly Calvinistic, was the common, almost stereotyped, spiritual experience of all the converts. The pattern of events in their conversion was a period of deep conviction of sin, followed by 'finding peace.'[35.] A spiritual change effected in this way could dispel the fears and suspicions about the non-Calvinist type of instant conversion that many evangelists offered. In the 1861 Assembly, more than one speaker denounced the type of enquiry room counselling which encouraged people to seek instant salvation as being ultimately harmful.[36.] One speaker argued that when enquirers came forward under conviction of sin and looking for salvation and comfort, as little as possible should be said to them, letting "...the Lord carry on his own work in their souls."[37.] The answer should be "...not to lessen conviction, but to deepen, and to lead great sinners

to the great Saviour."[38]

Finally having been brought to faith in Christ by means of a crushing sense of sinfulness, it is not surprising that the spiritual development of the converts should be like those in Ferryden, who came to see as "vivid realities" such "...great /Calvinist/ truths...as their utter depravity and helplessness by nature: the presence and power of a personal devil; the preciousness and nearness of a living personal Saviour; the absolute and glorious sovereignty of God in the dispensation of His grace..."[39]

Thus on the basis of the theological developments of the converts, and those features of the revival which were either not inimical to Calvinism or clearly in accord with it, Calvinists welcomed the revival as quite in accord with their theology. Yet there must have been many who realised the inherent and ultimately irreconcilable tension between those who saw revival as a period when the elect were being 'effectually called' in larger numbers than usual, and those who saw it as a period when the Holy Spirit had made people peculiarly receptive to the message of God's offer of Salvation to all who have faith in Christ.

The point when this tension reached a peak and Hyper-Calvinists and evangelicals found themselves openly opposed, came with the great revival associated with Moody and Sankey during 1873-4. The theological emphasis was clearly different. The Rev. Dr. George Reith characterised the difference in this way: "We were in 1859 all Simon Peters falling at Jesus knees and crying 'Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!' In 1874 we were all Lydias, 'the Lord opening our hearts' with the Golden Key of His great love to sinners."[40] This theological move was brought out in the context of a revival which was also strikingly different in its style and the style of the main evangelists.

It is hard to imagine anything more different to an old style Scottish Hyper-Calvinist than D.L. Moody in action. Here is a picture of Moody at work in Chicago in his early days: "Standing outside the Chicago YMCA building erected through his soliciting ability, Moody would recruit congregations for the noon day prayer meetings in the 1860's by accosting passers-by with the question, 'Are you for Jesus?' Whether they answered yes or no, Moody insisted that their attendance at the meeting was imperative and pushed them into the building. When a crowd was obtained he often went in and led the meeting himself. After prayers, Bible reading and a hymn, he would single out newcomers by calling from the platform, 'You, brother, over there by the first window, don't you love the Lord?' 'That red-haired man on the back seat, are you a Christian?' Weak or negative answers brought him storming down the aisle with the question, 'Do you want to be saved now?' And the startled man was down on his knees beside Moody and other YMCA members before he had time to object." It is not surprising that among people in Chicago who were not in sympathy with Christianity or Moody's brand of Christianity, he became known as 'Crazy' Moody.[42.]

While the above description comes from a modern writer who is not in sympathy with Moody's evangelical position, it is another modern writer, totally in sympathy with Moody, who gives the information that he was known as 'Crazy' Moody. Consequently we need not assume that the picture is greatly exaggerated. Therefore, even allowing for the maturing effect of doing relief work during the American Civil War and the trauma of the Chicago fire in the intervening period; Dwight L. Moody was still something of a shock to staid Scots whether they were inclined to Hyper-Calvinism or not. Humorous stories to illustrate sermons, which were short by local standards, and the free use of hymns - as opposed to the metrical psalms more common in the presbyterian churches - were strange things for

Scottish church folk. So, too, was the inclusion of a singer as a regular part of the services, who not only sang hymns but - horror of horrors - accompanied himself on a harmonium. To begin with the harmonium was even an embarrassment to some of his supporters. The inquiry room, too, was viewed with suspicion as a place for pressing people into making decisions.

If the evangelists style was not in keeping with Scottish ways, neither was his theology. Indeed, he was not greatly concerned with theology which he equated with creeds and dogma. When confronted by a woman in an inquiry room who said, "I want you to know that I do not believe in your theology;" Moody replied, "My theology! I didn't know I had any. I wish you would tell me what my theology is."[43.] In fact, he never changed from the theological position he displayed in the description given above of his early days in Chicago: salvation was essential for all and in his love God offers it to all, they only have to accept it by faith in Christ. Pressed, in 1876, to say what doctrines he considered best for revival preaching he said, "Why, the good old doctrines of our fathers: Man is fallen; Christ comes to seek, redeem, and save him." He described these doctrines as "the three R's" i.e., "Ruined by sin, Redemption by Christ, and Regeneration by the Holy Ghost." He was quite unconcerned that his theology - such as it was - could not be fitted into any of the recognised theological systems. He said, "I am an Arminian up to the Cross; after the Cross, a Calvinist."

The preaching of the offer of salvation to all was enforced by the hymns which were sung during the revival and afterwards. With the publication of the famous Sacred Songs and Solos, which Sankey edited, people continued singing the theology of the revival long after the preacher had returned to America. The hymns included verses such as these :-

That gate ajar stands free for all
Who seek through it salvation:
The rich the poor, the great the small,

Of every tribe and nation.

Or:-

Free from the law, oh, happy condition!

Jesus hath bled, and there is remission!

Cursed by the law, and bruised by the fall;

Grace hath redeemed us, once for all.

The ability of hymns to transmit theology like that was one of the reasons strict Calvinists opposed their use in worship.

Yet despite the strangeness of their style and theology, they were generally and enthusiastically welcomed. One layman in a letter to the Scotsman compared them to the general run of Scottish ministers and judged both the ministers and their theology to be inferior:

"Scotch preaching," he wrote, "has for fifty years been little else but a reiteration of doctrines which to me at least are unintelligible...the whole ingenuity of our preachers has been to convince us that we are the subjects of God's wrath and that it is only by believing in a complex theological puzzle...that we can gain God's favour and forgiveness.

"At last two strangers have come amongst us and sing and recite the declaration of God's goodness and forgiveness.

"They believe in God's love as the foundation of all Christian strength and health and happiness. Now the educated clergy should give up that complex system they have learned in the theological hall and which has made Christianity a lifeless puzzle."[45].

Ministers of the churches were just as enthusiastic in their welcome. Alexander Moody Stuart "...rejoiced in the wonderful blessing attending his /D.L. Moody's/ ministry..."[46]. Andrew Bonar, with whom Moody stayed during the time he was in Glasgow, described Moody and Sankey as "...sent by the Lord, as when 'He sent them two and two to every place wither (sic) He Himself would come.'"[48]. But it was not only those who were

obviously in the evangelical wing of the church who supported the Moody-Sankey movement. Some broad churchmen were also involved, such as Marshall Lang of the Church of Scotland.[49] Involved, too, were some who became better known for their contribution to liberal theology. Prominent among this group was George Adam Smith. Smith was still a student at the time of Moody's campaign, but the evangelist made such an impression on him that he developed a life long admiration for him, and later a friendship with him; despite the fact that Smith's Old Testament researches led him to propound theories which contradicted Moody's fundamentalist approach to the Bible.[50]

Almost unique among the supporters of Moody was Henry Drummond who worked with Mooody during the Scottish and English phases of the British tour of 1873-5. This led to a friendship and a frequently renewed working partnership which was unique, and to some people, curious. The initial curiosity was how two men from such contrasting social, cultural and educational backgrounds could become so close. Latterly the curiosity was how the friendship and loyalty remained so strong in the light of Drummond's pursuit of scientific and theological ideas which were so much at variance with Moody's fundamentalism.

While Drummond was undoubtedly a unique character in both the academic and evangelistic fields of the nineteenth century, it will be of value to look, now, at his theological interactions with Moody. Since the interests of Drummond, himself, covered such a wide spectrum, it may help us to understand something of the attraction of Moody for so many different people and his influence on them.

With regard to their theological interactions, it would appear to be the case, that despite their closeness in evangelistic work and friendship, there does not seem to have been a great exchange of theological ideas. Any influencing which was done seems to have been one way and limited: Moody to Drummond.

Moody remained fundamentalist in his approach to the Bible until the end of his days. Drummond, as we have seen, was more open to the questions which science raised with regard to the Bible and in pursuing these he taught and wrote in a way which Moody regarded as unscriptural; but there was nothing in Moody's theology which either inhibited or encouraged Drummond in the lines of enquiry which he followed. At the same time, however, the more liberal theological outlook which Drummond developed, did not interfere with his interest in evangelism. He remained an active evangelist for most of his life and Moody was willing to use his services in evangelism despite his liberalism.

If this situation seems anomalous, it is probably because it is being viewed from the situation which prevails in the last quarter of the twentieth century, rather than that of the last quarter of the nineteenth. Today there is a tendency to polarize things and assume that there is a great gulf between conservative evangelicals and liberal Christians, and that they have no common ground. Now while it is true that in Moody's day there were evangelicals who could hardly bring themselves to be civil to a liberal, Moody was a remarkable exception to this. Both Drummond and GeorgeAdam Smith were tremendously impressed with Moody's willingness to tolerate theological views which differed from his own. J.C. Pollock has written, "...if a man's fundamental loyalty was to Christ and the Gospel Moody heard him gladly."[51] Both Drummond and Smith wrote about Moody in a way which supports this claim: the former in a biographical sketch - Dwight L. Moody: Impressions and Facts - and the latter in a memorial tribute included in later editions of this book after Moody's death.

Moody's tolerance was not becuase he felt that the questions raised by liberal scholarship were of no consequence. He felt that some of the results endangered his own faith. For

example, he told Smith that his belief in the resurrection of Christ involved a belief in the literal interpreation of the story of Jonah.[52] But the main grounds which he gave Smith for opposing the new criticism was that it served no practical purpose, while creating divisions and troubles which prevented the Church from getting on with its real business. He asked Smith, "Why talk of two Isaiahs when most people don't know of one?"[53] Again speaking to Smith he said, "What's the use of criticism? It's creating divisions in the church. It's restraining revivals. It's paralysing preaching."[54]

It was this practical work of the church which provided the common ground between Moody and men like Smith. Although a man may have taken a liberal line in Biblical criticism, if he still believed that the fundamental message of the Bible was the gospel of salvation through faith in Christ, and that this message had to be communicated to all men; then Moody was prepared to work with that man. Indeed, he proposed the impractical plan of calling a ten year truce during which no fresh views would be brought out, and liberal and evangelical Christians could give their time to getting on with "the practical work of the Kingdom."[55] As Drummond shared Moody's concern for communicating the gospel, they were on common ground which enabled them to work together even when certain aspects of Drummond's theology became radically different to Moody's.

Nevertheless, even if Moody's theology did not contribute to Drummond's later theological development, his involvement with Moody during the campaign in the early '70s did have some permanent effect on his theology. At the time when Moody and Sankey came to Scotland, Drummond was a very unsettled young man. He was studying divinity at New College but he did not really know what he wanted to do, although he was reasonably sure that he did not want to be a minister. He had some notion that he would like to do some form of mission work. In any case

he had already withdrawn from college for a year to do mission work and pursue further studies in natural science, before Moody and Sankey arrived in Scotland.[56] The time out of college would give time, also, to resolve his difficulties. Thus Drummond did not take a year off college for the purpose of assisting Moody, as is often claimed. He had already designated that period as a sabbatical year which had already begun before he became involved with the campaign.

Drummond's unsettled state at this time was not all due to uncertainties about his future career. Theology contributed to it, too. He came from a conservative, evangelical background. John Watson said, "He began with believing in verbal inspiration, with holding the complete system of orthodox doctrine, with its use of conventional phrases about religion."[57] But during the two sessions he had spent at New college he had been forced to examine his position. Old Testament was taught, as we have seen, by A.B. Davidson "...who began the process of weaning him from the more or less mechanical views of inspiration..."[58] Further, his interest in the question of evolution and the Bible is seen in a paper on Darwin which he delivered to a student society;[59] and in his choice of essay subjects: "The Six Days of Creation," and "The Doctrine of Creation." Also, he led a student debate on the subject, "Was the Deluge Partial."[60] In addition he spent the summer studying in Tubingen.[61]

While George Adam Smith is no doubt correct in saying that at the time of his involvement in the 1873 campaign, "His theology was practically that of the leaders of the movement..."[62] the influences of the previous two years study had already begun to separate him from that position, and his theology was really in a state of flux at the time. Indeed, it was not because he identified with Moody theologically that Drummond became involved in the movement. It was because he was interested

in Moody's methods, especially the enquiry room, that he became drawn into the movement.

In November, 1873, before Moody and Sankey came; Drummond had presented a paper to the Theological Society entitled "Spiritual Diagnosis". In this he expounded the idea that the most effective way to win people to Christianity was through personal encounter on a one to one basis, and he lamented the fact that ministerial training gave no instruction on how to recongise and deal with the various conditions of men's souls.[63] In dealing with the enquirers who came forward at Moody's meetings Drummond had the opportunity to practise the spiritual science which he discussed in his paper. It was quite some time before Drummond moved from working among enquirers to actually speaking at meetings. Even then it was force of circumstances and not personal choice which brought him to do it.

Once involved in the work of speaking and deputations, however, Drummond was committed to a hectic routine of almost daily speaking engagements, some times more than one engagement each day. In the course of his preaching during the campaign, George Adam Smith says that he "...ranged over all the great doctrines and facts of Christianity: Sin and Salvation, Penitence, The Atonement, Regeneration, Conversion, Sanctification, The Power and the Spirit, Christ's Teaching about Himself and about a Future Life - on all those ...he preached again and again and with great detail..."[64]

In view of the context in which Drummond was preaching, plus the limited amount of time which his busy schedule allowed for sermon preparation, it is highly unlikely that Drummond tried to think these subjects through in the light of the new Higher Criticism. His preaching was very much in line with his own evangelical background, and that of the campaign leaders. Yet George Adam Smith contends that it was during this period of intense

preaching and preparation that the drafts of most of Drummond's discourses in later years were prepared.[65] If this is the case (and in view of Smith's personal acquaintence with Drummond he was in a position to know if it is) then the theology which Drummond expounded in preaching and in devotional writings was 'fossilized' at this time and did not develop much more.

On the other hand, the previous loosening of his attachment to the old orthodox views of the Bible meant that when he returned to his studies and when he embarked on his academic career, he was able to accept the results of higher criticism and "...the principle of evolution to a somewhat startling length."[66]

However, the one thing which Higher Criticism did not do to Drummond, or George Adam Smith, or even William Robertson Smith, was separate them from their evangelical belief in the Bible message of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ and that in love God offers that salvation to everyone, and that it is essential to everyone. So although it is possible to identify men who were clearly members of the evangelical party in Scottish church life - Moody Stuart, Bonar, for example - the appeal of the message preached by Moody went beyond them, because this basic evangelical message was accepted by a much wider spectrum of Christians who were equally concerned that this message should be preached in order that people might accept it.

The impression that there was no common ground between the evangelicals and others is given through the differences of opinion which arose over theological matters not concerned with this central evangelical belief. Few evangelicals had the courage of breadth of sympathy of Moody who could subordinate questions of Higher Criticism and other contentious matters, and so maintain friendships and working relationships with people whose viewshe did not share on these matters. Thus

the critical views of Robertson Smith, and George Adam Smith alienated them from the conservative evangelicals although both men could and did subscribe to the gospel of salvation which the evangelicals preached. Indeed, both regarded themselves as evangelicals, and Robertson Smith was so orthodox in his preaching that many who went to hear him when he was the centre of controversy were disappointed to hear, not shocking heresies, but thoroughly orthodox, even old fashioned, evangelicalism.[67] In fact, his preaching was so orthodox that on one occasion when Bonar heard him, he could not believe Smith was being sincere.[68]

Not even Drummond with a foot in both camps made people realise the common evangelical ground on which both conservative evangelicals and those with more liberal theological tendencies stood. The points on which they disagreed led evangelicals to see the others as a threat to orthodoxy and themselves as the defenders of it. They failed to see the inconsistency of their own position in casting themselves as defenders of an orthodoxy they had departed from. John Macpherson did not see any contradiction in participating in the Moody revival claiming, "We hold the glorious but awful truth of predestination and election through grace; but we also remember the commandment of the Master, Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature."[69]

There were those, however, who saw quite clearly the inconsistency; and who saw in the evangelical theology a divergence from the Westminster Confession of Faith which was every bit as serious as the errors of Higher Criticism. It is to this group we turn our attention in the next chapter.

NOTES

1. Alexander Moody Stuart, p.200.
2. Ibid., pp.201f.
3. Bonar : Diary, p.326. (Monday, 17 June, 1878)
4. Rainy, p.351
5. Bonar : Diary, p.331 (Tuesday 27 May, 1879)
6. Ibid., pp.334f. (Tuesday 25 May, 1880)
7. Ibid., p.338. (Friday 27 May, 1881)
8. Alexander Moody Stuart, pp.193ff; Bonar : Diary, pp.288f.
9. C.F. Chalmers, p.6 above.
10. Alexander Moody Stuart, p.193.
11. Ibid., pp.194f.
12. Bonar : Diary, p.343.
13. Cambuslang Revival, p.19
14. Confession, III : vii
15. Cambuslang Revival, pp.18f.
16. Ibid., p.18.
17. Ibid., p.19.
18. Ibid., p.23.
19. The United Presbyterian Church, p.66.
20. Drummond & Bulloch, p.301.
21. The United Presbyterian Church, p.68.
22. Confession, X : i-iv.
23. F.C. Proc., 1860, p.47; Acts of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, 1860, p.62; Proceedings of the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church, 1860, p.320.
24. E.g. Reginald Radcliffe said to people, "Everything has been done for your salvation, Jesus has finished it all long ago for you, and you have only to believe." See Recollections of Reginald Radcliffe, by his Wife, pp.62f.
25. The revival affecting Scotland during 1859-60 was part of a movement which began in America and spread to many

other countries. When Dr. McLean, ex-President of Lafayette College, Pennsylvania, addressed the Free Church General Assembly in 1858 on the revival in America. he stressed the Calvinist nature of it by claiming that one result was an unprecedented sale of the Shorter Catechism, even among non-presbyterians. (F.C. Proc., 1858; p.260).

26. F.C. Proc., 1860; p.48.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid., 1861; p.79.

29. Ibid.

30. Ibid., 1860; p.51.

31. Ibid., 1861; pp.93f.

32. Ibid., 1860; p.48.

33. Ibid., 1861; p.90.

34. Confession, X : i.

35. William Nixon published a pamphlet entitled An Account of the Late Work of God at Ferryden (London, 1860) which is an account of the revival in Ferryden. It is valuable for the individual 'case studies' which it gives of converts. The pattern of events in their conversion, which Nixon gives in detail, is the same as accounts of conversions by other contemporary writers.

36. F.C. Proc., 1861; pp.89-90, p.94.

37. Ibid., p.89.

38. Ibid., p.90.

39. Ibid., 1860; p.51

40. Reminiscences of the Revival of Fifty-nine and the Sixties. (Aberdeen, 1910), p.35.

41. Modern Revivalism, p.177.

42. Moody without Sankey, p.45.

43. This and other quotations in this paragraph taken from Modern Revivalism, pp.246f.

44. McLaughlin does not cite the source of this quotation or when it was said. However, it would certainly not have been said during the Scottish campaign, for such an open profession of Arminianism would have lost him all the support he had.

45. Quoted Modern Revivalism, pp.209f.

46. Alexander Moody Stuart, p.140.

47. Moody without Sankey, p.113.

48. Bonar : Diary, p.302.

49. Henry Drummond, p.56.

50. See George Adam Smith's memorial tribute to Moody in Henry Drummond's Dwight L. Moody, pp.3ff.

51. Moody without Sankey, p.258.

52. H. Drummond - Dwight L. Moody, p.27.

53. Moody without Sankey, p.258.

54. Drummond, Op. Cit., p.25.

55. Ibid., p.30.

56. Henry Drummond, p.50.

57. C. Lennox - Henry Drummond, p.154.

58. See above p.36, p.52 fn.77.

59. Henry Drummond, p.45.

60. J.Y. Simpson - Henry Drummond, p.38.

61. Henry Drummond, pp.47f.

62. Ibid., p.94.

63. J.Y. Simpson - Henry Drummond, pp.39f.

64. Henry Drummond, p.94.

65. Ibid.

66. John Watson, quoted C. Lennox - Henry Drummond, p.154.

67. Robertson Smith, p.124.

66. Ibid., p.125.

67. Revivals and Revival Work, p.305.

CHAPTER IV

Hyper-Calvinism:

The 'Faithful' Remnant.

If the evangelicals thought themselves to be orthodox and defenders of orthodoxy, there was a group within the Free Church who were in no doubt that they were not. This dwindling Hyper-Calvinist remnant was strongest in the Highlands - hence the disparaging title sometimes given to them: the 'Highland Host.' Although their strength was in the Highlands, their leader was generally regarded as James Begg who lived all his life in central Scotland and was minister of Newington Free Church in Edinburgh.[1] With the Highland Host's support Begg is widely credited, or blamed, with being the main influence in wrecking the plans for union between the Free Church and the United Presbyterians, in 1873: and playing a major part in the ultimate condemnation of Robertson Smith. In both cases - and in many other things which Begg opposed, the issues were seen as a direct threat to the church principles and theology enshrined in the Westminster Confession of Faith.

With regard to the evangelicalism which was coming to the fore in the Moody-Sankey revival, the spokesman for the Hyper-Calvinist remnant was John Kennedy of Dingwall who, along with Begg was an outstanding influence in the leadership of the 'Highland Host'. Kennedy was regarded as the greatest Gaelic preacher of his day. He was a scholar and writer, too. His biography of John Macdonald of Ferintosh - <u>The "Apostle of the North"</u> - is still regarded as a classic by some.[2]

With regard to Moody and Sankey, however, Kennedy's eloquence and learning were used in a bitter criticism of evangelistic theology and methods. His dislike of Moody and his methods was so intense that he circulated - without seeking

verification - a malicious letter he received from Chicago, which claimed that Moody only went into full time Christian work after being dismissed from his secular employment for dishonesty.[3] His more reasoned - but still bitter, and still grossly unfair at many points - attack on the movement was a pamphlet entitled "Hyper-Evangelism: Another 'Gospel' Though a Mighty Power". It will be of value to look at this pamphlet in some detail; because despite the polemical tone and unfairness at many points, it is the clearest illustration we have of the theological gulf which existed between two groups of people who both thought themselves quite orthodox: people who thought like Begg and Kennedy, and the evangelicals.

Kennedy subtitled his pamphlet "A Review of the Recent Religious Movement in Scotland". Although the movement was that associated with Moody and Sankey, at no point in the work does he refer to either by name. This causes problems in trying to evaluate their work from the point of view of one who was opposed to them, rather than from the abundanec of laudatory appraisals which contemporaries compiled. While on occasion Kennedy refers quite clearly to Moody in such terms as "the great American evangelist"[4] or "one of the leader's addresses"[5] more often than not, he uses a general "their" or "some men"[6] "Their" seems to denote the movement as a whole, "some men" is definitely a reference to more than Moody and Sankey. The question this raises is, although Kennedy declared "I heard the leading teacher repeatedly, and I perused with care published specimens of his addresses"[7] to what extent was Kennedy's appraisal based on what Moody said or did or can reasonably be held responsible for; and to what extent was he judging the movement from the views and behaviour of extremist elements, which Moody would have wanted to repudiate?

However, even if there is the possibility that Kennedy's appraisal of the Moody - Sankey revival was coloured by observation of some of the extremists, it is not probable that

anything could have brought him to a favourable opinion of the movement which others were acclaiming so enthusiastically. In too many ways - if not every way - the movement was contrary to Calvinist orthodoxy as Kennedy understood it.

Kennedy began by disputing the right of anyone to describe a religious movement as a work of God's grace, while that movement was still taking place. Those who were describing the Moody - Sankey movement in these terms "must have laid claim to inspiration", he said.[8.] Ultimately, it was only God knew the true nature of such movements.[9.] Man's judgement on such movements can not be so certain, and it must not be made either at the time of the movement or even soon after it. They can only be judged by their fruits, and the change produced in a person's life has to be sustained for some time before men can say with certainty that it is permanent and therefore the work of God.[10.] In this Kennedy is echoing the orthodox Calvinist view which was held during the time of the 1859-60 revival: the view which would only recognise a religious movement as genuine if the change in the converts stood the test of time - as it did in the majority of 1859-60 converts.[11.]

However, although Kennedy held that a religious movement could not be declared to be a work of God's grace at the time; he claimed that it was possible in some cases, to spot a movement which was not a work of grace, right from the outset. These were cases where the means used to further the work were not scriptural[12.] and he held that this was the case with Moody and Sankey.

He divided the reasons he had for believing the movement to be other than a work of grace, into two categories. The first of these was doctrine. He described the doctrine of the revival as "another gospel", and named it Hyper-Evangelism. He gave it this name because he claimed that those preaching it made loud professions of evangelism, while neglecting some

aspects of evangelical doctrine which were essential. At the same time as they were neglecting some evangelical truth they were extreme in their emphasis on others.[13.]

This point has some validity. In revival work there is the tendency to emphasise some Christian truths, to the exclusion of others. Where Kennedy goes wrong is in imputing unworthy motives to Moody for this imbalance. In his detailed discussion of Hyper-Evangelism he suggests that the motives behind the form of doctrine preached include an attempt to make salvation easier to come by than it really is, thereby deceiving people; and also the vain desire to receive the glory for people's conversion, a glory which rightly belongs to God.

The reason for this imbalance in revivalist doctrine, according to Kennedy, comes from the nature of the preaching involved. It is aimed at getting people to accept salvation, preferably there and then. This being so, a revivalist sermon was not a comprehensive exposition of all Christian doctrine. Moreover, no responsible evangelist would have suggested that it was. Moody would not have claimed that it was. He and others expected converts to become acquainted with the other doctrines of the Christian faith as they progressed and matured as Christians. The danger was that converts might make no effort to grow in the faith; either because evangelists did not stress the need for it, or because they came under the influence of others who were not seeking to mature in the Christian faith.

On one point Kennedy did come close to accuracy here; on the question of how easy it is to be saved. He is wrong to suggest an unworthy motive for Moody preaching it was easy to be saved, but it is true that Moody believed it was easy. All it required, in Moody's view, was faith in Christ, and that is what he preached.

If Kennedy's pamphlet had been a warning against the

dangers of imbalanced doctrine in revival work, then it would have been timely; but from the detailed criticism which he makes of various points it is clear that he considers it erroneous.

His first point of criticism is: "No pains are taken to present the character and claims of God as Lawgiver and Judge and no indication given of a desire to bring souls in self condemnation, to accept the punishment of their iniquity"[14]. Here Kennedy made the point that it was not enough to tell people in a general way that they were sinners. They had to be made to see what it means to be a sinner. God's law did this, the Holy Spirit using it to convince people of their sins, "... so that they shall know that their hearts are desparately wicked." Kennedy held that they had to be aware of the iniquity of sin as well as their guilt as sinners; and they had to know what they deserved as sinners, "... that their persons are condemned to die."[15] Unless they knew of these things, he argued, they could have no conception of the gospel of grace.

Kennedy claimed that the failure to emphasise these things was an attempt to make salvation seem easier and more acceptable to men. However, he argued that there was more to salvation than what was most convenient for men. The salvation of men glorifies God, and God's glory matters more than man's convenience. It was Kennedy's contention that God was glorified when, in the light of man's sin, it was seen how utterly undeserving man was of salvation. What he saw as the easier and humanly more appealing approach to revivalism, disguised this fact and so did not glorify God as it should. Therefore, he claimed that the aim of evangelical preaching should be to bring sinners to plead guilty before God, recognising that they have no excuse for their guilt, and their only hope is in the soverign mercy of God.

While preaching may aim at this, the thing which made a sinner willing to submit to the position of one inexcusably

guilty before God and at His sovereign mercy, was the renewal of his soul by God. However, Kennedy claimed that 'Hyper-Evangelism' skimmed over this point. His idea was that they felt that to insist on the claims of God as Lawgiver and Judge, until men felt themselves so guilty as to be totally at His mercy, was placing an obstruction between them and the grace of the gospel. So, he claimed, they never really called for repentance, only some vague notion that a person's soul was in danger if they did not accept salvation. He alleged that Moody once declared, "Why raise up your sins again, to think of and confess them for were they not disposed of nearly two thousand years ago? Just believe this and go home, and sing and dance."

It is unlikely that Moody was discounting the need for repentance here. The point of the statement is that the work of atonement has already been done, and what the sinner had to do now was appropriate that work. It is a statement which is reminiscent of Reginald Radcliffe during the 1859-60 revival: "Everything has been done for your salvation; Jesus has finished it all long ago, and you have only to believe."[16.] Such statements were as fiercely criticised in 1859 as Moody's was, here, in 1874. In fact, neither man took sin lightly or thought that repentance was unnecessary, but in placing their main emphasis on the availability of salvation and urging people to accept it, they seemed to omit a preliminary stage which Kennedy considered indispensable: conviction of sin.

It was because he saw this stage as indispensable that Kennedy was critical of the apparent emphasis on sudden and immediate conversion in the movement. He claimed that 'Hyper-Evangelism' made sudden conversion the rule, rather than just one possibility. He dismissed the argument that the New Testament provided justification for sudden conversion by arguing that the cases of sudden conversion cited there were not intended to be an invariable rule for all time. He claimed that there

was a detailed progress in conversion and where this took place over a period then the result was more sure. Indeed, sudden conversions should be viewed with suspicion because they were likely to prove superficial and not last.

Also in this section, Kennedy criticised a tendency to separate feeling from faith, although he did admit there was the danger of people substituting feeling for faith. Nevertheless, he held that faith was a sort of feeling and they should not be separated.

What may have inspired this criticism was the determined efforts made by Moody and his associates to avoid emotionalism in the campaign. They were afraid of the sort of emotional out-bursts and excitement which had marred previous revivals, and made them the object of adverse criticism.

At the same time Kennedy made a valid point about the danger of confusing faith with assent to certain doctrines. There is a difference between asking a person to express belief in certain statements about Christ, and actually having faith, trust in him. Kennedy held that making belief in certain doctrines the ground of salvation, rather than faith, was to bring things down to a doctrine working on the same principle as salvation by works.

How widespread this practice really was is not clear. It was certainly a danger, for it is an unfortunate fact today, that many evangelicals judge a person's Christianity by the doctrines he believes about Christ, rather than his faith in Christ. At the same time, it is a strange point for Kennedy to make, for he - as much as any 'Hyper Evangelical' - placed great store by the doctrines a person assented to.

Kennedy's second criticism of 'Hyper-Evangelism' is: "It ignores the sovereignty and power of God in the dispensation of Grace."

In this section Kennedy does not propound a doctrine

of predestination, but it seems clear that this is what inspired his criticism. He argues that Hyper-Evangelism overlooks the fact that God's sovereign will controls everything, including conversion. The motives which he imputes to them for this omission are: that men will be put off from seeking salvation if they think that salvation is entirely at the disposal of God's sovereign will;[17.] also the preachers do not like the idea that they do not control conversion, that it depends entirely on a will other than their own.[18.] Hence, although they frequently refer to the Holy Spirit and acknowledge the necessity of His work, in practice they do not make much allowance for Him to do anything.

If the example which Kennedy quoted had been typical of other utterances by Moody, then he would have laid himself open to that accusation. As it is there is no evidence that the statement is even authentic. However, Kennedy claimed that Moody told a group of young ladies, "Go to the streets and lay your hand on the shoulder of every drunkard you meet and tell him that God loves him, and Christ died for him; and if you do so, I see no reason why there should be an unconverted drunkard in Edinburgh for [in?] fourty-eight hours."[19.] Kennedy could have supplied a reason, and given a chance to qualify his statement Moody would have admitted too, that there was a reason why it might not happen. He would probably have admitted that there are some people who will not respond to the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, Kennedy's explanation would have been that not all were predestined for salvation.

In this section Kennedy also criticised people being called to have faith in order to be regenerated. He argued that regeneration was the work of God, and that to imply that regeneration was the consequence of exercising faith was to exclude the operation of the sovereign God who alone regenerated.

In the section, "No care is taken to show, in the light

of the doctrine of the cross, how God is glorified in the salvation of the sinner", Kennedy returns in greater detail to some points which he made earlier in the pamphlet.

He specifies substitutionary atonement as one of those cases in which Hyper-Evangelism expects assent to the doctrine more than faith in the Christ of the doctrine. While holding a belief in Christ's substitutionary death, himself, Kennedy claimed that Hyper-Evangelism made the substitution rather than Christ the object of faith. He saw the result as being, no direct dealing with the person who was substituted, no appreciation of His merit, no trust in the one who glorified Him in His death.

Again it is undoubtedly true that then, as now, some evangelicals placed more emphasis on the mechanics of the atonement than on faith in Christ who made atonement. But the consequences Kennedy claimed were imagined rather than real, especially in Moody's case. Further, Kennedy's criticism of such fierce adherence to this doctrine is strange. One wonders what his reaction would have been to any one suggesting that there was another interpretation of the cross, other than substitutionary atonement.

The fourth and final section of Kennedy's criticism of the doctrine of Hyper-Evangelism is: "No precaution is offered against a tendency to antinomianism in those who profess to have believed." Again this is returning to a point which he has already touched on.

The failure to emphasise the Law of God and thereby show the sinner the position in which he stands in relation to God, fosters antinomianism. It leads to the belief that sin is a great calamity rather than a heinous crime, as a consequence there is little reverence for God or His law, and the sinner thinks it would be unfair to withhold salvation from him. Referring again to the alleged lack of repentence in the

revival he claimed that this led believers to an Antinomian belief in perfection.

He does concede that converts are called on to work, but describes this work as speaking at meetings. This is followed by descriptions of the character of a typical convert, and of testimony meetings, which are so violent in their language that they would have done credit to Jonathan Swift's attacks on eighteenth century evangelicals.

He closes the section with a return to the question of belief in doctrine. He asserts that the Hyper-Evangelical doctrine of assurance involves re-examining one's doctrines to see if they are correct, rather than examining one's life to see if one's conduct is showing the fruits of a redeemed life. Again one wonders how far Kennedy would have been prepared to go in regarding right living in a person as acceptable proof of their salvation, if their doctrines deviated substantially from his.

The second category of reasons that Kennedy had for refusing to accept the revival as a work of grace, was the unscriptural devices used in it. Again we hear an echo of the orthodox Calvinist view heard during the 1859-60 revival, which would only recognise a movement as a genuine religious revival if no human agency had initiated it and no human means were used to further it.[20.] The unscriptural devices which Kennedy picked out for criticism were: "Excessive hymn singing;" "The use of instrumental music;" the inquiry room; and prayer meetings "converted into factories of sensations."

Hymn singing was held to be unscriptural, "even in moderation,"[21.] but he claimed that in the revival it had gone to excess and was being used irrationally. In a clear reference to Sankey he speaks about "... singing the gospel ..." He dismisses this as wrong on the grounds that singing is worship and should be to the Lord.

Sankey is again in his mind when dealing with instrumental music. He claims that this is unscriptural and anticipating having Psalm 150 and other psalms quoted to him, he seeks to forestall it by claiming that the mode of worship was completely changed by the revolution of the New Testament dispensation of grace. Therefore the ritual of the old dispensation provided no precedent. He went on, then, to criticise instrumental music being allowed in the Assembly Hall and cited the Westminster Confession, chapter XXI, "On religious worship ..." He points out correctly that this forbade the use of any mode of worship which was not specifically mentioned in Scripture.

However, the Confession does not draw the fine distinction which Kennedy does between the Old and New Testaments. Chapter XXI which he cited simply says "... the acceptable way of worshipping the true God is instituted by himself, and so limited by his own revealed will, that he may not be worshipped according to the imaginations and devices of men, or suggestions of Satan, under any visible representation, or any other way not prescribed in the holy Scriptures."[22.] Neither does Chapter I of the Confession - "Of the Holy Scriptures" - make such a distinction. It states that the Scriptures are all the books of the Old and New Testaments.[23.]

Kennedy's final comment on the Moody-Sankey revival is: "... if there continue to be progress in the direction,in which the present religious activity is moving, a negative theology will soon supplant our Confession of Faith, the good old ways of worship will be forsaken for unscriptural inventions, and the tinsel of superficial religiousness take the place of genuine godliness."[24.]

The question of whether the theology of the Confession or the evangelistic theology is correct is not relevant to this discussion. What is relevant is the fact that Kennedy was quite clearly right in his contention that evangelistic theology was at odds with the Westminster Confession of Faith,

a fact which his misinterpretation of the Confessions teaching on worship did not change. The attempt to balance predestination, as taught by the Confession, and the free offer of salvation, as evangelists longed to preach, was given up at this time. Despite the fact that many conservative evangelicals claimed loyalty to the Westminster Confession and were as much against easing the terms of subscription as were the Hyper-Calvinists; the fact was that after Moody, the working tools of evangelism, and the message preached, was the love of God for all men in which he offered forgiveness and salvation to all who had faith in Jesus Christ. But that, as Kennedy had argued, was not the emphasis or theology of the Westminster Confession of Faith.

NOTES

1. Annals, p.93.
2. Ibid., pp. 198f
3. Moody without Sankey, p.119.
4. "Hyper-Evangelism", p.13.
5. Ibid., p.16.
6. Ibid., p.18.
7. Ibid., p.8.
8. Ibid., p.3.
9. Ibid., p.4.
10. Ibid.,
11. C.f., F.C.Proc., 1864; Appendix XIV; F.C.Proc., 1865; pp.18f.
12. "Hyper-Evangelism", p.4.
13. Ibid., p.7.
14. Ibid., p.8.
15. Ibid., p.9.
16. See above chapter 2 fn. 23.
17. "Hyper-Evangelism", p.13.
18. Ibid., pp.13f.
19. Ibid., p.14.
20. See above p.63.
21. "Hyper-Evangelism", p.26.
22. Confession, XXI:i
23. Confession, I:ii
24. "Hyper-Evangelism", p.28.

CHAPTER V

In Conclusion -
The Declaratory Act:
What Wrought the Change?

At the beginning of this century, when the dust of creed revision had still not settled, James Moffat wrote: "It is not that the Churches have outlived the Gospel, but that the gospel has outlived the Creeds...the Church, as she is true to the authority of faith, is morally bound...to move in the direction of revision, cautiously and reverently, but not the less with spirit and sympathy."[1.]

Having come to the conclusion that the Gospel, as she now understood it, had outlived the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Free Church drew back as the Scottish church continued to do - from revising the Confession in the sense of drawing up a new one, or even re-writing or deleting parts of the old one. However, some of the statements in the Declaratory Act are virtually a re-writing in that they state some thing quite different from what the Confession says. Because of this opponents of the Act, such as Kenneth Moody Stuart, could feel justification in complaining that the Free Church could not claim to be still adhering to the Confession when it had officially declared, "That this Church does not teach, and does not regard the Confession as teaching, the fore-ordination of men to death irrespective of their own sin."[2.] The fact is that the Confession does teach predestination, yet the Declaratory Act seemed to deny this. It is not surprising that a further act was required two years later[3.] to ease the consciences of those who wanted to go on believing in predestination and all the other things the Westminster Confession taught.

However, as this subject does not include the merits of

the way by which the Free Church sought to meet the scruples people felt with regard to the Confession of Faith, we must try, now, to draw some conclusions about the influences which were at work in the Free Church from the mid-1860s until 1892, and which led to the passing of the Declaratory Act. In the preceding chapters a number of possible influences have been examined, most of them forces which contemporaries felt had played a part in arousing the desire for a less rigid creed or form of creed subscription.

One point which has come out is that many of the causes which were said to arouse a desire to depart from the Confession in some way, were not as influential as contemporaries thought. We have seen how Darwinism, which aroused less controversy in Scotland than England, had little effect on the Free Church's Declaratory Act.[4.] In a very rare interview with a journalist, which he gave in 1890, Henry Drummond spoke of the Science and religion controversy being a dead issue.[5.] Certainly as has been observed, the Free Church Declaratory Act of 1892 makes no mention of any point of belief or doctrine which can be connected with the question of evolution or any other question of science.[6.]

There are some writers who spoke of the new understanding of the Old Testament in terms of religious evolution, as though the theory of evolution applied to religion and God's revelation of himself, as well as to the physical world. In fact when Higher Critics spoke of the evolution of religion, they used the word in the sense of development. The discovery of evolution in physical things did not lead to a search for - far less the discovery of - a comparable form of evolution in religious and spiritual things. Only Henry Drummond attempted to reconcile religion and science by showing continuity between the laws of the natural and spiritual worlds. He was - as was noted - unsuccessful.[7.] The concept of development of religion in the Bible was purely a product of the results of Higher

Criticism, and as we saw, those who were drawn to Higher Criticism did not necessarily come via other new modes of scientific or philosophical thought. It had an appeal of its own.

It has been shown that rationalism was not necessarily a step on the road to Higher Criticism either, and Scottish critical scholars were not rationalists.[8.] Robertson Smith claimed that those who believed Higher Criticism was a product of rationalism were being mislead by the coincidence that at the time the new critical methods were coming to the fore, there was also an upsurge of rationalism but the two were not connected.[9.]

Rationalism in general was not an influence towards creed revision. Although Professor Cheyne cites the influence of the Caird brothers' teaching as <u>one</u> of the contributing factors in the number of students who, in David Cairns' words, "...slipped quietly out of the theological halls...",[10.] the Declaratory Act was passed for the benefit of those in the church, not those outside it, even if they had once been in.[11.]

While such things in science, as evolution, and rationalism, did not have a direct or major influence on the move towards the Declaratory Act; they had an indirect influence in the way in which they shook some of the confidence people had in the absoluteness of theology in the past. The Westminster Confession of Faith sets out an absolute and clear cut statement of the Christian faith, with no suggestion of doubt about any of the assertions made. It demonstrates such absolute certainty about even the most speculative and minute theological details, that it led at least one critic to complain that the Westminster Confession of Faith made pronouncement about things on which the Bible itself is silent.[12.] However, when science and philosophy challenged some of the old assumptions which people held along with their assumptions about God and their

faith, it affected the confidence with which they once asserted the religious assumptions as absolute and certain. They may have rejected the scientific and philosophical ideas but the challenge these things had posed made for a reluctance to be so absolute in their assertions, and a corresponding willingness to look at the things of their faith openly.

At the same time Higher Criticism provided an approach to the scriptures which made people look at the Bible in a new way; and in doing so it did two things. It provided answers and insights into the Christian faith, which strengthened the faith of many people who had had their confidence in the absoluteness of Christianity shaken. It also provided a direct influence towards the movement which led to the Declaratory Act.

It was not, though, the scholarly results of Higher Criticism concerning the dates, composition, and authorship of the Old Testament books which started the move towards creed revision. Initially these results produced no desire among Higher Critics for any move away from the Confession. They did not think that they were at odds with the church's credal standards. Robertson Smith argued that his results could not be contrary to the Confession since it said nothing about such matters as date and authorship. In this he was being rather naive. Nothing is said in the Confession about the questions Higher Criticism dealt with since it would never have occurred to the Westminster Divines that a day would ever come when the authorship or historicity of the books would be questioned. There is, however, a sense, in which it was those who condemned Higher Criticism as contrary to the Confession, who helped put in motion the movement towards the Declaratory Act. While they thought they were within the terms of their subscription to the Confession there was no need for critical scholars to seek the relief which a Declaratory Act offered. It was

only when conservative elements argued that they were breaking the faith of the Confession and began to harass them in the church courts, that they required relief.

In terms of their personal Christian faith, and the faith they preached from the pulpit and in devotional works, all the Scottish critical scholars showed themsleves to be men of profound and evangelical Christian faith. Robertson Smith's biographers say of him, "He began with a profound conviction of the truth of the evangelical system as taught in Scotland in the first half of the nineteenth century. That conviction he never abandoned, though for many years before his death he had ceased to exercise the functions of the ministry."[13.] His basic Christian faith was so obvious and even conservative, that one critic - who admired Smith's scholarship but could not understand his faith - complained that "...he pursued the methods of rationalistic literary analysis while holding the faith of Bibliolatrous superstition..."[14.] Indeed, as has been pointed out,[15.] conservative evangelicals and many of those who accepted Higher Criticism, shared a common evangelical conception of the basics of the Christian faith. In this they had more in common than many of them realised, or, at least, cared to admit.

What they had in common theologically is important, because ultimately it was theological problems, rather than the textual problem of Higher Criticism, which reveal themselves as the causes of concern with people wishing to be less rigidly bound to the Westminster Confession. In reading the debates in the Free Church General Assembly concerning proposals to alter the Confession, no one is found bringing forward the question of the authorship or composition or historicity of the books of the Bible as points which were causing scruples over signing the Confession. It was always the theology of the Confession which they took issue with.

One of the main complaints against the Confession was that

- while it did not deny the love of God - it did not give sufficient prominence to that fact. It was argued that the Confession did not give as much attention, proportionately, to the fact of God's love, as the Bible did.[16.] In answering this opponents of revision claimed that the others were subverting the sovereignty of God with their concept of divine love; apart from which they held that the love of God was dealt with adequately. In seeking to illustrate this latter point one speaker quoted from chapter III of the Confession "Of God's Eternal Decree" - "Those of manking that are predestined unto life God...hath chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory out of his free grace and love."[17.] But in using this quotation he was illustrating the difference which existed between the parties. Those seeking revision did not deny the sovereignty of God and his love; but they held that God offered his love to everyone,[18.] hence they could not accept the concept of election and predestination in which their opponents saw God's love being exercised. This point was argued in connection with the question of election, for example, with regard to children who die in infancy. Principal Brown of the Aberdeen College argued that when the Confession pronounced that elect infants who died in infancy were saved and went to heaven, it thereby implied that there were infants who were not elect and so not saved. He claimed the right to believe there were no non-elect infants.[19.]

In reply to the charge of opponents of revision that the 'new' Gospel of God's general love for mankind was not Calvinism, it was argued that it was much better Calvinism than the Westminster Confession, or the interpreation put on it, for such a concept of the Gospel was in line with the teaching of Calvin himself. To this end, the Rev. Dr. Archibald Henderson[20.] quoted Calvin's commentary on John 3 : 16. "Both points are distinctly stated thus - namely, that faith in

Christ brings life to all, and that Christ brought life because the Heavenly Father loves the human race and wishes that they should not perish." He quoted this against a speaker in a previous debate who had quoted the interpretation of the same verse by a Calvinist writer, Gillespie, who said that by the world, John meant "the elect world."[21].

When we look at the terms of the Declaratory Act we find that it explicitly stated the theological position Henderson, Brown and others contended for. The second paragraph[22]. states that the church's belief in the general love of God "...to sinners of mankind..."[23]. stands "...in the forefront of the revelation of Grace..." The third paragraph states that those who hear the Gospel are both justified and required to accept it in order to be saved. It further states that it is because people do not accept the Gospel that they are not saved, not because they are fore-ordained to death.

The fourth paragraph, in asserting the duty of Christians to make the Gospel known to non Christians, also deals with the question of those who die without having had the opportunity to respond to the Gospel. With regard to infants, it asserts that the Confession is not to be taken as teaching that any are lost. As for adults who die without hearing the Gospel, the Act recognises that God's grace is controlled by his mercy not the Westminster Confession, and so it declares that the Confession can not be held to teach that God may not, in mercy, extend grace to such people.

Now in so far as Higher Criticism made people look at the Bible in a new way and come to the theological conclusions reflected in the paragraphs of the Declaratory Act, then it was a direct influence on the movement towards the Act. But the theological emphasis of the Declaratory Act is very much in line with the evangelical preaching seen during the Moody-Sankey campaign and which had been struggling towards full

expression in evangelical circles and movements for many decades before. Consequently, there were large numbers within the Free Church who Sunday by Sunday had been familiarised with, and had accepted an evangelical doctrine which taught God's love for all and the salvation which in that love, is offered to all through Christ. Indeed, there were many in the Free Church who traced their Christian development from a spiritual experience they had during either Moody's campaign or some other evangelistic movement which preached such a Gospel. In this the Declaratory Act was as much acceptable and needed by them, as it was by those who had held the same view's from the side of Higher Criticism.

It is difficult to assess and weigh the force of influences which are at times too nebulous, and always too complex, to completely separate one from another in the minds of people. No two people were influenced by the same set of forces in exactly the same proportions. We can only identify the forces which, combined with human prejudice and weakness and limited understanding, led Free Church members to pass the Declaratory Act and effectively change the historic credal position which they had occupied for almost fifty years as the Free Church, but as Scots presbyterians for over two centuries.

We can perhaps go a stage further and say some influences were more prominent than others, more common to people's minds, and so played a greater part. Among them, the effect of Higher Criticism was a major influence. While its opponents may have been wrong about Higher Criticism being bad, they were right about it being influential. It brought a new, freer approach to the Bible and an openess to the broader theology and insights which were found there. Such a freer and more open approach to understanding God's word, led to a freer approach to man's final dogmatic pronouncements on the word. Hence the Declaratory Act recognises the right to diversity of opinion within the Church on points of the Confession which are not fundamental

to the Christian faith.

But in this work I have sought to show, too, that evangelical theology was also a powerful influence. Kenneth Moody Stuart lamented that "...the evangelistic efforts so much owned by God..."[24.] had helped towards the passing of the Act. In fact, the influence of evangelism and evangelical theology did more than give a slight, unwitting, helping hand. The powerful influence of evangelism in the movement towards a Declaratory Act was greater than is generally accepted; greater, perhaps, than will ever be realised. It is a fact which is obscured by the claims to unchanging orthodoxy made by evangelicals; claims which John Kennedy violently but effectively demolished.[25.]

However, the unintentional inconsistency of the evangelicals is a good illustration of the weakness and contrariness of human nature, which as the Confession teaches - and all sides agreed - is fallen. Given that fact, fallen man could not go on dogmatically asserting a creed so absolute as the Westminster Confession of Faith, itself compiled by fallen, fallible men. With this point the Westminster Divines might have agreed and even been surprised at the tenacity and arguments with which many sought to retain the Confession entire and bind everyone rigidly to it. Being wiser in their day than many who followed them, they said of ecclesiastical gatherings - of which theirs was one - they "...may err, and many have erred; therefore, they are not be made the rule of faith or practise, but to be used as a help in both."[26.]

NOTES

1. Quoted "The Westminster Standards," p.213
2. "The New Declaratory Act," p.7; Cox, p.412.
3. F.C. Act IX., 1894 - Anent Declaratory Act, 1892, On Confession of Faith. See Cox, p.413.
4. Above pp.15f.
5. Henry Drummond, pp.131f.
6. Above p.16.
7. Above pp.18ff.
8. Above pp.27ff.
9. Robertson Smith, p.180.
10. "The Westminster Standards," p.208.
11. C.f. above pp.25f.
12. F.C. Proc., 1889; p.152.
13. Robertson Smith, p.571.
14. Ibid.
15. Above p.73f.
16. F.C. Proc., 1889; p.134.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid., p.135.
19. Ibid., pp.137f.
20. One of the students involved in the Glasgow College Case in 1859, now Junior Principal Clerk of the Assembly.
21. F.C. Proc., 1891; p.91.
22. Cox, p.412.
23. This was an expression which was very common in Marrow doctrine.
24. "The New Declaratory Act," p.6.
25. Above pp.79ff.
26. Confession, XXXI : iv.

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