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A table of contents for *Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology* can be found here:

Unravelling Scottish Evangelicalism (Part Two)

Martin Spence

Cornerstone University, 1001 E Beltline Ave NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49525-5897
martin.spence@cornerstone.edu

INTRODUCTION

Is Scottish Evangelicalism unravelling? A belief that it might be was one reason for choosing 'Evangelical Ecumenicity' as the theme for the 2011 Scottish Evangelical Theological Society conference. Underlying the conference agenda was a perception that perhaps irreparable fissures threaten the Scottish Evangelical future. The conference conveners invited the current author to open proceedings by unravelling the roots of what the conference organizers identified as contemporary Scottish Evangelical 'polarization'.

In the first part of my paper, a revised version of which was published in a previous number of this journal, I argued that modern Evangelicalism has not declined from a pristine unity into rival camps.[1] Rather, the potential for Evangelical fissure has always been latent within the very forces that have propelled the Evangelical coalition to success since the eighteenth century. I concluded that Evangelicalism 'has only lived and breathed because it has existed in a social-cultural setting of the kind that has valued personal liberty and religious competitiveness. Its members are freely-associating, self-determining groups. Such an environment has meant longevity and vitality for the movement as well as division and rancour. Evangelical diversity is both the movement's tragedy and triumph.'[2]

While Evangelicalism has always functioned as a movement calling the church back to old certainties (be they those of New Testament authenticity, or Reformation confessionalism), its birth and development within a social-cultural milieu that has valued innovation and individuation has meant that demand for the restoration of authentic Gospel religion has in fact created multiple new forms of Christianity. Such innovation is often justified by the Pietistic emphases within the movement. These Pietist

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[1]   M. Spence, 'Unravelling Scottish Evangelicalism (Part One)', *SBET* 30 (2012), 30–50. Part Three, the final instalment, is scheduled to appear in *SBET* 32 (2014).

[2]   Ibid., p. 49.

traits, by stressing a personal connection between the human and the divine, help to endorse ecclesial modernizations when they are claimed to spring from a closer insight into the nature and purposes of God—even if others within the Evangelical coalition protest that these innovations do not quite comport with the way that they understand spiritual truth! In this second instalment of the paper, I offer a cursory historical survey of some of the ways in which the Evangelical movement in Scotland has demonstrated the internal logic of the movement's congenital fissiparousness in ways that have both furthered and frustrated the existence of the coalition.

DISRUPTIVE EVANGELICALISM

Evangelicalism was a disruptive force in the nineteenth-century Scottish church. Its inherent tendency was to promote religious pluralism. This was because the movement embodied the liberalizing, democratizing and voluntaryist spirit of the age. Indeed, in one sense 'Evangelicalism' is the name we give to the adaptation of central Reformation Protestant doctrines to the emerging cultures of the modernity. Although Evangelicalism in the Hanoverian era has commonly been seen as a conservative force, marshalling religious obedience against revolution and aiming to defend the social order, this was not the view of many observers at the time. As one critic put it, alluding to the rise of Evangelical missionary initiatives such as the Glasgow and Edinburgh Missionary Societies, 'the whole of this missionary business grows from a democratical root [and is] calculated to produce discontent, to foster an aversion to the present order of things'.[3]

A tendency to view Presbyterianism as the authentic locus of Scottish ecclesiastical history means that talk of the disruptive tendencies of nineteenth-century Evangelicalism leads our minds quickly to the 'Great Disruption' of 1843. The secession in this year of over 450 Evangelical ministers from the Church of Scotland to form the Free Church of Scotland was indeed a major event, but the impression left by much historiography is that this was the central, game-changing factor in Victorian Evangelical history. However, the evidence from the previous fifty years suggests that, despite the powerful vision of a national Christianity propounded by Thomas Chalmers and the Kirk Evangelicals, they were fighting a losing

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[3]   C. G. Brown, *Religion and Society in Scotland Since 1707* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), p. 32. See my comments in the first instalment of this article on the applicability of Nathan Hatch's observations about the democratization of American Evangelicalism to Scotland. Spence, 'Unravelling (Part One)', p. 34.

battle. In one sense, their vision was undermined by the very religious impulses which they endeavoured to inculcate.

By the last decades of the eighteenth century the church south of the Scottish border had already experienced the disruptiveness of Evangelical revival. The Anglican Evangelical renewal movement associated with John Wesley had broken the bounds of the Established church and transmuted into a separate denomination called Methodism. Wesley's doctrines of universal atonement, individual free will, and moral perfectionism had also sparked the first major polarization of the Evangelical coalition between those 'Arminian' Methodists who followed his teaching and other Calvinistic Methodists who, while agreeing with the need for new forms of preaching in order to promote conversion and renewal, continued to set their Evangelicalism within a framework drawn from the Calvinist Reformed tradition of the Protestant Reformation.

It is sometimes asserted that Wesleyan Methodism had no impact in Scotland because Arianism did not sit well with the resolutely Calvinist Scots. However, although when learning of Wesley's plans to visit Scotland, George Whitefield told him bluntly, 'You have no business there', Wesley did not listen.[4] As Margaret Batty has demonstrated, numerous Methodist congregations formed in the late 1750s due to 'the heroic endurance' of a small number of Methodist preachers.[5] Thus by the time of Wesley's death in 1791, there were 1,179 Scottish Methodists.[6]

Other streams of the eighteenth-century Scottish Evangelical movement flowed through more conventionally Calvinist channels, yet nonetheless also began to erode the kind of confessional national Christianity for which Chalmers would argue in the 1830s. Drawing inspiration from the English and Welsh Calvinistic Methodists and from Anglican Evangelicals, a small group of Scottish Independents emerged in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. One early sponsor of this movement was Willielma Campbell, Lady Glenorchy (1741–1786), a wealthy Evangelical patron who founded chapels in Edinburgh and Strathfillan in the last three decades of the eighteenth century. Influenced by the English Calvinistic Methodist preacher Rowland Hill (1744–1833) and by the English Evangelical patron of Calvinistic Evangelical preaching, Selina, Countess of Huntingdon (1707–1791), Glenorchy intended her chapels to be ecumenical preaching centres. She resisted the absorption of the chapels into any one denomination. Glenorchy's movement was small and abortive—

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4   M. Batty, *Scotland's Methodists, 1750–2000* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2010), p. 4

5   Ibid., p. 19.

6   Ibid., p. 35.

against Presbyterian intransigence she found it easier to found churches in England. However, her initiatives showed a latent force within Evangelicalism that could push against established ecclesiastical structures in the name of ecumenical mission and Biblical preaching.

A more sustained impulse toward Evangelical independency came from Robert (1764–1842) and James (1768–1851) Haldane. In the teeth of opposition to both overseas and home mission from the Church of Scotland, and with the support of English Anglican Evangelical minister, Charles Simeon (1759–1836), the Haldanes helped form the Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home as a mission agency to the Highlands in 1798. The Society sponsored hundreds of lay evangelists who were dubbed the 'Haldane Preachers'. Numerous 'preaching Tabernacles' were formed in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee and Wick.[7] These preaching tabernacles inevitably took on the hue of fully-fledged churches, offering the Gospel in new ways in new places. There were eighty-five such independent congregations in Scotland by 1807.[8] Today, might these be styled 'emergent' churches?

Like Lady Glenorchy, the Haldanes were originally members of the Church of Scotland who faced entrenched opposition to their supra-parochial mission work. They formally left the Church of Scotland in 1799. Their subsequent desire to break the monopoly of ecclesiastical interests led them to offer a two-year course of seminary instruction for the evangelists in Glasgow, Dundee and Edinburgh. These lay seminaries were in many ways the precursors of non-university theological training institutes that would be founded in subsequent years of Scottish Evangelical history—from the late Victorian Bible Training Institute of Glasgow, founded by the Glasgow United Evangelistic Association in the late Victorian era, to the early twenty-first century Destiny College, a training school of Destiny Church International, founded and led by self-styled 'social entrepreneurs' Andrew and Sue Owen.[9] Indeed, the Haldanes exemplify a certain brand of Evangelical pioneer whose commitment to mission, antipathy to hierarchy and desire to re-make the church to meet the needs of the age has always sought to strip back ecclesiastical struc-

[7] D.E. Meek, 'The Early Nineteenth Century', in *The Baptists in Scotland: A History*, ed. by D.W. Bebbington (Glasgow: Baptist Union of Scotland, 1988), pp. 26–47 (p. 31).

[8] Drummond and Bulloch, *The Church in Victorian Scotland*, p. 53

[9] D.W. Lovegrove, 'Haldane Preachers', in *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology*, ed. by Nigel M. de S. Cameron (Edinburgh : T. & T. Clark, 1993), p. 385. On Destiny Church, see K. Roxborough, 'Growth Amidst Decline', in *Church Growth in Britain 1980 to the Present*, ed. by D. Goodhew (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2012) pp. 209–20 (pp. 217–9).

tures in preference for their own vision of New Testament Christianity. Like many later Evangelical visions, whether those of the Brethren movement of the mid-nineteenth century or those contained within the Charismatic New Churches of the late twentieth century, the restless desire for contemporaneous authenticity and New Testament essentialism that has marked this kind of Evangelical *renovatio ecclesia* has, in the words used by Deryk Lovegrove to describe Robert Haldane, 'displayed a mixture of unitive and divisive tendencies.'[10]

In 1808 the Haldane brothers began speaking in favour of credo-baptism. The controversy which ensued split the Independency movement between pædo- and credo-baptists. The pædo-baptists evolved into the nucleus of the Congregational Union, founded in 1812. Glaswegian minister Ralph Wardlaw (1799–1853) became perhaps the most well-known representative of the Evangelical Congregationalist community in Scotland. Thus another distinct Evangelical sub-institution was born from the refractory energies of the Evangelical movement.

The Haldanes helped merged their stream of credo-baptist Independency into the channel carved by the Scottish Baptist movement, the source of which was also in the eighteenth-century Evangelical movement. In 1768, Archibald MacLean, influenced by George Whitfield, had founded the Scotch Baptist Connection. The Scotch Baptists were distinguished from their English counterparts by an emphasis on mutuality of elders (rather than 'one man' pastorship) but nevertheless co-operated with the missionary-minded English Baptists to sponsor itinerant evangelists across Scotland.[11] MacLean sounded early the note of Evangelical restorationism which pulsed through the movement more fully in the nineteenth century when he spoke of Baptist principles representing the 'primitive purity and simplicity of the Christian faith'.[12] In fact this note was itself drawn from the Sandemanian or Glasite movement, with which MacLean had been involved, and from which the Scotch Baptists recruited heavily, although the inward-looking separatism of that movement was now blended with the more outward-looking missionary-minded disposition of the Evangelical revival.[13]

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[10]   D.W. Lovegrove, 'Haldane, Robert (1764–1842)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Online edn., ed. by Lawrence Goldman. (Oxford: OUP, 2004), <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/11896>, accessed 11 July, 2013.

[11]   Meek, 'The Early Nineteenth Century', p. 28

[12]   Ibid., p. 22.

[13]   L. Billington, 'The Churches of Christ in Britain: A Study in Nineteenth-Century Sectarianism', *Journal of Religious History* 8 (1974), 21–48 (pp. 22–3).

The Haldane accession in 1808 helped give identity and solidarity to Baptist principles across Scotland and infused the somewhat separatist and confessionaly Calvinist tendency of Scotch Baptist culture with a new pragmatic Evangelical zeal.[14] The Baptistic impulse pre-dated the Evangelical revival, of course, but the drama of credo-Baptism as a visual symbol of conversion, the Baptist commitment to congregationalism and an underlying anti-creedalism appealed to the democratising spirit of nineteenth-century Scotland. The Evangelical movement, itself a product of a growing religious democracy, thus refreshed and re-oriented Scottish Baptists into another compelling Evangelical institution in an increasingly crowded marketplace. A Scottish Baptist Association was formed in 1835, drawing together churches with strong links to the Home Missionary Society for Scotland (BHMS) that had been formed in 1827 with a particular mission to the Highlands and Islands. The Association was re-launched in 1843, the year of the great Disruption, as the Baptist Union of Scotland. Seventeen churches joined, most of them with a strongly Arminian temperament.[15] A larger number of churches joined in a re-launched Union in 1869, a broad coalition shaped by the spirit of Evangelical ecumenicity of the age.[16]

The Baptists, like all denominations in this era, often co-operated with other Evangelicals and yet they also implicitly claimed for their distinctive practices and ecclesiology the imprimatur of New Testament authenticity. In 1880, for example, Baptist pastor William Grant listed these Baptist distinctives: congregational independence, believers' baptism, membership of churches limited to Christians. He then added as a fourth that 'Baptists do not recognize creeds or confessions of faith'. This claim to have boiled down Gospel Christianity to a set of distinctive ideas, followed by a claim that these ideas are not in and of themselves a particular confession but simply represent pure Christianity, is a disingenuous way of disarming critics! It has been a common attitude within many Evangelical movements that have sought primitive simplicity.[17]

Evangelical sentiment helped unify as well as fracture during the early nineteenth century, although the net result was the same: the creation of vibrant sub-communities in a religious free market. The constructive dimensions of the Evangelical impulse was evident in the transforma-

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[14] Meek, 'The Early Nineteenth Century', p. 32.

[15] Ibid, p.41

[16] D.B. Murray, 'Baptist Union of Scotland', in *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology*, pp. 59–60.

[17] J.M. Gordon, 'The Later Nineteenth Century', in *The Baptists in Scotland: A History*, ed. by D.W. Bebbington (Glasgow: Baptist Union of Scotland, 1988), pp. 48–66 (p. 61).

tion of the Secession and Relief churches (originally formed during the eighteenth century in protest at an earlier controversy concerning state involvement in ecclesiastical matters) into a new Evangelically-oriented institution. In 1820 two of the eighteenth-century Session Presbyteries (the New Licht Burghers and the New Licht Antiburghers) merged to form the United Secession Church. The two groups had been brought together in part by shared participation in Evangelical missionary societies which had helped dissolve a narrow Calvinist defensiveness.[18] In 1847 the United Secession Church combined with another eighteenth-century Presbyterian splinter group, the Relief Church. This church had been founded in 1761, again in part over the rights of congregations to elect their own minister but also pervaded also with a piety drawn from the Evangelical revival and a missionary spirit which had led some to dub them the 'Scots Methodists' (a name which is, of course, unfair to the real Scots Methodists). [19] The new institution was called the United Presbyterian Church. The five hundred or so United Presbyterian congregations were infused with an Evangelical missionary emphasis over the next fifty years.[20] It exemplified a tendency of later Evangelicals to found new churches in middle-class areas already well-served by Christian congregations.

DEMOCRATIC DISRUPTIVENESS

During the 1830s and 1840s, the disruptive tendencies of Evangelicalism intensified. Several other new Evangelical communities were founded, largely within the industrializing lowlands but also with a growing presence in north-eastern fishing villages. The rationale for each of these groups was premised on the belief that the hierarchical structure of the existing denominations did not do proper justice to the New Testament blueprint for the church. Each spoke with a tone (which many late twentieth century New Churches would also adopt) which implied that they were the first to challenge tradition and the sole providers of a truly 'evangelical' expression of Christianity. Ironically, the very pride with which these groups claim to have reduced Christianity down to all but its barest essentials has generally ended up generating an attitude of exclusivity which militated against the primitive ecumenicity that the group has sought to construct.

The most significant of these mid-century groups was the Brethren movement which had its origins in a number of separatist groups in Ire-

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18 I. Hamilton, 'United Secession Church', in *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology*, p. 841.

19 Brown, *Religion and Society*, p. 37.

20 Drummond and Bulloch, *Church in Victorian Scotland*, p. 44.

land and England that gathered around Irish clergyman John Nelson Darby (1800–1882), English missionary Anthony Norris Groves (1795–1853), and Scottish preacher Henry Craik (1805–1866). Arising in the late 1830s, the Brethren at first provided an umbrella movement for numerous groups of independently-minded Evangelical Christians dissatisfied with the practice and structure of existing churches. Committed to a non-hierarchical, non-clerical community, they aimed for primitive simplicity rooted in the breaking of bread. The egalitarian feel of Brethrenism meant it appealed particularly to the heartland of working classes in the industrialising middle belt of central Scotland, as well as to rural fishing communities.[21] Brethrenism clearly represented the central Evangelical tension. It manifested an Evangelical essentialism; its very name implied that this was pure, apostolic Christianity shorn of its traditions and hierarchies and open to all who simply desired to be known as 'brothers' in Christ. However, the Brethren did not actually sweep up all who claimed the name 'Evangelical' into their radical vision for 'mere Christianity'. Rather, they constructed another ecclesiastical subculture—one without ministers, or connexions, or theological colleges, to be sure, but nevertheless pervaded by a deep sense of its own identity, culture, and values. The Brethren movement itself fractured between Open and Exclusive wings in 1848.[22]

The quest for primitive apostolic simplicity exhibited by the Brethren was matched by the emergence of another strand of primitivism, the Churches of Christ, adopted in 1842 as the denominational affinity of several Baptist congregations who had, over the past decade, been influenced by the County Antrim-born preacher Alexander Campbell (1788–1866). Campbell, who emigrated with his father to Pennsylvania in 1809, was also animated by a desire for primitive Christianity, an attitude forged by the heady freedom generated amid the revivalism of the American frontier. As was the case with the Brethren, the name of this group implied a desire for New Testament essentialism. Members wanted to be known simply as followers of Christ or 'Christians': nothing more, nothing less. The movement, which in the United States was called 'The Disciples of Christ', gained more churches in Scotland than anywhere else in the United Kingdom. There were forty-nine congregations Scot-

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[21] N.T.R Dickson, *Brethren in Scotland 1838–2000* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2002), *passim*, esp. pp. 25–7.

[22] Roger Shuff speaks of the 'invisible structures' that helped provide Brethren with *de facto* ecclesiastical unity. R. N. Shuff, *Searching for the True Church: Brethren and Evangelicals in Mid–Twentieth Century England* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2005), p. 32.

tish congregations by 1917. Like the Brethren, this movement flourished in urban and industrializing areas, places where the dissolution of traditional social structures provided the nearest equivalent to the heady religious liberty sprouting in the soil of the American west.[23]

A further example of a quest for a 'simple' evangelical community occurred in 1843—actually on the exact same day that Chalmers led the walkout from the Church of Scotland—when James Morrison (1816–1893) founded the Evangelical Union. Morrison, a probationer in the United Secession Church, had since 1839 preached what he called the 'three universals': the universal love of God, the universality of the atonement and the universal of the work of the Holy Spirit. In other words, he rejected not only the structure of Presbyterianism but also its Calvinist theology. He believed that mission was best served by preaching unlimited atonement and human free will. The Evangelical Union appealed to the growing democratic spirit of the age. 'A universal atonement is popular with the masses', wrote Morrison's biographer.

> Untaxed bread for all; liberty for all; a suffrage for all—these have been popular political cries. Not less a Saviour for all—if men were only set free from theological leading-strings. And for this very reason we have always felt that the doctrines of the Evangelical Union were a protest against religious conservatism, and in harmony with the liberal and liberalising spirit of the age.[24]

Like the Brethren and Disciples of Christ, the name of the Evangelical Union again implied that all true evangelicals should join the community in a spirit of simple fellowship and mission. Indeed, some Evangelical Union congregations eventually moved into Brethrenism, although the denomination itself merged with the Congregationalist Union in 1883. The Evangelical Union is particularly good example of the symbiosis between Evangelical fragmentation and the democratic liberty and voluntarism of the Victorian age. Kier Hardie joined the Evangelical Union later in the century.[25] The first incarnation of the Baptist Union of Scotland (founded in 1843) was self-consciously Morrisonian in emphasis.[26]

The Scottish Methodists movement also fractured into multiple groups in the nineteenth-century with a scattering of churches locked

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[23] D.M. Thompson, 'Churches of Christ', in *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology*, p. 187.

[24] 'The Origin and Formation of the Evangelical Union: No.6', in *The Evangelical Repository* (4th Series), No. 1 (1870), pp. 1–23 (pp. 11–12).

[25] A.L. Donaldson and J. Bulloch, *The Church in Late Victorian Scotland* (Edinburgh: St. Andrew Press, 1978), p. 199.

[26] Meek, 'The Early Nineteenth Century', pp. 39-40.

into the lay-leaning Kilhamite New Connexion, the populist Independent Methodist movement, the missionary-led Bible Christians, the anti-hierarchical United Methodist Free Churches, or the American-influenced, revivalist–minded Primitive Methodists.[27] The numbers involved in these movements were relatively small (as was the case with some of the other movements surveyed in this section), although the Primitive Methodists, who enjoyed a supple organizational structure, enjoyed notable success in the same decade (the 1840s) and same location (the industrialized towns of the western central belt) as the other new movements of the era that we are surveying.[28] Indeed, by the mid-nineteenth century it was perhaps the availability of other forms of 'free grace', primitive, missionary-minded Evangelical Christianity that stymied Methodist growth, rather than the often-alleged Scottish dogged traditionalism or recalcitrant Calvinism.[29]

Finally, it is worth noting one more disruption, again occurring in 1842–3 when Episcopal priest David T.K. Drummond (1806–77) led his congregation of St Thomas, Rutland Street, Edinburgh, out of the Episcopal Church of Scotland and formed an alliance with English Anglicanism in order to continue Evangelical worship and preaching. A significant Evangelical presence within the Episcopalian church grew in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Even in this relatively marginal church within the Scottish landscape, Evangelicalism disrupted and multiplied the forms and structures of Christianity.[30]

THE 'GREAT' DISRUPTION

It is only once we have understood the emergence of this increasingly democratic, somewhat chaotic, Evangelical marketplace that we are ready to fully grasp the story of the 'Great' Disruption, which we can now interpret as but one more of many fragmentations and re-alignments triggered by Evangelical Christianity in the first half of the nineteenth century.

The 1843 Church of Scotland Disruption was the result of the growth of Evangelicalism in the Church of Scotland since the late eighteenth century. Inspired by the legacy of the Cambuslang Revival and by the growth of Evangelicalism in the Church of England, the Evangelical 'Popular Party', among whom numbered Robert Walker (1716–83), John Erskine (1721–1803), and Thomas Chalmers (1780–1847), stressed the need for 'real' or 'saving' faith, in contrast to merely nominal assent or deistic

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27 Batty, *Scotland's Methodists*, pp. 48–79, 141–157.
28 Ibid., p. 147.
29 Brown, *Religion and Society*, p. 53.
30 D.W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain* (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 307.

natural religion. The popular party maintained a characteristic Evangelical emphasis on the centrality of Christ's atoning sacrifice in satisfying divine justice and recommended that such an emphasis on Christ's saving mercy should be broadcast widely through preaching. The paucity of such Gospel preaching, noted Robert Walker, meant that 'the power of godliness hath declined and languished, till a cold formality hath at length given way to the open profession of infidelity itself'.[31]

Like its English counterpart, Scottish Evangelicalism in its national church guise had a profound concern for the social implications of right belief and practice. John Erskine, for example, echoed Wilberforce when he wrote in his *Fatal Consequences and General Sources of Anarchy* that only real, vital Christianity could preserve a nation from ruin. Similarly, Walker stressed the link between right belief and ethics: 'Morality grows out of faith in Christ, as the branches grow from the stock.'[32] The conviction that Evangelical Christianity was good for the soul of the nation meant that the Kirk Evangelicals were strong believers in a territorial, state church. Thomas Chalmers lectured extensively on the virtues of national confessional Christianity in the 1830s and became the darling of establishmentarians across Britain.[33] It is in part this articulation of a vision of an Evangelical national church that may deceive us into believing that the Kirk Evangelicals had a real chance to create such an institution if only they had not been thwarted by the obduracy of the Moderates. In fact, the Kirk Evangelicals were trying to lock the Presbyterian stable door after the Evangelical horse had bolted. In fact, they were among those who had helped prise the door open in the first place.

During the first three decades of the nineteenth century, Church of Scotland Evangelicals focused on strengthening parish ministry and extending pastoral and evangelistic outreach into the growing urban centres of industrializing Scotland. This was exemplified by Chalmers' experiment of making the parish a unit of social, religious and moral cohesion in Glasgow. Having gained a majority within the General Assembly, in 1834 Evangelicals helped pass legislation that enabled creation of new chapels in areas underserved by the existing parochial system (the Chapels Act) and gave congregations the right to call a minister against the wishes of the lay patron of the church (the Veto Act), thereby

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[31]   J R. McIntosh, *Church and Theology in Enlightenment Scotland: Evangelical Party, 1740–1800* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1998), p. 204.

[32]   Ibid., p. 205.

[33]   'All the world is wild about Dr Chalmers', observed William Wilberforce. Quoted in B. Hilton, *Age of Atonement* (Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1988), p. 57. The substance of his lecture tour was published as *Lectures on the Establishment and Extension of National Churches* (Glasgow: William Collins, 1838).

encouraging Evangelical congregations to retain Evangelical ministers. All this was intended to strengthen, not undermine, the national church; and yet setting these actions in the context of the broader predilections of the Evangelical movement, the Kirk Evangelicals were clearly influenced by the prevailing tendency to seek 'fresh expressions' (as we might call them today) of church life. The establishment of extra-territorial chapels and assertion of congregational prerogative was but one expression of the tendency to create new venues for Evangelical Christianity that had been occurring from Glenorchy to Morrison. The disruption of existing ecclesiastical structures was, as it well known, indeed the natural culmination of the Kirk Evangelicals' bold project.

The presenting cause of their break with the Church of Scotland was the perennially vexed question of the relationship between Scottish state and church. In 1838 the right of congregations to appoint their own minister was overturned by the Court of Session in favour of the right of lay patronage, thus stymying the plan to ensure Evangelical ministers for Evangelical congregations. In 1843, the Chapels Act was also declared illegal by the Court of Session. These decisions generated a move by the Evangelicals for a separation of church and state, a proposal that split the Church of Scotland. Chalmers led around four hundred ministers out of the Kirk. They constituted themselves as the Free Church of Scotland. Having for so long stood for the vision of an Evangelical national church, and although trying to claim that they still *were* the national church, Chalmers and his co-religionists (perhaps up to 38% of the clergy and 40% of lay adherents) now found themselves committed in practice to running a voluntary church in order to preserve their Presbyterian liberties, which had themselves become tethered to their Evangelical priorities.[34] Chalmers even took some pride in his stance: 'I do hope that henceforth our friends the Voluntaries will think seriously of us than they have done heretofore', he wrote '…when they find us giving up all the endowments of a National Church so soon as it is determined that we shall not be permitted to hold them but at the expense of our Christian liberties.'[35]

Locating the Great Disruption in the broader milieu of early-nineteenth century Evangelicalism shows that Evangelical growth of the kind that had led to a strong Kirk Evangelical party under Chalmers also created the conditions for luxuriant evangelical crops that sprouted in the first half of the nineteenth century, crops diverse enough to mean that

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[34]   Brown, *Religion and Society*, p. 32
[35]   Although Chalmers also clarified: 'the Voluntaries mistake us, if they conceive us to be Voluntaries'. A.L. Drummond and J. Bulloch, *The Church in Victorian Scotland 1843–1874* (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 1975), p. 14.

any unity around a national church—or, indeed, any church—withered. Mid-century Scottish Evangelicalism was 'lay in spirit, urban in concern, disaffected from the ministry … expressing its distrust of traditional religious institution by the formation of new ones, which were kept out of the control of the clergy as much as possible.'[36] Evangelicalism was clearly a modern movement that flourished in pluralistic contexts. Indeed, Evangelicalism was itself helped create those pluralistic environments. By 1850, Scottish Evangelicals, particularly in the industrial central lowlands, had—willingly or otherwise—embraced a free trade in Christianity. Surveying the scene at mid-century, one might have felt that Evangelicalism was unravelling; alternatively, if you were a member of one of the emerging groups, you may have felt that it was only just beginning.

EVANGELICAL ECUMENICITY

Clearly each of the groups surveyed above maintained its own identity; sometimes, as was the case with the Brethren, this was a very separatist identity. Any hope of constructing just one Evangelical union was bound to failure. However, a commitment to paring down ecclesiastical traditions to apostolic simplicity was not insincere. It spoke of a growing attitude that warmed to the idea of deconstructing false ecclesiastical boundaries and was attracted to ecclesiastical minimalism. It was thus no coincidence that at the same time the Evangelical Christian world was fragmenting, thereby ostensibly militating against any kind of official Scottish Evangelical unity of the kind once hoped for by Chalmers and the Kirk Evangelicals, so also Scottish Evangelicals were becoming increasingly excited about the prospects for Evangelical ecumenism. This would be a unity based not on structural homogeneity but rather upon pragmatic co-operation and affective bonds of friendship: a unity that was freely chosen, not ecclesiastically conferred. This was a vision not dissimilar to the vision that political radicals of the era such as John Bright (1811–1899) and Richard Cobden (1804–1865) propounded in regard to the potential for economic free trade to create international peace.

This desire for unity and the forging of a common Evangelical culture had, of course, already glimmered in the eighteenth-century revival as well as in early nineteenth-century mission organizations such as the Glasgow City Mission (founded in 1826). The proliferation of cross-denominational religious tract publishing also helped perpetuate this

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[36] J. Kent, *Holding the Fort: studies in Victorian Revivalism* (London: Epworth Press, 1978), p. 101.

missionary ecumenism.[37] The desire for unity was exemplified by the formation of the Evangelical Alliance in 1846. Fifty-five Scottish ministers, including Glasgow businessman and philanthropist John Henderson (1782–1867), Free Church Moderator Robert Candlish (1806–1873), and Congregationalist Ralph Wardlaw, supported the cause.[38] The institution, which aimed for visible co-operation, stressed and even celebrated a tension between unity and diversity.[39] Its founding document stated:

> That this conference, composed of professing Christians of many different denominations, all exercising the right of private judgment, and, through common infirmity, differing among themselves in the views they severally entertain on some points, both of Christian doctrine and ecclesiastical polity, and gathered together from many and remote parts of the world, for the purpose of promoting Christian unions rejoice in making their unanimous avowal of the glorious truth that the church of the living God, while it admits of growth, is one church, never having lost, and being incapable of losing, its essential unity. Not, therefore, to create that unity, but to confess it, is the, design of their assembling together. [40]

The growth of diverse Evangelical institutions and subgroups in this era was therefore matched by a feeling that denominational strife might be ending and that fragmentation might actually be healthy for allowing private judgment to find an outlet that did not disrupt essential co-operation on mission and proclamation.[41]

During the latter half of the nineteenth century the spirit of 'evangelical alliance' multiplied across Scottish Evangelicalism even while yet more distinct sub-Evangelical networks were born. J. Edwin Orr called

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[37] S. Piggin, 'London City Mission', in *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology*, pp. 494–5.

[38] Drummond and Bulloch, *Church in Victorian Scotland*, p. 313.

[39] Wolffe suggests that several Evangelicals saw the Disruption of 1843 as untethering Evangelicals from denominations in order to form a new voluntary union that would usher in the millennium. J. Wolffe, 'Unity in Diversity? North Atlantic Evangelical Thought in the Mid-Nineteenth Century', in *Unity and Diversity in the Church: Studies in Church History*, vol. 32, ed. by R.N. Swanson (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 1996), pp. 363–75 (p. 366).

[40] 'Historical Sketch of The Evangelical Alliance', in *The Religious Condition of Christendom* 1, ed. by E. Steane (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1852), pp. 52–73 (p. 55).

[41] J. Wolffe, *The Expansion of Evangelicalism: The Age of Wilberforce, More, Chalmers and Finney* (Nottingham: Inter-Varsity Press, 2006), pp. 240–1.

this era the 'second great awakening'.[42] It was indeed a time of renewed mission and conversion, but the 'awakening' was also a reassertion of the Evangelical 'imagined community' that had been created in the eighteenth century and pivoted on shared narratives, hymns, preaching and periodic revivals. A new semi-professionalized 'revivalism' emerged which aimed to disperse this religious energy broadly across church and society. The revivalist culture was powerful and intoxicating. It was also, in some ways, a mirage that deflected Evangelicals from grappling with some central questions of theological identity and ecclesiastical practice that would return to haunt them in the twentieth century.

THE PROMISES AND PITFALLS OF THE REVIVALIST AGE

When James Morrison, the founder of the Evangelical Union, began preaching universal atonement, he did so not from a speculative interest in predestination but out of a perceived missiological imperative. If salvation was a free gift, he reasoned, those to whom the Gospel was addressed must have the freedom to respond to its offer. That meant that Christ must have died for all, or otherwise the individual would be constrained in their free choice by the prior decision of God about who would be saved. The evangelistic strategy of the church must create the conditions in which individuals can exercise such freedom to make a choice for Christ.

Morrison was somewhat unusual for consciously propounding a theology that was self-consciously aligned with the trends within the Wesleyan-Arminian branch of the Evangelical coalition. In practice, however, his ideas became widely shared because of the growing purchase of the phenomenon known as 'revivalism' among Scottish Christians of all stripes. Indeed, Morrison had come to his views after reading the principal architect of nineteenth-century revivalism, the American Presbyterian, Charles Finney (1792–1875). In his seminal *Lectures on Revivals of Religion* (originally given in 1834), Finney, who claimed to remain a Calvinist, argued that God had given human beings *methods* to win people to Christ. A revival, he claimed, is 'not a miracle' but 'a purely philosophical result of the right use of the constituted means'.[43] It is still God who converts people, argued Finney, but God has entrusted to humans the tools by which he works. Finney therefore recommended the conscious and strategic deployment of evangelistic strategies to stimulate individ-

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42   J. E. Orr, *The Second Evangelical in Britain* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1949).

43   C.G. Finney, *Lecture on Revivals of Religion* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960), pp. 12–13.

ual conversion and communal revival, including the often emotionally-laden Gospel song, the 'anxious seat' (a bench at the front of a meeting to which penitents were invited to move toward as a sign of their desire to respond to Christ), and the use of affective female testimony. These tools, embedded in large-scale meetings often led by a well-known professional 'revivalist' (often a lay evangelist) became the essence of late nineteenth-century 'revivalism'. Like Finney, many Scottish Calvinists believed they could reconcile this new emphasis on human methods and free will with their inherited confessions, although such reconciliation was normally at the expense of the latter.[44] Revivalism became a major force across the Scottish religious landscape for several generations and helped generate a powerful identity for the Evangelical coalition well into the twentieth century.[45]

Large-scale bursts of revival in this mode began in in Dundee and Kilsyth under itinerant mission of William Chalmers Burns (1815–1868) in 1839, and exploded during the international revival movement of 1859–61. The events associated with this movement triggered considerable growth within some of the existing denominations, such as the Brethren and the United Presbyterians.[46] Scottish revivalism was perfected in the visit of the Chicago shoe salesman-turned-preacher, D.L. Moody (1837–1899) during the 1870s.[47] Moody left a trail of philanthropic and missionary organisations in his wake across Scottish cities, helping the Free Church in particular experience demographic expansion.[48] This spirit of revivalism was supported by businessmen and enterprising ministers. It clearly

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[44] D.W. Bebbington, *Holiness in Nineteenth-Century England* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2000), p. 46.

[45] There is a growing literature on revivalism in Victorian Britain. See R. Carwardine, *Trans-atlantic Revivalism: Popular Evangelicalism in Britain and America 1790-1865* (London: Greenwood Press, 1978); Kent, *Holding the Fort*; Susan Sizer, *Gospel Hymns and Social Religion*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1978); J. Holmes, *Religious Revivals in Britain and Ireland 1859–1905* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2000); K.S. Jeffrey, *When the Lord Walked the Land: The 1858–62 Revival in the North–East of Scotland* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2002); D.W. Bebbington, *Victorian Religious Revivals: Culture and Piety in Local and Global Contexts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

[46] Drummond and Bulloch, *Church in Victorian Scotland*, p. 185.

[47] D.W. Bebbington, 'Moody as Transatlantic Revivalist', in *Mr. Moody and the Evangelical Tradition*, ed. by T. George (London: T & T Clark, 2004), pp. 75–92 (pp. 78–9; 87). See also Holmes, *Religious Revivals*, pp. 69–76; Drummond and Bulloch, *The Church in Late Victorian Scotland*, p. 9

[48] Drummond and Bulloch, *The Church in Late Victorian Scotland*, p. 14

exhibited Finney's belief that the 'right means' could stimulate wholesale spiritual awakening. 'We may not be able to command wealth or friends', said William Ross (1836–1904), the revivalist-minded pastor of Cowcaddens Free Church, 'But, so long as God is true, we can command a blessing.'[49]

Revivalism aimed not only for the conversion of individuals but also for an entire spiritual renovation of individuals and communities.[50] The tendrils of revivalism stretched out into beach missions, street preaching, orphanages, tract distribution societies, regular prayer meetings, meals for the poor, and the temperance movement.[51] Children's work in particular grew in the late nineteenth-century, pioneered by Payson Hammond (1830–1910), an American-born Free Church ministerial student whose work among children in the 1860s was the inspiration for the foundation of the Children's Special Service Mission in England in 1867, although the organization did not take root in Scotland until 1902.[52]

Revivalism also spawned another batch of new churches and denominations. This was the next burst of the Evangelical desire to recover an authentic New Testament Christianity, now self-consciously using revivalist techniques in an attempt to embed the Gospel within urban and socio-economically poor communities. These new late Victorian institutions included the Salvation Army which first established a Scottish presence in the Anderston district of Glasgow in 1879 and married robust revivalist fanfare with strong revivalist philanthropy;[53] the Faith Mission, founded in 1886, which aimed to bring revival to rural areas of Scotland and Ireland rooted in apostolic confidence that God would provide for all material needs of Christian missionaries; and the Church of the Nazarene, an American network of congregations which was in 1915 adopted as the denominational affinity of a number of Scottish churches who had, from 1906 onward, embraced the holiness teaching that a second blessing

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[49] T. Lennie, *Glory in the Glen: A History of Evangelical Revivals in Scotland* (Fearn: Christian Focus Publications, 200), p. 91.

[50] Drummond and Bulloch, *Church in Victorian Scotland*, p. 50. On the broader tendency for evangelistic enterprise to transmute into a campaigns for social and ethical reform (with an implicit critique of this tendency for its softening of religious distinctiveness) see: D, Edozain, 'The Secularization of Sin in the Nineteenth Century', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 62 (2011), 59–88.

[51] Brown, *Religion and Society*, pp. 143–8.

[52] J.M.F. Butler, 'Scripture Union', in *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology*, p. 763. See also N. Scotland, *Apostles of the Spirit and Fire* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2009), pp. 165–186.

[53] M. Harper, 'Salvation Army', in *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology*, pp. 743–4.

could lead to the elimination of sin.[54] Revival also spawned non-denominational mission halls such as the Carrubers Close Mission in Edinburgh, the Dundee Tent Mission, and the Tent Hall in Glasgow. Although these institutions were founded as mission centres they evolved (just like the Haldane 'preaching tabernacles' a century earlier) into *de facto* churches. Jock Troup (1896–1954), a product of this revivalist culture who became the redoubtable superintendent of the Tent Hall, did not try to hide the fact that mission halls offered an alternative expression of church that he believed broke with the established norms of Scottish Christianity: 'the highbrow stuff in some churches is a waste of time', he observed. 'Surely Jesus does not want all that formality.'[55]

Revivalism swept up the new and existing churches into a good deal of pragmatic unity. At a revival meeting in Perth in 1860 the sponsors boasted that they had 'buried sectarianism in the South Inch of Perth that day and saw no Christian weep over its grave.'[56] A 'revival' (the term was often used in this era in the typical American sense of meaning a large evangelistic rally at which a large number of conversions and rededications were expected to occur) in Motherwell in 1905–6 was jointly coordinated by several United Free churches, Congregationalists, Baptists, Methodists, the 'Hallelujah Mission', the 'Mission Church', the Salvation Army and the Brethren. Even the national Kirk was caught up in revivalist fervour, a reminder that in many ways the Church of Scotland, although still officially marked with a vision for national Christianity, was nevertheless forced to compete for business using the tools of mass evangelism.[57] At Eyemouth, the Church of Scotland minister W.D. Kennedy thus noted that he was 'ever ready to unite with his brother-ministers in any movement which has for its object the common good of all'.[58] Of course, none of this 'delightful spirit of harmony'[59] meant that denominational differences ended, nor that there wasn't a certain degree of rivalry for

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[54] T.A. Noble, 'Church of the Nazarene', in *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology*, p. 186. These churches had from 1909 styled themselves as the 'Pentecostal Church of Scotland', although unlike the churches that came to use the descriptor 'Pentecostal', they did not teach that the second blessing would lead to glossolalia or other spiritual gifts. The change of name was necessitated by a need to distinguish their holiness teaching from the emerging Pentecostal movement.

[55] G. J. Mitchell, *Revival Man: The Jock Troup Story* (Fearn Christian Focus, 2002), p. 182.

[56] Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, p. 55.

[57] Lennie, *Glory in the Glen*, p. 106.

[58] Ibid., p. 117.

[59] Ibid., p. 127.

converts, but shared participation in revivalism was an occasion for unity and Evangelical solidarity.

The key to this unity was a decline in dogma. In late Victorian revivalism words were at a discount and emotional warmth was at a premium. 'There was often little preaching' it was noted of a 'revival' at Charlotte Chapel, Edinburgh in 1905, under the guidance of Joseph Kemp (1871–1933).[60] The soft-peddling of theological complexity was widespread across Scottish Evangelicalism. In 1866 seventy-one leading figures of Scottish Evangelicalism called for a conference 'with the view of removing, as far as practicable, from among evangelical protestant Christians, conflicting interpretations of the doctrines and precepts taught in the word of God'. Appealing to the doctrine of Biblical perspicuity they hoped that unity on the plain meaning of Scripture would put an end to needless doctrinal debates and thus to denominational strife. Only such unity, they argued, would allow the church's 'evangelistic work to be blessed with full success'.[61] This appeal revealed the key to the unity that Scottish Evangelicals enjoyed in the late Victorian era: an evangelistic revivalism based on minimal dogmatics and a belief that the gold of Biblical Christianity could be easily and incontrovertibly distinguished from the dross of worthless theological debate.

This decline of dogma meant that revivalist ecumenicity hid, and may even have irritated, future Evangelical divergences. This was because the decline of a focus on the Biblical text, and the art of constructing coherent doctrinal statements based upon it, was not limited to revivalist-minded Evangelicals but was shared with the inter-related set of ideas and theologies that we know today as theological liberalism. Theological liberalism was at core a belief in the need to update Christian doctrine and to act with freedom, or liberality, toward inherited dogmas, in order to account for modern knowledge. This included new ideas about the historical accuracy of Scripture, theories of geological and biological evolution, and a growing commitment to the explanatory power of science and technology. Nineteenth-century theological liberalism claimed that Christianity must develop and change according to the times if it was to speak to contemporary society: this was, after all, an age of progress. Across Scottish Christianity in the late nineteenth-century 'a new spirit of tolerance and tentativeness, along with a growing preference for the apologetic as

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[60] Ibid., p. 206; D.B. Murray, 'Kemp, Joseph William', in *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology*, p. 454.

[61] *The Evangelical Repository*, 4th ser., 1 (1867), p. 67. The proposal under review was contained in the book *Unity of Creed, the Union of the Christian Church* (Edinburgh: Elliot, 1866).

opposed to the dogmatic spirit, rendered the hard-line orthodoxy of the traditionalists increasingly uncongenial.' [62]

On the one hand, of course, revivalist Christianity was a world away from these progressive themes that were being articulated through the theology faculties of Scotland and elsewhere in Europe and America. Revivalism is associated with an 'old-time Gospel' message that actually developed in conscious opposition to *avant-garde* scholarly theories. D.L. Moody is reported to have told a group of ministers: 'I don't see why you men are talking about "two Isaiah's" when half the people in the country do not know that there is one Isaiah yet.'[63] However, by subduing the pursuit of dogmatic or confessional truth, late Victorian Scottish revivalism actually helped precipitate the erosion of classical theological discipline among Evangelicals. Because of the deposit of Scottish church history this often meant an erosion of Calvinism, but it was not as if there were any great Arminian theologians emerging to take their place! Rather, doctrinal discussion of all stripes was relegated to a subsidiary role within Evangelicalism. It was a nice indication of this phenomenon that the Free Church accepted hymns in in 1879 largely as a result of the popularity of Sankey's *Sacred Hymns and Solos*.[64] Sankey's hymns were entirely non-Calvinistic and non-dogmatic: they were personal, emotive, yearning, and testimonial. Moody, meanwhile, focused his preaching on stories of happy reunions in heaven rather than preaching about sin and hell.[65] Just over a decade later, the Free Church passed a Declaratory Act that made official that which Sankey had unofficially announced and helped to perpetuate: that subscription to the Westminster Confession was no longer necessary to be a Free Church Minister (the United Presbyterians had already passed such an act in 1879). P. Carnegie Simpson (1865–1947) thus noted ironically that 'Moody's preaching of a "free Gospel" to all sinners did more to relieve Scotland generally ... of the old-hyper Calvinist doctrine of election and of what theologians call "a limited atonement" than did even the teaching of McLeod Campbell.'[66] Moody and Sankey may have preached the 'old time religion', but it was not as old as 1646.

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[62] A.C. Cheyne, *Studies in Scottish Church History* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999), p. 131; A.C. Cheyne, *The Transforming of the Kirk* (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 1983), pp. 60–85.

[63] J. W. Chapman, *The Life and Work of Dwight Lyman Moody* (London: James Nisbett & Co., 1900), republished at <http://www.biblebelievers.com/moody/20.html>, accessed 11 July, 2013.

[64] Drummond and Bulloch, *Church in Victorian Scotland*, p. 187.

[65] Ibid., p. 33.

[66] I. Hamilton, 'Moody, D.L.', in *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology*, pp. 605–6 (p. 606); cf. Drummond and Bulloch, *Church in Late Victo-*

The revivalist project was not even necessarily about conversion, but often emphasized rededication of back-slid Christians and offered spiritual uplift for beleaguered disciples. Merging with Wesleyan Arminian focus on a 'second blessing', late Victorian revivalism stressed not only conversion, but 'crisis' and 'consecration'— a second, and perhaps regularly-recurring, crisis period of the Christian in which they broke through to a new level of spiritual immediacy and entire dedication to God. Accounts of revival meetings regularly emphasized that this 'blessing', rather than conversion of the penitent, was the main point of the meeting. As one minister wrote:

> In the revival meetings in the Institute there were happy choruses, hallelujahs, bursts of praise and wonderful prayers, but behind it all, and through it all, and sometimes in a somewhat overwhelming measure, there was that consciousness of the presence of a Higher Power that constitutes the difference between a real revival meeting and what is merely an imitation.[67]

This new emphasis on common encounters with the Spirit provided a unity based on charismatic experience with often startling similarities to the 'charismatic renewal movement' of a century later.

This emphasis on an empowering post-conversion experience that moved one to a higher plane of spiritual life was also the defining theme of the Keswick movement. Founded in 1875, the Keswick Convention, a yearly meeting of British Evangelicals held in the Lake District, absorbed the teaching of the American 'Higher Life' movement, which the predominantly Anglican Keswick audience interpreted as meaning a post-conversion experience that would lead to suppression of all known sin, a state that could be described as the 'victorious' Christian life. Many Scottish Evangelicals attended Keswick, and regional meetings were established.[68] From 1892 a Scottish National Convention was held regularly at Bridge of Allan, a venue chosen for its romantic vistas.[69]

Revivalism, and the broader 'higher life' movement from which it was nourished, each with their focus on religious passion and warmth, allowed those who wanted to embrace historical critical Biblical methodology or evolutionary social theory to do so unhindered while still enjoying and

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rian Scotland, p. 11.

[67] Lennie, *Glory in the Glen*, p. 106.

[68] Bebbington, *Holiness in Nineteenth–Century England*, p. 73.

[69] Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, p. 307; I. Randall, *Evangelical Experiences: A Study in the Spirituality of English Evangelicalism* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1999), p. 273.

proclaiming a personal piety and love of Jesus.[70] One can observe this duality clearly in the life and thought of Alexander Whyte (1836–1921), minister of Free St George's, Edinburgh. Weighing in to support the right of Free College professor William Robertson Smith (1846–1894) to embrace higher critical ideas about the Old Testament, Whyte declaimed:

> The theological mind will stand still at its peril… No man who knows, or cares to know, anything of my personal sympathies and intellectual and religious leanings will accuse me of disloyalty to the Calvinistic, Puritan, and Presbyterian polity … but I find no disparity, no difficulty in carrying much of the best of our past with me in going out to meet and hail the new theological methods.[71]

Whyte was in this way a paradigm of theological liberalism. However, he also remained committed to the revivalist cause. Converted by D.L. Moody, he supported the cause of what today looks to be a very old-fashioned, pre-critical kind of missionary project, helping, for example, to organise the visit of American revivalist J. Wilbur Chapman (1859–1918) to Scotland in 1914.[72] Indeed, when Chapman could not attend a meeting, Whyte stepped in and, according to his biographer, 'spoke on the hymn "Just As I Am"—his favourite subject during those months—with an eloquence, a pathos, and a home-coming power which made this address stand out in the memory of some who knew him well as among the very greatest of his utterances'.[73] Note, of course, that he preached on a Gospel hymn, not on a Biblical text.

Such 'liberal revivalism' was also evident in the case of Henry Drummond (1851–1917), another convert of Moody and a notable student evangelist at the University of Edinburgh. Drummond's theological speculations borrowed from Spencerian evolutionism. He increasingly came under attack for downplaying original sin and the cross.[74] However, his concern to convert young people was thoroughly imbued with Evangelical revivalist fervour. 'Last Sunday', he wrote, 'after an hour's meeting, I sent all the small boys home, and kept two or three hundred of the big ones for

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70 Cheyne, *Transforming of the Kirk*, pp. 81–3.

71 G.F. Barber, *The Life of Alexander Whyte* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1925), p. 219.

72 Ibid., p. 521,

73 Ibid., p. 556

74 D. W. Bebbington, 'Drummond, Henry (1851–1897)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); online edn, May 2007, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/8068>, accessed 11 July 2013.

a private talk about decision. We did not think it wise to cross-examine them individually, or put any undue pressure upon them, but I am sure many of them are thinking more seriously.'[75] Like Whyte, Drummond saw no conflict between conversionist, pietistic preaching and adoption of new theological ideas. The lack of dogmatic statements within revivalism allowed his conscience to rest easy on this point.[76]

RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

As I noted in the first part of this article, anti-dogmatism united Evangelical revivalism with theological liberalism because both evangelical experimentalism and theological liberalism were relatives of the German theologian Friederich Schleiermacher (1768–1834). Both exhibited the same genetic trait that religion as something that inheres in the feelings, rather than in intellect.[77] This is not, of course, to suggest that all involved in revivalism or the holiness movement consciously embraced liberal theology or historical-critical methodology. However, taken as a whole, late Victorian revivalism allowed the questions posed by new scholarship and science to be submerged beneath an experiential unity rooted in common evangelistic endeavour and romantic conceptions of faith. In the end, this deferred some pressing questions about tradition, authority, conversion and the appropriate relationship between Christianity and modern thought to several generations later than that in which they should have been grappled with by the movement.

This *Zeitgeist* was not, of course, necessarily a declension from some older Evangelical purity. As I contended in the first part of this article, Evangelicalism was always a hybrid of pragmatism and pietism on the one hand, and Reformation Protestant confessionalism on the other. Indeed, Schleiermacher himself was *formed* by pietism in the first place (his father was a Lutheran Pietist pastor), the very same force that help shift Protestantism into its Evangelical gear during the eighteenth century. The late Victorian era, infused by cultural romanticism and popular sentimentality, was particularly conducive environment for the flourishing of the pietistic elements of the movement. However, as Victorian emotion and sentiment declined throughout British society in the first few decades of the twentieth century, these two elements of the movement started to diverge again, forcing upon Evangelicalism with a fresh urgency a question about its dual parentage: was it a movement of new light, or old dogma? A move-

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[75] Lennie, *Glory in the Glen*, p. 405
[76] Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, p. 90.
[77] Spence, 'Unravelling (Part One)', p. 46.

ment of fresh expressions, or orthodox certainties? As Christian Britain decayed, the Evangelical identity crisis became more acute.[78]

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[78] Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, pp. 202–1.