

A.J. SCOTT AND HIS CIRCLE

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## Abstract

Alexander John Scott, born in 1805, was the son of a prominent minister of the National Kirk in Scotland. Scott, as early as the age of 22, began, as a licensed minister, to oppose the Kirk's reigning Westminster Calvinism by teaching a doctrine of God's universal love, based upon his belief that the Father had revealed Himself in the humanity of Christ. By 1828 Scott, T. Erskine, and J. McLeod Campbell, formed a small band of theological reformers, which, in its advocacy of unlimited atonement, increasingly incurred the enmity of Scottish orthodoxy. During an assistantship to E. Irving in London, 1828-30, Scott, attracted to the early Church's vitality, began to advocate a renewal of the charismatic gifts of the Spirit. His Spirit emphasis altered the course and direction of Irving's life and theology. Scott's preaching of the charismata on the west coast of Scotland in 1829 gave rise to the first appearance of modern pentecostalism. These extraordinary phenomena, however, which occurred both in Scotland and London, Scott, unlike Irving, rejected as inauthentic. In 1830 he accepted a call to Woolwich and applied to the London Presbytery for ordination. His conscientious refusal to sign the Westminster Confession of Faith obstructed the ordination proceedings, and ultimately resulted in Scott's unanimous deposition from the Church of Scotland ministry by the 1831 General Assembly. Scott pursued an independent ministry in Woolwich for the next fifteen years, and publicly lectured throughout the country on theology, the harmony of religion and science, the socio-political systems of his day compared with Christianity, literary and philosophical subjects, and the extension of education to all classes. Scott became the close friend of T. Carlyle, F. D. Maurice, D. Macmillan, and J. C. Hare, the last three of whom were theologically indebted to Scott. Also at this stage, James Baldwin Brown, one of Scott's closest disciples, came under his influence. He returned to London in 1846 and continued to preach independently. Scott's London friends, now including Thackeray, F. Newman, and the Gaskells, were often among his hearers. In 1848 Scott's socio-political concerns led him, along with Maurice, Hare, C. Kingsley, and J. M. Ludlow, to become one of the founders of Christian Socialism. He was involved in the beginnings of Politics for the People, the Cooperative Tailors Association, and the London and Manchester Working Men's Colleges. Late in 1848 Scott became the Professor of English Literature at University College, London, the only place of higher education totally free from religious tests. In 1849, along with E. Reid, Newman and other friends, he began what later became known as Bedford College, the first centre of higher education for women based upon the principles of religious freedom. And in 1851 Scott became the first Principal of Owens College, later the Victoria University of Manchester, also a centre of university education committed to religious liberty. In 1853 Scott was joined in Manchester by his closest disciple, George MacDonald, who over the next fifty years reproduced much of Scott's thought in his literary works. During Scott's Manchester period he made a significant contribution to the development of Congregationalist theology, particularly through the lives of J. B. Brown, H. Solly and D. W. Simon. His theology was characterised by a belief in the spiritual conscience, the doctrine of Incarnation, the universal love and immanence of God, a thirst for the spiritually living and

extemporaneous, and a search for a catholic unity. Because Scott's influence was largely personal, upon his death in 1866 and upon the death of those who knew him, the memory of Scott faded. As a seminal influence upon many leading theological reformers, and as a window into the lives of prominent Christian thinkers of his day, Scott deserves a place in the history of 19th-century British theology.

Declaration of Authorship

I hereby declare that this thesis has been composed by myself, and is entirely based upon my own work.

*J. Philip Newell*  
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CHAPTER I

SCOTT'S HOME LIFE AND EDUCATION, AND  
HIS EARLY CIRCLE UNTIL LATE 1828.

a) Scott's home life, and his father's theology

Alexander John Scott was born on 26th March 1805. His parents were Susanna and Dr. John Scott, minister of the Middle Parish, Greenock. Scott's father was described as 'one of the most esteemed of the elder ministers of the Church,'<sup>1</sup> a man deeply loved by Thomas Chalmers,<sup>2</sup> and an intimate friend of some of the most distinguished leaders of the National Kirk.<sup>3</sup> Dr. Scott (1763-1836), having completed his formal education at the University of Glasgow, had been licensed to preach in 1787 by the Presbytery of Glasgow, and, in 1793, presented by the Greenock town council and ordained to the middle Parish. In 1796 he had married Susanna, the daughter of Alexander Fisher, Dychmount, 'a lady', wrote Dr. J. Barr, 'well fitted to be his associate by the vigour of a well-cultivated understanding, and the fervour of an enlightened and elevated piety.'<sup>4</sup> Scott greatly admired his mother.<sup>5</sup> Thomas Erskine later recalled Scott's feelings for his mother, and remembered 'her look of depth and fineness.'<sup>6</sup> Mrs. Scott came of a family line, which, on both the paternal and maternal sides, was predominantly clerical. Maternally the ministerial succession extended as far back as the late 16th century.<sup>7</sup>

Scott always contended that home held for him a 'sacredness beyond any other earthly spot'.<sup>8</sup> Scott, the fifth of six children, grew up in an atmosphere of much love and warmth. His father's devotion to the family was remarked upon as being extraordinary.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup>D. Brown, 'Personal Reminiscences of Edward Irving', The Expositor 3rd series, vol 6 (London, 1887), p.219.

<sup>2</sup>R. Rainy, Life of William Cunningham (London, 1871), p.43.

<sup>3</sup>Dr. J. Barr, Introductory Essay in Dr. J. Scott's Sermons (Edinburgh, 1839), p.xxiii.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid. p.xvii.

<sup>5</sup>A. J. Scott's Introduction to Dr. Scott's Sermons, p.xxvii.

<sup>6</sup>W. Hanna, Letters of T. Erskine vol I (Edinburgh, 1877), p. 192.

<sup>7</sup>For Scott's lineage I am indebted to William Campbell, 28 Scotland Street, Edinburgh.

<sup>8</sup>P. Macallum, Recollections of Prof. A. J. Scott (Greenock, 1878), p.27.

<sup>9</sup>R. Smith, A Sermon in Memory of Rev. John Scott, D.D. (Greenock, 1836), p.28.

The Scott family, however, experienced not a little suffering over the years. Two of Scott's sisters died in infancy and another sister and brother died at early ages. And his mother was for a long time in very delicate health, and suffered a lengthy period of illness. Scott, in 1839, commented on this early period of family life, and especially the effect it had on his father:

The loss of three children within eight months, by illness gradual and protracted enough to afford scope for every fluctuation of hope and fear, left deep marks on his character as a man and as a father. An unreadiness to be moved by sources of slight and transient emotion, a sadness whose very consolations were solemn and deep, the sword still suspended in the lingering illness of her who had shared most largely in his bereavements, formed in a man naturally grave and reserved, a habit which might seem like sternness to his surviving children, missing in him the cheerful parent of a little merry family. It was not gloom. He sorrowed not as those who have no hope. Towards us, as towards his flock and humanity in general, his feelings had gained in depth and tenderness, but not so as to promote facility of access; a sort of religious awe was at that early period the feeling which he most inspired at home.

This did not of course continue at the same height. In addition to the usual effects of time, a strenuous regularity in discharging his official duty, through a struggle which few indeed can appreciate, and a peculiar susceptibility of enjoyment from the society of his friends and from the objects of nature, contributed much to the restoration of the tone of his mind; while this progress into the capacity of sympathy diminished to his children the sense of distance from him, and incited him to greater openness of communication.<sup>10</sup>

Scott went on to say that the family, in one member or another, continued frequently to be afflicted by disease.

Scott's experience of family suffering was not unique in the highly industrialised, early 19th-century town of Greenock, considered to be the most unhealthy town in Scotland, excepting Glasgow.<sup>11</sup> Greenock, with its importation of Irish and Highland workers, had become one of the most overcrowded plague-spots in Britain. The Greenock population at the time of Scott's birth was approximately 18,000. By his fifteenth year the population had

<sup>10</sup>A.J. Scott in Dr. Scott's Sermons, p.xxv.

<sup>11</sup>D.F. MacDonald, Scotland's Shifting Population (Glasgow, 1937), pp.87-88.

grown to 22,000.<sup>12</sup> The increase in the number of houses was not in proportion to the increase in the number of immigrants, and the growth of town population was accompanied by little or no sanitary planning. This overcrowding and poor sanitation made Greenock, like other industrial towns, vulnerable to epidemics which, throughout Scott's period, swept these towns frequently and violently. Smallpox, measles, cholera, and, most devastating of all epidemics, typhus fever, ran rampant in such conditions. This sets the sufferings of the Scott family in context, and with Dr. Scott being one of the most 'respectable' members of Greenock society,<sup>13</sup> Scott's family would have been relatively untouched by some of the more devastating aspects of industrialised Greenock. Nevertheless, the death of four children out of six was unusually severe, and brought much suffering to the Middle Parish manse. This family suffering, however, as Scott explained, was met in a strong spirit of faith. Dr. Scott exclaimed: 'I am called to weep over the sick members of my family. But I do not repine, for I know I should be neither so holy nor so happy if I wept less.'<sup>14</sup> And Scott was to say of his father: 'I am thoroughly persuaded that the depth of paternal concern for the lambs of his flock which prompted his efforts on their behalf, and the tender sympathy with which he entered the chamber of mourning, belonged to him, not merely as a man, or a Christian, or a minister, but emphatically as the sorely bereaved father of children who died in the Lord.'<sup>15</sup>

Scott received his early education in Greenock at the local grammar school. His formal training was greatly supplemented by his parents, who were highly cultivated individuals. To this early training at home, which developed every faculty, may be traced Scott's broad learning and refined taste. Little is known concerning Scott's reading material at this stage. He was, however, from an early age, a warm admirer of the poetry of Robert Burns, a significantly early rebel against Scottish Calvinism. 'As a boy I

<sup>12</sup>A. Williamson, Views and Reminiscences of Old Greenock (Greenock, 1891), chart 1.

<sup>13</sup>R. Smith, p.33.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid. p.36.

<sup>15</sup>A.J. Scott in Dr. Scott's Sermons, p.xxvi.

remember the close of the great war,' recollected Scott. 'I was with my parents at an inn, and there suddenly sounded forth in a neighbouring room a manly voice with the words, "When wild war's deadly blast was blawn", and the remaining portion of the "Soldier's return". The time was telling on the souls of all men; I stole from the room from which the voice proceeded, and there saw a veritable soldier in the uniform in which he had served in war. Think how many soldiers brought home to Scotland the appeal to the affections and sympathies of their friends that spoke in that noble song with the added power of that noble air.'<sup>16</sup>

Scott asserted many years later that 'in the intellectual development of children, the intercourse of parents and guests goes further, by the range of subjects in which an interest is shown, and by the habits of thought exhibited and communicated, than long courses of lectures and of solitary study. The moral character is greatly formed, no doubt, by what others have taught; but far more by what they have been.'<sup>17</sup> Scott surely stated this with his own upbringing in mind. Certainly in his father young Scott had a living example of broad and profound learning. Dr. Scott was described as delighting in study; his scholastic abilities were apparently of 'the first order'. He developed them 'with persevering diligence and eminent success. His understanding was acute and vigorous, and his apprehension clear and quick. ... Few persons had acquired so much, recollected so well what they had learned, or turned it so readily and successfully to good account.'<sup>18</sup> In 1803 the University of Glasgow had acknowledged Dr. Scott's learning by conferring upon him, at a relatively young age, the degree of Doctor of Divinity. Barr recalled Dr. Scott's academic abilities:

He possessed a minute and accurate acquaintance with the literature of his profession, acquired by a careful examination of the Sacred Writings in the original tongues, and by an attentive perusal of the most esteemed theological works, both ancient and modern. He was, besides, more or less conversant with almost every department of general literature; and his stores

<sup>16</sup>A.J. Scott, 'A Toast to Burns', The Manchester Times and Examiner, 29 January 1859.

<sup>17</sup>A.J. Scott, Suggestions on Female Education. (London, 1849), p.4.

<sup>18</sup>R. Smith, p.24.

of knowledge, extensive and varied as they were, had been so carefully digested, and so judiciously arranged, and were so distinctly remembered, as to be always at his command, and always available for materials of interesting conversation and subjects of useful instruction.<sup>19</sup>

Dr. Scott involved himself in his son's education. He began to revive some of his earlier intellectual interests, in order to participate in Scott's literary pursuits. Scott later referred specifically to his father acquiring at this time enough of Italian 'to read some of the best works in that language with perception and enjoyment of their merits.'<sup>20</sup> Dr. Scott, even in this area of Italian literature, played no insignificant part in the education of his son, who, years later, was to be considered one of the foremost students of Dante.<sup>21</sup>

Young Scott's intellectual abilities attracted attention. Rev. Robert Story, at this time a young minister in Roseneath, commented years later:

I have known Mr. Scott from his boyhood. Even in early life he was remarkable for his original powers of thinking; and I remember well what interest was excited in his seniors by the logical clearness and metaphysical ingenuity with which, when reasoning or disputing upon any subject, he could conduct an argument.<sup>22</sup>

Dr. Scott, as mentioned, was minister of the Middle Parish Church, situated in Cathcart Square, and locally called the 'Square Church'. Scott's father was a dedicated pastor. 'His mind', said Dr. J. Barr of Port Glasgow, 'was habitually impressed with a deep sense of pastoral responsibility.'<sup>23</sup> And just as Dr. Scott had become actively involved in his own son's early education, he devoted much of his pastoral energy to the development of youth in his parish, who in a special way captured his attention.<sup>24</sup> One of Dr. Scott's friends, having spoken of his intellectual ability and his deep pastoral concern, offered this eulogy to Dr. Scott

<sup>19</sup> Barr in Dr. Scott's Sermons, p.xix.

<sup>20</sup> A.J. Scott in Dr. Scott's Sermons, p.xxvi.

<sup>21</sup> The Scotsman, 19th January 1866.

<sup>22</sup> Testimonials to A.J. Scott (Edinburgh, 1856), pp.16-17.

<sup>23</sup> Barr in Dr. Scott's Sermons, p.xx.

<sup>24</sup> R. Smith, p.30.

shortly after his death: 'Such were his attainments, that I never knew any man so faultless, nor one who possessed so many excellencies in so high a degree. Individuals you might find, superior to him in one thing or another, but you would hardly find any one man who combined so many valuable qualities in such perfection.'<sup>25</sup>

In light of Scott's later, and much remarked upon, ability as an orator, it is interesting to note that Dr. Scott also was known for his 'accuracy and elegance of expression and execution', and was considered 'one of the best preachers of his day'.<sup>26</sup> Smith described Dr. Scott as expressing himself with 'the accuracy without the turgidity of a Johnson.'<sup>27</sup> 'To a commanding figure, a clear and melodious voice, a distinct and animated utterance,' wrote Barr, 'he added a plain and pointed style of composition, a simple and natural arrangement of his subject, close and pertinent illustration, and fervent and impressive delivery.'<sup>28</sup>

Probably the most characteristic aspect of Dr. Scott's ministry, however, and that which seems most to have affected young Scott, was his living piety, or what might be described as the heartfelt character of his religion. This is not to exclude the intellectualism of his orthodoxy, but only to emphasise the personal and inward dimension of his faith. According to Barr, Dr. Scott's words indicated that 'he spent much of his time in communion with God'.<sup>29</sup> Smith spoke of the depth of his prayers, both public and private.<sup>30</sup> And John James Bonar, one-time assistant of Dr. Scott's, told of a little Greenock saint who used to say that she could leave the church after the first prayer, 'so powerful and elevating was its effect.'<sup>31</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Ibid. p.25.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. p.29.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid. p.33.

<sup>28</sup> Barr in Dr. Scott's Sermons, p.xx.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid. p.xix.

<sup>30</sup> R. Smith, p.26.

<sup>31</sup> J. Bonar, Jubilee Memorial of St. Andrew's Parish and Congregation, Greenock (Greenock, 1889), p.16.



But what was the theological climate in which Scott was reared? Scott once described his father in the following words: 'he might have taken his place among the divines at Dort.'<sup>32</sup> The synod of Dort in the early 17th century had, against Arminianism, asserted doctrines of unconditional election, limited atonement, the total depravity of man, the irresistibility of grace, and the final perseverance of the elect. All of these Dr. Scott indubitably stood by; his theology was Calvinistic orthodoxy. He belonged to the National Kirk's Evangelical party, which, at this time, was becoming increasingly rigid in its Westminster Calvinism. It should be said, however, that at the beginning of the century both parties in the Kirk were unambiguously, and it seems quite contentedly, committed by their own legislation and that of the State, to the Westminster faith.<sup>33</sup> No alternative theology existed in the Church of Scotland. The Kirk still controlled a large part of the schooling system, with parish teachers committed to subscribing the Westminster Confession of Faith. University professors were also required to assent to it as the confession of their faith. As Scott's later disciple expressed it, the Scots were 'being brought up upon oatmeal porridge and the Shorter Catechism.'<sup>34</sup> Scottish theology's extremely isolated and insular position at the beginning of the 19th century was clearly evidenced in Scott's father's theology. In part the conservative reaction to the French revolution had made both the major parties in the Kirk more pronouncedly orthodox and immobile than ever before. But the characteristic party for this period was the Evangelical camp, with its accentuation of the hard lines of the Westminster Confession. And it was the dogmatic atmosphere of this party in which Scott was reared.

With the orthodoxy of the day, Dr. Scott asserted that the object of Christ's love is not the whole world, but the elect ones only, those chosen before the foundation of the world, the church.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid. p.16.

<sup>33</sup>See A.C. Cheyne, 'The Westminster Standards: A Century of Re-Appraisal', SCHS vol 14 (Glasgow, 1963), pp.200 f.

<sup>34</sup>G. MacDonald, David Elginbrod (London, 1927), p.39.

'In what sense', asked Dr. Scott, 'is it said God loved the world, and Christ died for its sins? ... How can the world be properly called the objects of God's love and of Christ's death, seeing God leaves the greater part of the world in ignorance of both his love and Christ's death, and leaves the greater part of those who do hear the gospel to live and die in enmity to Christ and unbelief of his love in him. ... It is then not true, and cannot be rightly said, that God loved and Christ died for the world, in the same sense as it is said that "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it".'<sup>35</sup> Scott's father was indeed a 'Dortian' divine, and, in tune with Westminster orthodoxy, centred his theology on the doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty. Central place being given to this doctrine, he was not logically allowed a belief in unlimited atonement.

But Scott's father was more than just a leading member of the Evangelical party. This is only one side of Dr. Scott and is not, in any sense, a complete picture of the man and his theology. Although highly esteemed by leading Evangelicals, he was also admired by men like Story of Roseneath and McLeod Campbell of Row, men who, with his son, were early rebels against Westminster Calvinism in Scotland. When every other pulpit was closed to Scott and his circle, Dr. Scott associated with them, welcomed them to his house, and on one or two occasions voted with the small minority who supported them, without thereby committing himself to all their views. In early summer 1827, when Campbell was teaching the assurance of faith in Row amidst growing ministerial criticism, Dr. Scott wrote to Story:

You gratify me by mentioning the minister of Row's regard for me. I wish I deserved it as much as I covet it. I esteem him highly, and do indeed expect that He who is 'working in him to will and to do of His good pleasure', will spare him to perform eminent service in His Church. I bear him affectionately on my heart when I pray for the young servants of God.<sup>36</sup>

Dr. Scott, it should be said, with his emphasis on heartfelt

<sup>35</sup> Dr. J. Scott, Sermons, pp.257-58.

<sup>36</sup> R.H. Story, Memoir of the Life of the Rev. Robert Story (London, 1862), p.90.

religion, was himself preaching an assurance of faith not unlike Campbell's. In one of his published sermons he asked:

May I not look to the unchangeable nature of the covenant of grace, -- to the everlasting love of the Father to his Son, -- and to the all-sufficiency of him whom I would fondly call my Saviour; may I not look to all these as securities for my being sanctified and kept through faith unto eternal life?<sup>37</sup>

In addition to Dr. Scott's sympathy with a doctrine of assurance, and his perhaps natural openness to his son's friends, there is that in Dr. Scott's theology which is broader than the orthodoxy of the day. He was among the first in Scotland to proclaim that the Gospel should be preached to all men. 'As soon as Missionary and Bible societies were formed,' wrote Smith, 'he did not, like some older ministers of his standing, look upon them coldly, as something new; but cordially and zealously supported them.'<sup>38</sup> In the late 18th century this was considered revolutionary activity. At the General Assembly of 1796 a proposal that the Church should support the newly established missionary associations met with a chilling response. It was argued that the Gospel could be preached only to the civilised, that missionary societies were associated with the politically radical and with opponents to the slave trade. The Assembly dismissed the appeal. Even as late as 1824 an authorised collection for foreign missions met with a response from only 59 parish churches and 16 chapels of ease out of 900 churches and 55 chapels. Scott's father manifests a broadening concern for humanity in his assertion of the Gospel for all. This should not be seen as unrelated to Scott's later development of a theology of God's love for all.

Dr. Scott's love and warmth for all men, his willingness even to 'love and pray for his enemies',<sup>39</sup> as his biographer put it, was larger than his theology. It was, in fact, more loving than the Omnipotent Sovereign in whom he believed. Even in his preaching we find him occasionally stretching out of a theology

<sup>37</sup>Dr. J. Scott, p.104.

<sup>38</sup>R. Smith, p.33.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid. p.27.

which restricted him to limited atonement. 'Christ's obedience unto death', proclaimed Dr. Scott, 'is sufficient to atone for sins of the deepest dye; his grace to change those, who are tenfold more the children of the devil than others, into the image of God; and his benevolence so overflowing, as to invite all, without exception, to look to Jesus and enjoy the blessings of his merit and power.'<sup>40</sup>

Another feature of Scott's father's theology, which, it seems, played a significant part in the development of Scott's own theology, was his emphasis on the Holy Spirit, an emphasis almost entirely absent in the orthodoxy of the day, but one to be picked up and developed by Scott. 'It is melancholy', stated Dr. Scott, 'to think how little the offices of the Holy Spirit are known, or considered, or improved. How can reading, or hearing, or catechising, or praying even, be profitable, while this is the case?'<sup>41</sup> 'What is this wilful ignorance of the office of the Spirit -- what is this contempt of his assistance, but a contempt of the unchangeable plan of heaven.' Scott's father encouraged his people to 'go to school to the Holy Spirit.'<sup>42</sup> 'The Holy Spirit brings near the things of Christ. ... The Holy spirit parts the clouds, and removes the veil that surrounds the things of Christ.'<sup>43</sup> Scott's father yearned for the life and dynamism of the Spirit which would bring the Church into living and personal communion with God. Barr said of Dr. Scott: 'The work of the Holy Spirit, on which he loved to expatiate, was with him a matter of actual experience.'<sup>44</sup>

A less significant but, nevertheless, interesting element in Scott's father's preaching, which also seems to have positively affected Scott's thinking, was his rather imaginative doctrine of progressive improvement in heaven:

The Christian's first step into the invisible world carries him farther in his spiritual course than all the weary steps

<sup>40</sup>Dr. J. Scott, p.62.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid. p.31.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid. p.447.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid. p.431.

<sup>44</sup>Barr in Dr. Scott's Sermons, p.xviii.

he took on earth. ... What bounds can we fix to his progress? Is he not capable of receiving endless information? Will not his other powers and faculties keep pace with his understanding? ... Is not God, to whom he gradually acquires a nearer resemblance, infinite in excellence? ... Does it not present a sublime image of our heavenly improvement, eternally approaching God, the model of it; and of God's inconceivable excellence, eternally approached, and still at an infinite distance beyond the closest imitation of it.<sup>45</sup>

Dr. Scott presents us with a picture of man gradually returning to God through eternity. He, of course, taught this in terms of the elect only, but, coupled with a doctrine of universal atonement, this teaching could quite easily give way to a doctrine of universal salvation. This life would be seen as primarily educative rather than probationary, an education continuing after physical death, all mankind ultimately being drawn to a knowledge of God. Dr. Scott himself admitted that, 'if the words 'God loves the world' in fact meant 'God loves all humanity' rather than 'God loves the church', then, in consistency, universal salvation must be believed and taught.<sup>46</sup> Such a doctrine was indeed to emerge much later in the Scott circle, especially in the theologies of T. Erskine, G. MacDonald, and J. Baldwin Brown.

In Scott's father then, as well as the orthodoxy of the day, against which Scott would react, we find seeds of thought which were broader than orthodoxy, and which, in Scott, would grow into heterodoxy. But probably the most pervasive element in Dr. Scott's life and theology, which reproduced itself in Scott, was the living, heartfelt nature of his religion. In Dr. Scott's family and pastoral life as well as in his theology there was this emphasis on personal communion with God. He called on his people to know God, not merely to know about Him, to seek close communion with God for the sake of knowing Him and becoming like Him, not for the sake of escaping divine wrath. 'We must seek to see his face', said Scott's father, 'to realise his presence. We must "take hold of him". We must wrestle with the Author of being and blessing.'<sup>47</sup>

<sup>45</sup>Dr. Scott, pp.101-2.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid. p.260.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid. pp.189-90.

b) Scott's university life (1818-1827)

Scott, at the age of thirteen, left Greenock and the immediate care of his parents, to study at the University of Glasgow. Because he did not actually matriculate until 1819,<sup>48</sup> the regularity of his attendance at the University, and his residence in Glasgow, during the 1818-19 academic session, are uncertain. But during the last week of October 1819, Scott put on the scarlet robe of Glasgow College and became a fulltime student. The college authorities allowing students to reside where they would, Scott's place of residence during his university years is unknown. The College itself, however, was situated on the Highstreet of Glasgow, 'a steep and filthy way of tall houses', wrote an ex-Glasgow student, 'abandoned to the poorest classes of the community, where dirty women in mitches, each followed by two or three squalid children, hold loud conversations all day long; and the alleys leading from which pour forth a flood of poverty, disease, and crime. On the left hand of the Highstreet, where it becomes a shade more respectable, a dark low-browed building, of three stories in height, fronts the street for two or three hundred yards. That is Glasgow College, or the University of Glasgow; for here, as also at Edinburgh, the University consists of a single College.'<sup>49</sup> The very filthiest lane in Glasgow ran parallel to one side of the College quadrangle, at a distance of 20 yards.<sup>50</sup> Scott, who in later life was to devote much energy to the amelioration of the working classes, could not but have been aware of the horror of industrialised Glasgow, and the inhuman conditions under which they had to live, conditions which gave way to frequent, infectious disease, torn family life, widespread immorality, and poor or non-existent education.<sup>51</sup> He could not but have been aware of the sharp divide between these conditions and the rising standards of the middle classes.

<sup>48</sup>University of Glasgow Archives.

<sup>49</sup>'College Life at Glasgow', Fraser's Magazine vol 53, May 1856 (London, 1856), p.505.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid. p.519.

<sup>51</sup>See D.F. MacDonald, Scotland's Shifting Population (Glasgow, 1937).

Thomas Carlyle, in later life a close friend of Scott's, expressed the unrest which he felt around 1819: 'Irving too, and all of us juniors, had the same feeling in different intensities, and spoken of only to one another: a sense that revolt against such a load of untruths, impostures, and quietly inane formalities would one day become indispensable.'<sup>52</sup> During Scott's second year in Glasgow the political atmosphere became increasingly explosive. There were cries for universal suffrage and annual parliaments, and, especially after the Peterloo Massacre in Manchester of 1819, threats of rebellion were uttered and secret societies extensively formed. Finally an uprising occurred in the spring of 1820. A Committee for forming a Provisional Government called for 'Liberty or Death'; sixty thousand Glasgow workers came out on strike, and many of them were drilled and armed; business almost came to a standstill; and shots were fired in the streets. Although the Government quickly crushed this political uprising, executing three of its leaders, and transporting others, it was not able to repress the spirit of reform, the call for greater equality.

Scott lived in a revolutionary age. The immediate background of the early 19th century was the French Revolution, with its explosive principles of 'liberty, equality, and fraternity'. As H. W. Meikle has clearly demonstrated, the French Revolution met with much acceptance in Scotland.<sup>53</sup> Sir James Mackintosh, for instance, the father of one of Scott's closest friends, in his Vindiciae Gallicae (1791), had vindicated the admirers of the Revolution and its principles. And although subsequent events produced a temporary conservative reaction, after Waterloo, when Scott was in his tenth year, the principles of liberty and equality again began to be heard. Scott thus began his university career with the cries of freedom for all, the vote for all, education for all, being clearly uttered by many voices in society, not least of all by the daily newspaper, the Scotsman, founded in 1817 to advocate radical reform.

<sup>52</sup>T. Carlyle, Reminiscences (London, 1972), p.213.

<sup>53</sup>H. W. Meikle, Scotland and the French Revolution (Glasgow, 1912).

Scott, as has been said, officially matriculated in late October 1819. Matriculation consisted of appearing at the professor's house a few days before his class was to begin and paying him the appropriate fee.<sup>54</sup> In 1819 Scott would have visited Josiah Walker, the Professor of Latin, and John Young, the Professor of Greek.<sup>55</sup> In return the professor would give the student a ticket of admission to his classroom; on which, at the end of session, he would certify the students attendance at class. Attendance at classes during the Arts degree appears to have been strictly adhered to. We even hear of roll call being taken at the early morning, 7:30 a.m. Greek and Latin classes.<sup>56</sup>

Scott was to say in 1849 that 'we forget to enter on the list of those who have educated us, along with fathers, preachers, and professors, the fascinating companion, the stubborn rival, the honest friend, our equals in age.'<sup>57</sup> Concerning Scott's university companions, very little is known, but one writer gave a general description of the student body at large:

What a strange mixed company the thirteen or fourteen hundred students of Glasgow College make up! Boys of eleven or twelve years old ...; men with grey hair, up to the age of fifty or sixty; great stout fellows from the plough; men in considerable number from the north of Ireland; lads from counting houses in town, who wish to improve their minds by a session at the logic class; English dissenters, excluded from the Universities of England, who have come down to the enlightened country where a Turk or a Bhuddist may graduate if he will; young men with high scholarship from the best public schools; and others not knowing a letter of Greek and hardly a word of Latin.<sup>58</sup>

More specifically it can be said that Scott's time at the university overlapped with that of his later friend, John McLeod Campbell, Campbell leaving the university in May 1820. There is no evidence, however, of a close relationship between the two during this period. More contemporary with Scott during his stay at university

<sup>54</sup>'College Life at Glasgow', p.506.

<sup>55</sup>University of Glasgow Archives.

<sup>56</sup>'College Life at Glasgow', pp.508.

<sup>57</sup>A.J. Scott, Suggestions on Female Education, p.4.

<sup>58</sup>'College Life at Glasgow', pp.506-7.



were some of the future leaders of the rigidly orthodox Free Church, men such as Robert S. Candlish, James Buchanan and James Begg. Even during his college days Candlish insisted on a more strict adherence to Westminster Confessionalism than was generally the case.<sup>59</sup> Scott, it seems, was primarily surrounded by the young men of the Evangelical party, which, in the 1820s, was poised for victory in the Scottish Kirk. One other classmate and university friend of Scott's, who should be mentioned, was William Gaskell, an English dissenter, and later a prominent leader of the Unitarian Church in England, and husband of Mrs. Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell the novelist. Gaskell was to be closely associated with Scott in later life.

In that Scott took a degree at Glasgow, he would have been required to follow the College curriculum, taking in his first year the Latin and Greek classes under Professors Walker and Young respectively.<sup>60</sup> These classes were approximately 250 to 300 students strong. Professor Young seems to have been a fascinating and eccentric character. T. Chalmers' biographer, Hanna, tells us that Professor Young 'frequently attended the Tron Church, and scarcely ever heard Dr. Chalmers without weeping like a child. Upon one occasion, he was so electrified that he leaped up from his seat upon the bench near the pulpit, and stood, breathless and motionless, gazing at the preacher till the burst was over, the tears all the while rolling down his cheeks. Upon another occasion, forgetful of time and place -- fancying himself perhaps in the theatre -- he rose and made a loud clapping of his hands in an ecstasy of admiration and delight.'<sup>61</sup> Young, in his Humanity class, tended to emphasise more a general appreciation of the classics than the technicalities of grammar, hoping to prepare his students for what was a philosophically oriented university course. Scott, who was later known for his ability in literature (especially

<sup>59</sup>W. Wilson, Memorials of R.S. Candlish (Edinburgh, 1880), p.14.

<sup>60</sup>See 'College Life at Glasgow', pp.506-8, for order and size of classes, etc. See University of Glasgow Archives for the professors under whom Scott studied.

<sup>61</sup>W. Hanna, Memoir of T. Chalmers vol I (Edinburgh, 1854), p.466.

English and Italian), in oratory, and classical scholarship, no doubt owed something to this respected scholar, who himself was a moving orator, and an enthusiast in English and Italian literature. Scott in May 1820 received a class prize in Young's Humanity class 'for exemplary diligence and talents, displayed throughout the session.'<sup>62</sup> Class prizes were decided upon by the students of the class.

Scott, in October 1820, matriculated in the second year Humanity class, again under Professor Young. But it was during this academic session in 1820 that the latter died, in his seventieth year. Scott also matriculated in Professor George Jardine's Logic class, a class which had from 150 to 180 students. Jardine was described by Begg, who was in Scott's year, as a 'gruff plain man, but still very kindly to the young men, an admirable teacher, and a thoroughly evangelical elder of the Church.'<sup>63</sup> Jardine was a chief formulator of Scotland's educational ideals during this period, and had set them forth in his Outlines of a Philosophical Education (1818 and 1825). He educated some of the most famous writers and philosophers of early 19th-century Scotland, men such as Francis Jeffrey, Sir William Hamilton, 'Christopher North', and J. G. Lockhart. Jardine aimed at a general, philosophical education which was distinct from the more specialised English university concentration on mathematics and classics.<sup>64</sup> There was thus a predominance of philosophy over other subjects in Scott's education, with even the other subjects taking on a more philosophical character. Examination hours, in which a method of Socratic questioning was employed, supplemented the lectures. The emphasis in these sessions was more on the common sense of subjects than on detail; they dealt with particular interests in a general way; they appealed to first principles. This metaphysical bent, common to Scottish education in general, but particularly

<sup>62</sup>W.I. Addison, Prize lists of the University of Glasgow (1777-1833) (Glasgow, 1902). And Glasgow Courier, 4th May 1820.

<sup>63</sup>T. Smith, Memoirs of James Begg vol I (Edinburgh, 1885), p.54.

<sup>64</sup>See G.E. Davie, The Democratic Intellect (Edinburgh, 1964), ch. I.

stressed by Professor Jardine, was always to be a striking feature in Scott's treatment of any subject. Concerning this aspect of Scott, T. Erskine wrote in 1848:

I know no man to whom I would go in any intellectual difficulty, with such expectations of help, for I have felt his acquaintance with the laws of human thought to be true and deep, and I have found his solutions always to consist in the development of those fundamental principles, which commend themselves as realities to every consciousness, and which are indeed the roots of all common knowledge. Hence I have found that his explanation of one thing never failed to throw light on all that I knew before, and that his method of illustrating a subject, apart even from the result at which he aimed and arrived, was full of instruction.<sup>65</sup>

Scott in his third year, 1821-22, studied Moral Philosophy under Professor James Mylne, and Mathematics under Professor James Millar. In the same year then Scott sat under both the son-in-law and the son of the radical Professor John Millar, who had sympathised with the revolutionary principles of 1789. The Millar-Mylne camp, with its more positive notions of humanity, rankled Scott's classmate, the Evangelical student, Begg, who described Mylne as teaching Moral Philosophy 'in a somewhat heathenish style, making man pass through all stages from savage to civilised, insisting on the progress of human nature, even in its primitive state, from worse to better, instead of from better to worse. In short, it was very much philosophy without the fall of man and apart from the Bible.'<sup>66</sup> It is significant that Scott was exposed to this non-Calvinistic, positive interpretation of man, thus offering him a clear alternative to the reigning Westminster Confessional notion of total depravity. Scott received a class prize in Mylne's Moral Philosophy class in May 1822, awarded 'for the best specimens of composition on the various subjects connected with the business of the class, and either prescribed by the Professor, or chosen by the students themselves; and for exemplary conduct and distinguished eminence.'<sup>67</sup> Scott spent his final Arts year studying Natural Philosophy under Professor William Meikleham.

<sup>65</sup>Testimonials to A.J. Scott (London, 1850), p.10.

<sup>66</sup>T. Smith, p.54.

<sup>67</sup>W.I. Addison, Prize Lists of University of Glasgow, May 1822.

Scott formally graduated M.A. from the University of Glasgow on 1st May 1824.<sup>68</sup> Relatively few students graduated in those days. A degree not being a prerequisite for the church ministry, most students were unwilling to submit themselves to the degree examinations, the majority of which were conducted orally. The small fee paid at graduation also was an obstacle for many of the poorer students. At no point in Scott's history does he appear to have been financially hindered. The Scott family seems to have been well enough endowed.

At the end of his four years' course in Arts, Scott began his theological studies at the Glasgow Divinity Hall in 1823. His theological training extended over the next four years, the curriculum of study for a minister at that time embracing at least eight years altogether. Attendance at Scottish Divinity Colleges in the early 19th century, as S. Mechie has pointed out, was highly irregular.<sup>69</sup> The Church recognised six years of 'irregular attendance' -- often just a euphemism for one day a session -- in place of four years of regular attendance. But Scott, receiving a Divinity class prize in his second year 'for eminence in the exercises of the class',<sup>70</sup> and then being licensed in 1827, seems to have been a regular attender. Stevenson MacGill, the Professor of Divinity, insisted upon quite regular attendance at the Divinity Hall, by students involved in the four year programme.<sup>71</sup> The theological training, however, was haphazard in a number of ways. In addition to no fees being paid,<sup>72</sup> and no degree being awarded, there was little or no instruction concerning suggested reading, the students being 'left quite at sea in the prosecution of their studies', complained Candlish.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>68</sup>Glasgow Courier, 4th May 1824.

<sup>69</sup>S. Mechie, 'Education for the Ministry in Scotland since the Reformation', SCHS vol XIV (Glasgow, 1963).

<sup>70</sup>W.I. Addison, April 1825. And Glasgow Courier, 3rd May 1825.

<sup>71</sup>According to Begg in T. Smith, p.55.

<sup>72</sup>It was decided by the University of Glasgow in May 1830 that divinity students should pay the Professor of Divinity an annual fee of two guineas.

<sup>73</sup>W. Wilson, p.22.

During a student's four years at the Divinity Hall, where there were more than a hundred students, he was expected to study Theology every year and Hebrew and Church History for two years each.<sup>74</sup> Scott's professors of Church History and Hebrew, McTurk and Gibb, were described by Begg as 'very ordinary men',<sup>75</sup> and of them very little is known. It is Stevenson MacGill, the Professor of Theology, of whom we hear much. Being an intimate friend of Dr. Scott's,<sup>76</sup> young Scott would have had personal access to the professor. Rather than a profound thinker, MacGill was primarily a pastor to his students, and a theologian who directed his energies in the direction of social concern. He was described by Scott's classmate as devoting himself to his students, always ready to make personal sacrifices and to offer kind advice on all subjects, 'including diet, recommending the students, amongst other things, to eat pease-brose, in imitation of his own example.'<sup>77</sup> MacGill primarily aimed at his students' spiritual improvement, the making of pastors and preachers, rather than learned theologians. His Letters to a Young Clergyman (1820), for instance, dedicated to Hannah More, concerned itself primarily with 'spotlessness of life'. Scott's professor was a great philanthropist, concerned with the comforts and cure of the sick, especially the insane, and the reform of criminals. His Thoughts on Prisons (1809) advocated extensive reforms in the prison system of his day. MacGill also called for reform in the Church, leading the Evangelical attack on pluralities.

Although a social and ecclesiastical reformer, MacGill was a staunch upholder of Westminster orthodoxy. His appointment as professor had been carried in the face of opposition, by the influence of the Evangelical party. Scott's classmate and later leader of the Free Church, James Begg, said of MacGill: 'Perhaps no man did more in his day to turn the tide in Scotland in favour of Evangelicalism.'<sup>78</sup> Although Scott might well have admired and

<sup>74</sup>'College Life at Glasgow', pp.512-13.

<sup>75</sup>T. Smith, p.54.

<sup>76</sup>R. Smith, see preface.

<sup>77</sup>T. Smith, p.54.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid. p.55.

been influenced by his professor's social and pastoral concern, he met nothing but the rigid Westminster Calvinism of the day in MacGill's theology. The Professor's theological lectures followed, with very few exceptions, the Westminster Confession of Faith.<sup>79</sup>

In light of Scott's later recognised ability in so many intellectual fields, it is very likely that, during his university career, he was busy in academic activities outside his prescribed course work. Certainly this was the case with McLeod Campbell,<sup>80</sup> and must have been so with Scott as well. He was described as always having been 'an omnivorous reader and enthusiastic student of literature.'<sup>81</sup> The Romantic revival in literature was at this time being fostered in Scotland by Sir Walter Scott. Collins of Glasgow had in 1819 published Sir Walter's Ivanhoe.<sup>82</sup> Other celebrated authors on the Collins' list during this period were Scott's later friends, T. Erskine whom Scott was to meet in 1826, and E. Irving whom, in fact, Scott met during his Glasgow days, although their friendship was not to blossom until 1828. Irving, during Scott's first university year, had joined Chalmers as assistant at St. John's parish, remaining with him until 1822. Irving had come to know Scott's older friend, Robert Story of Roseneath, whom he occasionally visited for walking excursions in the country. Scott also, during these years, took advantage of walking the banks of the Gareloch, as he often did with members of his circle in future years. Here, we are told, he increasingly 'looked questions in the face -- questions heretofore hushed, but now demanding an answer.'<sup>83</sup>

The most prolific author in Glasgow, during Scott's time at the University, was Thomas Chalmers, also publishing through Collins. Chalmers, who was later named as one of the two men who

<sup>79</sup> See Stevenson MacGill's testimony to the Universities Commission, 5 Jan 1827, Evidences, Universities of Scotland, vol II, University of Glasgow (London, 1837), pp.55-7.

<sup>80</sup> J.M. Campbell, Reminiscences and Reflections (London, 1873), p.3.

<sup>81</sup> D.N.B. article on A.J. Scott.

<sup>82</sup> D. Keir, The House of Collins (London, 1952), pp.45-83.

<sup>83</sup> J. Finlayson, 'Professor A.J. Scott', Owens College Magazine vol 13, no. 3 (Manchester, 1881), p.109.

most affected Scott,<sup>84</sup> was at this time enjoying a popularity and influence without parallel in Glasgow. W. Hanna wrote of the admiration for the preacher at Glasgow University, and provides us with a student's description of the reception given Chalmers at the College Chapel:

The College courts became crowded with students and others not connected with the University about an hour before the commencement of the service. So soon as the doors were opened, the rush towards them was tremendous.<sup>85</sup>

Although Chalmers 'deeply loved' Scott's father and occasionally met and corresponded with Scott in later years, it is not certain that they knew each other in Glasgow. But for the popular writer and preacher of St. John's to exert a strong influence on the young Glasgow divinity student, a personal relationship would not have been necessary.

Although Chalmers' Evangelicalism was more genial than that of the dogmatic leader of the Evangelical party, Andrew Thomson, or that of the young but rising stars of Evangelicalism, Scott's contemporaries, Candlish, Cunningham and Begg, Chalmers' theology was, nevertheless, an orthodoxy based on the Westminster Catechisms. Scott would have met with nothing in Chalmers' theology that he had not already found in his father's preaching or in Professor MacGill's lecturing. More likely would it have been Chalmers' emphasis on education and his concern for the working classes that inspired Scott, who himself was later to be absorbed in similar concerns. Chalmers was the first to offer services specifically geared to the working classes,<sup>86</sup> and education was always a top priority for him in St. John's parish, one of the poorest in industrialised Glasgow. The day after the church was opened, in fact, in September 1819, it was decided to build two parish schools; other schools soon followed.<sup>87</sup>

<sup>84</sup>J. Johnson, George MacDonald (London, 1906), p.37.

<sup>85</sup>W. Hanna, Memoirs of Chalmers vol I, p.465.

<sup>86</sup>W.G. Enright, 'Urbanization and the Evangelical Pulpit in 19th-century Scotland', Church History vol 47, no. 4 (America, 1978), p.405.

<sup>87</sup>Hanna, Memoirs of T. Chalmers vol I, p.528.

c) The Scott-Erskine relationship begins, 1826.

Before completing his divinity training at Glasgow, Scott in 1826, spent a session, or part of it, in Edinburgh, attending classes at the University, as was often the case with Glasgow divinity students. While in Edinburgh, holding a tutorship in the family of one of Thomas Erskine's friends, he met Erskine.<sup>88</sup> This early introduction to Erskine of Linlathen resulted in a lifelong intimacy. Erskine later recalled his first meeting with Scott: 'When I first met him, he opened himself to me, delighted apparently both to give and to receive confidence and intimacy.'<sup>89</sup> This was a significant meeting in the lives of both men. Scott, whom Julia Wedgwood described as 'one of the deepest thinkers of our day, and one least prone to such expression', was later to say to Erskine: 'Everything that reminds me of God reminds me of you.'<sup>90</sup> And Principal Shairp of St. Andrews' University wrote in the Scotsman after Erskine's death in 1870: 'For Mr. Scott, Mr. Erskine entertained the highest regard and admiration, always speaking of him as the man with the most powerful grasp of spiritual truth whom he had ever known.'<sup>91</sup> These statements clearly indicate the closeness of, and the mutual value attached to, the relationship which was to follow this first meeting in 1826.

By 1826 Erskine had become a well known lay theologian in Scotland. His uncle, John Erskine, had been for a time leader of the National Kirk's Evangelical party, but Erskine himself was reared at the home of his maternal grandmother, an Episcopalian and a Jacobite. His grandmother's piety, free from presbyterian rigidity, appears to have made a deep impression on Erskine. This, combined with some schooling in Durham, provided a background which was distinct from the Westminster Calvinism of Scotland. In

<sup>88</sup>Hanna, Letters of T. Erskine vol I (Edinburgh, 1877), p.130. The D.N.B. article on Scott incorrectly states that Scott did not make Erskine's acquaintance until 1828.

<sup>89</sup>Hanna, Letters of Erskine vol II, p.183.

<sup>90</sup>J. Wedgwood, Nineteenth Century Teachers (London, 1909), p.74.

<sup>91</sup>Scotsman, 31 March 1870. Also, H.F. Henderson in Erskine of Linlathen (Edinburgh, 1899), p.24, lists Scott as one of the living teachers who most profoundly influenced Erskine.



1816 Erskine came into possession of the Linlathen family estate, and thenceforward gave himself up to a life of study and thought, quite free from the restriction of church articles and confessions. Erskine associated himself in Dundee with an Independent Chapel until, in 1828, with the publication of his Unconditional Freeness of the Gospel, he was asked to withdraw from the congregation. In his personal religious life he daily followed the psalms and lessons appointed by the Book of Common Prayer. Also, he made available premises in Broughty Ferry for establishing an episcopal congregation, where he often communicated. Erskine also exercised his rights as a heritor of the Mains parish church on the outskirts of Dundee, and frequently attended the Monifieth parish church. On the continent, where he travelled widely, especially in the early 1820s, his contact was with the Reformed Churches, and in Paris with various 'Revival' groups of the time. These diverse contacts gave Erskine's theology much breadth, and a particularly non-Westminster flavour. Writing from the continent in 1827, Erskine spoke of liking 'the German mind better than the mind of any other nation, our own not excepted. We are very meagre in comparison of them,' said Erskine.<sup>92</sup> Scott, at the age of 21, probably for the first time, had entered friendship with a deep religious thinker who represented something much broader than the Scottish Calvinism upon which he had been reared.

Before meeting Erskine in 1826, Scott may well have read his major work, Remarks on the Internal Evidence for the Truth of Revealed Religion, first published in 1820, and going through nine editions by 1829. In this book, Erskine affirmed that there is in man a spiritual faculty which enables him to respond to true divine revelation. It was very similar to Coleridge's 'Reason' and to Schleiermacher's 'Christian consciousness'. Principal Tulloch, in fact, later honoured Erskine as an apostle of the 'Christian consciousness' in Scotland.<sup>93</sup>

Erskine also asserted that there is 'an intelligible and

<sup>92</sup>Hanna, Letters of Erskine vol I, p.115.

<sup>93</sup>J. Tulloch, Movements of Religious Thought (New York, 1971), p.138.

necessary connexion' between true doctrine and the character of God, and that the belief in true doctrine has a necessary tendency to bring the character of man into harmony with that of God.<sup>94</sup> In England Coleridge was similarly saying in Aids to Reflection (1825) that in testing a doctrine one should ask, 'Will the belief tend to the improvement of any of my moral or intellectual faculties?'<sup>95</sup> The only sure evidence of any truth is in how it operates in a man's life. Erskine asserted that the knowledge communicated by revelation is a moral knowledge of God, and it has been communicated in order to produce a moral effect upon our characters. 'When we are considering a religious doctrine,' wrote Erskine, 'our questions ought to be, first, What view does this doctrine give of the character of God, in relation to sinners? And secondly, What influence is the belief of it calculated to exercise on the character of man?'<sup>96</sup> Erskine's central concern was sanctification, a partaking of the moral character of God. 'The great argument for the truth of Christianity lies in the sanctifying influence of its doctrines.'<sup>97</sup> All other emphases served this central focus. Erskine, at this early stage, proclaimed the gospel message in terms of universal pardon, which he believed would produce a response of obedience and holiness in man. 'The Monarch of the Universe has proclaimed a general amnesty of rebellion, whether we give or withhold our belief or our attention.' Belief in the pardon 'implants in the heart the love of God and the love of man, which is only another name for spiritual health.'<sup>98</sup> Erskine's major thrust was towards an acquaintance with the loving nature of God, which in turn would transform the moral character of man.

Such then was the Erskine with whom Scott entered close friendship in 1826. It should also be noted that in 1822 Erskine had written the introductory essay to a new edition of The Works

<sup>94</sup>T. Erskine, Remarks on the Internal Evidence for the Truth of Revealed Religion (Edinburgh, 1829), p.20.

<sup>95</sup>S.T. Coleridge, Aids to Reflection (Edinburgh, 1905), p.178.

<sup>96</sup>Erskine, pp.97-9.

<sup>97</sup>Ibid. p.114.

<sup>98</sup>Ibid. pp.196-7.

of Gambold, a product of 18th-century Moravian piety. Erskine's own religion was always to be coloured by a type of mysticism, an interiorised faith, not unlike the heartfelt Moravian piety.

Not long after the commencement of the Scott-Erskine relationship, a new hope expressed itself in Erskine, which was later to dominate his theology. Writing to his sister in January 1827, Erskine stated: 'I have a hope (which I would not willingly think contrary to the revelation of mercy) of the ultimate salvation of all. I trust that He who came to bruise the serpent's head will not cease His work of compassion until He has expelled the fatal poison from every individual of our race.'<sup>99</sup> There is no indication that this new emphasis came directly from Scott. It is, however, worth noting the direction and emphasis of Erskine's theology shortly after the birth of this relationship of mutual influence.

d) Scott's licensing and early preaching, and the beginning of the Scott-Campbell relationship, 1827.

Scott completed his theological training in May 1827. Divinity students, having completed their course of studies, had next to appear before a Board of Examiners appointed by the General Assembly, after which they were taken on 'trials for license' by their home presbytery. Scott's 'trials' before the Presbytery of Paisley consisted of examinations on the subjects taught at the theological college, and the delivery of five discourses prescribed by the Presbytery. On the 27th September 1827 the Presbytery of Paisley 'declared their entire approval' of Scott's trials and judged him 'a fit person to receive a licence to preach the gospel. He then gave satisfying answers to the questions appointed to be put to candidates for licence, and subscribed the Formula; and the Act of 1759 having been read to him, the Moderator, in name and by appointment of the Presbytery, did licence said Alexander John Scott, to preach the Gospel within the bounds of this Presbytery, or wherever he may be regularly called.'<sup>100</sup> Thus, after committing himself to the Westminster Standards of the Church, Scott was

<sup>99</sup>Hanna, Letters of Erskine vol I, p.92.

<sup>100</sup>Minutes of the Presbytery of Paisley (1823-36), the 26th to the 27th September 1827. Scottish Records Office CH2 294 14.

licensed to preach. But Scott's licensing did not proceed as smoothly as the Presbytery minutes suggest. Campbell explained to Story on the 2nd October 1827:

Sandy Scott is licensed, with great approbation; the old Dr. (Scott) quite delighted; although there was one of his subjects on which Sandy was led naturally to consider the doctrine in which they differ, and he did not think he would be faithful in avoiding it; so he did not. As you are from home Sandy preaches first for me. Oh the Lord give him faith, love, and a sound mind. Those who preach the truth in its simplicity have need to strengthen one another by prayer; for there is a spirit of hostility to it stirring up.<sup>101</sup>

Unfortunately, Campbell did not state what exactly that point of difference was. The tone of the letter, however, points to a substantial degree of agreement between Scott, Campbell, and Story, at this time. It also indicates that Scott is already speaking according to his conscience, and articulating his doctrinal differences from the norm.

In Scotland at this time, candidates for the ministry did not preach until they were licensed to do so by their presbytery. This, therefore, was a transition point in young Scott's career. Campbell recounted Scott's second Sunday:

I had the intermission of a day from preaching last Sabbath, which I did not regret, as my pulpit was occupied by my young friend Mr. Scott. I heard him with peculiar delight. His preaching, though his second Sabbath, was with a sober, solemn composure, that would have seemed a delightful attainment in a man of much experience. The progress he has already made in the divine life, the elevation and clearness of his views, the spirit of love which he breathes in every word, and the single-eyed devotedness to his Master's glory, are to me most delightful illustrations of the power of simple faith.<sup>102</sup>

Scott remained for some time in the West of Scotland preaching here and there, and assisting Story at Roseneath, and Campbell at Row, attaining a degree of popularity as a preacher.<sup>103</sup>

<sup>101</sup>D. Campbell, Memorials of J. McLeod Campbell vol I (London, 1877), pp.42-3.

<sup>102</sup>J. McLeod Campbell, Reminiscences (London, 1873), p.22.

<sup>103</sup>D. Campbell, Memorials vol I, pp.42-3. And J. Hunter, 'Alexander Scott' in The Expositor vol XXI, 8th series (London, 1921), p.394.

In 1866 Campbell recalled one of Scott's earliest sermons at Greenock, when he preached on the words, "I have given him a witness to the people". Scott, said Campbell, directed people to Christ as 'the one perfect witness' to God, 'witnessing for God in contradiction to all men's distrust and suspicions and hard thoughts of God.'<sup>104</sup> Scott emphasised the loving humanity of Christ as the place where God alone is revealed, as opposed to Westminster Calvinism's 'hard thoughts of God' as a predestinating Sovereign whose love was less than human. Scott's incarnational focus on Christ as 'the one perfect witness' stood in sharp contrast to the penal substitutionary doctrine of atonement then prevalent in Scotland. The doctrine of atonement was given central place in Scottish theology at the time, incarnation being dragged in only to add a certain sufficiency to the sacrifice of the cross. Here in 1827 then the first signs of Scott's developing Christ-centred theology can be seen.

Another characteristic emphasis of Scott, which appeared even at this early stage, was his doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Campbell, in October 1827, related to his father how he had been struck by Scott's thoughts on the influences of the Spirit.<sup>105</sup> And a few years later in a letter to Chalmers, Campbell dated back to this period, when he first came close to Scott, the beginning of his belief that the spiritual gifts of Pentecost should be enjoyed by the Church in all ages.<sup>106</sup> By December 1827 Campbell decided to preach on the pouring out of the Spirit on the first Sunday of the new year, and to encourage his people to pray for an 'abundant outpouring'.<sup>107</sup>

As with Scott and Erskine, Campbell's religious background had also been of a heartfelt nature. His father, a minister of the Moderate party, was nevertheless a man of warm personal religion. Campbell had become the minister of Row parish in 1825. We are told in his Reminiscences that it was between the autumns of 1826

<sup>104</sup>D. Campbell, Memorials vol II, p.125.

<sup>105</sup>D. Campbell, Memorials vol I, p.43.

<sup>106</sup>A letter from Campbell to Chalmers, April 1830. New College MSS CHA 4.134.21.

<sup>107</sup>D. Campbell, Memorials vol I, p.48.

and 1827 that his teaching took on a distinctive character. Campbell rightly described his own interest in doctrine as being primarily pastoral:

I was gradually taught to see that so long as the individual is uncertain of being the subject of love to his God, and is still without any sure hold of his personal safety in the prospect of eternity, it is vain to attempt to induce him to serve God under the power of any purer motive than the desire to win God's love for himself, and so to secure his own happiness. ... I accordingly began to urge on my own people, that in order to their being free to serve God -- in order to their being in a condition to act purely, under the influence of love to Him, and delight in what He is, their first step in religion would require to be, resting assured of his love in Christ to them as individuals, and of their individually having eternal life given to them in Christ.<sup>108</sup>

Campbell was encouraging his people to look away from themselves to the love of God. Assurance of faith was to be gained by looking at God and His love. It was late summer 1827, close to the time of Scott's licensing in September, that Campbell became aware of opposition to his teaching on assurance. By the end of 1827 'most of the Glasgow ministers', wrote Campbell, 'were preaching with pointed reference to what I taught.'<sup>109</sup>

It should be noticed in tracing the development of Campbell's theology that it was not until after the commencement of the Scott-Campbell friendship, which began around the time of Scott's licensing in September 1827, that Campbell came to a deeper consideration of the extent of the atonement.<sup>110</sup> It was not until the controversy over 'Assurance', late 1827 and early 1828, that it became clear to Campbell, 'that unless Christ had died for all, and unless the Gospel announced Him as the gift of God to every human being ... there was no foundation in the record of God for the Assurance which I demanded, and which I saw to be essential to true holiness.'<sup>111</sup> Until the end of 1827, assurance of faith had been Campbell's prominent theme. For the next two years he was to dwell primarily

<sup>108</sup> J.M. Campbell, Reminiscences, pp.18-19.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid. p.21.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid. p.27.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid. p.24.

on the universality of pardon offered in Christ. Although a direct connexion cannot be drawn between the commencement of the Scott-Campbell friendship and the shift in emphasis in Campbell's preaching, for Campbell does not acknowledge such a direct influence at this point, and Scott's theology is only in embryo at this stage, it seems more than coincidence that the two events are contemporaneous. We know that Scott by this stage was preaching Christ alone as 'the one perfect witness' of what God is to man, and that Campbell had remarked upon this emphasis, and we know that Scott had already entered a friendship of acknowledged mutual influence with Erskine, who had for some time been preaching a universal pardon. These two facts argue in favour of a connexion between the beginning of Scott's friendship with Campbell and the latter's shift in emphasis. Scott, considered by Campbell, even in these early years, to stand highest intellectually,<sup>112</sup> may well be seen to have enabled Campbell, the pastor, to work out some of the theological implications of his preaching. Campbell was later to say of Scott:

He has indeed always, beyond any other man that I have known, impressed me with a sense of mental superiority; -- and this, whether that superiority has been manifested in the facility with which he has grasped the thoughts of others, and placed himself in their point of vision, or in the power and insight characteristic of the independent action of his own mind.<sup>113</sup>

e) Robert Story of Roseneath

Living across the Gareloch from Row was Robert Story, the minister of Roseneath parish since 1815. Story, as has been mentioned, was friendly with Dr. Scott, and had known young Scott from his boyhood. Principal R. H. Story of Glasgow, Story's son, and in later years a friend of Scott's, recalled in 1862 that his father's 'words and counsels had been of no slight value' to young Scott.<sup>114</sup>

<sup>112</sup>The Daily News, 3 June 1862. Letter from Campbell to Editor.

<sup>113</sup>Testimonials to A. J. Scott (Edinburgh, 1856), p.25.

<sup>114</sup>R.H. Story, Memoir of Robert Story, pp.187-88.

Story and Campbell had developed a close friendship, and often met together at the home of the devout Isabella Campbell. Story later published a memoir of Isabella, entitled Peace in Believing (1829), which depicted a life of holiness and suffering, of prayer and almost mystic communion with God. The Campbell-Story relationship was at this time primarily one of 'an ever deepening and strengthening earnestness and piety.'<sup>115</sup>

Like Campbell, Story had been occupied with the subject of 'Assurance'. He was dissatisfied with the popular teaching which encouraged people to look for the ground of assurance in themselves, in their own feelings and convictions, rather than in God. In the final solution of his difficulties he was largely indebted to Alan Ker of Greenock, Scott's future father-in-law and one of Dr. Scott's elders.<sup>116</sup> Ker had helped him to see that the certainty of salvation is not in what we are, but in what God is. Between Greenock, Roseneath, and Row, at this time, there was a fascinating network of cross-influences between such characters as Ker, Story, Campbell, and Scott.

Story had not come to a position of universal atonement when, in late summer 1827, just before Scott's licensing, illness enforced his absence from the parish for nine months. But during Story's time of recuperation in England, he also came to see that universal atonement was the only true foundation of all assurance. The individual could feel assured of his own salvation only through his belief in the universal offer of it. Principal Story, I think incorrectly, stated that his father came to this position alone. In light of the memoirs and biographies of those concerned, it can be clearly seen that there was, by this time, constant communication between Scott, Campbell, Ker and Story, in one form or another. To speak of any of these men, by this stage, 'coming to a position alone' is inadequate. Principal Story did, however, mention two books, both of a pietist strain, which were much in Story's mind during this period of transition, one of which was The Works of Gambold with the introductory essay by Scott's new-found friend,

<sup>115</sup>Ibid. p.106.

<sup>116</sup>Ibid. p.99.



T. Erskine. It seems to have been the warm heartfelt emphasis on the love of God, which Story found in Alan Ker, Isabella Campbell, and the writings of Gambold, which served as the primary impulse in altering Story's theology.

Upon Story's return to Roseneath he began to preach according to his new conviction. All sorts of exaggerated rumours circulated around the country concerning Story's new theology. The following is taken from a letter to Story from a clergyman of the Western isles, which reveals the colourful state of the rumours at this time:

It was reported that you declared from the pulpit that you had been preaching false doctrines to your flock hitherto, and that you now recanted. It was said that you committed to the flames all the books procured for the children of the parish; then from the books it came to be said it was the sermons you burned; and from the actual burning it has come lately to the intention of doing so. It is said that you reject all human aid and knowledge, and deem it impious, not only to write sermons, but even to make any preparation before entering the pulpit. I heard it said a few days ago, that you completely did away with the doctrine of election, and taught, or at least, implied in your preaching the doctrine of Universal Salvation; that you discarded everything like duty altogether, and many such things.<sup>117</sup>

f) Scott's father-in-law, Alan Ker

Further mention should be made here of the devout man to whom Story was indebted, Alan Ker, Scott's future father-in-law. Since Ker was an elder of Dr. Scott's Middle Parish Kirk, and Scott was to marry Ker's daughter, Ann Ker, in December 1830, it is safe to assume that there was a certain degree of intercommunion between the Scotts and the Kers even before the marriage took place, and that Ker's profound spirit made an impact on Scott, as it did on most within his sphere.<sup>118</sup>

Mrs. Ker was described as 'a large-hearted motherly woman, as clear and just in mind as she was warm and sincere in affection.'<sup>119</sup> The Ker family was marked by laughter and humour as well as deep

<sup>117</sup> Ibid. p.123.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid. pp.94-99

<sup>119</sup> Ibid. pp.94.

personal religion. We hear of Mrs. Ker telling Story, who was a frequent and favoured guest at the Ker house, that she was hesitant to take him into her house before the celebration of the Sacrament, for fear that in his presence they would indulge in 'a levity which would be reprehensible on the eve of the communion.' There are numerous accounts of Alan Ker's humorous bent which sometimes took the form of practical jokes, often abetted by William Motherwell, the poet and friend of James Hogg. In younger life Ker had anonymously published in the Greenock papers an elaborate description of the 'Trottle Plant', a member of the British Flora, claimed Ker, totally unknown to botanists. When the description was copied into the contemporary journals some of Ker's friends, knowing the real author, inserted an advertisement indicating where the public might purchase such plants. Immediately there flooded in orders for this non-existent plant, and Ker was forced to undeceive the public by exposing himself.

But Ker, in fact, became a much respected person in Greenock, his opinion, wrote Principal Story, being 'regarded with no little deference'.<sup>120</sup> For a time he was the Chief Magistrate of Greenock, and, after his death, a public school in the town was named after him.<sup>121</sup> Story in later life began a memoir of Ker which his own death unfortunately cut short. Principal Story described Ker as an excellent classical scholar, a reader in French and Italian, a learned musician, and a man who had a wide acquaintance with the facts and theories of physical science. Another spoke of 'his array of ancient and modern literature', his 'shrewd and comprehensive views on politics and philanthropy', his 'fresh and original landscapes of the journey of human life, his extraordinary appreciation of character', 'his boundless, active, buoyant, happy benevolence', and his 'progressive holiness'.<sup>122</sup> This last attribute was what Principal Story most remarked on in describing his father's indebtedness to Ker, the 'earnest and

<sup>120</sup>Ibid. p.95.

<sup>121</sup>Greenock Advertiser, Memorable Events in Greenock (Greenock, 1883), 10th June 1814, and 2 May 1829.

<sup>122</sup>R.H. Story, p.95.

unaffected godliness' which 'pervaded and harmonised his whole being. His strong intellectual powers, too, guided by his deep spiritual insight and experience, enabled him to clear up many a misty point in the horizon of truth, which, to Story's eager, but less piercing gaze, seemed lost in cloud-land. Especially, one disposed too often to take the shadowed, and not the sunlit view of life, found in Ker a perpetual and unshaken witness to the heartfelt peace and the strength to suffer, found in believing on God as revealed in Jesus Christ.'<sup>123</sup>

Concerning Ker's influence on Scott, it can at least be said that the broad education and religious consciousness of the Ker family were determining factors in the life of Scott's wife, and, thereby, eventually affected Scott himself. Certainly Ann Scott was later to display much of her father's theological acumen.

g) Scott begins to doubt the Kirk's Westminster Confessionalism, late 1827.

Not long after his licensing in September 1827, Scott began to give up his preaching engagements, and to think that he could no longer conscientiously continue his ministerial career. 'He was passing through a season of darkness and doubt,' wrote his biographer and later disciple, J. Hunter. 'He had ceased to believe in the traditional Calvinism of the Scottish Kirk.'<sup>124</sup> Scott's doubt was one of the first signs of the theological erosion of Westminster Calvinism in Scotland. The disturbance caused by Scott's doubt was but a ripple compared to the tidal wave of discontent which occurred later in the century, but, especially in light of its early date, Scott's theological doubt is of significance. By December 1827 we find him in Edinburgh having relinquished the idea of ministry.<sup>125</sup> 'I was then studying medicine,' wrote Scott, 'having cast away the help of many influential friends and all the advantage of

<sup>123</sup>Ibid. pp.97-8.

<sup>124</sup>J. Hunter, p.394.

<sup>125</sup>D. Campbell, Memorials I, p.47.

a long career of study, preparatory to the ecclesiastical profession, in consequence of my inability to assent to the claims which the Scotch church makes for herself.<sup>126</sup>

Concerning Scott's situation, Campbell wrote in the early spring of 1828:

Having shaken himself loose from systems, and entering upon the study of the Word for himself, there are many things received among us which seem to him brought into doubt. ... Not that these doubts affect the ground of peace or the messages of peace; but being concerning matters of much importance, particularly as affecting the character of Christ's church, it is the bounden duty of every steward of the oracles of God to seek to know the mind of the Spirit as respects them. It often occurs in the history of deep thinking minds, particularly when pressed by a sense of duty to prove all things, that views for a time rise before them, and exceedingly perplex, which often subsequently a ray of divine light shows in an entirely new aspect.<sup>127</sup>

Scott, by this stage, was standing in opposition to the orthodoxy of the day, and basing much of his opposition on his absorbing study of the Scriptures. Campbell, on the other hand, still placed himself within the National Kirk and accepted the Confession's theology and ecclesiology as basically his. He did, however, consider himself closer to Scott than to someone like Irving, who was already developing a higher doctrine of the visible Church, quite consistent with aspects of the Westminster Confession's ecclesiology.<sup>128</sup> Writing to Story in April 1828, Campbell stated:

I see that you and I occupy more common ground with Sandy than Irving. ... Most fully do I go along with you in what you say to dearest Alan Ker as to the need of reformation in the Protestantism of the present day.<sup>129</sup>

It is difficult to arrive at a perfectly clear understanding of Scott's doubts in early 1828, but these become increasingly

<sup>126</sup> A.J. Scott in The Daily News, 26th May 1862.

<sup>127</sup> D. Campbell, Memorials I, p.57.

<sup>128</sup> See Westminster Confession ch. XXX, concerning the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven being committed to the Church.

<sup>129</sup> D. Campbell, Memorials I, p.56.

clear over the next few years of his life. The fragments given of dissatisfaction with Westminster orthodoxy and an increasingly Scriptural emphasis are consistent with Scott's later, more clearly articulated theology. Two antitheses appear to have been at work in Scott, early in 1828. One was the Scripture versus tradition antithesis which was to characterise much of later 19th-century religious liberalism in its opposition to dogmatism and High Church theology. The other, very much an overspill from the 18th century was the reason versus authority antithesis. What characterised the Enlightenment was not so much the omnipotence of reason as the 'omnicompetence of criticism',<sup>130</sup> the belief that everything is properly subject to rational criticism. 18th-century rationalism with its confidence in the possibilities of inquiry can be traced in Scott's 'sense of duty to prove all things', as Campbell put it. Coleridge wrote something in Aids to Reflection (1825) which would have greatly comforted Scott during this period, if, in fact, it had not actually influenced him, for Coleridge was later named as one of the two men who most affected Scott.<sup>131</sup> Coleridge said that the following was 'worthy to be framed and hung up in the library of every theological student':

When there is a great deal of smoke, and no clear flame, it argues much moisture in the matter, yet it witnesseth certainly that there is fire there; and therefore dubious questioning is a much better evidence, than that senseless deadness which most take for believing. ... Never be afraid to doubt, if only you have the disposition to believe, and doubt in order that you may end in believing the Truth.<sup>132</sup>

h) Scott introduces Campbell to Erskine

It seems to have been in the spring of 1828, during Scott's period of questioning, that he introduced Campbell to Erskine in

<sup>130</sup>P. Gay, The Enlightenment, an Interpretation (New York, 1966), pp. 141 ff., as quoted by C. Welch, Protestant Thought in the 19th Century vol I (London, 1972), p.32.

<sup>131</sup>J. Johnson, p.37.

<sup>132</sup>S.T. Coleridge, Aids to Reflection, pp.88-89.

Edinburgh. In 1870 Campbell recounted how 'dear Scott took me to him, as to one who knew that "love of God" in which we were seeing eye to eye.'<sup>133</sup> Campbell referred a number of times in later life to the separate theological development of each member of this triple friendship, who, when they came together in 1827 and 1828, found agreement on the central doctrine of God's love. 'That historical independence', wrote Campbell, 'which we mark when two minds, working apart and without interchange of thought, arrive at the same conclusions, is always an interesting and striking fact when it occurs; and it did occur as to Scott and myself; and also as to Mr. Erskine and me, and I believe too as to Mr. Erskine and Scott.'<sup>134</sup> Any suggestion that one of these men was the disciple of one of the others is unwarranted. Throughout their entire lives these three men carried on relationships of mutual influence with one another. Upon Erskine's death, Campbell wrote:

There has been taken from me this beloved friend, who for 43 years has occupied in my higher life a special place which only one other -- Mr. Scott -- has shared with him. ... I met them both 43 years ago, about the same time, as the first who gave a full response to all that was in my heart of the joy in God through Jesus Christ; having before -- each, and each separately -- come to the same light of the divine love in which I was rejoicing.<sup>135</sup>

All through life each of these three friends was to find in the other two what he found in no one else. Although possessing different degrees of intellect, pastoral ability, spiritual insight, etc., they were very much at one in their burning conviction that the love of God was at the very heart of all true doctrine and religious life.

1) The summer of 1828 with Erskine and Campbell, and the beginning of the Scott-Irving relationship.

<sup>133</sup>D. Campbell, Memorials I, p.62. J. Finlayson incorrectly states that it was at Row in the middle of 1828 that Scott first introduced Campbell to Erskine.

<sup>134</sup>Hanna, Letters of Erskine I, p.130.

<sup>135</sup>D. Campbell, Memorials II, pp.273-4.

In the summer of 1828, Erskine accompanied Scott to Greenock on a visit to his father. This time together must have been strengthening for the two men who were, for most of the time, quite isolated in their heterodoxy. As one of Scott's biographers put it, Scott's 'uninterrupted intercourse with one who could sympathise and console' must have been soothing to the medical student, 'in his agitated frame of mind at this transition period, plunged in doubts and beset by difficulties.'<sup>136</sup> Scott and Erskine spent a good deal of time that summer on the West coast, often with Campbell. Edward Irving was also to join them for a little while. In 1862, Campbell, recalling this period in their lives, said that in the eyes of Erskine, Irving and himself, Scott 'stood highest in our thoughts, considering him intellectually, and was also felt by us to be deeply under the power of that love of truth and devoted faithfulness to conviction which we all sought to cherish.'<sup>137</sup>

Row was becoming a rallying point for those who proclaimed the universal love of God, and, especially during the summer months, young inquiring divinity students gathered round Campbell's church. Scott again did some preaching in Row, although, as Campbell tells us, 'Mr. Erskine used to say in the Row days that whoever preached, even when it was Mr. Scott, he wished for me to add the personal application. Searching personal application was indeed the secret of the interest -- as well as of the opposition -- which my preaching then awakened.'<sup>138</sup> Campbell was indeed the pastor, and he excelled in 'personal application', but his theology, at this point, greatly lacked consistency. In Campbell, as we have seen, there was a marked conservative sympathy for the Scottish Church and its Confession of Faith. At this stage, he simply held a modified Westminster Calvinism. Contradictorily Campbell asserted a substitutionary view of atonement and a Calvinist doctrine of election, together with his personal assurance of God's universal love.<sup>139</sup>

<sup>136</sup>J. Finlayson, 'Professor A.J. Scott', The Owens College Magazine vol XIII, June 1881, No. 3, p.111.

<sup>137</sup>The Daily News, 3rd June 1862.

<sup>138</sup>D. Campbell, Memorials II, p.69.

<sup>139</sup>See J.M. Campbell, Sermons and Lectures (Greenock, 1831).

By the summer of 1828 Erskine's Unconditional Freeness of the Gospel had for some months been published; it had created quite a stir. He continued in this book the primary emphasis of his Internal Evidence (1820). The whole aim of the gospel, claimed Erskine, is the intimate knowledge of God, which transforms us into the moral likeness of God. Life eternal does not consist in knowing that there is a God, but in knowing God, as a child knows his father.<sup>140</sup> What distinguishes Erskine's Unconditional Freeness from his earlier work is his concentration on the doctrine of universal pardon. Pardon is the daily bread upon which the soul must feed in order to be sanctified.<sup>141</sup> The basis of pardon is the holy compassion of God, and holy love is the unchangeable character of God, not an arbitrary feeling for some.<sup>142</sup> Pardon, therefore, is proclaimed freely and universally in the gospel; it is unconditional and unlimited. The limitation of redemption lies only in the application of it, lies only in the will of man. Man's response to the proclamation of pardon should be that of faith, which is the application of pardon to one's life. Faith does not bring about pardon, but rather sanctification.<sup>143</sup> Holy love in one's life is the product of faith, not the evidence of faith. Faith is the way of becoming a partaker of God's moral character, and heaven is the name for a character conformed to that of God.<sup>144</sup> When we are in sympathy with God's will and purposes, when we love God and our neighbour, we are reunited with God, we are in possession of salvation. Erskine's hope was that in light of the unchanging love of God, all will be restored, all will be sanctified. This drawing closer to God and being transformed into His moral likeness occurs only through faith in God's unlimited pardon, the unconditional freeness of the gospel. This then was Erskine by the summer of 1828.

Many years later Erskine recalled this summer with Scott. He looked back on Scott's 'youthful beauty, with that rich endowment

<sup>140</sup>T. Erskine, The Unconditional Freeness of the Gospel (Edinburgh, 1828), p.199.

<sup>141</sup>Ibid. p.171.

<sup>142</sup>Ibid. p.122.

<sup>143</sup>Ibid. p.24.

<sup>144</sup>Ibid. p.11.



of mental power and spiritual understanding. I recall my walks and talks with him by the side of the Gareloch; and the unfailing, loving, and admiring interest which I have ever since felt in himself and in his thoughts and movements.'<sup>145</sup> 'The walks and talks I had with him return, not as fossil remains, but full of life.'<sup>146</sup> Later in that summer, Scott accompanied Erskine to Linlathen, preaching in Dundee, and several times in the hall at Linlathen.<sup>147</sup> Erskine recounted one of the sermons preached by Scott at that time:

Young Scott, the son of Dr. Scott of Greenock, is with us. He is a highly gifted man. ... He preached last night at Dundee. There was one thing which he said upon the universality of the love of God to sinners which I shall repeat to you. When God was manifested in Christ, in the man Christ Jesus, that man fulfilled the whole law, of which the second great division is, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. If there had been any single man upon earth whom He did not love as Himself, He would have been a breaker of the law. But He fulfilled the whole law, and loved every man, as He loved Himself -- ay and more; and as He thus fulfilled the law, He said, 'He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father'; that is to say, My love to men is the very image of my Father's love to them.<sup>148</sup>

This all along was to be Scott's special emphasis, and his particular contribution to his circle of friends. They had grown, or were growing, towards a belief in the universal love of God, but Scott it was who first offered a more clearly articulated Christ-centred theology of incarnation.

Also in the summer of 1828 the romantic, apocalyptic, and increasingly High Church, Edward Irving came north to Scotland. He was, by this stage, the much famed minister of Regent Square, London, where, each Sunday, a thousand people assembled to hear him preach for three hours at a stretch. During the General Assembly in May 1828, Irving came to Edinburgh to proclaim the imminence of the second advent. Every morning at 6 a.m. he addressed, on the theme of the Apocalypse, crowded congregations in St. Cuthberts, the largest church in Edinburgh.

<sup>145</sup>Hanna, Letters of Erskine II, p.182.

<sup>146</sup>Ibid. p.179.

<sup>147</sup>Hanna, Letters of Erskine I, pp.382-3.

<sup>148</sup>Ibid. p.143.

Shortly after the Kirk's General Assembly of 1828, Irving travelled to Row, where he again met Scott. Irving's biographer, Mrs. Oliphant, who always pictured Scott as Irving's Mephistopholes, bitingly described him in the following words:

A Scotch probationer, but characteristically recalcitrant and out of accord with every standard but his own, this remarkable man, then young and in a position in which any great thing might be prophesied of his visible powers, attracted, I cannot tell how, notwithstanding his total dissimilarity and unaccordance, the regard of Irving.<sup>149</sup>

Oliphant correctly described these two men as 'dissimilar' in nature, but to present Scott, who had conscientiously decided against the ministry because of his disagreement with the confessional standards of the Church, and who, as we have seen, was in much agreement with Erskine, Campbell, Story and others, as 'out of accord with every standard but his own' is unacceptable. At any rate, Irving was now greatly struck by Scott's character and 'his manifest superiority as a thinker'. In the words of the Free Churchman, Principal Brown of Aberdeen, one-time assistant of Irving's, and a man who had no sympathy with Scott or his theology, Irving deeply admired 'a mind of such independence and rare grasp.'<sup>150</sup> There followed walks and talks along the shores of the Gareloch. On one such occasion in late May 1828, after a long discussion with Scott and Campbell, Irving suddenly exclaimed, 'I see what you mean', and then stated the doctrine of the universal love of God. On that same day, in preaching at Roseneath, he preached God's universal love for the first time. Irving was later to say: 'Till I came to acknowledge the unlimited love of God, I was always finding myself striking against something or other, like a fish in a tub; but now I am in the ocean.'<sup>151</sup>

Irving's time with Scott and Campbell at Row in May 1828 was a significant turning-point in his theological life. It was

<sup>149</sup>M. Oliphant, The Life of Irving vol II (London, 1862), p.28.

<sup>150</sup>D. Brown, p.219.

<sup>151</sup>R.H. Story, 'Edward Irving', Scottish Divines: St. Giles' Lectures (Edinburgh, 1883), pp.242-3.

a major transition for Scott as well for Irving asked him to come to London. Upon Irving's invitation, Scott is said to have replied: 'I cannot accept it; I have told you all my unbelief.' 'Never mind, never mind,' said Irving. 'Come along with me, you shall be free as air.'<sup>152</sup> Irving, writing to his wife in early June 1828, said:

I was much delighted with Campbell and Sandy Scott, whom I have invited to come with you to London. I trust the Lord will deliver him out of his present deep waters.<sup>153</sup>

Scott agreed to become Irving's assistant at Regent Square and missionary to a poor district of London, on the understanding that he was to be quite free and unrestricted in regard to doctrine. On Irving's part, this was a generous concession which reveals how much he valued Scott. Oliphant quite correctly stated that this was an offer which 'perhaps, no man in the Church of Scotland but himself would have made.'<sup>154</sup> It indicates a generous openness in Irving for his friends, which one of Scott's biographers commented upon in comparing Irving's love for Scott with his love for Thomas Carlyle:

Although Carlyle was longer known to Irving, it is questionable if he enjoyed the same intimacy and sympathy with him, even while a guest, as Irving's references to Scott are at all times hearty and spontaneous. Still it is interesting to observe how Irving readily performed the same kindly offices for both; first as a spiritual counsellor in extorting from Carlyle, amidst the scenes of the old covenanting times, the memorable confession that he did not think as his interrogator of Christianity, and in conceding to Scott amid his doubts, that he was to be left unfettered in his religious opinions with a frankness they always reciprocated. Again, in using his great influence to obtain for Carlyle the Buller tutorship, which prepared the way for his literary career; as in asking Scott to become his assistant.<sup>155</sup>

<sup>152</sup> J. Hunter, p.395. See also H. Solly, These Eighty Years vol II (London, 1893), p.78.

<sup>153</sup> M. Oliphant, p.27.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid. p.29.

<sup>155</sup> J. Finlayson, 'Professor A.J. Scott' Part II, Owens College Magazine vol XXI, p.9.



Irving had arrived at the same high estimate of Scott's extraordinary intellect and capacity for theology as had the rest of the circle, and thus began the intimate Scott-Irving relationship.

j) Opposition to Scott's circle.

It was during the year of 1828 that virulent opposition against the Scott circle began to develop. Particularly was it aimed at Erskine in light of his Unconditional Freeness (1828), and Campbell because of his preaching at Row, rather than at Scott, whose temporary decision to withdraw from the ministry, and Irving, whose situation in faraway London, had for the moment, freed them from Scottish criticism. On the west coast, pulpit after pulpit was closed against them. The Greenock ministers, excepting Dr. Scott, refused to take part in the services of the Seaman's Chapel in that port, if Campbell and Story were allowed at any time to officiate. Alan Ker wrote in 1828: 'As the opposition chiefly comes from the Evangelical clergy, whose influence is so extensive, it is formidable.'<sup>156</sup>

It is true that this age was marked by an Evangelicalism of steadily hardening doctrine. The Evangelicals believed that theology was static, that no further development was to be expected or desired, and that theological questions of any significance had been exhaustively dealt with by the 17th-century Westminster divines. But the Moderate party did not greatly differ from the Evangelicals in this. From such Evangelical leaders as Andrew Thomson and Alexander Duff, the typical Moderates were not far removed -- John Inglis, for example, or George Cook. Both parties remained inflexibly orthodox in their Westminster Confessionalism. Speaking of the doctrine of God's universal love, Erskine asked his sister in 1828: 'Do you know that this doctrine is looked on as a heresy by almost all the teachers of religion in this country, and that a directly opposite doctrine is preached?'<sup>157</sup>

The doctrine of universal atonement and assurance of faith had excited anti-Marrow feelings, for the phrases 'universal

<sup>156</sup> Story, Memoir of Story, p.151.

<sup>157</sup> Hanna, Letters of Erskine I, p.149.

atonement and pardon' and 'assurance as the essence of faith' had been used over a century before when the Assembly of 1720 condemned the Marrow doctrine. H. F. Henderson was probably correct when he wrote that 'Scotsmen have never relished spiritual food too highly seasoned. They have a strong distaste for the element of enthusiasm and religious assurance.'<sup>158</sup> But it was mainly the doctrine of universal atonement and pardon which incited the greatest opposition. Even many who had applauded the doctrine of assurance now began to draw back. Campbell described the widespread antipathy to the doctrine of universal pardon:

I was made to mourn over the opposition to the doctrine of universal pardon taking, as it did, such forms as, 'If all are forgiven, then we need not repent, or be sorry for our sins, or think of a future judgment, and we may do what we please': for it was thus apparent beyond all my previous fears that what men called repentance was not a real sorrow for sin, but merely something offered in exchange for safety; and I was shocked to hear men avow that if they were certain their Heavenly Father forgave them their sin they would feel it unnecessary to grieve because they had offended Him; and, instead of being led to repentance by the knowledge of this His goodness, would be encouraged by it to sin more and more. ... While urging the faith of forgiving love as that which purifieth, I found myself charged with Antinomianism, and with setting forth doctrines leading to licentiousness.<sup>159</sup>

It was certainly the doctrine of universal pardon that gave birth to Dr. Andrew Thomson's series of sermons, subsequently published as The Doctrine of Universal Pardon Considered and Refuted in a Series of Sermons (1830). Thomson wielded a great deal of influence in the National Kirk at this time, as editor of the Edinburgh Christian Instructor, as minister of St. George's in Edinburgh, and as the indisputable leader of the Evangelical party. Thomson attacked the doctrine of universal pardon as unscriptural. 'On this ground alone,' he asserted, 'were there no other -- on the ground that it is opposed to a multitude of Scriptures on the one hand, and not sanctioned or supported by a single affirmation of Scripture on the other, we hesitate not to reject it as unsound,

<sup>158</sup> H.F. Henderson, The Religious Controversies of Scotland (Edinburgh, 1905), p.148.

<sup>159</sup> J.M. Campbell, Reminiscences, pp.25-27.

untenable, and dangerous.'<sup>160</sup> By "God in Christ reconciling the world to himself", the Bible is not, Thomson claimed, referring to every human being. It is obvious that the entire world is not being reconciled to God. The 'world', therefore, means those elected by God to be redeemed. This was a common argument used against the advocates of universal atonement. Thomson also argued, as had Dr. Scott, that a doctrine of universal pardon is inconsistent if it is not taught with a doctrine of universal salvation. This is a 'consistency' to which many in the Scott circle were later to come. The Westminster doctrine of God bringing to salvation all those for whom Christ had died Thomson held up, in contrast, as a doctrine of logical consistency.

Thomson feared that the doctrine of universal pardon, if widely propagated, 'must open all the floodgates of licentiousness'. Letting his imagination run rampant, he accused the proponents of God's universal love of 'creeping into houses, and fastening upon the weak and the half-informed who have been so unfortunate as to listen to them when they unfolded their little bundle of texts. They have propagated doctrines which belie the word of God most odiously -- which reason repudiates as inconsistent and mistaken -- which break the constitution of the gospel into pieces, and substitutes for it freaks of fancy and unwholesome paradoxes -- which introduce into religion all that is silly and bigotted and presumptuous -- and which add to all their other evils, that worst of all evils -- saying peace! peace! to the worldling and the sinner, when there is no peace.'<sup>161</sup> Thomson represents, perhaps exaggeratedly, the formidable opposition of the establishment against this young and small group of rebels.

Although Thomson represented a large wing of the establishment, he, by no means, represented its entirety. Chalmers, for instance, soon to succeed Thomson as leader of the Evangelical party, remarked upon Erskine's Unconditional Freeness as 'one of the most delightful books that ever had been written.'<sup>162</sup> By also saying, however, that

<sup>160</sup>A. Thomson, The Doctrine of Universal Pardon Considered and Refuted (Edinburgh, 1830), p.87.

<sup>161</sup>Ibid. pp.361-62.

<sup>162</sup>Hanna, Memoirs of T. Chalmers vol II (Edinburgh, 1854), p.194

he thought Erskine's idea of universal pardon 'clearly contrary to Scripture', Chalmers displayed a misunderstanding of Erskine's book, one of its primary thrusts being the universality of pardon. Nevertheless, Chalmers, in spite of his Westminster orthodoxy, sympathised with this group in many respects, and the sympathetic attitude of a Chalmers and a Dr. Scott indicates that there were probably many more in the Church of Scotland who, although in disagreement, were not hostile to Scott's circle. But the predominant attitude in the Kirk to the advocates of this broadening theology appears to have been hostility. Under these circumstances, Scott headed south for London to take up a ministry without doctrinal restriction. There, for a little while, he was to be free from controversy.

## CHAPTER II

THE SCOTT-IRVING FRIENDSHIP, THE CHARISMATA, AND  
THE BEGINNING OF SCOTT'S ECCLESIASTICAL TRIALS.



a) Scott's assistantship to Irving at Regent Square, London

Scott joined Irving in London in the autumn of 1828. By December Irving was writing to Chalmers: 'Sandy Scott is a most precious youth, the finest and the strongest faculty for pure theology I have yet met with. Yet a rough sea is before him, and perhaps, before more than him.'<sup>1</sup> The mention of Scott and his theological ability took Irving on to speak of the universality of God's love. He asked Chalmers 'to consider the great hope of the Church first given to Abraham: "That she shall be heir of the world." Certainly it is the very substance of theology', said Irving. Scott, as we have seen, during the summer of 1828, had been instrumental in Irving's conversion to the doctrine of universal atonement. Now present with Irving in a very close ministerial relationship, Scott continued to nurture that belief in Irving. The latter in his letter to Chalmers indicated that now he, as well as Scott, may well have a 'rough sea' -- probably of theological questioning and opposition -- before him. Scott was to exert powerful influence over Irving during their time together.

Scott took up the post of missionary and assistant minister at Regent Square, at a salary of 150 pounds per year, the contract being for an indefinite period of time. He was required to preach on Sunday afternoons in the church at 3 p.m., and occasionally for Irving, especially when the latter was preaching or lecturing elsewhere. Also he was to preach at the local schools, such as the Fitzroy School, and to assist the elders in their visitations.<sup>2</sup> Scott was described as 'throwing all the energies of his nature into the new and extended sphere.'<sup>3</sup> Soon after his arrival in London, Scott, deeply struck by the ignorance of the poorer classes and their need for instruction, devoted much of his time and energy to teaching and preaching among the poor of Westminster and its vicinity.<sup>4</sup> Scott attempted to preach every night to the poor of Westminster, while Irving attempted the same in London. 'The Lord be with them! But

<sup>1</sup>M. Oliphant, The Life of Edward Irving vol II (London, 1862), p.68.

<sup>2</sup>J. Hair, Regent Square (London, 1899), pp.86-87.

<sup>3</sup>J. Finlayson, 'Professor A.J. Scott', The Owens College Magazine vol XIII, p.112.

<sup>4</sup>J. Hair, p.87.

there are limits to mortal strength,' wrote Dr. J. Martin.

'Mr. Scott's is not great, and Edward's, though more than ordinary, is not invincible.'<sup>5</sup> During Scott's assistantship with Irving, he occasionally retreated into the country to recruit his strength, but even there, said his biographer, 'those missionary labours were continued, with a clearness of statement and cogency of reasoning rarely found in alliance with such zeal.'<sup>6</sup> Hair also spoke of Scott's 'force and vigour of expression' and 'command of beautiful and apt illustration', combined with his 'great intellectual power,'<sup>7</sup> which enabled him to effectively carry on his mission to the working classes, and his assistantship at Regent Square. 'Your son', wrote Irving to Dr. Scott, 'has taken up the cross, and I think he will not lay it down till he receives the crown. He is a very stay to me; he comforts me greatly.'<sup>8</sup> And Hunter informs us that Scott, during his assistantship in London, 'gained no small measure of popular favour.'<sup>9</sup>

On one public occasion, in the presence of the enormous Regent Square congregation, Irving put his hand upon Scott's head and said, 'Listen, my people, to this young man. He has the spirit of God in him. Much do I learn from him.'<sup>10</sup> Many years later a writer in The National Review stated, concerning the Irving-Scott relationship: 'Irving loved, and we may almost say revered him.'<sup>11</sup> Scott, he also asserted, 'with the solitary exceptions of Coleridge and Carlyle, had far more of pure intellect than any other man with whom Irving was ever personally acquainted.' And he 'from a more rigorous habit of self-discipline, -- from possessing a power granted to few of visiting the more retired haunts of the human spirit, and of holding deepest self-questioning there, -- from a scientific capacity of wisely

<sup>5</sup> Oliphant, p.63.

<sup>6</sup> Finlayson, p.112.

<sup>7</sup> Hair, p.103.

<sup>8</sup> J. Thompson, The Owens College (Manchester, 1886), p.171.

<sup>9</sup> J. Hunter, 'Alexander Scott', The Expositor 8th series, vol XXI (London, 1921), p. 395.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. p.395. See also H. Solly, p.78.

<sup>11</sup> The National Review vol XV July and October 1862 (London, 1862), p.355.

estimating the respective claims and boundaries of Scripture, tradition, and private thought, -- was fitted rather to be Irving's guide than his disciple.'<sup>12</sup> After two years of intimate communion with Scott, Irving was to say: 'A young man so learned and accomplished in all kinds of discipline I have never met with, and as pious as he is learned, and of great, very great discernment in the truth, and faithfulness Godward and manward.'<sup>13</sup>

Scott, as will clearly emerge, loved Irving in return. Years later Erskine spoke of him as having a living portrait of Irving in his own heart. 'Scott,' wrote Erskine, 'cannot speak of him without becoming Irving in voice and manner, even in countenance.'<sup>14</sup> Yet all along there were great differences between the two friends. Politically they were in opposite camps,<sup>15</sup> Irving hating the reforms of the late twenties and early thirties. And the theological divide, as will be seen, widened increasingly. But their friendship and deep mutual respect remained always unbroken.

b) Scott's new friends and contacts in London

Scott had been in London a very short time when Erskine, in November 1828, wrote the following letter to a friend:

The motive of my writing to you at this moment is to tell you that Mr. Scott, who I believe is acting as assistant to Mr. Irving at present, is a friend very dear to me. I have received something through him. He is a very able minister of the new testament. He does not frustrate the grace of God, and I think you might find him profitable to your soul. In some respects I don't know his equal, and I should like, if it were agreeable to you, to make you acquainted with him, both for your sake and his. He is a very young man, not more than 23 I believe. I wish to make him acquainted with you and Mrs. Rich, as some sort of recreation to him in the midst of his labours.<sup>16</sup>

With Mrs. Rich, the eldest daughter of Sir James Mackintosh and the

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. p.355.

<sup>13</sup> Oliphant, p. 126.

<sup>14</sup> Hanna, Letters to Erskine II, p. 135.

<sup>15</sup> J. Thompson, p. 172.

<sup>16</sup> Hanna, Letters of Erskine I, pp.147-8.

widow of Claudius James Rich, Scott entered an intimate, life-long friendship. Sir James, honoured by Chalmers as 'one of the highest and most accomplished men in the nation',<sup>17</sup> was a liberal philosopher, and one of the first sympathisers with the French Revolutionary principles. Although finally renouncing the French Revolution itself, he continued to work for reform, advocating, for instance, the abolition of the death penalty in many cases, and speaking in support of the Reform Bill in 1831. It is not certain that Scott knew Sir James, although it seems likely that they would have met. In any case, it can be said that the Mackintosh-flavoured Rich environment was a sympathetically liberal and non-Calvinistic one for Scott. Sir James disputed Calvinistic doctrines from a very early stage.

Claudius James Rich (1787-1820) had been an Oriental discoverer and a very superior linguist. Upon his death Rich's extensive collection of Oriental manuscripts and coins etc., were entrusted to the British Museum. Rich was the first to bring back to Europe a Babylonian cuneiform. Cuneiform tablets, of course, were soon to play a significant part in the historical understanding of the Bible.

Scott, through his friendship with Mrs. Rich, entered a broad and highly cultured sphere of contacts, not only philosophically able and liberal, and politically progressive, but historically aware. In addition to Scott being expanded by this relationship, Hanna informs us that Mrs. Rich in turn, was broadened by Scott and Erskine. She, through them, came to 'a confidence in the universality of the love of God and of its ultimate triumph in the case of every human spirit.'<sup>18</sup>

It was probably through Mrs. Rich that Scott came to know his good friend, Hensleigh Wedgwood, the philologist. They met as early as 1828, and continued an intimate friendship.<sup>19</sup> Wedgwood was Mrs. Rich's cousin and later brother-in-law. He also, as will become evident, was to broaden Scott's sphere of contacts. Wedgwood's cousin and later brother-in-law was Charles Darwin, and the latter's brother, Erasmus, was a frequent visitor at Wedgwood's house. Also, Wedgwood's family had keenly supported S.T. Coleridge, his father and uncle

<sup>17</sup>R.J.Mackintosh, Memoirs of the Life of Sir James Mackintosh vol II (London, 1835), p.505.

<sup>18</sup>Hanna, Letters of Erskine II, p.153.

having given the poet-philosopher an annuity of 150 pounds to more devotedly pursue his work. Coleridge, as has been mentioned, was later named as one of the two men who had most affected Scott.

Scott's most direct line of contact with Coleridge, however, would have been through Irving, who for many years had been sitting at Coleridge's feet, and, as Chalmers described it, 'drinking in the inspiration of every syllable that falls from him.'<sup>20</sup> In 1825 Irving had dedicated his For Missionaries after the Apostolical School to Coleridge, in the following words:

You have been more profitable to my faith in orthodox doctrine, to my spiritual understanding of the Word of God, and to my right conception of the Christian Church, than any or all of the men with whom I have entertained friendship and conversation. . . . I have partaken so much high intellectual enjoyment from being admitted into the close and familiar intercourse with which you have honoured me, and your many conversations concerning the revelations of the Christian faith have been so profitable to me in every sense, as a student and a preacher of the Gospel, as a spiritual man and a Christian pastor, and your high intelligence and great learning have at all times so kindly stooped to my ignorance and inexperience, that not merely with the affection of friend to friend, and the honour due from youth to experienced age, but with the gratitude of a disciple to a wise and generous teacher, of an anxious inquirer to the good man who hath helped him in the way of truth, I do now presume to offer you the first-fruits of my mind since it received a new impulse towards truth, and a new insight into its depths, from listening to your discourse. Accept them in good part, and be assured that however insignificant in themselves, they are the offering of a heart which loves your heart, and of a mind which looks up with reverence to your mind.<sup>21</sup>

Scott's close friend then was deeply indebted to Coleridge, and continued frequently to visit Highgate with the Basil Montagus. Montagu, it seems, was second only to Charles Lamb in Coleridge's heart.<sup>22</sup> Scott met Coleridge on at least one occasion, when the

<sup>19</sup> Testimonials to A.J. Scott (Edinburgh, 1856), p. 3

<sup>20</sup> Hanna, Memoirs of Chalmers II (Edinburgh, 1854), p.127.

<sup>21</sup> E. Irving, For Missionaries after the Apostolical School (London, 1825), pp. VII-IX. Irving's opinion of Coleridge had not changed by March 1832. See Fraser's Magazine vol V March 1832, p.201.

<sup>22</sup> L.E. Watson, Coleridge at Highgate (London, 1925), p. 126.

latter expressed, 'in a striking manner', the value of historical awareness.<sup>23</sup> It is probable that Irving occasionally took his close friend along to Coleridge's, as he did with both Chalmers and Carlyle. It is reported that, during Scott's time in London, Irving sometimes visited his acknowledged teacher along with other 'Scotch divines'.<sup>24</sup> Although the extent of Scott's contact with Coleridge is uncertain, it can at least be said that Scott, if he had not already encountered Coleridgean thought, would have done so now. At Coleridge's weekly open house on a Thursday could sometimes be found, in addition to Irving, Lamb, and Montagu, such luminaries as Leslie the Royal Academician, Judge Talfourd, J.C. Hare, Stuart Mill, and Hazlitt. Irving's broad contacts in London would occasionally have added also to Scott's growing list of acquaintances. His agreement to join Irving in London had drastically altered Scott's situation. From being an Edinburgh medical student he had become assistant to one of the best known ministers in London's history.

c) Scott's first publication, 1829: 'Answer to the Question, What was the Reformation?'

Scott's contacts through Irving were many-sided. In 1826 Irving had become a member of the Albury Conferences coordinated by Henry Drummond for the study of Scriptural prophecy. Between 1826 and 1830, approximately fifty religious leaders met annually for a fortnight at Albury Park, to discuss apocalyptic subjects. A leading light at these conferences was Irving, who, in his Babylon and Infidelity Foredoomed (1825), had claimed that the battle of Armageddon, the coming of Christ, and the establishment of the millennial kingdom would occur c. 1868. These Albury discussions were continued through a quarterly journal of prophecy, the Morning Watch, begun in 1829. Scott contributed an historical-theological article on the Reformation to the first volume of this journal, and a sequel to the second volume. But these non-prophetical

<sup>23</sup>A.J.Scott, 'On the Social Systems of the Present Day, Compared with Christianity' Lecture IV, The Woolwich Gazette, 2 January 1841.

<sup>24</sup>E.L.Griggs, Collected Letters of S.T. Coleridge vol 6 (Oxford, 1971), p.785.

articles are distinctly out of place in a journal almost exclusively devoted to apocalyptic studies. The only other Morning Watch emphasis appears to have been Irving's doctrine of Christ's human nature. Irving, in fact, dominated the journal, and this alone can account for the presence of Scott's articles on the Reformation.

Scott's 'Answer to the Question, What was the Reformation?' focused primarily on Luther. His interest in, and obvious sympathy with, the Lutheran camp is strikingly early for a 19th-century Scottish theologian. As will become evident, Scott found much more in common with Luther than he did with Calvin, and his development away from Westminster Calvinism was nurtured, if not partly inspired, by his study of Luther.

For Scott the Reformation was a reinfusion of Divine life into the Church. Luther, seen as the primary agent of the Reformation, was distinguished by the intensely personal and living character of his religion. There was a 'glow of reality, and an impassioned tone of thorough experience' in Luther's theology.<sup>25</sup> Luther had experienced the horror of divorce from God and had groped for God's grace 'as a drowning man casts abroad his desperate grasp for a support.' Out of this real despair came Luther's personal experience of God's forgiveness. And it was this living encounter of God's grace, not criticism of the Roman Catholic hierarchy, which became the positive, 'energetic', reforming principle. Luther, said Scott, 'opposed the pope; but it was to make room for Christ the Saviour he would thrust him aside. He opened the Scriptures to the people; but it was that they might read of free grace, really free -- not the grace of our times, which is free on certain undefinable and inscrutable conditions.'<sup>26</sup> Scott wished to emphasise that Luther was concerned, not so much, to alter the structures of the papal institution, or to give the people the right to read the Scriptures, or the right to judge for themselves, but to inspire the people with the living message of the Gospel. Luther, claimed Scott, did more than 'to send us to a book, of whose intrinsic

<sup>25</sup> A.J.Scott, 'Answer to the Question, What was the Reformation?', The Morning Watch vol I (London, 1829), p.634.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. p. 634.

efficacy to convert it is enough to say, that there are myriads of copies now circulated throughout the world, and the world remains what it is. One living man with the Spirit dwelling in him and speaking by him, who exercises faith and prayer for his fellow-men, is more to a country than thousands of Bibles. I do not mean Bibles left shut, but thousands of Bibles pored on and ransacked for proofs of doctrine, are less than one living man, with the Spirit of wisdom and love, of faith and prayer.'<sup>27</sup> Scott mourned the lifeless, 'palsied' state of the church of his age. Throughout both articles, he, with this dominating principle of life and the importance of experienced faith, echoed Coleridge's belief that 'Christianity is not a Theory, or a Speculation, but a Life. Not a Philosophy of Life, but a Life and a living Process.'<sup>28</sup>

Luther's was a living faith, claimed Scott, because he was a man with the Spirit of God in him. Reason he had, with imagination, eloquence, and learning, but that, in itself, was not enough. What made his religion dynamic was the spiritual principle within. Applying this to the Church of the 19th century, which, too often, concerned itself only with material and visible objects like churches, preachers, tracts and Bibles, idolising these means as ends, Scott called for a more spiritual Christianity. 'You have been spending years of great activity in erecting, and improving, and extending a huge machine', asserted Scott. 'Do think a little about the moving power.'<sup>29</sup>

A related emphasis which Scott developed in these articles on the Reformation was the unity of the Church universal. The confession of one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, were principles, said Scott, 'pregnant with all truth, to retain which is virtually to retain all.'<sup>30</sup> The unity of which Scott spoke, however, was spiritual, a unity which was indeed to manifest itself visibly, but a unity which could not be created or preserved by means of a visible, ecclesiastical structure. Where there is true spiritual

<sup>27</sup> Ibid. p.635.

<sup>28</sup> S.T.Coleridge, Aids to Reflection, p.178.

<sup>29</sup> Scott, p.640.

<sup>30</sup> A.J.Scott, 'Answer to the Question, What was the Reformation?', The Morning Watch vol 2 (London, 1831), p.164.



life, said Scott, there is the living Body of the Church. And 'what holds all together, and gives all the common name of body, is the single pervading principle of life; which being departed, the union must be utterly dissolved.'<sup>31</sup> Luther, claimed Scott, was in no sense a seceder. He worked for the true unity of the body by witnessing to its source of life, i.e. to the truth of God's free grace to man. He attacked the Papal indulgences because they were blocking that life-giving truth. Luther opposed the pope, argued Scott, not because he was against there being a pope, but because the pope had become 'the sun and soul of that system.'<sup>32</sup> Whenever the visible church is diseased by corruption, it is to be reformed by the living body within it witnessing to the truth, and not by a secession of the vital spiritual body. When the corruption, however, is supported by the majority within the visible church, as in the case of Luther, the living body is then likely to be excommunicated and come forth a new Church, as the Protestant Church was brought forth from the Catholic European.

While Scott greatly applauded the Reformation, he did not pretend that it had been an unmixed blessing. The events of the Reformation had also 'weakened the cause of the one true faith, perpetuated the habit of hasty innovation, tarnished the honour of the Book from which all alike quoted for defence and refutation.'<sup>33</sup> It had given rise to that 'independent completeness in self, which shuts out all that is beyond the range of one's own sense and intellect'; and had 'flattered and elevated the individual, without the control of reverent faith in any visible unity of the Church, scarcely being able to show him such a unity.'<sup>34</sup> The visible Church of Protestantism had, in turn, become diseased, and Scott, in concluding his first article, emphasised its lifeless condition by asserting that 'the doctrine of Luther and his brethren, on spiritual points, was more

<sup>31</sup>Ibid. p.165.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid. p.167

<sup>33</sup>Scott, 'Answer to the Question, What was the Reformation?' I, p.636.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid. p.637.

remote from what is now held up as the same in substance, than was the doctrine opposed to it by the Council of Trent.'<sup>35</sup>

Scott's two articles on the Reformation were characterised by a degree of historical awareness and sympathy uncommon in 1829. Historical method had been virtually non-existent in the 18th century. Only now, partly through the Romantic revival, was a sympathetic involvement in the past developing. Scott attempted to understand the Protestantism of his day genetically, i.e. by looking at its origin and development. He understood many of its present evils by studying its birth in the 16th century, and he taught that the antidote to its present diseased state was to be found in the pure principles of its origin.<sup>36</sup> Scott also evidenced in these articles a sympathetic understanding of the events of the past. He recognised that the Reformation was a complicated network of influences. It was 'too far-spread, and deep and sudden, to be sufficiently accounted for by reference to the solitary workings of any individual mind,' stated Scott, 'though that mind were Martin Luther's.'<sup>37</sup> Scott explored many of the socio-political causes of the Reformation, and his recognition that the printing press, for instance, had been one of many determining factors in the Reformation's widespread nature, displayed, for his day, a rare historical involvement in the events of the past.<sup>38</sup>

d) Scott's developing doctrine of the Spirit

Scott's doctrine of the Spirit had been exceptional in emphasis even before his assistantship to Irving. It has already been noted that Scott was reared by a father known for his stress on the role of the Spirit, and that Campbell had been deeply impressed by Scott's own Spirit emphasis. This interest continued to develop in Scott. Just as he had attempted to understand modern Protestantism by studying its original burst of life in the 16th century, so he also sought to learn the true nature of the Church by going back to its origins in the first

<sup>35</sup> Ibid. p.640.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid. p.640.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid. p.630.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid. pp.632-33.

century. Scott was impressed by the early Church's living quality, one element of that life being its charismatic gifts.<sup>39</sup> The charismatic gifts signified the spiritual life for which Scott longed. Here again we find Scott yearning for that which is living and dynamic, for the spiritual life without which the Church is not the true living body of Christ.

Scott was not alone in emphasising the Spirit, for the Church in many quarters, including the Albury Conference, was praying for 'an outpouring of the Holy Spirit.'<sup>40</sup> Those praying for the Spirit, however, were not looking for anything charismatic as was Scott. And although Irving, as early as 1827, had preached on the gifts of the Holy Spirit, he himself said that he did not actually believe they would be restored to the Church until after Christ's second advent.<sup>41</sup> Concerning Scott's emphasis on the spiritual gifts, Irving went on to say:

He was at that time my fellow-labourer in the National Scotch Church, being our missionary to preach to the poor of the city; and as we went in and out together, he used often to signify to me his conviction that the spiritual gifts ought still to be exercised in the Church; that we are at liberty, and indeed bound to pray for them as being baptised into the assurance of the 'gift of the Holy Ghost', as well as of 'repentance and remission of sins' (Acts 2:38). When I used, on these occasions to propose to him my difficulty, as stated above, lest for our fathers' transgressions we should have been adjudged to the loss of our inheritance until our Redeemer should come, he never failed to make answer, that though we were baptised into one body, the Church, we were called to act upon our several responsibilities as persons; that the promise is to every believer personally who, receiving of the same, do by their several gifts constitute the body and membership of the Church. Though I could make no answer to this, and it is altogether unanswerable, I continued still very little moved to seek myself or to stir up my people to seek these spiritual treasures.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>39</sup>J. Thompson, p.176.

<sup>40</sup>P.E. Shaw, The Catholic Apostolic Church (New York, 1946), pp.25-27.

<sup>41</sup>E. Irving, Fraser's Magazine vol IV (London, 1832), pp.754-55.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid. p.756.

Oliphant contended, however, that Scott, 'that powerful and singular spirit ... with a power of impressing other minds around him,'<sup>43</sup> was, to a certain extent, able to influence Irving. And Irving himself admitted that, although he was not absolutely persuaded that these charismatic gifts would occur before the second advent, 'yet I went forward to contend and to instruct whenever the subject came before me, in my public ministrations of reading and preaching the Word, that the Holy Ghost ought to be manifested amongst us all, the same as ever he was in any one of the primitive churches.'<sup>44</sup>

With the spiritual life and energy of the early church very much on his mind, and contrasting this to what he considered the 'palsied' state of his own church, Scott was called north upon his mother's death on the 1st November 1829.<sup>45</sup> He was required at home over this time of bereavement, for his father, during the previous General Assembly in May, had suffered a paralytic stroke, and his only surviving sister, Margaret, was not well. Scott later wrote concerning this period of his family's life:

A paralytic stroke, which, although it had not the effect on the mental powers so often attending that disease, cut off from the first every expectation of returning to public life, was soon followed by the removal of the partaker in his parental affections and his parent sorrows. Of her I may less trust myself to speak than even of him. Few could know what he had found, and what he lost in her. ...Benumbed in his limbs, depressed in animal spirits, having but one member of his own family a constant resident under his roof, and that one suffering and enfeebled by illness like himself; he evidently felt the season to be given for humbling and melting, for settling his desires and his faith more exclusively on the treasure that is in heaven. He grew in gentleness, and meekness, and poverty of spirit.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>43</sup>Oliphant, p.103.

<sup>44</sup>Irving, Fraser's Magazine IV, p.756.

<sup>45</sup>J.Barr in Dr. Scott's Sermons, p.xviii.

<sup>46</sup>A.J.Scott in Dr. Scott's Sermons, p.xxvii.

Scott stayed a little while at his father's manse in Greenock, and was again to do some preaching in the neighbourhood, this time with extraordinary consequences.

e) Scott preaches the charismata on the West Coast of Scotland, late 1829.

'Towards the end of the year 1829', wrote Irving, 'our excellent missionary -- whose mind God was more and more confirming on this head, and enabling to disentangle the subject of the baptism with the Holy Ghost from the work of regeneration, with which it is commonly confounded, whereof the latter cometh from the incarnation, and the former from the glorification of the Son of God -- being called down to Scotland upon some occasion ... was led to open his mind to some of the godly people in those parts.'<sup>47</sup> Scott also preached what turned out to be a momentous sermon on the charismata, or spiritual gifts, of 1st Corinthians 12.<sup>48</sup>

The atmosphere in the west was, in many ways, favourable to Scott's belief that the charismata of the early Church could be enjoyed in all ages of the Church. Particularly among the adherents of the Row doctrines there was a sense of expectation in the air. Scott's future father-in-law had, in 1828, described the intensely heartfelt religiosity of many of the 'Rowites', as they were called by their opponents, and went on to describe some of the extraordinary events which were then occurring and continued to occur:

A good many weeks ago, one of the Gourock Ropework Company's flaxdressers took ill of a disease, brought on, it was thought, by intemperance. Of course, his young master, W. Johnston, was not long of being at his bedside, and was blessed in being the instrument of his conversion to Christ. It was soon very manifest that the Lord was taking a peculiar interest in this man, so to speak, and gave him grace most rapidly to receive the truth in fulness of joy. ...He lies on his back, his eyes often shut in prayer. ...He petitioned that the Lord would now send in some one in need of instruction. 'Whilst he was yet speaking', two persons lifted the latch of the door and came in,

<sup>47</sup> Irving, p.756.

<sup>48</sup> J. Finlayson, The Owens College Magazine vol XIII, p.112.

and forthwith he spoke to them from the Lord,  
 so that they started as if he knew their hearts  
 -- thus it is almost always with him.<sup>49</sup>

Reports of such extraordinary happenings had been communicated to Scott and Irving in London, but now Scott was able to confirm that which they had previously heard, and 'was stronger than ever', wrote Irving, 'in his conviction that the gifts of the Holy Ghost would be restored, and that speedily.'<sup>50</sup>

Those who were eventually to belong to the 'gifted' community on the west coast had originally been distinguished by belief in the doctrines of universal atonement, assurance of faith, and the imminent second advent of Christ, as well as by their intense piety. They had tended to associate themselves with the ministries of Campbell and Story. Being a somewhat persecuted religious minority, especially in a town like Port Glasgow where the minister was not sympathetic, they established separate meetings in each others' houses for Scripture reading and prayer. Here they prayed for an outpouring of the Spirit, although, as Boase explained, by that 'they sought, simply, that multitudes of souls might be gathered in, and the Lord of the harvest himself come.'<sup>51</sup> It was among such people, associated especially with a few on their death-beds, that extraordinary events had begun to happen. Irving described them in the following words: 'They were able to know the condition of God's people at a distance, and to pray for the very things which they needed; they were able to search the hearts of persons in their presence; they were above measure strengthened to hold out both in prayer and exhortation.'<sup>52</sup> But the subject of spiritual gifts had received no attention among them. Irving was partly incorrect when he asserted that Campbell 'had received no insight, nor held any discourse with the people on this subject',<sup>53</sup> for Campbell himself admitted to

<sup>49</sup> C.W. Boase, Supplementary Narrative to the Elijah Ministry (Printed for private circulation c.1870), pp.754-55.

<sup>50</sup> Irving, p.757.

<sup>51</sup> Boase, p.772.

<sup>52</sup> Irving, p.757.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid. p.756.

Chalmers in 1830 that he, for two years, had believed that the Church should enjoy the charismatic gifts.<sup>54</sup> Campbell does not, however, appear to have preached on the charismata. It was reserved to Scott, said Irving, to sow the seed which was to bear the 'precious fruit',<sup>55</sup> or as Oliphant quite typically described it, to lay 'this train of splendid mischief.'<sup>56</sup>

One of the people to whom Scott opened his mind on the subject of the charismata was Mary Campbell of Fernicarry, sister of the devout Isabella, of whom Story had recently published a memoir. Fernicarry had become almost a shrine of pilgrimage where people came to hear of Isabella. Before long, however, much of the interest in Isabella was transferred to Mary herself, whom Principal Story described as 'a young and beautiful woman, of fervid temperament and fluent speech, herself an invalid, whose interesting languor passed into animation and eloquence, as she talked of the sister she had lost and the Lord she loved.'<sup>57</sup> Scott visited this Mary Campbell, late in 1829, but was not at the time able, said Irving, 'with all his power of statement and argument, which is unequalled by that of any man I have ever met with, to convince her of the distinction between regeneration and baptism with the Holy Ghost; and when he could not prevail, he left her with a solemn charge to read over the Acts of the Apostles with that distinction in her mind, and to beware how she rashly rejected what he believed to be the truth of God.'<sup>58</sup> Within a month of Scott's visit to Mary Campbell, having read the Scriptures with his distinction in mind, she came to believe in the charismatic gifts of the Spirit.<sup>59</sup> Immediately, with her group of friends, Mary Campbell began to pray for baptism with the Holy Spirit.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>54</sup>New College MSS. CHA 4.134.21 Campbell's letter to Chalmers dated the 28th April 1830.

<sup>55</sup>Irving, p.756.

<sup>56</sup>Oliphant, p.107.

<sup>57</sup>R.H.Story, 'Edward Irving', Scottish Divines (Edinburgh, 1883), p.254.

<sup>58</sup>Irving, p.756.

<sup>59</sup>G.Strachan, The Pentecostal Theology of Edward Irving (London, 1973), p.64. And, E.Irving, Fraser's Magazine IV, p.757.

<sup>60</sup>Strachan, p.16.

'By this young woman,' said Irving, 'it was that God, not many months after, did restore the gift of speaking with tongues and prophesying to the Church.'<sup>61</sup>

In the town of Port Glasgow, 15 miles away, the devout Macdonald family and others of the 'Rowite' camp, were also seeking the spiritual dynamism of the early Church in the form of charismatic gifts. 'These good people, along with some others,' wrote Principal Story, 'had been led to pray for and to expect the restoration of "spiritual gifts" to the Church, by a sermon on the nature of the Charismata of the Corinthians, preached by Mr. A.J. Scott.'<sup>62</sup> Having set 'this train of splendid mischief' around the Clyde, Scott returned to London.

f) Scott's Neglected Truths (1830)

Scott, in early 1830, not long after his return from the north, published Neglected Truths or 'Hints on I Corinthians 14'.<sup>63</sup> He continued and expanded, in this publication, his principle of dynamic life, his belief that the Church ought to be the truly living body of Christ in the world, infused by the life-giving Spirit of God. Scott explained that John the Baptist's most conspicuous title for the coming Christ was 'Baptiser with the Holy Ghost', and that Christ himself gave, as his most important reason for departing, the promise of the Spirit. We live in the dispensation of the Spirit, said Scott.<sup>64</sup> But, the Church has 'so spoken of the presence of the Spirit as though it were an obscure and uncertain thing, that men calling themselves spiritual, are habituated to the searing familiarity of thinking, that the Holy Ghost may be in them, and never awed, never

<sup>61</sup>Irving, p.756.

<sup>62</sup>R.H. Story, Memoir of R. Story, p.205.

<sup>63</sup>In Scott's Neglected Truths (London, 1830) no mention, or even reference, is made of the charismatic 'gifts' which appeared in Scotland in March 1830. It is, therefore, assumed that the publication occurred before the outburst of charismata in late March 1830.

<sup>64</sup>A.J. Scott, Neglected Truths, p.3.



strengthened, never raised above the world, by knowing that the Holy Ghost is in them as a truth. ... We cannot but regard the Church, as at present existing, as being, at best, a temple without Shechinah, without Urim and Thummim.<sup>65</sup> The Church, if it is to be a continuation of the original body, claimed Scott, needs the energising thrust of the Holy Spirit, as was the case in the early Church. The true Church is a body of men indwelt by God, without limitation of His being and without confusion of nature between God and man, and it derives its life and unity from this inhabitation alone.<sup>66</sup> The purpose of the charismatic gifts is to demonstrate the Life of the body, to demonstrate the God who has enshrined himself in the fallen humanity of the Church. 'It does appear,' said Scott, 'that the difficulty of convincing men how awfully grand and important is the subject of which we speak, arises from the difficulty of presenting to their minds the idea of God personally inhabiting man.'<sup>67</sup> Paul, explained Scott, addressed the church as the temple of the living God. In her were men to see God. Scott called for a presence in the Church which is neither the presence of man, nor the common Omnipresence of God, but 'his Personal Exhibition of Himself. A voice must be heard from her which is neither the voice of Levite or of Cherubim; but the voice of God: a glory seen in her which is God's own glory: -- God so present, not as in works in which he may be traced, but as in his tabernacle where he dwelleth. God, before whose face men shall "fall down and worship."<sup>68</sup>

In dealing more specifically with Paul's instruction in I Corinthians 14, Scott took up the apostle's emphasis as expressed in the first verse of that chapter: 'Make love your aim, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts.' In encouraging the charismata as demonstrations of the Divine Life within the body of the Church, Scott had in view the final goal of love. 'Charity', he said, 'eternity shall never leave out of date, while prophecies, while tongues, while

<sup>65</sup> Ibid. p.4.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid. p.10.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid. p.10.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid. p.18.

knowledge shall serve their temporary purposes, and when that which is perfect is come, shall vanish away.'<sup>69</sup> Scott went on to say that love is itself the crowning of the edifice 'for which the scaffolding is erected, spiritual gifts, the particular forms and measures of God's manifestation, whereof we speak, are but the scaffolding: and therefore, to be taken down. But therefore also, not to be taken down, ere the building be completed; as it is written, when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. Is that which is perfect come? Is that which edifieth the brethren themselves, and edifieth the Church, and teacheth the world to know that God is in her of a truth, less needed now than in the days of Paul?'<sup>70</sup> Scott hoped for a Church inspired by the Spirit of God, a body which in its charismatic life would reveal its Divine Source of Life who is love, thereby bringing to the world the love which will never end.

There emerged in this publication a new emphasis in Scott, which was to characterise all his later theology, an emphasis which could already be found in Erskine's 'internal evidence for truth' and in Coleridge's 'Reason'. Probably both men influenced him on this point. Scott now, for the first time, dealt with the subjective side of revelation. Why should we believe a revelation? Not because it is confirmed by a miracle, answered Scott, but because it meets with a response in man's conscience. Conscience is that power in man of judging what is of God. Revelation addresses man 'not as an arguing creature only', said Scott, 'but as a rational, that is, a moral and spiritual one. In one word, the sole reason why what comes from God should be believed is, because of the testimony of conscience of his goodness and truth.'<sup>71</sup> This emphasis emerged out of Scott's understanding of miracles, which also was similar to Coleridge's. A miracle is not, as claimed Paley and the apologists of the 18th century, an evidence for revelation; a miracle cannot prove that a revelation comes from God, said Scott.<sup>72</sup> The purpose of miracles,

<sup>69</sup> Ibid. p.12.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid. p.13.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid. p.5.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid. p.4

or, more specifically, miraculous spiritual gifts, is to reveal the moral character of God. They are designed to lead man into a knowledge of the moral attributes of his Creator. Miraculous gifts, claimed Scott, 'constitute an element, and but an element, of that truth which commendeth itself to men's consciences.'<sup>73</sup>

g) The charismatic outburst on the west coast of Scotland, March 1830.

Scott, in late 1829, had impregnated the minds of a number of Clydeside people with a belief in the charismatic gifts. Mary Campbell, the consumptive with whom Scott had met in November, had been earnestly praying for the restoration of spiritual gifts since December, and believed that the charismata were soon to be exercised again by the Church. On Sunday 28th March 1830, one of Mary's sisters and her friend spent the day at Fernicarry in prayer and fasting, praying especially for the restoration of spiritual gifts. And as Irving described it:

They had come up in the evening to the sick chamber of their sister, who was laid on a sofa, and, along with one or two others of the household, they were engaged in prayer together. When, in the midst of their devotion, the Holy Ghost came with mighty power upon the sick woman as she lay in her weakness, and constrained her to speak at great length, and with superhuman strength, in an unknown tongue, to the astonishment of all who heard, and to her own great edification and enjoyment in God.<sup>74</sup>

Mary Campbell and those with her believed these incomprehensible sounds to be the charismatic gift of tongues, concerning which Scott had spoken.

In early April, on the other side of the Clyde at Port Glasgow, James Macdonald, who, with his family and friends, had, since Scott's persuasive preaching in November, been daily praying for the restoration of spiritual gifts,<sup>75</sup> was also 'endowed with the power of the Holy Ghost'. One of his sisters recounted the sequence of events:

<sup>73</sup> Ibid. p.5.

<sup>74</sup> Irving, Fraser's Magazine IV, pp.759-60.

<sup>75</sup> R.H.Story, 'Edward Irving' in Scottish Divines, p.255.

For several days Margaret (Macdonald) had been so unusually ill that I quite thought her dying, and on appealing to the doctor, he held out no hope of her recovery unless she were able to go through a course of powerful medicine, which he acknowledged to be in her case impossible. She had scarcely been able even to have her bed made for a week. Mrs -- and myself had been sitting quietly at the bedside, when the power of the Spirit came upon her. She said 'there will be a mighty baptism of the Spirit this day; and then broke forth in a most marvellous setting forth of the wonderful works of God, and as if her own weakness had been altogether lost in the strength of the Holy Ghost, continued with little or no intermission for two or three hours, in mingled praise, prayer and exhortation. At dinner time James and George came home as usual, whom she then addressed at great length, concluding with a solemn prayer for James that he might at that time be endowed with the Holy Ghost. Almost instantly James calmly said, 'I have got it'. He walked to the window and stood silent for a minute or two. I looked at him and almost trembled, there was such a change upon his whole countenance. He then with a step and manner of the most indescribable majesty, walked up to Margaret's bedside and addressed her in those words of the twentieth psalm, 'arise and stand upright'. He repeated the words, took her, by the hand, and she arose; then we all quietly sat down and took our dinner. After it my brother went to the building yard as usual, where James wrote over to Miss Campbell commanding her in the name of the Lord to arise. The next morning after breakfast James said, I am going down to the quay to see if Miss Campbell is come across the water; at which we expressed our surprise, as he had said nothing to us of having written to her. The result showed how much he knew of what God had done and would do for her, for she came as he expected, declaring herself perfectly whole.<sup>76</sup>

Mary Campbell described her own healing as follows:

On the Saturday previous to my restoration to health, I was very ill, suffering from pain in my chest and breathlessness. On the Sabbath, I was very ill, and lay for several hours in a state of insensibility. Next day I was worse than I had been for several weeks previous (the agony of the Saturday excepted). On Tuesday I was no better.

<sup>76</sup> R. Norton, Memoirs of James and George Macdonald of Port Glasgow (London, 1840), pp.107-9.

On Wednesday I did not feel quite so languid but was suffering some pain from breathing and palpitation of my heart. Two individuals who saw me about four hours before my recovery, said that I could never be strong; that I was not to expect a miracle to be wrought upon me: it was not long after until I received dear brother James Macdonald's letter, giving an account of his sister's being raised up, and commanding me to rise and walk. I had scarcely read the first page when I became quite overpowered, and laid it aside for a few minutes; but I had no rest in my mind until I took it up again, and began to read. As I read every word came home with power, and when I came to the command to arise, it came home with a power which no words can describe; it was felt to be indeed the voice of Christ; it was such a voice as could not be resisted; a mighty power was instantaneously exerted upon me: I felt as if I had been lifted from off the earth, and all my diseases taken from off me at the voice of Christ. I was verily made in a moment to stand upon my feet, leap and walk, sing and rejoice.<sup>77</sup>

Clearly, extraordinary things were taking place, and, regardless of how these events are to be interpreted, cures of some description seem to have occurred. 'As to the miracle of healing in Mary Campbell's case', wrote John McLeod Campbell, who personally knew Mary, 'it is unquestionable that she was suddenly restored to health from a state of severe sickness and a sickness pronounced by her medical attendant incurable.'<sup>78</sup>

On Friday evening, the 18th April, George Macdonald also spoke in an unknown tongue, and was followed by James. The next night they claimed to be given the gift of interpreting the tongues. James recorded these events in a letter, dated Sunday the 20th April:

On Friday evening while we were all met for prayer, utterance was given to George in an unknown tongue, and next to me. It is manifestly out of ourselves: we have no more power over it than a trumpet has over its sounds, -- I mean control as to forming the words; for the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets, in as far as they can refrain from speaking. On Saturday Mr. Campbell came over, and my mouth was again opened. He said, it is written

<sup>77</sup> Ibid. pp.109-10.

<sup>78</sup> New College MS. CHA.4.134.21. J.M.Campbell letter to T.Chalmers, the 28th April 1830.

'pray that ye may interpret'; he accordingly prayed. I was then made to speak in short sentences which George interpreted one by one. The first word of interpretation was 'Behold he cometh -- Jesus cometh.' 79

During the month of April 1830, John Mcleod Campbell followed events very closely, both in Fernicarry and Port Glasgow. In late April he wrote to Thomas Chalmers in Edinburgh 'as to the facts' of the recent charismatic activity, as he no doubt did to Scott and Irving in London as well:

Mary Campbell, before her restoration to health, twice or three times (I am not sure which) at intervals of some days - spoke with what appeared to those around her 'other tongues'. - The distinction of tongues seemed quite marked. - She also on one of these occasions wrote in an unknown character - as is described with great rapidity, and the variety in the tongues which struck the ear has been confirmed so far by a variety in the characters which she has written at different times. - Two specimens, written since her recovery, I saw, and also that written before, and they seemed three distinct characters - a fourth specimen has been like one of the three. - Each specimen has appeared one character throughout - and one extended to a small octave page or nearly so. - These specimens or copies of them have been sent to Cambridge and to persons known to some who have been here as acquainted with Eastern languages (for the characters seemed eastern) elsewhere. - We have as yet no reply to any of these communications. - Mary does not understand the languages which she speaks. - In praying in them she feels much nearness to God and sensible communion with him - but no distinct intelligent association of ideas with the several words. - She described to me the first reception of the gift as if something were just poured into her and made to pass through her lips without volition. The subsequent exercise of the gift she says has been in a way of conscious dependence and expectation in uttering every word (just as I understand her like praying in the spirit when it has been her native language). A strong sense of the presence of God and a realisation of her nothingness have always accompanied these exercises. Two other individuals, two brothers, McDonalds, shipbuilders or carpenters in Port Glasgow have also received the same gift. They speak freely and with a manner as foreign to them as the language I heard them speak and nothing could be more striking than the contrast of the animated and

<sup>79</sup>Norton, p.111.

apparently eloquent manner of their utterance and gesture as contrasted with the soberness and awkwardness, I may say, of their natural manner in their own language. The character of their feelings I have not had the same opportunity of ascertaining. They are staid sober minded persons who have been much engrossed with religion - and of whom, in occasional and very limited intercourse with them, I have trusted they were taught of God from their intelligent and full recognition of truth, - while their apparent coolness of feeling and absence of emotion has made me feel as if they had more understanding than realisation of what they seemed to believe. In all this they have been just the opposite of what Mary Campbell is. The gift of interpretation seems to have been also to some extent given to one of these brothers - that in sentences now and then he has been made to know while his brother spoke and tell in English. I may add that these have all referred to the coming of the Lord.<sup>80</sup>

These are the types of reports which would have been travelling south to Scott, whose doctrine of the Spirit was in no small measure responsible for the extraordinary events.

h) Scott's Call to the Scots Church, Woolwich

A few months before the burst of charismatic activity in Scotland, Scott had received a call to the Scots Church in Woolwich, situated on the southbank of the Thames, about nine miles below London. On the 19th January 1830 the Scots Presbytery in London recorded that Scott had been 'almost unanimously elected' to Woolwich, a church which could accommodate about five hundred people.<sup>81</sup> The

<sup>80</sup>New College MS, CHA.4.134.21. J.M. Campbell's letter to T. Chalmers, 28 April 1830.

<sup>81</sup>See Minutes of the Scots Presbytery of London, 19 January 1830. See also the 'Tabular view of the Scottish Presbytery of London Approved by Presbytery, May 1834', in the back cover of G. Cameron's Scot's Kirk in London (Oxford, 1979). Scott's income in Woolwich was approximately 150 pounds per annum. Concerning Scott's call to Woolwich, there are many incorrect statements: D. Brown in 'Personal Reminiscences of Irving', p.220, stated that Scott was called to assist the minister at Woolwich; W. Hanna in Letters of Erskine I, p.138, and J. Hunter in 'Alexander Scott', The Expositor (8th series) vol 21, p.397, both incorrectly state that Scott's call to Woolwich was in October 1830; J. Thompson in The Owens College (Manchester, 1886), p.171, and the D.N.B. article on Scott, incorrectly state that his call was in the summer of 1830; and G. Cameron, p.48, and the Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae article on Scott, incorrectly state that Scott's call was in 1831.

Scots Kirk in Woolwich had originally been a Protestant Dissenting body of the late 17th century, with a small chapel in Meetinghouse Lane.<sup>82</sup> In 1792 they had joined the Scots Presbytery of London, and in 1800 erected a new church at the corner of Powis Street and Beresford Square.<sup>83</sup> At the time of Scott's call, Woolwich was a very important military centre in England, where battleships were launched, weapons manufactured, and military personnel trained.<sup>84</sup> The Scots Church, in fact, was attended by a large number of Presbyterian soldiers, and Scott was to become chaplain to the Scottish regiments stationed in Woolwich.<sup>85</sup>

Concerning Scott's call, Irving wrote:

The Lord's hand hath indeed been manifest in the settlement of Woolwich. Almost unanimously hath Mr. Scott been chosen, who had not a man, no, not one, to speak for him. But he had friends in a higher court; it was like a thunder-stroke to us all. I praise God for it above all measure; it is decidedly the most striking instance of an overruling Providence which hath occurred in my day.<sup>86</sup>

Irving's letter indicates the light in which Scott was viewed by the Church at large. He was seen as an unsafe propounder of heterodoxy, and Irving expressed surprise at, what then appeared to be, a straightforward settlement at Woolwich. Scott formally accepted the call to Woolwich at a meeting of Presbytery on the 16th February 1830, at which time he also applied for ordination.<sup>87</sup>

It was during Scott's trials for ordination, which occurred in a few month's time, that a controversy arose, not only over Scott's theology, but also, concerning his call to Woolwich. In a newspaper article, dated the 26th April 1830, it was stated by The World's

<sup>82</sup>For a brief history of the Scots Church in Woolwich see 'Scots Church, Woolwich', The Woolwich Advertiser, 24 August 1839. See also G. Cameron's Scots Kirk in London, or J. Cairns' A Biographical and Historical Account of the Presbyterian Ministry of Woolwich (Woolwich, 1913).

<sup>83</sup>This building no longer stands.

<sup>84</sup>For a brief descriptive sketch of Woolwich, see P.M.E. Erwood's Woolwich in 1846 (Kent, 1846).

<sup>85</sup>See 'A.J. Scott' (one of the miscellaneous undated articles on Scott at the United Reformed Church History Society Library), and H. Solly, These Eighty Years, p.79.

<sup>86</sup>Oliphant, p.111.

<sup>87</sup>Minutes of the Scots Presbytery of London, 16 February 1830.



correspondent that Scott had received his call to Woolwich through the influence of Edward Irving. And on the 5th May the same writer asserted that Irving's 'sway over the ignorant and uncultivated minds of the Woolwich Session was absolute and unlimited.' Scott was described as 'Mr. Irving's idol', and his election, claimed the writer, had been 'effected by an active canvass, conducted with so much secrecy and address, that the result struck all that were not in the secret with astonishment. Mr. Irving,' said the correspondent, who now signed himself as "A member of the Church of Scotland", 'has lauded and bepraised Mr. Scott to the utmost, wherever an opening occurred of palming his services, stated or occasional, on the people. Notwithstanding all this, he was not acceptable, and is not acceptable, as I am informed, and would never have been elected to the church at Woolwich but for strategem, coalition, and canvassing.'<sup>88</sup>

The immediate response to this assertion was from a member of the London Presbytery, who stated: 'I know the congregation at Woolwich can testify that this is utterly false - that no election has ever taken place in which less external influence has been used.'<sup>89</sup> More persuasive was a letter from the elders of the Scots Church, Woolwich, submitted to The World a number of weeks later. 'We fearlessly deny the charge', they said, that Scott was called through the influence of Irving. 'He was not even nominated as a candidate at the suggestion of Mr. Irving, nor did he succeed to the church through any influence of that gentleman, direct or indirect.' The elders also unanimously stated that 'the assertions that Mr. Scott "was not acceptable, and is not acceptable", are equally false; had this been the case he never would have been elected, nor could he have acquired the esteem and affection of the congregation in the eminent degree that he has done. The charge of "coalition and stratagem" is truly absurd,' they asserted.<sup>90</sup> The Kirk Session's letter brought this particular aspect of the controversy which had ensued from Scott's call to Woolwich to an end, but more important still was the theological side of the debate. The sideline

<sup>88</sup>The World, 26 April and 5th May 1830.

<sup>89</sup>The World, 3rd May 1830.

<sup>90</sup>The World, 21st June 1830.

controversy over Scott's call, however, highlights the vindictiveness of some of his opposition.

i) Scott's ordination trials before the London Presbytery, and the doctrine of Christ's human nature, March-May 1830.

Scott's acceptance of the call to Woolwich entailed application to the London Presbytery for ordination. As Scott proceeded with his ordination trials from March until May, news from the north, both exciting and disturbing, would have been reaching him in London. Intelligence of the outburst of charismatic activity around the Clyde must have intensified his hopes for a living body full of the early Church's spiritual dynamism. On the other hand, the reports of the Presbytery of Dumbarton's ecclesiastical action on the 30th March against Campbell for his doctrines of assurance and universal atonement must have further convinced Scott of the 'palsied' state of the Scottish Church.

Scott's ordination trials before the London Presbytery began on the 16th March 1830.<sup>91</sup> He was required to deliver a popular sermon and a homily, the first of which was on the words, "God sent not His son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved". It was later remarked that this 'was the keynote of his whole life's teaching.'<sup>92</sup> Scott's discourse on the universal love of God, however, did not draw the Presbytery into attack. It was rather his doctrine of Christ's human nature, which he expressed on the 20th April during his discourse on I Peter 3:18-21, that called forth criticism.<sup>93</sup> As Irving recollected: 'His trials proceeded with approbation till they came to this question of our Lord's human nature and there they stuck fast.'<sup>94</sup>

This is the earliest reference to Scott's doctrine of the human nature of Christ, as well as being the first occasion on which

<sup>91</sup>Minutes of the Scots Presbytery of London, 16 March 1830.

<sup>92</sup>J. Thompson, p.172.

<sup>93</sup>A report of the London Presbytery meetings on 20th April and 21st April is given in The World, 26th April 1830. See also the Minutes of the Scots Presbytery of London, 20, 22 April 1830.

<sup>94</sup>E. Irving, Christ's Holiness in Flesh (Edinburgh, 1831), p.xvi.

the London Presbytery discussed the doctrine.<sup>95</sup> It had been for some time, however, in both England and Scotland, a hot theological controversy, with Edward Irving at its centre. Irving had been teaching that, although Christ was sinless, his human nature was that of all humanity, i.e., fallen, and with a sinful tendency. Christ's human perfection was due not to a nature other than ours, but rather to the constant indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Scott had accepted Irving's doctrine of Christ's humanity, and must quite easily have been able to incorporate it into his own theological emphases of God revealed in the humanity of Christ, and the need of the new body of Christ, the Church, to be indwelt by the Spirit. But the orthodoxy of the day, centred as it was on the penal substitutionary doctrine of atonement, with its understanding of Christ the Sacrificial Lamb appeasing a God of wrath, did not find it easy to accept. The central idea of propitiation seemed to require that the sacrificed One be almost more than human, a tertium quid, almost a Docetic Christ, and at least One more perfect in nature than the rest of fallen humanity.

As early as 1827 Irving had been suspected of heresy for preaching that Christ assumed fallen humanity in order to redeem it. Rev. Henry Cole, an Anglican, had published A Letter to the Rev. E. Irving in Refutation of the Awful Doctrines (held by him) of the Sinfulness, Mortality, and Corruptibility of the Body of Jesus Christ. With Irving's publication of The Doctrine of the Incarnation opened in six sermons (1828) opposition only grew, and in 1829 the Scottish Churches in the persons of James Haldane and Andrew Thomson also launched an attack on Irving.<sup>96</sup> Irving further defended himself in a few articles in The Morning Watch (March and June 1829) on the 'true humanity of Christ', and in January 1830 he published The Orthodox and Catholic Doctrine of our Lord's Human Nature, which only intensified the conflict. M. Dods now entered the

<sup>95</sup>Hair, p.93.

<sup>96</sup>In 1829 appeared James Haldane's A Refutation of the Heretical Doctrine Promulgated by the Rev. Edward Irving, respecting the Person and Atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ (Edinburgh, 1829). Andrew Thomson also attacked Irving's position in Sermons on various subjects (Edinburgh, 1829).

controversy by submitting three hostile articles to The Edinburgh Christian Instructor between January and March 1830. By early 1830 antipathy to Irving's understanding of Christ's human nature was widespread.

Such was the immediate background to Scott's ordination trials on the 20th April 1830. Oliphant rightly observed that, in light of the negative treatment given Irving's doctrine by both Scottish and English orthodoxy at large, the ears of the London Presbytery 'were specially quickened and critical'.<sup>97</sup> With regard to this controversial doctrine, the Presbytery was ready to pounce on the slightest detection of 'heresy'. When Scott raised the doctrine of Christ's humanity on the 20th April there ensued a six hour, heated discussion, which, at the request of Scott and Irving, was conducted in private.<sup>98</sup> The privacy of the Presbytery's discussion was taken up and commented upon by London newspapers such as The Times, The Record, and The World 'with an interest and vehemence amazing to behold,' said Oliphant.<sup>99</sup>

'Contrary to all precedent, and in violation of the laws of the country,' reported The Record, 'the discussion was private - a procedure that lays the presbytery open to severe penalties by the Toleration Act. This privacy was adopted at the suggestion of Messrs. Irving and Scott, as the means of concealing from the public the actual views and feelings of the presbytery; illustrating the truth of Scripture - "He that doeth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the Light, lest his deeds should be reproved; but he that doeth truth, cometh to the light that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God."' <sup>100</sup> The Times quoted from the Toleration Act to prove the illegality of a closed meeting, and went on to ask: 'If Messrs. Irving and Scott have truth on their side, why should they not seize every opportunity of making that truth known? Have they any right to conceal it? The question itself is one of the deepest public interest, and any attempt to

<sup>97</sup> Oliphant, p.111.

<sup>98</sup> The World, 26th April 1830.

<sup>99</sup> Oliphant, p.122.

<sup>100</sup> The Record, 29th April 1830.

argue it in private will be taken as conclusive proof that the parties concerned do not in truth believe it, but merely broach it for the purpose of attracting attention.'<sup>101</sup> And Scott's particularly virulent heresy hunter, who signed his letters to The World as "A Member of the Church of Scotland" stated that 'concealment was the object of the privacy, and nothing but concealment.'<sup>102</sup>

Scott was defended in the press on this matter, although again it was the member of Presbytery who had denied the charges concerning Scott's call to Woolwich. This sympathetic member of Presbytery later turned out to be Irving's brother-in-law and elder, William Hamilton.<sup>103</sup> Writing to the editor of The World, Hamilton stated that the privacy 'could not have been designed to conceal Mr. Scott's views, uttered as they were by your informant's own account, in a public discourse, and the decision of the Presbytery as to the character of these opinions is what could not be kept secret, were any man foolish, or wicked enough to desire it.'<sup>104</sup> And Irving explained, concerning this disturbance over the private Presbytery meetings, in a letter to a friend, that 'according to the custom of, I believe, most presbyteries, we permit the young men to have their questionnaire trials private, if they please, which Mr. Scott desiring, to the custom we deferred.'<sup>105</sup> But the press was generally so hostile to the new doctrine of Christ's humanity that Scott and Irving's actions were viewed with great suspicion.

At the end of the private six hour debate on the 20th April, the Presbytery adjourned until the following day. On the 21st April the ministers of Presbytery met with Scott alone at 10 a.m., and the full Presbytery gathered at 5 p.m. The Moderator of Presbytery intimated at the beginning of the meeting that Scott had not recanted.

<sup>101</sup>The Times, 8th May 1830.

<sup>102</sup>The World, 7th May 1830.

<sup>103</sup>According to The World, 15th November 1830. Also, Irving spoke of W. Hamilton contradicting 'the falsehoods' of the press at this time. See Oliphant, p.126.

<sup>104</sup>The World, 3rd May 1830.

<sup>105</sup>Oliphant, p.126.

Another, this time a seven hour, debate ensued lasting until midnight. Still no resolution had been arrived at, and the discussion was postponed until the next meeting of Presbytery.<sup>106</sup>

The correspondent to The World commented on the important implications of the Presbytery's debate. 'If the presbytery refuse Mr. Scott ordination', he asserted, 'they must necessarily call upon Mr. Irving to recant or resign his charge!!! It is gratifying to find so much firmness, intelligence, and faithfulness, in the presbytery of London. There is now a fair prospect of putting an end to a system of preaching that has brought the Church of Scotland into contempt; and, if not speedily arrested, must cause its extinction in London.'<sup>107</sup> The correspondent added, incorrectly, that the Presbytery was allowing Scott to continue preaching at Woolwich on the condition that 'he abstain altogether from preaching on the sinfulness of Christ's humanity.' This, claimed Hamilton in his letter to the editor, was a misstatement. 'Mr. Scott's consenting to this in order to get admittance to that pulpit,' he declared, 'would indicate a baseness, of which he is known to be wholly incapable.'<sup>108</sup> In response the correspondent, while partly admitting his error, proceeded to say that he could not at any rate see anything 'base either in imposing or in accepting the condition. To abstain from calumniating Jesus Christ for two Sabbaths,' he asserted, 'I do not conceive an intolerable hardship.'<sup>109</sup>

Scott's case before the London Presbytery continued to receive publicity in the press. The Times, on the 4th May, advertised that the next meeting of Presbytery would take place on the 11th May at 5 p.m. in the Scots Church at Regent Square, 'for the further discussion of sinfulness of Christ's humanity, as maintained by Messrs. Scott and Irving. A correspondent states his conviction that the church will be crammed almost to suffocation, to witness the effect of a contest that must terminate in the recantation of those gentlemen, or in the dissolution of their connexion with the

<sup>106</sup>The World, 26 April 1830.

<sup>107</sup>Ibid.

<sup>108</sup>The World, 3rd May 1830.

<sup>109</sup>The World, 7th May 1830.

Church of Scotland.' And The World, on the 10th May, intimated that in opposition to Scott and Irving 'various members of this Presbytery are making active preparations for the debate on the sinfulness of Christ's humanity.'

Events appeared to be speeding towards a climax on the 11th May, but this, in fact, was not to be the case. Scott's health failed him under the pressure of controversy, thus preventing his attendance at Presbytery. The discussion of the doctrine of Christ's humanity was postponed until he should be able to attend Presbytery, when a special meeting would be summoned. In the mean time the London Presbytery decided to appoint a special committee to examine the controversial doctrine.<sup>110</sup>

Scott continued ill for some time. Irving, on the 21st May, reported that 'poor Scott is sick'.<sup>111</sup> But Scott's relentless critic of The World continued his assault. On the 24th May in a letter to the editor of The World the heresy hunter asserted:

Since the reverend gentleman embraced the sinfulness of Christ's humanity, and some other great discoveries in theology, he has, after the example of that truly apostolic man, the Rev. Edward Irving, turned up his nose with great contempt at all that could not see with his eyes, or were not endued to the same extent with the organ of credulity. He used to call them babes who could only live upon milk, while he was a full-grown man. The young gentleman, I imagine, has been prematurely brought forward; if he recant, he must, in consistency with his own doctrine, go again into leading-strings, resume the kilt, and feed on milk.

But Scott remained silent, unmoved to enter controversy with this enraged 'Member of the Church of Scotland'.

The Presbytery's debate concerning Scott's orthodoxy had led to a committee being set up to examine the doctrine of Christ's humanity. By early July 1830 the Committee produced a formula concerning Christ's humanity, with which Scott and Irving could agree.<sup>112</sup> The formula, which was formally accepted by the Scots

<sup>110</sup> A report of the London Presbytery meeting on the 11th May 1830 appeared in The Times, 15th May 1830.

<sup>111</sup> Oliphant, p.125.

<sup>112</sup> The World, 19th July 1830. G. Strachan in The Pentecostal Theology of Edward Irving, p.43, incorrectly states that the formula was drawn up on the 4th May 1830. The committee itself was not set up until the 11th May.

Presbytery on the 20th July, stated:

That the Son of God took human nature of the substance of his mother, which (human nature) was wholly and perfectly sanctified by the Holy Ghost in the act of conception, and was upholden in the same state by the same power of the Holy Ghost; and underwent no process or progress of sanctification, as it needed none. <sup>113</sup>

It is not known how much the Presbytery's dialogue with Scott affected the final content of the formula, but Scott's orthodoxy on this particular doctrine was never again called into question. His language on the doctrine of Christ's humanity seems never to have been as extreme as was Irving's. Although Irving also agreed with the formula in July 1830 the London Presbytery, before the end of the year, was to find him guilty of heresy on this count. But Scott, having not yet completed his ordination trials, and, thus still with a rough road before him, was temporarily freed from controversy in London.

j) Scott's visit to the west of Scotland in the summer of 1830, and the diverse reactions to the charismatic activity.

Scott, still in a weak state of health, in July 1830, headed north to Scotland, where he was to be with family and friends, and also receive firsthand experience of the flurry of charismatic activity for which his preaching was in no small measure responsible. On the 27th July Campbell wrote to his father concerning Scott, who, by now, was in the west of Scotland:

Monday I had the happiness of hearing dear Scott again addressing me and my people; and he has just left me, all the better of preaching. I did not, in the state of his health, ask him, but he felt equal to it and volunteered. <sup>114</sup>

By late July 1830 Campbell was in need of support from his friends, for he was under heavy criticism, not only from the Presbytery of Dumbarton and the leading pulpits of orthodoxy all over Scotland, but also from the secular press. Campbell's theology of universal atonement was, on one occasion, associated with the reforming

<sup>113</sup> Irving, Christ's Holiness in Flesh, p.76.

<sup>114</sup> D. Campbell, Memorials of J.M. Campbell I, p.70.



political principles of the day, by an astute politician. Having been asked his opinion of Campbell, the old politician replied: 'O he's a gran' fallow! he's for doin' awa wi' the aul' close borough system o' election a'thegither, an' bringing us a' in on the fair open principles o' universal suffrage.'<sup>115</sup> Most of the press, however, did not see, or chose not to accept the validity of, this parallel, and, while applauding movements for political reform, usually denigrated the attempts at broadening the bounds of orthodoxy made by the small band of theological reformers. With increased opposition on all sides, Scott and Campbell must have been mutually strengthened by this time together.

Scott was also able to be with his intimate friend Erskine again, who, in 1830, spent the summer months at Row or in the vicinity.<sup>116</sup> Daily, Erskine opened his summer home to as many people as possible for morning and evening prayer, at which time he delivered a short exposition of Scripture. In addition to this he was preaching at least three times a day. There was a tremendous amount of intense religious activity among Scott's circle on the west coast throughout this summer. Many years later Erskine recalled walking and talking with Scott along the shores of the Gareloch during the summer of 1830. In relation to this he spoke of what Scott had then taught him:

What an immense change would be made in the conscious personal religion of men, as well as in their theology, by understanding that they were made to be educated, not to be tried; and therefore that trial is in order to education, not education in order to trial. 'Thou wilt not be overcome of evil, but wilt overcome evil with good.' You were the person that showed me first how all Divine precepts testified to Divine character, and consequently how we are entitled to look to God for this optimism. And in analogy with this how we are entitled and justified in applying to God everything that we have experienced of amiable or conceived of amiable in our fellow creatures.<sup>117</sup>

Scott taught Erskine a more human theology, lessening the enormous gap between humanity and divinity. This stood in sharp contrast to Westminster theology's central tenet of the almost impersonal

<sup>115</sup>Greenock Advertiser, the 18th June 1830.

<sup>116</sup>Hanna, Letters of Erskine I, p.383.

<sup>117</sup>Hanna, Letters of Erskine II, pp.146-7.

Sovereignty of God. The divine and the human, contended Scott, are not to be torn apart. Through precepts such as 'love your neighbour' or 'forgive your enemy' man is given not merely instruction concerning perfect human behaviour, but also teaching as to the eternal moral character of God. Divine precepts do not instruct man to be that which God is not, but rather to be like God. And also, contended Scott, when man encounters love in human form, he is, in fact, meeting a quality of the Eternal and learning more about the divine.

Concerning Scott's time at his father's manse in Greenock in the summer of 1830, little is known. At the recommendation of Chalmers, Dr. Scott, by this time, had taken on as his assistant, and then successor, William Cunningham, the loud advocate of Westminster Confessionalism, and, later in life, a leader of the Free Church.<sup>118</sup> The ministerial relationship between the two men was one of mutual admiration. Cunningham later said of Dr. Scott: 'I can truly say of him, as Burnett did of Leighton, that "I have the greatest veneration for his memory, and that I reckon my knowledge of him among the greatest blessings of my life, and for which I know I must give an account to God in the great day."' <sup>119</sup> And Dr. Scott, during their relationship, wrote of his assistant: 'To me he has been all I could wish in his situation, and to him I desire to be all he could wish in my situation.'<sup>120</sup> Cunningham's biographer described the relationship in terms of father and son, and explained that the assistant was often to be found at the Middle Parish manse.<sup>121</sup>

The vociferous leader of the Evangelical party, Andrew Thomson, having been told about Cunningham's settlement at Greenock, had said: 'Good, he'll be a capital fellow for knocking the Row heresy on the head.'<sup>122</sup> And so Cunningham attempted to do, throwing himself, 'heart and soul, into the battle'. Cunningham preached powerfully and regularly against the Row doctrines, thus turning the Middle Parish into a camp opposed to Scott's circle. And early in the

<sup>118</sup>R. Rainy, Life of William Cunningham (London, 1871), p.43

<sup>119</sup>W. Cunningham in introductory essay to Dr. Scott's Sermons, p.iv.

<sup>120</sup>Rainy, p.45.

<sup>121</sup>Ibid. p.47.

<sup>122</sup>Ibid. p.55.

summer of 1830 Cunningham had served as a primary witness against Campbell at the beginning of his heresy trial before the Presbytery of Dunbarton.<sup>123</sup> All of this Scott's father seems to have sanctioned, in spite of his earlier sympathies with Campbell. Unease and tension must have been experienced in the manse during Scott's time at home in the summer of 1830, but there is no sign of a break between father and son.

Another feature of Scott's holiday in the west of Scotland was his close proximity to the charismatic activity which his preaching had partly inspired. This was his first opportunity of directly observing the charismatics in the exercise of their 'gifts'. There were by this time nine 'gifted' people in the district.<sup>124</sup> One group, centred upon the MacDonald brothers, met daily in Port Glasgow. Another, with Mary Campbell at its centre, met regularly in Helensburgh.<sup>125</sup> Both groups, in full communion with each other, experienced a constant flow of charismatic activity during the summer of 1830. Both were invaded by great swarms of, largely admiring, visitors from all over Britain, many of whom in turn, began to seek in prayer the spiritual gifts.<sup>126</sup> But Scott, the great propounder of a Church of the Spirit, appears not to have been impressed with this display of 'spiritual gifts'.<sup>127</sup> For over a year there is not a trace of Scott's response to the burst of charismatic activity in Scotland and later in London, and when we do finally get a glimpse, it is of a critical observer.<sup>128</sup> While the rest of his circle in Scotland at first declared their acceptance of the genuineness of these 'gifts', we meet with nothing but silence in Scott, who previously had been the most vocal on this subject.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid. p.53.

<sup>124</sup> Boase, p.766.

<sup>125</sup> R.H. Story, Memoirs of R. Story, p.226.

<sup>126</sup> Boase, p.766. And Norton, p.125.

<sup>127</sup> The D.N.B. article on Scott quite definitely states that he 'never felt the "utterances" to be convincing proofs of any genuine inspiration.'

<sup>128</sup> Birrell described Scott as silently observing, in a critical fashion, a charismatic outburst at Regent Square c. 1831. C.M. Birrell, 'Some Recollections of Professor Scott' in Sunday at Home (1881), p.664.

The reasons for Scott's early silence and eventual rejection of the 'gifts' displayed around the Clyde and later in London are not entirely clear, although, as will emerge, Scott, even at this early date, had reason to doubt the 'tongues' on linguistic grounds. Also, it is almost certain that Scott would have disliked the anti-intellectual obscurantism of the 'gifted'. The MacDonalds, for instance, became known, and this was admitted by their admiring biographer, for fueling their evening fire with the classical books of literature from their family's extensive library.<sup>129</sup> And Mary Campbell, who was obsessed with a zeal for foreign missionary work, refused to acknowledge the need for language study and appropriate training, believing that all would be provided through the charismatic gifts.<sup>130</sup>

In spite of Scott's silence, nearly all in his immediate Scottish circle, at an early stage, spoke in favour of the charismatic manifestations, although, eventually, all, with the exception of Irving, would rescind their favourable judgment. Campbell in his letter to Chalmers on the 28th April 1830 stated that he believed the charismatic activity to be the work of God.<sup>131</sup> He dated back to the commencement of his friendship with Scott his belief in the spiritual gifts: 'Personally it has been my faith in this department of truth for two years and upwards that the gifts enjoyed by the first Christians were not characteristic of that time but of this present dispensation and therefore possessed in right of God's gift by the church all along and on until the second coming of Christ, however, through lack of faith in that right, they have in point of fact been unsought and unenjoyed.'<sup>132</sup> Clearly echoing Scott's understanding of the gifts as expressed in Neglected Truths, Campbell explained to Chalmers that the purpose of the charismata is to 'edify the whole body in love' and to show to the world that 'God is in us of a truth'. Campbell soon assumed the silence of Scott concerning the actual manifestations around the Clyde.

<sup>129</sup> Norton, p.77.

<sup>130</sup> See R.H. Story, Memoirs of R. Story, pp.202-4.

<sup>131</sup> New College MS. CHA.4.134.21.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

Robert Story, on the 24th April 1830, also writing to Chalmers, declared that he believed these things to be 'of God, and not of men'.<sup>133</sup> And Alan Ker in a letter dated the 29th April wrote:

"There cannot be a doubt", says Mr. Story, in his letter to me on the subject, "but that Mary Campbell has the gift of speaking in an unknown tongue".<sup>134</sup> But Story's acceptance of the 'gifts', even at this early stage, was not as totally unreserved as he indicated to Ker. 'I am very anxious to have the matter fully and thoroughly investigated,' he stated to Chalmers. 'If a delusion, the more speedily it is given to the winds, the better.'<sup>135</sup>

Scott's future father-in-law also described Erskine's acceptance of the manifestations:

Mr. Erskine is here at present. He went up to Port Glasgow yesterday, or the day previous, and held a prayer meeting. ... Young James MacDonald started suddenly up and spoke the unknown tongue. While speaking, his countenance all at once assumed a new expression, and he exclaimed - 'The shout of a King is among us! God is in this place. He has taught me the interpretation!' Straightway he proceeded to interpret what he had said! Mr. Erskine was in floods of tears today speaking of it at my bedside.<sup>136</sup>

Erskine was, in fact, to spend six weeks in the house of the MacDonalds. He embodied his immediate impressions in a tract entitled On the Gifts of the Spirit, published in Greenock, late in 1830. Erskine's doctrine of the gifts of the Spirit, both in this work and in his Brazen Serpent (1831), also echoed Scott's earlier work on the charismata. With Scott he emphasised the teaching of St. Paul that the gifts ought not to cease 'until that which is perfect is come.'<sup>137</sup> Erskine also contended that the purpose of the gifts is to demonstrate the Life of the body, i.e., 'the living, moving, acting God'.<sup>138</sup> Unlike Scott, however, he went on to assert his firm belief in the

<sup>133</sup>R.H. Story, Memoirs of R. Story, p.209.

<sup>134</sup>Boase, p.764.

<sup>135</sup>Story, p.211.

<sup>136</sup>Boase, p.764.

<sup>137</sup>Erskine, On the Gifts of the Spirit (Greenock, 1830), pp.3-10.

<sup>138</sup>Ibid. pp.20-21.

authenticity of the charismatic events of the west coast, and continued to do so for a couple of years.<sup>139</sup>

Although Scott's close friends in the west of Scotland applauded, in its early days, the charismatic outburst, there was one person, who had both encountered the 'gifts' firsthand and was close to Scott, who critically viewed the manifestations from the very first. That person was Ann Ker, whom Scott was to marry within the year. On the 11th May 1830, Ann wrote:

Yesterday we were invited to come up (to Port Glasgow); about 16 or 20 were assembled - from what I saw, we and Mrs. Stirling appeared to be the only members who seemed more like listeners than full sympathizers with them in the strong groaning and tears with which their supplications were offered up. ... In connecting many passages in the Prophets, they spoke to Him as the God who had talked with Moses, and had done mighty wonders of old, and besought Him now to shew Himself the same living, faithful, and true God, in whose sight a thousand years are as one day, and to fill them with his Spirit, that all the members of Christ's Body might manifest that their Head is a living Head. ... At one time some strange words (Disco, Capito, Halo Halo - seemed the sound of some of them) were given him, which with tremendous shout he uttered, and then interpreted - 'I come, I come.' etc. During all this time his voice was not the only one that spake, at many times he was echoed by his sister (she who was lately raised up), sometimes with deep groaning, sometimes with eager, earnest expostulation, and even with piercing cries and loud shouting as the thought excited. At these times I felt altogether appalled and terrified, from not realising God in it, and felt that it gave just cause for gainsayers to scoff.<sup>140</sup>

Although Scott had for some time been expecting the restoration of the charismata to the Church, and his friends around the Clyde had recognised as genuine the manifestations which occurred among the 'gifted', Ann Ker did not feel compelled to acknowledge as authentic charismata the extraordinary phenomena of unintelligible utterances which she had witnessed. Her impressions no doubt coloured Scott's early approach to the 'gifts' in the summer of 1830.

Another factor in Scott's reserved attitude to the manifestations was Thomas Chalmers' visit to London in May 1830. Chalmers took with him a sample of Mary Campbell's writings in the

<sup>139</sup> Ibid. pp.15,20.

<sup>140</sup> Boase, pp.764-5.

unknown tongues, and through Scott's close friend, Mrs. Rich, whose husband had been an outstanding linguist, submitted the transcript to the linguist Sir George Staunton. Staunton's conclusion, according to Chalmers' biographer, was in agreement with that of Dr. Samuel Lee's of Cambridge, who, on the 19th May 1830, stated:

Whatever it contains, if indeed it contains anything, must for ever remain a mystery to me, as I am quite unable to attach any meaning, sound, etc., to the characters in which it is written. This is the fact of the case. My opinion is, that it contains neither character nor language known in any region under the sun: and this, without laying claim to any miraculous powers, I will venture to predict will turn out to be the fact.<sup>141</sup>

It seems, therefore, that Scott's linguistic and philological friends in the Rich-Wedgwood circle in London would have discouraged any belief in these unintelligible utterances even before Scott had headed north to acquire firsthand experience of the 'gifts'.

Scott's circle then was not united on this matter, but neither was anyone in the circle openly hostile towards the 'gifts', as were the majority of religious leaders outside Scott's circle. There was much opposition literature published at this time. The Evangelical organ in the Scottish Church, The Edinburgh Christian Instructor, in reviewing A. Robertson's attack on the charismatics in Vindication of the 'Religion of the Land' from misrepresentation, and an Exposure of the absurd pretensions of the Gareloch Enthusiasts: in a letter to Thomas Erskine, Esq. Advocate (1830), stated:

If ever we had any hopes of Mr. Erskine's recovery from delusion, since he speculated and raved on universal pardon and its cognate heresies they are now gone; for he believes in the gift of tongues having been conferred on certain ship carpenters in Port Glasgow, and a feverish damsel or two in Dumbartonshire. Of these we can only say that if they are not full of trickery, they are full of folly - that if they should not be condemned for their impious pretensions, they

<sup>141</sup>W. Hanna, Memoirs of Chalmers II, p.205. Linguists since Staunton and Lee have nearly always come to the same conclusion concerning glossolalia. R.M. Anderson in Vision of the Disinherited (Oxford, 1979), a study of Pentecostalism, states that linguistic 'studies now completed or in progress have concluded that speaking in tongues is incoherent, repetitive syllabification having neither the form nor the structure of human speech.' (pp.16-17). Peter Farb, an American linguist, also speaks of modern scientific studies of glossolalia in Word Play (New York, 1974), pp.66-69.

should be pitied for their insane illusions, and looked after by their friends. ...The dishonest ministers, dull preachers, briefless advocates, idle writers, half-pay officers, sentimental clerks, petulant boys, old maids, unquiet widows, indiscreet wives, and boarding school misses, who congregate to pray all night, and rail at the religion of the land - who travel post-haste to Row whenever they get scent of another wonder ... - who cannot live with any comfort, or breathe with any freedom, or be devout to any purpose, except in the midst of a coterie of sillies, at 6 o'clock in the morning - who can talk of working miracles as familiarly as sober people talk of putting up an umbrella or taking off a great coat - who complain most dolefully of every body persecuting them, whereas, they are themselves the persecutors of every body - and who indulge gluttonously and intemperately in all manner of gossip, scandal and vagaries - will either die off, or be seized with universal rheumatism, or be bled and blistered into sense, or turn downright stupid and inactive, and leave us to the tranquil possession of our Confession of Faith, our Shorter Catechism, our Bible, our ordinances, and all the privileges in short which they have so grievously abused, but which are to us dearer and more precious than ever.<sup>142</sup>

The religious press freely employed slander in their attacks on the charismatics, and generally displayed no attempt whatsoever to understand the extraordinary events occurring around the Clyde. The orthodoxy of the day, believing that miracles had occurred in the past only as evidences of divine revelation, generally did not feel compelled openly to examine these 'miraculous' phenomena, for revelation was complete and not to be added to.

The secular press also joined the attack, the Greenock Advertiser, for instance, dismissing the charismatic events as 'insane and ridiculous'.<sup>143</sup> Even The Edinburgh Review finally launched an assault on the charismatic activity by reviewing some of the publications which had given 'the proceedings at Port Glasgow the implied sanction of their doctoral authority.'<sup>144</sup> The article, entitled 'Pretended Miracles - Irving, Scott, and Erskine', was partly a criticism of Scott's Neglected Truths. 'Our readers may be surprised,' said the reviewer, 'that we have entered at all into

<sup>142</sup>The Edinburgh Christian Instructor vol XXIX (Edinburgh, 1830), pp.502-4.

<sup>143</sup>Greenock Advertiser, 11th June 1830.

<sup>144</sup>'Pretended Miracles - Irving, Scott, and Erskine', The Edinburgh Review vol LIII (Edinburgh, 1831), p.289.



the discussion. Nor less so, at our having treated it as the proper subject of argument rather than of mere unmitigated contempt. If the doctrine in question had fallen within the most liberal limits of heresy or schism, we confess to so much of latitudinarianism in our opinions, that we should have left the regular practitioners in undisturbed possession of the case. But "common quiet is mankind's concern". When opinions of this prodigious and inflaming character are boldly inculcated by well-known writers of very popular talents, and have been propagated with so much industry and success as to have a well-appointed periodical of their own, we have felt called on to step out of our ordinary path.<sup>145</sup>

k) Effects of the charismatic outburst in Scotland on Irving and Regent Square

Irving in London was not long in following the lead of most of Scott's circle in the north in accepting the manifestations as authentic charismata. Unlike the rest, however, Irving was to take the bit between his teeth and run full speed with it, never again to let it go. His growing expectation of a restoration of the spiritual gifts of I Corinthians, followed by the charismatic outburst in Clydeside, 'both fanned by one powerful hand' said Oliphant,<sup>146</sup> combined to create a new emphasis in Irving's teaching which was to strongly colour the rest of his life and teaching.

'The tidings of the restoration of the gift of tongues in the West of Scotland', recalled Irving, 'burst upon us like the morning star heralding the approach of day, and turned our speculations upon the true doctrine into the examination of a fact.'<sup>147</sup> Irving was excited by this news, although in retrospect he claimed also to have been very cautious about accepting it. 'I felt it to be a matter of too great concern to yield up my faith to anything but the clearest evidence, and at the same time of so great importance as not to leave a stone unturned in order to come at the truth; for if it should turn out to be true, I perceived at once that it would revolutionise the

<sup>145</sup> Ibid. p.304.

<sup>146</sup> Oliphant, p.108.

<sup>147</sup> Irving, Fraser's Magazine IV, p.755.

Church and make such an upturning as the world had not seen.<sup>148</sup> Irving had ample means of obtaining secondhand information concerning the 'gifts'. Although Scott was, by the spring of 1830, at Woolwich, news from the Kers concerning the extraordinary events continued to reach Irving, but now primarily through David Ker,<sup>149</sup> a deacon at Regent Square, and soon to be Scott's brother-in-law. Among others, Irving also heard from Erskine, Campbell, and Story. But he can hardly be said to have turned over every stone in evaluating the genuineness of the gifts. It was in the early summer of 1830, just before Scott headed north, and at least six months before he himself was to be able to observe the 'gifts' and meet with the 'gifted', that he committed himself to a belief in the 'miraculous' events of Clydeside.<sup>150</sup> There was much in the new outburst of 'prophecy' which echoed Irving's own distinctive teaching, especially his apocalyptic emphasis; the 'gifted' also agreed with Irving's central doctrine of Christ's humanity.<sup>151</sup> Theological compatibility, rather than evidence based upon an observation of the facts, seems to have been the determining factor in Irving's commitment to the charismatic activity. He now began to throw his energy into preaching on the charismatic gifts of the Spirit.<sup>152</sup>

In July 1830, while Scott was observing the charismatic activity in Scotland, Irving attended the final conference for prophecy at Albury Park. The Albury Conference, since 1826, had emphasised prayer for 'an outpouring of the Holy Spirit'; they had not, however, sought the restoration of the charismata.<sup>153</sup> The extraordinary events of Clydeside, however, had greatly excited the interest of those at Albury, and Irving, now firmly convinced of their reality, encouraged the Conference to pray for a revival of the spiritual gifts. As well as hearing reports of the

<sup>148</sup> Ibid. pp.755-6.

<sup>149</sup> Oliphant, p.34. David Ker later became an 'Angel' in the Catholic Apostolic Church. See R.H. Story, Memoir of the Life of R. Story, p.337.

<sup>150</sup> Strachan, pp.73,76.

<sup>151</sup> Norton, pp.60,126.

<sup>152</sup> Strachan, p.16.

<sup>153</sup> Boase, p.751.

charismatic outburst in Scotland, the Conference studied together Scott's Neglected Truths.<sup>154</sup> And one of the resolutions passed at Albury in July 1830 stated that it was their 'duty to pray for the revival of the gifts manifested in the primitive Church; which are wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, kinds of tongues, and interpretation of tongues.'<sup>155</sup> The Albury Conference had thus decided to take up Scott's emphasis on the charismata of the early Church.

Another resolution passed at the same Conference was 'that a responsibility lies on us to enquire into the state of those gifts said to be now present in the West of Scotland.'<sup>156</sup> A number of groups did, in fact, travel north to personally investigate these strange occurrences. One such group was led by J.B. Cardale, a leading light of the Albury Conference, a friend of Irvings, and later the first Apostle of the Catholic Apostolic Church. Cardale, a solicitor in the supreme court,<sup>157</sup> headed north to Port Glasgow in August 1830 with his five fellow travellers, including his wife and daughter, to observe the phenomena. Cardale concluded after 'three weeks' constant communication, and the information of those in the neighbourhood,' that the 'gifts' were of God.<sup>158</sup> Upon his return to London Cardale described the prophecies, the tongues, and even the singing in tongues, in an article submitted to The Morning Watch.

The Cardales and others in London now began to meet regularly for prayer to seek the gifts of the Spirit. Their expectations were further encouraged by the 'miraculous' cure of Elizabeth Fancourt in London on the 20th October 1830, a healing very similar to those of Margaret MacDonald and Mary Campbell. Cardale's wife, on the 30th April 1831, was to become the first person in London to 'speak in tongues' and 'prophecy' in one of these house prayer meetings. Even

<sup>154</sup> Ibid. p.750

<sup>155</sup> Ibid. p.777.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid. p.777.

<sup>157</sup> A.J.A. Symons, "Irving and the Irvingites", Essays and Biographies (London, 1969), p.68.

<sup>158</sup> J.B. Cardale, 'On the Extraordinary Manifestations in Port Glasgow', The Morning Watch vol II (London, 1831), p.873.

here Scott's powerful influence, both direct and indirect, can be traced. The Albury prophets, of which Cardale was one, had been influenced to seek the spiritual gifts: firstly by the partly Scott-inspired charismatic events in Scotland; secondly, by Irving's teaching on the spiritual gifts, which now largely echoed Scott's doctrine of the charismata; and thirdly, by the perusal of Scott's Neglected Truths itself. Cardale travelled to Clydeside, where he was convinced as to the genuineness of the 'gifts', and returned to London to be encouraged and supported in his course of action by Irving. Mrs. Cardale's utterances in April 1831 were, within that year, to infect Irving's congregation.<sup>159</sup>

1) Scott's On the Divine Will, 1830

Scott, in the late summer of 1830, returned from the west of Scotland to Woolwich, where he continued to preach at the Scots Church as he awaited the completion of his ordination trials in October. Scott met with much success at this time in Woolwich. 'Persons of all conditions flocked to the chapel,' wrote one of Scott's congregation, 'from Blackheath, Greenwich, Eltham, and all parts of Woolwich.'<sup>160</sup> It became so crowded, explained the member of the Scots Church, that the elders began to think about enlarging the building. Scott also published another theological work, entitled On the Divine Will. This was published separately as well as being submitted to the September number of The Morning Watch.<sup>161</sup> In this work Scott expanded and more clearly articulated some of his earlier emphases, as well as breaking new ground.

Early in Scott's relationships with Campbell and Erskine, his two friends had, independently of each other, commented upon

<sup>159</sup> Concerning the Cardale house meetings and the development into Irving's church, see G. Strachan, The Pentecostal Theology of Edward Irving (London, 1973), especially Chapters 9, 11.

<sup>160</sup> 'The Scots Church, Woolwich', The Woolwich Advertiser, 24 August 1839.

<sup>161</sup> A.J. Scott, On the Divine Will (Greenock, 1830). Also published as 'On the Divine Will' in The Morning Watch vol II (London, 1830). In 1842, when this work was one of the discourses in Scott's Three Discourses, he stated in the preface that since 1830 it had been frequently reprinted. It was also included in Scott's Discourses (London, 1866).

the emphatically Christ-centred nature of his theology. Scott in On the Divine Will expanded this central focus, which, in a distinct way, was to characterise his life's theology. Divinity, claimed Scott, was to be understood in terms of the humanity of Christ:

We believe in a God-Man. Plato, Socrates, confessed a God: we confess Immanuel, and his Father - such a God as no man sees, understands, knows, saving inasmuch as he sees, knows, and understands the Man Christ Jesus. ...Was Jesus born a weak infant? Were Egypt and Nazareth the witness of budding and blossoming human faculties in him? Did he ever weep over embittered Jerusalem? Did he utter the desire of a human heart, when he cried, 'Father, forgive them?' Did he die of very love; love felt in all the stirrings that it awakens in the breast of a tender-hearted man? But what, then, it may be asked, Was God a weakling infant? did God weep human tears, or groan, or give up the ghost? If disposed to give a short answer, in a free uncritical spirit, and in language familiar and constant with the sages of the early Church, we would say simply, Yes; for Christ is God. But if we must endeavour to answer the precise according to their precision, we say, the Godhead was not born, laboured not, died not, rose not: humanity did all this, but His humanity who is no less God than man: humanity did all this, but for the express purpose of revealing the God within; even as light cannot make known to us its presence but by the denser, and to us more congenial, air. The humanity of Christ is that which translates the ineffable language of the Most High into man's native tongue. But it is much more; for 'he that hath seen Him hath seen the Father'; not as another, but as one with Him. The light of Godhead is reflected from him; but that is also the light of Godhead which is refracted through him.<sup>162</sup>

On the basis of his Christ-centred faith Scott expressed his belief in the universal love of God, the doctrine which at that time was being unequivocally denounced by the Scottish Kirk. What was it, asked Scott, that the humanity of Christ revealed about God? What most distinguished the God-Man from all other men? 'It was his moral character,' claimed Scott. 'It was love to God with all his heart, and to his neighbour as himself, with no peculiar selection, unless we take as such the emphasis with which he applies the law to the case of those that curse and hate and persecute us.'<sup>163</sup> And the Christ who loved all men, said Scott, is the very image of God.

<sup>162</sup> Scott, On the Divine Will, pp.15-16.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid. p.16.

C.G. McCrie described Scott as one who 'moved in an orbit of ever-increasing divergence from the confessional teaching of his mother church.'<sup>164</sup> Certainly this was the case in regard to Scott's Christ-centred understanding of God as Love, which stood in stark contrast to the Omnipotent Sovereign of Westminster Confessionalism, whose love was limited to the elect. Scott's theology on this point was much closer to that of Martin Luther, of whom he had recently been writing, than that of the arch-theologian of Scotland, John Calvin. Luther's understanding of God as the Almighty Loving One revealed in Christ appealed to Scott more than did the theology of Calvin, in which sovereignty and omnipotence rather than love assumed the predominant place. The Westminster doctrine 'Of God's Eternal Decree' whereby some were 'foreordained to everlasting death'<sup>165</sup> for the display of God's justice, was, for Scott, intolerable:

God has not more plainly declared that sin is contrary to the will of his justice, than that the ruin of sinners is contrary to the will of his love: he has sworn the great oath by His own Name, that in the death of the sinner he hath no pleasure; that he wills that all should come to know the truth and be saved. Every argument that has ever been used against taking these words in their honest meaning, whether shaped according to the doctrine of election or in some less systematic form, is just as reasonable, as reverent, as decent, as if men should say, 'The law can never mean what some foolish people suppose; it can never mean that God would have holiness and would not have sin: the fact is sin exists, and shall exist, and this proves what the mind of God is'. For, may we not take every syllable of this wicked mockery of God's revelation of his own holiness, which would rob us with hollow sophistry of a God that hateth iniquity, and, by applying them as objections to the doctrine of universal good-will towards man and universal reconciliation, present the whole force of the technical argumentation that would rob us of a God who is love? Does it not just amount to this: 'The Gospel cannot mean what some idly suppose, that God would have each sinner saved, and would not have him perish: the fact is, sinners have perished, and shall perish - all but the few who are compelled to come in, according to a purpose of eternal election - and this proves what the mind of God is.' But the object of a Christian's faith is a mountain summit fixed high above these earth-born clouds, which draw their being from the

<sup>164</sup> C.G. McCrie, The Confessions of the Church of Scotland (Edinburgh, 1907), p.101.

<sup>165</sup> The Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapt. III, sect. 3.

marshes of that evil which is not of the Father, but of the world; above time and events, and plans and purposes, yea, even the plans and purposes of God (for these, too, are of events in time, and are their seed).<sup>166</sup>

The object of the Christian's faith, asserted Scott, is the moral character of God as revealed in Christ's humanity. No one believing Christ to be the God-Man can doubt that God loves all men and wills their salvation. That would be less than Christ, 'the best of men'; it would be less than the human at its best. 'Is it credible', Scott asks, 'is it human, that one capable of living and dying thus for any of those whom he saw truly in the mean deformity of their wickedness, could be indifferent to the eternal misery of any one of their fellow-sinners? Is it human? Can the same heart be capable of this intensity of love and of this hardenedness of indifference?'<sup>167</sup>

In relation to the two preceding emphases, of God revealed in the humanity of Christ, and the universal love of God, Scott developed his doctrine of confidence in God, 'that doctrine misnamed the assurance of faith',<sup>168</sup> he said. 'This is the confidence that we have towards him,' asserted Scott, 'that he will fulfil all hopes which are in accordance with the dispositions of his own character, and which take their stand on the manifestation of that character in the work of Christ Jesus, the object of our faith.'<sup>169</sup> The divine will is in accordance with that moral character revealed in Christ's humanity. Confidence in God is not a prophetic knowledge of what is decreed. 'A study of God's predeterminate purposes,' stated Scott, 'may be far from a study of God as the east is from the west; and ... a confidence in God himself is high above a confidence in his decrees, as the heavens are above the earth.'<sup>170</sup> Just as there is in man something deeper than his plans and purposes, something from which they spring, that is, his moral character, so the true basis

<sup>166</sup> Scott, pp.19-20.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid. p.21.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid. p.19.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid. pp.4-5.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid. p.7.

of confidence in God is the knowledge of His character. This is truly a confidence in God himself, in what he is, not in what he purposes. 'The whole word of God,' claimed Scott, 'is a continued call to trust in him, absolutely to trust - a call to all people to trust at all times.'<sup>171</sup> The work of God in Christ shows man a rest; faith is an entering this resting place. He who knows the character of God, and thus the will of God, concluded Scott, 'ceases to strive with it and provide against it, and is borne on unresistingly towards the blessedness to which it presses to carry him.'<sup>172</sup>

In On the Divine Will Scott also more clearly expressed his increasingly noble, and non-Calvinistic, understanding of man. This had been emerging in his earlier preaching and writing through such emphases as his decidedly human theology, and his doctrine of a spiritual consciousness in man. Scott already stood worlds removed from the Westminster Calvinist understanding of man as 'wholly defiled in all the parts and faculties of soul and body', 'utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil.'<sup>173</sup> He now stated that God had produced 'a being so stupendous, that after it is created, even those who partake in it, shall doubt or deny the high attributes with which it is endowed; a being participant of his own reason, and will, and moral power; a fit viceroy of the world.'<sup>174</sup> To assert that whatever is according to the good pleasure of God, as did the Westminster Confession,<sup>175</sup> is to 'cut off at once', said Scott, 'all that is truly moral in God and in man.'<sup>176</sup> 'Doubtless there is a sense', he admitted, 'in which God is the doer of all things; a sense so sublime and so important, that we need not wonder if some men, of highest and deepest thought, have pondered it in their minds till it swelled to a size leaving no room for truths on the other side.

<sup>171</sup>Ibid. p.22.

<sup>172</sup>Ibid. p.23.

<sup>173</sup>The Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapt.VI, sections 2,4.

<sup>174</sup>Scott, p.11.

<sup>175</sup>See The Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapt.III, sect.1.

<sup>176</sup>Scott, p.11.



Whatever is done, even when that is committed which is in extremist contrariety to the will of God, still without God, still but by the power of God, it could not be done.' God enables man to think, 'but it is himself that thinks: God sustains his faculty of will, his electing power; but it is himself that wills.'<sup>177</sup> There is a capacity in man for freedom of thought and will which is sustained by the power of God. There is a power 'of being and doing the very contrary of what God would be or do, or would have done,' said Scott. 'We affirm that every revelation God has made has been addressed to such a power, designed for its illumination and right direction; that but for philosophy and vain deceit, men would have seen its existence in all that God has commanded or forbidden; and that but for its existence it would be unreasonable to speak of the existence of moral and spiritual evil as any thing less than a proof that God is indifferent to good, and that in his being is no fixed basis of moral character.'<sup>178</sup>

m) Scott's Hints for Meditation on Acquaintance with God, 1830

Scott published another work in 1830, entitled Hints for Meditation on Acquaintance with God. It was first published anonymously as Tract No. 12 among Religious Tracts, Greenock 1830. In the following year the writing was published separately under Scott's name; subsequently it was often to be reprinted.<sup>179</sup>

The publication closely resembles Scott's On the Divine Will, published in the same year. There is, however, in this work, a stronger thrust in favour of an experiential faith. He called for a living faith of intimate acquaintance with the living God. Scott's experiential emphasis in this work again places him well within the more typically Lutheran than Calvinist camp. It should be noted that Tract No. 15 in the Religious Tracts, of which Scott's was the twelfth, was an extract from Luther's Commentary on the Epistle to

<sup>177</sup> Ibid. pp.12-13.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid. p.13.

<sup>179</sup> A.J. Scott, Hints for Meditation on Acquaintance with God (Greenock, 1831). This writing was amongst Scott's Three Discourses published in 1842, and his Discourses of 1866. In the preface to Three Discourses Scott stated that it had been 'frequently reprinted'. It appeared separately again in 1855.

the Galatians. Where Scott was distinct from the Westminster Calvinist orthodoxy of his day he often evidenced an aspect of Luther's theology.

Scott in his experiential emphasis claimed that eternal life was to know God. 'It is not to know about God, that is eternal life, or that a man may glory in: it is to know God, to be acquainted with him. For God is not a thing, nor a notion, nor a doctrine: he is the living God.'<sup>180</sup> Scott was calling for a living communion with God, not merely a correct doctrinal understanding; and the living experience was, in value, high above any dogmatic awareness.

Scott also continued in this work his Christ-centred, Incarnational focus. He asked his readers to imagine God in terms of humanity, God showing his life in the form of human life, making his love plain as the tenderness of a mother, and offering a sign of self-sacrificing love. He then went on to proclaim:

Man and brother! There is such a man: the Lord Jesus Christ. He has shewn us the Father. He that hath seen Him hath seen the Father; we need say no longer 'shew us the Father'. ... He was shewing God in all his actions. ...His name is Emmanuel, God-man; and God he is in every act - man in every act. He and the Father are one.<sup>181</sup>

And as in On the Divine Will, Scott proceeded from this emphasis to the doctrine of God's universal love:

And what manner of man was he, that we may know what manner of God is He with whom we have to do? Observe what life he led. ...The Word of God tells us he came under the law; and that he fulfilled all the righteousness of that law. What was that law? The first commandment of it was, 'Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart'; and the second was, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' ...And who is thy neighbour whom thou art to love as thyself? Christ teaches the Jew and the Samaritan, enemies by all that makes men enemies, that they are to regard each other as such neighbours. He tells us, we are to love our enemies, bless them that curse us, pray for them that despitefully use and persecute us, that we may be the children of our Father who is in heaven. ...This was the law he was under. - To love all his brother men. - To count nothing a sufficient reason for not loving any one. His own enemies, and the Christian enemies, he especially mentions as to be loved; and these are the enemies

<sup>180</sup> Scott, Hints for Meditation on Acquaintance with God, p.3.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid. p.8.

of God. There is no exception. This law he kept while on earth, does he break it now that the Father has rewarded him for his perfect righteousness? He is the same yesterday, and today, and for ever. I dare not doubt, reader, that Jesus loves thee and me; to doubt it, were to assail the moral character of God's Holy One. And how is God disposed towards us? He that hath seen Jesus hath seen the Father. Nay more. This dear friend and brother-man is made head over all things. He is sustaining all things by the word of the Father's power. The world is ruled by the man who is perfect in the law of love.<sup>182</sup>

n) Scott's refusal to sign the Westminster Confession of Faith before the London Presbytery, October 1830.

After a four month respite from London theological controversy, Scott's trials for ordination before the London Presbytery were to recommence on the 12th October 1830. The London press had, even before the 12th October, already picked Scott's case up again, anticipating that there would be 'many able speeches' delivered at the Presbytery meeting, and 'a large concourse to witness the proceedings.'<sup>183</sup>

Scott's trials for ordination, however, were not to recommence. At the London Presbytery meeting on the 12th October, just as his ordination proceedings were about to begin, Scott requested that he be allowed to make a statement.<sup>184</sup> Standing before the members of Presbytery and the crowded audience of observers, Scott stated that he now found it necessary to perform 'the most painful duty' to which he had ever been called. Although he had so recently applied to the Presbytery for ordination, he now wished to withdraw his application and submit his reasons for doing so.<sup>185</sup> His friends were aware, he claimed, that he had had, at various times, difficulties connected with presenting himself for

<sup>182</sup>Ibid. pp.8-10.

<sup>183</sup>The World, 4th October 1830.

<sup>184</sup>For a full coverage of the London Presbytery meeting on the 12th October 1830, see The World, 18th October 1830, or the Greenock Advertiser, 22nd October 1830, which is an exact reprint of The World's report.

<sup>185</sup>W. Wilks in Edward Irving (London, 1854), p.219, incorrectly stated that the London Presbytery refused to ordain Scott, whereas, in fact, Scott withdrew his application for ordination. See The World, 18th October 1830.

ordination in the Established Church of Scotland. Scott now wished to state why, 'after the utmost degree of prayerful attention', he had decided not to present himself for ordination. Ordination would involve signing the Westminster Confession of Faith as an expression of his own faith, and that he 'dared not and would not' do. The Confession's treatment of the doctrine of Christ's humanity, Scott declared, he was satisfied with. There were other subjects, however, on which his mind was made up, and these doctrines clashed with the Westminster Confession of Faith.

Scott quoted one of the questions he would have been asked, had he proceeded with the ordination trials: 'Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, and the only rule of faith and manners?' To this, Scott claimed, he would assent. Another question, however, would have been: 'Do you sincerely own and believe the whole doctrine contained in the confession of faith approved by the general assembly of this church, and ratified by law in the year 1690, to be founded upon the Word of God? And do you acknowledge the same as the confession of your faith?' Scott declared that he could answer neither part of this question in the affirmative. The Westminster Confession, he asserted, did not contain 'the essence, the vital principle of Christianity.' The essential truth of the Christian faith, claimed Scott, is 'that the grace manifested in the Gospel was a grace to all men.' And this, he continued, the Confession did not affirm; rather it stated that 'by the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestined unto everlasting life, and others fore-ordained to everlasting death.'

Scott explained to the Presbytery that, over the past three years he had been giving much thought, with fluctuating uncertainty, to the propriety of his signing the Confession. It was Campbell's heresy trial in Scotland, said Scott, which had called his attention with greater force to this question. Concerning his own case, Scott stated that, if he were to be a minister of the truth, he must now 'come forward as an honest man.' If he were to be true to his conscience he must not subscribe to the Confession 'by the meaning which logical ingenuity could put upon it, but by the words on their plain broad surface - not by a meaning which might with subtlety be extracted from them.' The Confession did not, Scott contended,

plainly and distinctly utter his belief in God's universal love, 'the vital principle of Christianity', and, therefore, he 'would not and dared not' sign it as the confession of his own faith.

Scott then proceeded to consider some of the other points on which he differed from the Westminster Confession of Faith. In Chapter XVIII of the Confession, Scott found that the objective assurance of God's character and promises, which he understood to be the true assurance of faith, or 'confidence in God' as he had expressed it in On the Divine Will, was confused with the subjective assurance of the believer. A person listening to him in stating the Church's Confession as an expression of his own faith, Scott claimed, would believe that he had no assurance of the love of God being for him, and of Christ having died for him, except what was derived from his personal state. The objective assurance of God's loving character is perfectly distinct from the subjective assurance of personal salvation, argued Scott.

The doctrine of assurance, along with that of universal atonement, was currently at the centre of Campbell's heresy trials in Scotland. The members of the London Presbytery, therefore, were particularly sensitive to these issues raised by Scott. His next objection, although not as essential a point of doctrine, nevertheless touched the Church of the early 19th century, and especially the sabbatarian Church of Scotland, at one of its dogmatically sensitive points. The rise of the Evangelical party in the Kirk had been paralleled by a marked growth of sabbatarianism,<sup>186</sup> and the situation in England was, to a lesser degree, very much the same. George MacDonald, later a disciple of Scott's, in recalling the 'nightmare-memory' of a Scottish Sabbath, stated that between it and its cousin, the English Sunday, 'there is too much of a family likeness.'<sup>187</sup> The strong and vocal Sabbath Protection Society in London is one example among many instances of the resurgent sabbatarianism of the time.<sup>188</sup> It was against this legalistic background of Sabbath

<sup>186</sup> See J. Bulloch, The Scottish Church 1688-1843 (Edinburgh, 1973), pp.214-15.

<sup>187</sup> G. MacDonald, David Elginbrod (London, 1927), p.302.

<sup>188</sup> Some of the activities of the Sabbath Protection Society in London are reported in The World, 13th September 1830. Other examples of the resurgent sabbatarianism can be found in The World, 5th May, 9th August, 1830.

observance that Scott raised his next objection to the Westminster Confession.

Scott referred to the Confession's treatment of the Sabbath in Chapter XXI, where it was described as 'a perpetual commandment, binding all men in all ages, to keep it holy, which from the beginning of the world to the resurrection, was the last day of the week, and from the resurrection of Christ was changed into the first day of the week, which in Scripture is called the Lord's Day, and is to be continued till the end of the world as the Christian Sabbath.' Scott, on the contrary, asserted that, throughout the New Testament, the Lord's Day was mentioned as quite distinct from the law of Sabbath observance. For this reason also then he 'dared not' put his name to that confession of faith.

Scott's final objection concerned Chapter XXX of the Westminster Confession, which stated that 'to the officers of the church the keys of the kingdom of heaven are committed, by virtue whereof they have power respectively to retain and remit sins, to shut that kingdom against the impenitent, both by the word and censures, and to open it unto penitent sinners, by the ministry of the Gospel, and by absolution from censures, as occasion shall require.' Also, said Scott, it was understood that, upon receiving ordination from the Presbytery, he should, by the imposition of hands, receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, and all the gifts implied in that character. Scott, on the other hand, affirmed that the gift of the Holy Spirit was miraculous, as poured out on the men on the day of Pentecost, whether in the form of apostles, evangelists, pastors, or teachers. The living Spirit of God it was who ordained men, and that quite apart from the laying on of hands. Scott thus denied that the Presbytery of London could, by the imposition of hands, bestow upon him the gift of the Holy Spirit and the 'keys of the kingdom.'

Scott concluded his address to the Presbytery by expressing how painful it was for him to abandon the Woolwich congregation, but he could not minister to them except as an 'honest man'. The Confession did not contain what he held to be 'the great essence of religion', namely, 'to preach a reconciled God to all men' and to implore mankind to be reconciled to a loving God. If he could not go to his people at Woolwich with a clear conscience on these points of doctrine, he could not go at all. Scott then asked the Presbytery's advice as

to how he could most appropriately resign the rights connected with his call to Woolwich. Also, in apologising for not having expressed his conviction earlier, Scott stated that he had arrived at this final decision only a few hours before the Presbytery's meeting.

The Moderator of the London Presbytery, John Crombie, later a Moderator of the General Assembly, responded with a depth of personal sympathy which was very rare in the fierce controversial events of 1830. This stands in marked contrast to the treatment given Campbell in Dumbarton, or that given Scott and Campbell at the General Assembly of 1831. Crombie expressed his admiration for Scott, and stated that he had always hoped that Scott would be a brother minister in London. Scott's character, he claimed, had risen in their estimation from their first acquaintance with him. Crombie even added that Scott's character had been 'finely displayed' in the midst of the Presbytery's examination of him during the earlier controversy over Christ's humanity. In spite of his kindness and sympathy, however, the rigid Confessionalism of the Scottish Church did not allow Crombie any other option but to ask Scott to return the Woolwich call.

Edward Irving then rose and said that he hoped that that which was right in the sight of God might be done. 'I was grieved', Irving later wrote, 'to think that a young man of such gifts and graces should be prevented from going forward, and moved that a committee should be appointed to deal with his conscience, and see whether these scruples might be got over.'<sup>189</sup> If after a meeting with Scott, 'which their love for him should make them willing to undertake', he still stood firm in his resolution, then, contended Irving, he should be asked to surrender the call. Although Irving encouraged the Presbytery to 'converse and deal' with Scott before accepting his resignation, he at the same time expressed his persuasion that nothing but the Spirit of God could induce Scott to retract the doctrines which he had that day asserted.

Irving loved Scott and, as has been stated, considered him to have 'the finest and the strongest faculty for pure theology'. There were, nevertheless, great differences between the two men even

<sup>189</sup> E. Irving, 'A Judgment upon the Decisions of the Last General Assembly', The Morning Watch vol V (London, 1832), p.104.

at this stage. At the Presbytery meeting on the 12th October, after suggesting that a committee be set up to deal with Scott's scruples, Irving proceeded to express his own belief in the doctrine of God's universal love. Unlike Scott, however, he contended that the Confession did not deny the doctrine of universal redemption.<sup>190</sup> Also, in opposition to Scott, he asserted his firm belief that 'the ordinance of laying on of hands was effectual through faith in the communication of all gifts needful for the Christian ministry.'<sup>191</sup> Although Irving did not mention in his Presbytery speech Scott's opposition to the laws of the Sabbath being transferred to the Lord's Day, he would not have sympathised with Scott on this point either. Irving had been vocal in favour of the strict observance of the Sabbath at Court and elsewhere.<sup>192</sup> In spite of these disagreements with Scott, Irving desired that the Presbytery, including himself, might, before coming to any final decision, closely and calmly consider Scott's statement. He asked them to remember 'the frailties of man's judgment and not to foreclose the matter.'

Rev. James Millar, who had already begun again his hot pursuit of Irving over the latter's doctrine of Christ's humanity, seconded Irving's proposal that a committee be set up to meet with Scott. Millar, although not expecting Scott's theology to be altered, hoped that a committee might guard Scott against any rash decision which would prevent him 'from doing that which was so dear to his heart, preaching the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.' It was not a matter to be settled at the present meeting, contended Millar. 'The decision of a man so intelligent and so well taught in Scripture as Mr. Scott,' he said, 'must have its effect upon the church with which they were connected, upon the Church of Scotland, and upon the Church of Christ.' The Presbytery must do all in its power to preserve Scott 'sound in the faith as they believed it', asserted Millar. If the small Presbytery of London did not condone Scott's heterodoxy, they at least treated him with a respect and benevolence too little known during these years of theological controversy.

<sup>190</sup>Ibid. p.104.

<sup>191</sup>Ibid. p.104.

<sup>192</sup>R.H. Story, 'Edward Irving', Scottish Divines (Edinburgh, 1883), pp.246-7.



In response to the Presbytery's proposal, Scott stated that, although he appreciated their good intent, such a meeting would not serve any purpose. Many people present, he contended, were aware that he had never preached any other doctrines than those which he had that day stated. He had previously been able to give his assent to the Westminster Confession by subjecting it to a kind of logical deduction as to the explanation of words, which he now thought no confession of faith ought to need. What a painful state he would be in, claimed Scott, if he took the charge at Woolwich, merely because there was some hole at which he could creep in. If he were to agree to the proposed conference, he would be doing the very thing he wished to avoid; he should be implying there was doubt upon his mind where no doubt existed. Scott concluded by stating that he would immediately forward the call to the Presbytery clerk.

In spite of Scott's plea, the Presbytery chose not to receive his resignation at once, but rather to make arrangements for a conference when they would examine the 'real arguments' by which Scott had arrived at his present conclusions. Two of the Woolwich elders spoke of the congregation's attachment to Scott, and expressed their hope that he would submit to a conference before returning the call. The Presbytery unanimously resolved to appoint a committee of four to converse with Scott on Friday the 15th October.

Needless to say, the conference on the 15th October between Scott and the four members of Presbytery failed to change Scott's mind. It was reported at the next meeting of Presbytery on the 19th October that Scott was determined to return the call, although he had not yet been able to locate it among his papers.<sup>193</sup>

It was at this same meeting of Presbytery on the 19th October that proceedings against Irving began, concerning his doctrine of Christ's human nature. Millar's motion that the Presbytery should obtain satisfaction regarding certain statements made by Irving in The Orthodox and Catholic Doctrine of our Lord's Human Nature was carried. Irving's loud protest against the resolution was rejected, and he stomped out of the court appealing his case to the Church of Scotland, who alone, he claimed, 'had the rightful

<sup>193</sup>The World, 25th October 1830.

authority over me and my flock.'<sup>194</sup> He withdrew himself and his church from the jurisdiction of the Presbytery. By the end of 1830 the London Presbytery had found Irving guilty of heresy.

After Scott refused to sign the Westminster Confession, his London critic again emerged, writing against both Scott and his Kirk session at Woolwich.<sup>195</sup> He now claimed that the disclosures of the 12th October at Presbytery more than justified his opinion of Scott. Revealing himself now as William Newland, a Dissenting minister in London, he asserted that 'the decision of Mr. Scott will have its use in stopping the mouths of Mr. Irving and his coterie against Dissenters, whom they represented as dissenting without any cause but the sheer love of schism. Mr. Scott,' said Newland, 'showed them that he did not dissent for the sake of dissenting. Let his example impress them with charity towards Dissenters.'<sup>196</sup> Newland then went on to encourage the kirk session at Woolwich to dissent from the London Presbytery if they wished to have Scott as their minister, and the London Presbytery to dissent from the Church of Scotland if they wished not to receive the call back from Scott.

Scott responded to Newland in The World of the 25th October. He wished to make it very clear that he had not seceded from the Church of Scotland, and did not believe in secession. 'I have merely kept my position, as an unordained member of that church', wrote Scott, 'and have already had opportunities of practically expressing my deference to her authority and steadfastness in her communion.'<sup>197</sup>

Newland again wrote to The World, this time bitterly attacking the elders at Woolwich for having been 'unable to detect error in the discourses of Mr. Scott, of which, perhaps they understood very little. ... I do think such ignorance, such obtuseness, such dulness of apprehension, such stolidity, doltishness, and stupidity, such besotted imbecility, and mental prostration, discreditable and shameful in men filling their high office.' 'But for the discovery of the delinquent himself', asserted Newland, the people of the Scots

<sup>194</sup> See Preface to Irving's Christ's Holiness in Flesh.

<sup>195</sup> The World, 18th October and 15th November 1830.

<sup>196</sup> The World, 18th October 1830.

<sup>197</sup> The World, 25th October 1830.

Church in Woolwich would have been 'poisoned'.<sup>198</sup> Having himself decided against ordination Scott was still not free from abuse in the press.

As had been mentioned at the meeting of Presbytery on the 19th October, Scott, because he could not find it among his papers, was unable to return the call. Instead he wrote the following letter to the Clerk of Presbytery:

Reverend and dear Sir, - Not having yet found the Call from the Congregation at Woolwich, I am unwilling to delay any longer putting into a permanent form my determination regarding that Call, in order that you may, at as early a period as possible, communicate it to the Presbytery.

Not believing that I could, consistent with truth, sign as a confession of my faith, a statement in which it is asserted that 'none are redeemed by Christ but the elect only', (Westminster Confession ch.3, sect.6); or that 'to all those for whom he hath purchased redemption he doth certainly and effectually communicate the same', (ch.8, sect.8) implying that he died for their sins only (ch.11, sect.4); seeing I believe, that God would have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, in testimony whereof Christ gave himself a ransom for all men: - having also a firm conviction that the Sabbath and the Lord's Day are not, as stated in the Confession (ch.21, sect.7), one ordinance, but two, perfectly distinct, the one Jewish and the other Christian: - believing that the powers enumerated (ch.30, sect.2) are greater in kind than could have been conferred on me by the imposition of the hands of the Presbytery, while, by accepting ordination, I should recognise in them a right and ability to convey such powers; I may not accept ordination, while my signing the Westminster Confession of Faith is made the condition of my receiving it, as it would be by the Presbytery of the Scotch Church in London; and therefore resign again into their hands every claim or right which I might find upon the Call addressed to me by the Scotch Church at Woolwich, inviting me to become their Pastor.

You will oblige me, Dear Sir, by communicating this resolution to the Presbytery, and beseeching them to look only to my sincere intention in it, disregarding any informality in the manner of expression. Believe me, Dear Sir,

Yours with sincere respect,  
A.J. Scott<sup>199</sup>

<sup>198</sup>The World, 15th November 1830.

<sup>199</sup>Scott included a copy of this letter (October 1830) in a letter to the editor of the Greenock Advertiser, 10th May 1831. J. Thompson, p.173, incorrectly states that Scott submitted the above mentioned letter to the Clerk of the London Presbytery before accepting the call to Woolwich.

In another letter around that date, Scott recognised that by the resignation of the Woolwich call "I shall, for the present, lose the sympathy of those whose opinion weighs most with me."<sup>200</sup> Edward Irving, whose opinion Scott admitted to have greatly valued, disagreed with Scott's course of action.<sup>201</sup> Rather than withdrawing his application for ordination, claimed Irving, he should have asked the Presbytery to ordain him inspite of his scruples. But Scott 'being a man of very simple character and scrupulous honesty', said Irving, chose the former. 'Here I think he fell into a snare,' continued Irving, 'the snare of a candid and ingenuous man acting for himself, instead of discerning his place in the body of Christ.'<sup>202</sup> Scott, said Irving, while refusing to sign the Confession, should have sought ordination on the basis of his gift as a preacher and the call from a congregation. 'If the Presbytery had refused', contended Irving, 'the responsibility lay with them, and he, with the flock which had fixed their heart upon him, might have gone elsewhere to seek for ordination. And if they could not have found any ministers of Christ willing to concur therein, it would have been righteous before God and man to have joined their union without this venerable and sacred ordinance. It would have been the case in which the ordinance Head must assert his own superiority to the ordinance administrators, and the standing order of the eternal government must be enforced, namely, that the ordinance was made for the creature, and not the creature for the ordinance; the thing for the person, and not the person for the thing.'<sup>203</sup> This is a curious example of Irving, whose doctrine of the visible Church was becoming increasingly high, advocating something close to secession, while Scott, whose emphasis lay on the spiritual life of the invisible Church, was hesitant to disrupt the visible unity of the Church in any way.

Thirty years later in recalling the events of October 1830, Scott said:

<sup>200</sup> Scott quotes from this letter in The Daily News, 26th May 1862.

<sup>201</sup> Irving expressed this disagreement in 'A Judgment upon the Decisions of the Last General Assembly', The Morning Watch V, p.104.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid. p.104.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid. pp.104-5.

I acted unhesitatingly then, and after 30 years I doubt not at all that I was right. I still find my justification mainly in the Confession as a whole, which refers to no atonement except for the elect, but compendiously in the words, 'To all those for whom Christ hath purchased redemption He doth certainly apply and communicate the same' (Confession, ch.8, sect. 8). To me these words are the negation of the Gospel.<sup>204</sup>

Oliphant's version of these events was that Scott possessed 'a determined resistance to every kind of external limitation',<sup>205</sup> a fastidious rejection of all ecclesiastical boundary 'which restrained his own powerful and wayward thoughts.'<sup>206</sup> In response to Oliphant's criticism, Scott asked if it was fastidiousness 'to refuse to sign the contrary of my chiefest point of faith?'<sup>207</sup> He claimed to have acted 'under a mere necessity of conscience.' Scott continued in his response to Oliphant:

Some years ago a distinguished friend refused to be a candidate for a professorship in a Scotch University because of his objection to the required signature of the Confession. I told him how much I was gratified. He answered simply and quietly, 'One ought not to tell lies.' I had no higher estimate than this of what I did, nor imagined that it was possible to suppose I had. For a second time I was renouncing a profession, a living, every kind of public connexion - but how could I do otherwise.<sup>208</sup>

o) Scott's marriage, and his second call to the Scots Church in Woolwich

After the turbulent autumn of 1830, Scott headed north to Greenock, where, on the 14th December, he married Ann, the third daughter of Alan Ker.<sup>209</sup> Dr. Scott was well enough to perform the marriage ceremony, and, according to Erskine, was greatly satisfied with this match.<sup>210</sup> Ann's father had died in late 1830 not long before the wedding. Robert Story, who had learned much from Ker, wrote of him upon his death: 'Dear, dear Alan, what an intense

<sup>204</sup>The Daily News, 26th May 1862.

<sup>205</sup>Oliphant, p.103.

<sup>206</sup>Ibid. p.149.

<sup>207</sup>The Daily News, 26th May 1862.

<sup>208</sup>Ibid.

<sup>209</sup>Greenock Advertiser, 17th December 1830.

<sup>210</sup>Hanna, Letters of Erskine II, p.182.

vitality glowed in him to the last; his living love was more than conqueror, for even when wounded it seemed as if only a new avenue was opened up for the outflowing of his affection to those who tried him, as often indeed I did myself, but his love covered all my errors and injuries. Where, Oh! where - on whom has his mantle fallen?'<sup>211</sup>

Irving wrote to a friend in Edinburgh on the day of Scott's wedding, exclaiming: 'he is to be married this day, God bless him!'<sup>212</sup> Irving indicated in the same letter that Scott and his wife would soon be in Edinburgh, just before Irving himself was to be delivering a series of lectures on the Epistle to the Hebrews in the city. 'When my dear brother Alexander Scott comes to Edinburgh,' requested Irving, 'would you say that if he were to remain and go over the subjects with me privately, I should deem it a great help?'<sup>213</sup> Scott and Irving, it appears, still enjoyed close friendship during these months, and, despite any theological differences, Irving continued to highly value Scott's theological ability.

Scott returned to Woolwich with Ann, and had thoughts of becoming a teacher of classics and mathematics. He regarded his refusal to sign the Confession of the Scottish Church as final, and as 'ipso facto incapacitating me for her communion, at least as a minister.' 'After my refusal at London in 1830,' stated Scott, 'I considered myself as having done with every official tie to the Church of Scotland.'<sup>214</sup> Scott compared his situation at this stage to that of 1828 when he had abandoned his hopes of church ministry and taken up the study of medicine in Edinburgh. Scott, however, was very reluctant to lose the sympathy of Irving. 'There was none I valued more than that of Edward Irving,' said Scott. 'As much of his sympathy as I honestly could I was earnest to retain.'<sup>215</sup> Irving was persuaded that Scott should not stop preaching as a licentiate of the Church of Scotland when his licence had not been withdrawn.

<sup>211</sup> Story, Memoir of R. Story, p.239.

<sup>212</sup> Oliphant, p.158.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid.

<sup>214</sup> The Daily News, 26 May 1862.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid.

'He had from the first,' said Scott, 'a strength of ecclesiastical, I might say hierarchical feeling, impossible with my convictions. He conceived I ought not to anticipate the actual decision of the Church, to assume myself cut off from her communion, by an act of my own, without her express sentence.'<sup>216</sup> Scott was, in fact, to comply with Irving's desire.

According to the deeds of the Scots Kirk in Woolwich, any licentiate of the Church of Scotland was eligible to become its minister.<sup>217</sup> Legally, the Woolwich congregation was entirely at liberty to again call Scott to be their minister, and Scott was perfectly entitled to accept the call. This is exactly what happened on Tuesday, the 11th January 1831.<sup>218</sup> At a congregational meeting, to which Scott was invited, the congregation 'gave him another call, as numerously signed as the former.' Scott, 'after much entreaty', assented.<sup>219</sup> The proceedings of the 11th January were formally intimated to the Presbytery of London on the following Tuesday. The Presbytery viewed this as 'a grievous and important case', potentially divisive, and discreditable for the Scottish Church.<sup>220</sup> It was agreed that the Moderator of the Presbytery should meet and remonstrate with the elders of Woolwich. This he did, but with no success. On the 8th February, the Moderator reported that he had 'found the majority resolved to continue in the course of which the Presbytery so highly disapprove.'<sup>221</sup> It was now agreed to remonstrate with Scott himself, and to study the legal niceties of the case. Not being able to dissuade Scott from his new course of action, the London Presbytery concluded, on the 22nd February 1831, that the whole case should be transmitted to the ecclesiastical body which had originally licensed Scott. The Presbytery of London agreed to communicate to the Commission of the General Assembly 'the fact, that there is in this place, one, Mr. Alexander John

<sup>216</sup> Ibid.

<sup>217</sup> Minutes of the Scots Presbytery of London, 22 February 1831.

<sup>218</sup> 'The Scotch Presbytery', The World, 31 January 1831.

<sup>219</sup> 'The Scots Church, Woolwich', The Woolwich Advertiser, 24 August 1839.

<sup>220</sup> 'The Scotch Presbytery', The World, 31 January 1831.

<sup>221</sup> Minutes of the Scots Presbytery of London, 8 February 1831.

Scott, who, in the character of a licentiate of the Church of Scotland, occupies the pulpit of a church belonging to this Presbytery, and in that character preaches weekly to the members of a Scottish congregation, although he has renounced the doctrines of the Church of Scotland, and refused any longer to acknowledge the Westminster Confession of Faith as the Confession of his faith. This Presbytery, being very desirous of sustaining the credit of their parent Church, and of maintaining the purity of her doctrine and worship amongst their countrymen in this place, have used their influence to prevent the Scotch Congregation in Woolwich being instructed by one who is unsound in the faith: but finding, by the Deeds of the Church, that all their efforts will be in vain, so long as the individual elected, let him preach what he may, is permitted to hold his licence from the Church of Scotland: resolved therefore, that the Clerk be instructed to transmit, without delay, to the aforesaid Commission of the General Assembly, the minutes and other documents in his possession relating to the case of Mr. Scott with the Church of Woolwich, that the Commission may deal with him in such manner, as in their wisdom they may deem best.<sup>222</sup>

p) Scott appears before the Presbytery of Paisley, May 1831.

Scott agreed that the entire matter should be referred to the Church of Scotland, with which he still considered himself to be in communion.<sup>223</sup> Scott hoped that the Scottish Church would settle the question as to whether or not his refusal to sign the Confession necessarily implied a forfeiture of his licence.<sup>224</sup> The papers relating to Scott and the Woolwich Church were passed on to the Presbytery of Paisley, from whom Scott had received his licence to preach four years earlier. On the 30th March 1831 the Presbytery of Paisley acknowledged receipt of these papers, but postponed any discussion of them until their next meeting in May, when Scott

<sup>222</sup>Ibid. 22 February 1831.

<sup>223</sup>'A.J. Scott on the Principles of Presbyterianism, at the Scottish Church at Woolwich', The World, 7 March 1831.

<sup>224</sup>The Daily News, 26 May 1862.



himself could be in attendance.<sup>225</sup>

Scott appeared before the Presbytery of Paisley on the 4th May, and, before discussion of his case began, he requested the right to speak, and explained that what he had to say would render lengthy discussion unnecessary. To this the Court agreed, and Scott proceeded first to read to the Presbytery his letter of October 1830, addressed to the Clerk of the London Presbytery, which contained his theological objections to the Westminster Confession of Faith.<sup>226</sup> After reading the letter, recalled Scott a few days later:

I then went on to state that this was still my conviction and resolution in regard to the Confession. That therefore nothing remained but shortly to explain why I should be found in my present situation, still amenable to that Court, because still retaining their license. That a suspicion or reproach of dishonesty commonly attached to such as remained in an ecclesiastical communion while holding doctrines opposed to those of its standards. That this might be just, where a man made his public declaration a cloak for private sentiments of an opposite kind, but my declaration of my objections had been as public and notorious as my signature had previously been, indeed much more so. Or the suspicion might be natural, where a man, denying the doctrines of the Confession, held anything by the tenure of that Confession: but that, whatever disputes might be about the nature of my present charge, (into which, as not before the Court, I would not enter,) it was my own full conviction that not one penny of what I now held was held on any such condition or by any such tenure. But that I felt there was a great difference between my saying to the Church, 'I cannot hold communion with you as Christian brethren', which I should do by withdrawing from the Church, and on the other hand giving them an opportunity of saying that what I had done must exclude me from their communion: the former I was not prepared to do, the latter I was now doing. - That, however, much it might be settled in the minds of the members of that Court, I was sure it was by no means universally known to others, that to remain a member of the Church of Scotland implied an unchanging adherence to every article of her Confession. That on this point I desired to have their

<sup>225</sup> Minutes of the Presbytery of Paisley (1823-36) in the Scottish Records Office, CH2 294 14, for the 30th March 1831.

<sup>226</sup> Reports of the Paisley Presbytery meeting of the 4th May 1831 can be found in the Greenock Advertiser, 6th May 1831, and in Minutes of the Presbytery of Paisley (1823-36) in the Scottish Records Office CH2 294 14. Scott's own version of events can be found in the Greenock Advertiser, 10th May 1831 in a letter to the editor. In that letter he corrects a few misrepresentations in the Advertiser's report of the 6th May.

decision, which would relieve my mind from a very painful load. I added that I could hold out to the Court no expectation that any change of my mind would follow a sentence of mere suspension, or the appointment of a conference, and therefore prayed that if they decided against the step I had taken, immediate deprivation of my license might be adopted rather than any dilatory proceeding.<sup>227</sup>

Scott then withdrew from the court while his case was discussed. Being in the west country the members of the Presbytery of Paisley were more than familiar with, and predisposed against, Scott's doctrine of the universal love of God. Campbell's heresy trial before the neighbouring Presbytery of Dumbarton had, for over a year now, been drawing much attention to the heterodox doctrines of universal atonement and assurance of faith. The Presbytery of Paisley, in fact, contained some of the most vocal opponents to Scott's circle and its theology. Dr. Robert Burns, for instance, had, in 1830, written The Gareloch Heresy tried, an attack primarily directed at the theology of Campbell and Erskine. Dr. James Barr, the minister in Port Glasgow, had energetically opposed the 'Rowite' doctrines, as well as the activities of the 'gifted' in Port Glasgow. Duncan Macfarlane from Renfrew was a vocal member of the Evangelical party, and in 1832, no doubt with Scott's opposition to the 'Sabbath' in mind, published A Treatise on the Authority, Ends, and Observance of the Christian Sabbath. Another member of the Presbytery of Paisley at this time was the future leader of the Free Church, Dr. Scott's assistant, William Cunningham, whose Westminster orthodoxy was impeccable. 'The Confessions of Faith of the Reformed Churches,' Cunningham later asserted, 'are the most important and valuable body of documents which have been given to the world since the apostolic age.'<sup>228</sup> Cunningham, with the orthodoxy of his day, believed that there were no important discoveries to be made in theology. As his biographer described it: 'Dr. Cunningham often said, that on all important theological questions the argument, so far as it has yet gone, was substantially anticipated

<sup>227</sup> Scott's letter to the editor, Greenock Advertiser, 10th May 1831.

<sup>228</sup> W. Cunningham, Theological Lectures (London, 1878), p.39.

and exhausted by the writers of the 17th century.<sup>229</sup> Cunningham had, for over a year now, been unleashing his great powers as a controversialist, hoping, as Andrew Thomson had put it, to knock 'the Row heresy on the head.'

These were some of the men, then, who deliberated upon Scott's case. The Presbytery very quickly, and without a vote, arrived at an almost unanimous decision concerning Scott. They considered Scott's refusal to sign the Westminster Confession as equivalent to a resignation of his licence to preach. Consequently, as recorded in the Minutes of Presbytery: 'The Presbytery did and hereby do find and declare that he is no longer a licentiate of this Presbytery and order his name to be removed from the roll of their probationers; and the Presbytery express their deep regret at the circumstances which have led to this result - and their best wishes for Mr. Scott's temporal interests and spiritual prosperity.'<sup>230</sup> Patrick Brewster, the political extremist minister of the Abbey Church in Paisley, alone dissented from the Presbytery's decision. He did not agree that Scott's refusal to sign the Confession necessarily implied a resignation of licence.

Another member of the Presbytery of Paisley was Scott's father, although, due to his partly paralysed state, it is improbable that he was present. Cunningham's biographer recorded Dr. Scott's response to the decision of Presbytery: 'The noble old man, loyal to the cause of truth, approved the righteousness of the sentence, and bowed his head to the sore affliction.'<sup>231</sup>

Scott protested against the Presbytery's decision and appealed to the ensuing General Assembly. 'It is very plain,' he wrote after the meeting, 'that I made no resignation, but declared my reasons for preferring to have the sentence of the Presbytery determining whether I should be deprived; and therefore I appealed against a

<sup>229</sup>R. Rainy, Life of William Cunningham (London, 1871), p.503.

<sup>230</sup>Minutes of the Presbytery of Paisley, 4th May 1831. The D.N.B. and Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae articles on Scott, and J. Thompson in The Owens College, p.174, incorrectly give as the date of this meeting of Presbytery the 27th May 1831. The 27th May was the date of Scott's trial before the General Assembly. R. Rainy in Life of William Cunningham, p.54, incorrectly states that Scott was disciplined because of his participation in the 'Irving errors.'

<sup>231</sup>Rainy, p.54.

finding that what I had done was "tantamount to resignation".<sup>232</sup>

Scott wrote the following appeal to the General Assembly on the 9th May 1831:

The Presbytery of Paisley having found that a declaration made at their Bar at Paisley the fourth day of this current month by the undersigned Alexander John Scott and recorded in the minutes of the said presbytery is equivalent to a resignation of his licence as a Probationer of this Church, and having therefore declared that the said Alexander John Scott is no longer a Licentiate of that Presbytery, I the said Alexander John Scott do hereby appeal to the ensuing General Assembly of the Church of Scotland from the Finding and Declaration of the Presbytery above mentioned, for the Reasons following.

Firstly. Because the Appellant by declaring his objections to the Westminster Confession of Faith, and his conviction that these objections are insurmountable, never intended to resign his licence as a Preacher of the Church of Scotland - but to submit to the judgment of the Presbytery whether this declaration was an offence worthy of their sentence of deprivation of his licence: of which intention he fully informed the Presbytery at their Bar.

Secondly. Because the said declaration, as it was not in his purpose a resignation of his licence - so is it not equivalent to a resignation either in its own nature, or according to the laws of the Church of Scotland, or her procedure in cases of alleged erroneous doctrine whether occurring before or since the adoption of the Westminster Confession of Faith.<sup>233</sup>

Irving sharply criticised the Presbytery of Paisley's treatment of Scott.<sup>234</sup> Because Scott was not preaching within the bounds of the presbytery's jurisdiction, Irving contended, they were entirely beyond their powers in proceeding against him. 'But those men, alike ignorant of all ecclesiastical principle and procedure,' claimed Irving, 'must hurry him down from his duties, a distance of 400 miles, to appear at their bar for no transgression against them.' 'I would not obey such a summons, nor think it right to do so,' declared Irving.<sup>235</sup> And, furthermore, contested Irving, a confession has nothing to do with the essence of a preacher. 'A confession,'

<sup>232</sup> Greenock Advertiser, 10th May 1831.

<sup>233</sup> General Assembly Papers, 1831, in Scottish Records Office, CH1/2 154.

<sup>234</sup> Irving's attack is included in his 'Judgment upon the Decisions of the Last General Assembly', The Morning Watch V, pp.105-7.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid. pp.105-6.

he said, 'is a mere testimony lifted up by the church against the heresies and errors of that particular time; it doth not stamp itself as a complete testimony, not to be added to or taken from; it doth not supersede the Holy Scriptures, nor present them in an improved form; much less is a man made a preacher by setting his name to it, nor is a preacher unmade by taking his name away from it.'<sup>236</sup> Irving parodied the Presbytery's attitude to Scott: 'A preacher is not made without signing the Confession of Faith: but this man cannot sign the Confession of Faith; therefore he is no preacher. He may be a very good man, and the son of a good man, learned in the Scriptures, and unrivalled in his gifts of teaching them to others; he may have the gift of a Paul, or of a Luther, or of a Knox; but what is that to us? he cannot subscribe the book agreed upon by the divines who sat at Westminster in the year 1646; therefore he can be no preacher in the Church of Scotland.'<sup>237</sup>

Scott, with the sentence of his home Presbytery against him, now awaited his appeal before the General Assembly of May 1831, 'little deeming,' said Irving, 'what rougher handling awaited him there.'<sup>238</sup>

<sup>236</sup> Ibid. p.106.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid. p.107.

<sup>238</sup> Ibid. p.107.

## CHAPTER III

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF 1831,  
AND THE SCOTT-IRVING DIVIDE.

a) The General Assembly of May 1831

Scott, as early as October 1830, had been willing to end his theological contest with the Scottish Kirk by returning his Woolwich call to the London Presbytery. But Irving, with his 'strength of ecclesiastical feeling', had urged Scott to consider himself a licentiate of the Church of Scotland until the Kirk had expressly withdrawn his licence. And, thus, when the Presbytery of Paisley had regarded his refusal to sign the Westminster Confession as equivalent to a resignation of his licence, Scott appealed to the supreme court of the National Kirk in May 1831.<sup>1</sup> 'I did so most reluctantly,' wrote Scott, 'to satisfy Irving and friends who were of his mind; who thought that till this was done I had left a duty to the church undischarged.'<sup>2</sup> 'Everywhere sentence was against me,' explained Scott, 'as I knew it must be; but for Irving's sake I had the matter ascertained.'<sup>3</sup>

In early May, two weeks before the General Assembly was to commence, Scott's former congregation at Regent Square began early morning prayer meetings each day from 6:30 to 7:30 a.m.. Sometimes nearly a thousand people gathered to pray for the ensuing General Assembly, that it might be guided by the Spirit of God.<sup>4</sup> Thus, Scott had in London, in addition to his Woolwich congregation, an enormous body of support as he awaited his ecclesiastical trial. These early morning prayer meetings were continued after the Assembly of 1831, with a new emphasis, prayer for the restoration of the spiritual gifts. On the 30th April 1831, Mrs. Cardale had been 'gifted' with tongues and prophecy. By this time, therefore, there was a growing sense of expectation among Irving and his followers, that the Church was about to be blessed by a widespread revival of the charismata. The Scottish church, they believed, was in great

<sup>1</sup>W. Wilks, Edward Irving (London, 1854), p.219, incorrectly states that upon his resignation of the Woolwich call in October 1830, 'Scott appears to have quietly retired.'

<sup>2</sup>A.J. Scott's letter to the editor, The Daily News, 3rd June, 1862.

<sup>3</sup>A.J. Scott's letter to the editor, The Daily News, 26th May, 1862.

<sup>4</sup>J. Hair, Regent Square (London, 1899), p.104.

need of the Spirit, for it not only scorned the nascent charismatic activity, but it, by and large, rejected the doctrines of Christ's humanity and God's universal love. Irving recalled meeting with Scott, shortly before the Assembly: 'I said to that persecuted minister, at my own table, before he went down unto the conflict, "Brother, if thou be faithful to thy Master in thine appearance there, be prepared for their taking thy cause into their own hands, and deposing thee by an instant vote."' <sup>5</sup>

The General Assembly certainly made short work of Campbell's trial which began on the 24th May, the Assembly deposing him at 6:15 the next morning, by a vote of 119 to 6. <sup>6</sup> Scott was to receive similar treatment on the 27th May, and justifiably so, according to at least one historian. 'If ever a religious community had cause to bestir itself in its own defence, it was the Scottish Church, when the integrity of its confession and form of government was threatened, not by a company of weak inquirers, but by the bold and aggressive action of men who did not hesitate to claim for their doctrines the authority of divine inspiration.' Walker contended that Scott and his circle 'had heresies among them sufficient to have sunk in time any orthodox church in Christendom.' <sup>7</sup>

Scott's appeal against the sentence of the Presbytery of Paisley came before the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland on the 27th May 1831. He appeared alone to argue his own case. Oliphant, years later, unjustifiably described Scott's appearance as being 'with a certain touch of chivalric perversity which is almost amusing amid such grave surroundings. ... Here suddenly appeared this brilliant knight-errant by himself upon the field, proclaiming his readiness, not only to impugn the standards, but to argue the matter with the Church, and maintain against all comers, in the strength of an argumentative power which Irving calls unequalled, his solitary daring assault against the might of orthodoxy.' <sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> E. Irving, 'A Judgment upon the Decisions of the Last General Assembly', The Morning Watch vol V (London, 1832), p.107.

<sup>6</sup> J.M. Campbell, A Full Report of the Proceedings in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in the case of the Rev. John McLeod Campbell (Greenock, 1831), p.178.

<sup>7</sup> N.L. Walker, 'Trials of Irving and Campbell of Row', The British and Foreign Evangelical Review vol XVI (Edinburgh, 1867), p.337.

<sup>8</sup> M. Oliphant, The Life of Edward Irving vol II (London, 1862), p.178.



Oliphant's description of Scott did not long remain unchallenged. 'This charge of a vainglorious "knight errantry" with respect to the gravest spiritual matter must be utterly amazing to all who know Mr. Scott's character, influence, and history,' wrote James Baldwin Brown, one of Scott's foremost disciples in later years. 'The request, before a church court, to be allowed to argue about the truth of the gospel out of the Scriptures, by which the court professed to be bound, is the knight errantry which appears to the biographer of Irving to justify the picture which she has painted of the friend who he held in the highest honour and love. ... If this be knight errantry, God send us more of it. If this be chivalry, it is the oldest Christian chivalry; by this the church was founded, by this in every age it repairs its form and renews its life.'<sup>9</sup> A less grand response but, perhaps, one more to the point, was Scott's own reply. Explaining 'the simple truth' of his appearance before the Assembly, Scott stated that he was there primarily to appeal from a sentence passed upon him for an ecclesiastical offence. 'My appearance', contended Scott, 'was the formally inevitable consequence of an act committed by me so far back as the 13th of the October before the sitting of this Assembly, May, 1831. The astounding irruption on the Assembly resolves itself into my being there to answer in course of law for an offence committed eight months before.'<sup>10</sup> 'Instead of being a bit of extempore Quixotism,' wrote a reviewer of Oliphant's book, 'Mr. Scott's appearance in the Assembly was the orderly outcome of a course of procedure which involved on his part the sacrifice of much personal feeling; while, after the protracted and painful processes were all over, the result proved to be entirely in accordance with Mr. Scott's expectations. It was surely a very novel proof of "wilfulness", "waywardness", "fastidiousness", and "recalcitrant restlessness", that a man should submit, as Mr. Scott did, to a succession of ecclesiastical forms so harassing, and should do so solely in deference to the scruples of his friend.'<sup>11</sup>

<sup>9</sup> J. Baldwin Brown's letter to the editor, The Daily News, 12th June 1862.

<sup>10</sup> A. J. Scott, The Daily News, 26th May 1862.

<sup>11</sup> Thomas Chalmers, A. J. Scott, and Edward Irving', The National Review vol XV (London, 1862), p. 358.

Scott, then, stood alone before the Assembly, appealing against the Presbytery of Paisley's decision. He argued that, although he was willing to submit to any judgment the Presbytery might pass upon him after a due investigation of his doctrines, he had not intended, by his refusal to sign the Confession, to resign his licence.<sup>12</sup>

One of Scott's major thrusts in his speech before the Assembly was that he should be judged by the Word of God alone. When he became a licentiate of the Church, contended Scott, the Church had pledged that, in any difference of doctrine, he should be tried by the Word of God, and 'not by any human standard whatever.'<sup>13</sup> He claimed that he had openly and consistently held the doctrines for which he was now brought before the court, thus having given the Church every opportunity to fairly assess his doctrines. Since his resignation of the call from Woolwich he had 'carefully and anxiously re-examined the Confession of Faith, and was only the more deeply convinced that the doctrines he objected to were contrary to the Word of God, and he could not, nor would not, affirm his belief in that which he did not believe.'<sup>14</sup> Earlier in this week of Assembly, Campbell also had asked to be judged by the Word of God alone, but, unlike Scott, he had contended: 'I hold that the doctrines I am charged with are not contradicted by the Confession of Faith.'<sup>15</sup> Scott, however, was asserting, much more radically, that certain doctrines in the Confession were actually 'contrary to the Word of God.' Such a direct assault upon the theology of the Kirk's Confession was unprecedented within the National Church. The Seceders in the 18th century had questioned the Confession's chapter concerning the Civil Magistrate, but up until this point

<sup>12</sup>For newspaper reports of Scott's case before the General Assembly of 1831, see the Caledonian Mercury, The Edinburgh Evening Courant, and The Scotsman, on the 28th May 1831, or the Edinburgh Observer on the 31st May 1831. For a slightly fuller report see the Greenock Advertiser 31st May 1831.

<sup>13</sup>'Case of Mr. Scott - Heresy', Caledonian Mercury, 28th May, 1831.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>J.M. Campbell, A Full Report..., p.40.

no really determined attack had been made on any central tenet of the Confession.<sup>16</sup> Scott spoke and acted clearly in accordance with his conscience. Where he differed from the Confession, it, he believed, diverged from the Word of God. He, therefore, could not bring himself to sign the Confession. With special reference to this stage in Scott's history, T. Erskine stated, many years later: 'I have indeed always considered him as most scrupulously conscientious - as a man, in short, who felt that his conscience did not belong to him, but that he belonged to his conscience.'<sup>17</sup>

After asserting that some of the Westminster Confession's doctrines were contrary to the Word of God, Scott proceeded to reiterate for the Assembly his three principal objections to the Confession. He directed his first objection against the doctrine that Christ had died for the sins of the elect only. Against this Westminster tenet of limited atonement, he applied the words of Scripture, 'that God would have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth.'

His second protest Scott aimed at the sabbatarianism of the Confession, the belief that the Sabbath and the Lord's day are identical. They are two separate institutions, claimed Scott, the one a Jewish ordinance and the other Christian, and the Church is not bound to observe the Sabbath. Scott's assault on Scottish sabbatarianism predated, by over 30 years, his friend's parallel attempt to de-puritanise the Kirk's legalistic observance of the Sabbath. In 1865 Norman Macleod, later a close friend of Scott's, by asserting, in sympathy with Scott, that the law, including the Sabbath, was left in the grave when Christ arose, became the centre of a heated ecclesiastical controversy known as the 'Sabbath War'. The main difference between these two cases which were separated in time by about 35 years, was that the first challenge was uttered by a young and relatively unknown rebel, whose opposition to

<sup>16</sup> See A.C. Cheyne, 'The Westminster Standards: A Century of Re-Appraisal', SCHS vol 14 (Edinburgh, 1962), p. 204. An exception to this might be the United Secession's contention, beginning around 1830, that the idea of Establishment expressed in the Confession was contrary to Scripture.

<sup>17</sup> T. Erskine's letter to the editor, The Daily News, 7th June, 1862.

sabbatarianism was relatively insignificant when placed alongside his other heterodoxies, whereas the later attack was led by one of the Established Church's most prominent ministers. In considering Macleod's 'victory' in his struggle to relax the stringent sabbatarianism of Scotland, the example of his older friend, 35 years earlier, should not be left unnoticed.

Scott's third protest against the Confession of Faith he felt to be 'one of awful importance.'<sup>18</sup> He could not believe that, in ordination, the Presbytery, by the laying on of hands, could communicate to the ordinand the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Scott denied that officers of the Church could have the power to retain or to remit sins, to shut up the kingdom of heaven from sinners, and to open it to penitent Christians. On this point, asserted Scott, 'as an honest man',<sup>19</sup> he was bound to declare that the Westminster Confession was not an expression of his own faith.

While 'not wishing to evade any judgment the Church might pronounce upon him',<sup>20</sup> Scott asked the Assembly not to confuse his case with Campbell's, which they had dealt with a few days earlier, for the issues were distinct. With Campbell's case, Scott later explained, 'there was a common element, and yet the two were essentially distinct; we both had, for four or five years, held the Atonement to have been made for all men, or better, for all humanity. To me it appeared that the Confession required me to affirm that redemption is of the elect only. Campbell believed the contrary.'<sup>21</sup> There were great inconsistencies, however, in Campbell's theology at this time. As well as contending that the Confession did not contradict his doctrine of universal atonement, Campbell unequivocally asserted that the doctrines of election and universal atonement were compatible.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>18</sup>'Case of Mr. Scott - Heresy', Caledonian Mercury, 28th May, 1831.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

<sup>21</sup>The Daily News, 26th May 1862.

<sup>22</sup>J.M. Campbell, The Whole Proceedings in the case of the Rev. John McLeod Campbell (Greenock, 1831), p.56.

While believing that all men were atoned for by Christ, he explicitly stated, on the other hand, 'that the persons ultimately saved are those and those alone originally elected of God unto Salvation.'<sup>23</sup> His belief in election greatly modified the significance of his doctrine of unlimited atonement. Referring, years later, to the 1831 Assembly, Campbell wrote: 'I did not, indeed, then see the subject of election as I now see it; otherwise I must have recognised a pointed contradiction of a part of my faith, as contained in the Westminster Confession.'<sup>24</sup> Unlike Campbell, Scott made no attempt to reconcile his belief in universal atonement with the Westminster Confession of Faith, and, for some time already, had rejected the Westminster notion of election.<sup>25</sup> Scott's later disciple said of him: 'He did not try to tone down or explain away differences. He saw the inconsistency too clearly.'<sup>26</sup> And as C.G. McCrie stated, concerning Scott and Campbell: 'The teaching of both men on cardinal points of the Faith was not simply extra-confessional, it was contra-confessional. The lucid intellect of the probationer saw that from the first. The less powerful, more sophisticated mind of the Row minister thought otherwise in the earlier stages of his speculations.'<sup>27</sup>

This was not the only point of distinction between the Scott and Campbell cases at the 1831 Assembly. Scott's second and third objections, relating to sabbatarianism and ordination, were, said Scott, 'very vital to me, but with which Campbell and Irving were unconcerned.'<sup>28</sup> Campbell was generally more conservative in his divergence from Westminster orthodoxy than was Scott. Even by 1865, during the 'Sabbath War', Campbell can be found writing to his son, concerning Norman Macleod's assault on sabbatarianism:

<sup>23</sup>Ibid. p.52

<sup>24</sup>D. Campbell, Memorials of J.M. Campbell vol II (London, 1877), p.34.

<sup>25</sup>See, for instance, On the Divine Will (Greenock, 1830), pp.19-20.

<sup>26</sup>J. Hunter, 'Alexander Scott', The Expositor, 8th Series, vol XXI (London, 1921), p.399.

<sup>27</sup>C.G. McCrie, The Confessions of the Church of Scotland (Edinburgh, 1907), p.107.

<sup>28</sup>The Daily News, 26th May 1862.

While I am fully persuaded that he is right as to the passing away of the Sabbath known by that name in Scripture, and the coming in of the Lord's Day as the day to be marked as a religious day in the Christian Church, I would not have felt any call to disturb men's minds on the subject but have felt it enough to raise the spiritual tone of their observance of Sunday, and to free it from superstitious gloom.<sup>29</sup>

After requesting that the Assembly distinguish between his case and that of Campbell's, Scott proceeded to further explain his appeal. He objected to the sentence of the Presbytery of Paisley because they had declared his loss of licence to be his own act, and that to differ from the Confession of Faith was virtually to be separated from his licence. To differ from the Westminster Confession of Faith, contended Scott, was not a virtual resignation of one's licence. Scott pleaded for toleration, an attribute almost entirely lacking in the dogmatic atmosphere of the Scottish Kirk at this time, but a quality which increasingly appeared as the century progressed. In spite of his divergence from the Confession, he requested that he might be tolerated as a licentiate in the Church of Scotland. Would the Assembly actually say, asked Scott, that if a man did not assent to every iota of the Confession, he was no longer to be considered a licentiate of the National Church? Was this not to put 'a temptation to hypocrisy and falsehood in the way of men'?<sup>30</sup>

From his plea for toleration Scott returned to his emphasis on the Word of God. 'The Church of Scotland was a Protestant Church,' claimed Scott, 'and the decision of this question was of the very essence of Protestantism. The Scriptures were that by which all doctrines were to be tried. They had a right to refer to them alone as the only standard.'<sup>31</sup> This, he maintained, was true Protestantism. Roman Catholicism it was which resolved all doubts and difficulties by appealing to creeds and councils. 'He would not compare this venerable Assembly to such councils,'

<sup>29</sup>D. Campbell, Memorials of J.M. Campbell II, p.115.

<sup>30</sup>Case of Mr. Scott - Heresy', Caledonian Mercury, 28 May 1831.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

said Scott, 'but he would hold it a heresy in principle to refuse to try him by the Standard of the Scriptures, and that alone.'<sup>32</sup>

Scott explained to the Assembly that it had often been said to him, that, if he wished to broach new and heretical doctrines, he should simply leave the Church and teach whatever he pleased, appealing for doctrinal support to Scripture. This right, it was claimed, preserved the Protestant character of the Church. 'To this argument,' commented Irving, 'Scott addressed himself like a sound-minded and right-hearted churchman.'<sup>33</sup> The right to believe and teach whatever doctrines he pleased, asserted Scott, was his by the toleration of the State. He did not have to leave the Church to acquire such a freedom. That which preserved, however, the true principle of Protestantism within the Church, he contended, was, not the act of toleration, but rather the determination of right doctrine by appeal to the Word of God alone.

Scott went on to demonstrate that the Church's own standards contained this protestant principle, and thus, that his case should be tried by reference to the Word of God alone.<sup>34</sup> Scott quoted first from the preface to the Scots Confession of 1560: 'If any man will note, in this our Confession, any article or sentence repugning to God's holy word, that it would please him of his gentleness and for Christian charity's sake, to admonish us of the same in writing: and we, upon our honour and fidelity, do promise unto him satisfaction from the mouth of God, that is from the Holy Scriptures, or else reformation of that which shall be proved to be amiss.' Scott then quoted an excerpt from the body of the Scots Confession itself, article XVIII: 'When controversy then happeneth, for the right understanding of any place or sentence in Scripture, or for the reformation of any abuse within the Church of God, we ought not so much to look at what men before us have said or done, as unto that which the

<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

<sup>33</sup>E. Irving, 'A judgment ...', p.108.

<sup>34</sup>This part of Scott's speech, containing quotations from the Scots Confession and the Westminster Confession, was reported only by the Greenock Advertiser, 31st May 1831.

Holy Ghost uniformly speaketh, within the body of the Scriptures, and unto that which Jesus Christ himself did, and commanded to be done.'

'If the old Confession had worn at all out of acquaintance or out of reverence because another was used for subscription,' said Scott, he would 'shew the doctrine of the present, the Westminster Confession, to be still fuller and stronger on this point.'<sup>35</sup> He quoted a number of passages from Chapter 1 of the Westminster Confession, but referred emphatically to 'the still stronger language' of the 10th section of that chapter: 'The Supreme Judge, by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other than the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scriptures.' Scott next called the Assembly's attention to Chapter 31 of the Confession, concerning Synods and Councils. In the 3rd section of that chapter, contended Scott, there is a sharp distinction drawn between a council 'ministerially' determining 'controversies of faith, and cases of conscience', and a council 'authoritatively' determining 'cases of maladministration'. A Council, whether the 17th-century Westminster Assembly or the 1831 General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, could not, claimed Scott, authoritatively determine, in and by itself, a theological controversy. It must stand under the Word of God. This section continues, said Scott, by instructing that a council's decrees and determinations, 'if consonant to the Word of God, are to be received with reverence and submission.' And finally, Scott quoted the 4th section of the same chapter, as conclusively proving his point: 'All Synods and Councils, since the Apostles' times, whether general or particular, may err, and many have erred: therefore they are not to be made the rule of faith or practice, but to be used as a help in both.'

While continuing in this strain, and, by implication, calling into question the 'Protestantism' of the Kirk's treatment of Campbell and himself, Scott was, not surprisingly, interrupted. Dr. Patrick Macfarlan of Glasgow it was, Moderator of the General

<sup>35</sup>Greenock Advertiser, 31st May 1831.



Assembly in a few years time, and later to be a Moderator of the Free Church, who called Scott to order. 'It was unworthy of the dignity of the Assembly,' said Macfarlan, 'to sit and hear, not a reasoning or discussion upon the finding of the Presbytery appealed from; but on a distinguishing principle of the Church of Scotland, on the Confession of Faith and certain standards, which the appellant himself had sworn to maintain and defend, and tending to show that these standards were false.'<sup>36</sup>

Dr. John Lee, another future Moderator of the Kirk, but in this case a leader of the Moderate party, and later the Principal of the University of Edinburgh, agreed with Macfarlan. He thought the course of action taken by Scott was 'insulting to the Assembly.'<sup>37</sup> Another leader of the Moderate party, Dr. Patrick Forbes, an ex-Moderator of the Assembly, and a Professor at Aberdeen, contended that Scott's argument 'went to show that he might be a member or a minister though not believing in the Confession of Faith. He had received his licence on the ground that he believed in that confession; and he now came and renounced that which he had sworn to defend, telling them that they were not to judge him by the rule which he himself had given them to judge him by; but that they were to judge him by his own interpretation of the Scriptures.' Forbes agreed that 'it was insulting to the Assembly to argue in this manner.'<sup>38</sup>

And finally, Lord Moncrieff of the Evangelical wing stood up to state that 'he had never sat so long in any court of judicature or legislative assembly, and heard statements from any man with so much pain as he had heard the appellant.'<sup>39</sup>

Irving described the interruption of Scott's Assembly speech by leaders of both parties, in words, which Scott later said, were 'too condemnatory of them, and too lovingly eulogistic of myself.'<sup>40</sup> 'Poor Scott could not even get a hearing,' recounted Irving. 'He

<sup>36</sup>Caledonian Mercury, 28th May 1831.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

<sup>40</sup>The Daily News, 26th May 1862.

was interrupted in one of the ablest, soundest, and most ecclesiastical speeches ever heard within their walls. Even the dignity and decency which became the judges of the supreme court of the church could not prevent the ill-instructed and unpractised man from interrupting him, and virtually preventing his pleading his own cause.'<sup>41</sup>

Campbell also recalled the events of that day:

Mr. Irving has characterised Mr. Scott's arguments at the bar of the Assembly as 'one of the most ecclesiastical speeches ever heard within those walls.' My memory of that scene, for I was present, is even a greater contrast to the picture of it of which Mr. Scott complains, than Irving's high praise, for it remains with me as the memory of the most humble and the meekest bearing, under much 'smiting of the tongue' from men who understood him not.<sup>42</sup>

Although interrupted in his Assembly speech, Scott was again given the floor. He now very briefly attempted to explain what had been regarded as an 'insult' to the Assembly. 'Had he regarded their adherence to the Church of Scotland as a profession that they adhered to every jot and tittle of the Westminster Confession,' said Scott, 'it would have been an insult to ask for a sentence contrary to it; but he was arguing on the express ground that adherence to the Church was not to be so interpreted.' Scott now agreed, however, to abstain from 'a course of argument disagreeable to that House.'<sup>43</sup> He had intended, explained Scott, to conclude from his argument, that the Presbytery of Paisley should not have regarded discrepancy from the Confession as equivalent to resignation. They should have allowed him 'trial by the Word of God', said Scott.<sup>44</sup>

Scott also indicated to the Assembly that he had intended to pursue a second line of defence against the Presbytery's decision. Though some divergence from the Confession might be

<sup>41</sup>Irving, 'A Judgment...', p.107.

<sup>42</sup>J.M. Campbell, 'letter to the editor', The Daily News, 3 June, 1862.

<sup>43</sup>Greenock Advertiser, 31st May 1831.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

expressed, without implied resignation, said Scott, other differences would be 'so grand and dangerous,'<sup>45</sup> that continuance in office could not be allowed. He meant to have argued that his doctrines were not of the latter sort. His divergences from the Confession, Scott claimed with certainty, 'were truth and he would have proved them to be truth from the Word of God.'<sup>46</sup> In light of the objections raised earlier, however, to the manner in which he was appealing, Scott explained that he would not, in fact, take up this second line of argument. He concluded his address by explicitly asserting that his objections to the Westminster Confession of Faith were the same now, 'with additional strength',<sup>47</sup> as they were when he stood at the bar of the Presbytery of Paisley. Scott reminded the Assembly that his appeal was directed at the Presbytery's finding that his acknowledged difference from the Confession was a virtual resignation of his licence. Irving, again somewhat eulogistically, described Scott's course of action, after the interruption of his speech: 'When he found that it was deemed derogatory to the dignity of the General Assembly to pursue his train of argument, he very wisely and meekly, like his Master, sat down and kept silence, and left his case to the vindication of God and the Head of the church.'<sup>48</sup>

When Scott had completed his speech, Lee rose and suggested that, after what they had heard from Scott, it was 'quite unnecessary to hear the Presbytery.'<sup>49</sup> John Geddes, however, a minister from Paisley, and representing the Presbytery, said that he would be very short. He explained that the Presbytery had found Scott's dealings all along 'direct, easy, and simple.' 'The Presbytery had proceeded on the principle,' continued Geddes, 'that Mr. Scott's having resigned into the hands of the Presbytery of London his call to Woolwich, was a virtual resignation of his

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Irving, p.107.

<sup>49</sup> Caledonian Mercury, 28th May 1831.

licence, and they accordingly ordered his name to be struck off the roll of probationers. The Church only required what was essential to purity in faith and practice, and to unity of faith throughout the land, that the trumpet of the Church might not give an uncertain sound. If it was held that in smaller points individuals might differ,' contended Geddes, 'one minister might come objecting to his section, and another objecting to his; so that before next Assembly the Confession of Faith might be in this way done away altogether. It was the duty of ministers not to bring forward their own novelties and imaginations,' stated Geddes, employing a commonly used argument against these new doctrines, 'but to explain the word of God agreeable to the standards of the Church.'<sup>50</sup> Geddes expressed concern that Scott was 'departing from soundness in the Faith.'<sup>51</sup> For Scott's sake, Geddes regretted this, but especially did he regret it for the sake of Dr. Scott, 'a venerable co-Presbyter, suffering affliction already under the hand of God, to whom it would be like the cutting off of his right hand, or the plucking out of his right eye.' But Geddes was certain that Dr. Scott 'would submit himself to this painful dispensation, and say with his Divine Master - "not my will, but that of the Father be done".'<sup>52</sup> Geddes concluded his speech by expressing his hope and prayer that Scott 'might be granted repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth, and be restored to his father and to this Venerable Church.'<sup>53</sup>

Scott responded to Geddes by again stating that 'the Reverend Presbytery were mistaken in supposing that he meant to resign his licence.'<sup>54</sup> Scott explained that, as his ordination had required subscription again to the Confession, and as he felt in his conscience that he could not do so, he had resigned any claim to the Woolwich call. But he could not acknowledge that his objection to sign the Confession involved, in any way, his status

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

as a licentiate of the Church of Scotland. Scott, apparently much affected by what Geddes had said concerning his father, in conclusion, 'begged the Assembly not to take that into consideration, but to pass sentence as if no such thing had been said.'<sup>55</sup>

Lee then rose again to speak against Scott. Scott, he said, was entitled to remain a licentiate of the Church on no other terms than those upon which he had originally been licensed. 'This was a truth which could not be contraverted,' Lee continued. 'Yet this young gentleman, who was licensed by a Presbytery within the bounds of the Established Church, declared that he was not only entitled to reject the Confession of Faith as a fit and faithful interpreter of the Word of God in the Scriptures; but was at liberty at any time to signify his dissent from its articles, under some qualification or other, and yet remain a member or minister of the Established Church.'<sup>56</sup> Lee could not see how 'the Assembly could avoid coming to the painful conclusion of sustaining, in substance, the decision of the Presbytery of Paisley.' 'They were bound,' he concluded, 'in vindication of the truth, and of the character of the Church, to declare that the appellant was no longer a preacher of the gospel, or a member within its bosom.'<sup>57</sup>

George Cook, the leader of the Moderate party, then rose to state that he agreed with Lee, 'that as this gentleman had avowed that he did not believe in the standards of the Church, he could not continue to be a licentiate of the Church of Scotland.'<sup>58</sup>

'Not a few in the Assembly spoke more or less defensively of Campbell's views,' wrote Scott years later, but 'not one voice had a word for me.'<sup>59</sup> The General Assembly unanimously found that 'as Mr. Alexander John Scott had voluntarily declared that he does not believe in the whole doctrine contained in the Confession of Faith which he subscribed when he was licensed as a preacher of the Gospel, he cannot continue a licentiate of this Church, and the General Assembly do hereby deprive him of his licence and prohibit

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> The Daily News, 26th May 1862.

and discharge all the ministers of this Church from employing him to preach in their pulpits.'<sup>60</sup> Oliphant described Scott's deposition, in her typically disparaging way: 'The Assembly took no notice of the bold summons which this dauntless opponent rang upon its shield. ... It withdrew from Mr. Scott his licence to preach, which, indeed, considering his opposition to most ecclesiastical propositions, was not remarkable.'<sup>61</sup>

Years later Scott recalled his state of mind immediately after the Assembly of 1831. 'I was relieved, indeed,' he said, 'after years of inward struggle.'<sup>62</sup> Scott had now joined Campbell on the deposed list; more were to follow over the next few years. On the evening of the 27th May, after Scott's trial, Campbell and Scott walked home together. 'After that dreary night in the Assembly', recollected Scott, 'the dawn breaking upon us as we returned, at length alike condemned, to our lodging in the New Town of Edinburgh, I turned round and looked on my companion's face under the pale light, and asked him, could you sign the Confession now? His answer was, 'No. The Assembly was right. Our doctrine and the Confession were incompatible." So I had admitted', wrote Scott, 'but I also asked which was true.'<sup>63</sup>

Although the reform bill was, by this stage, far along the road to being passed in parliament, the theological reform of doctrines and the confessional liberty of ministers had still far to go in the Church of Scotland, but reform was to come. Scott and his circle, increasingly standing outside the Establishment, were now to take up a more typically prophetic role in calling the Church to reform. In 1878, one of Scott's biographers wrote concerning 1831 and the steadily growing reform since that date:

For conscience sake he made the surrender, choosing rather to keep a good conscience than to secure a good living. Who can estimate the value of the steadfastness of these men? And how much does this present generation owe to them? That Christ gave himself up to the death for all men was

<sup>60</sup>Records of the General Assembly 1828 - 1831, pp.527-28, Scottish Records Office, CH1/1 81.

<sup>61</sup>Oliphant, p.178.

<sup>62</sup>The Daily News, 26th May 1862.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid.

the first break of the morning light that has not yet burst into the fulness of day, but that is on its way still. Accustomed as we are now to that message, it is hard to realise what a disturbing element it was 40 years ago.<sup>64</sup>

'The men of the past half-century,' he continued, 'were too timid and too much afraid to let go their go-carts and leading strings, and it was in vain that they heard a strong man urging them "to quit their clogs".'<sup>65</sup> Scott, at the Assembly of 1831, was indeed a man before his time. As another biographer put it:

He was one of the few men who may be found in every age who think and speak for themselves, and cannot be included in the general categories of society; who do not readily fall into line with political parties, who stand outside all the churches, or, if they remain in them, are constantly striving for modification and expansion. They are not so much at variance with their age as in advance of it, the prophets of its awakening mind and soul, the voices of its inarticulate or half-articulate thought, shaping into clearness its cloudy aspirations.<sup>66</sup>

Who in the Church of Scotland was responsible for this Confession-obsessed judgment upon Scott and Campbell in 1831? Campbell, writing to his father a few months before the Assembly, stated:

I will not conceal it from you that I have little expectation of anything less than deposition. Dr. Chalmers has, indeed, said that 'the Moderation was not half so excited against me as the Evangelicals'; and that 'he hoped I might be got through'. But it is very doubtful whether he will be a member; and besides, the 'Moderation' in my presbytery are not better than the rest.<sup>67</sup>

The facts of the 1831 General Assembly do not substantiate Chalmers' claim. There was very little, if any, visible difference between the Evangelical and Moderate approaches during the heresy trials of Scott and Campbell. In fact the Moderates took a lead in the judgments of May 1831. George Cook, it was, the leader of the Moderate party, who moved that Campbell's appeal be dismissed and that the sentence of the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr against Campbell

<sup>64</sup> (P. Macallum?) Recollections of Professor A.J. Scott (Greenock), 1878, pp.16-17.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid. pp.30-31

<sup>66</sup> J. Hunter, pp.388-89.

<sup>67</sup> D. Campbell, Memorials of J.M. Campbell I, p.78.

be affirmed.<sup>68</sup> And P. Macfarlan, a leading Evangelical, rejoiced to 'find all parties in our Church united in the sentiment of attachment to those forms we have sworn to maintain.'<sup>69</sup> In Scott's case, as we have seen, although Evangelical leaders such as Macfarlan and Moncrieff protested against Scott's 'insult to the dignity of the Assembly', it was, in fact, Lee and Cook, the leaders of the Moderate party, who dealt the final death blow.

What can account for the silence of Thomas Chalmers during the proceedings against Scott and Campbell which culminated in the 1831 Assembly? The same assembly also 'launched a passing arrow' at Chalmers' close friend, Edward Irving, by approving a motion submitted from Scott's home Presbytery concerning the heterodox doctrine of Christ's humanity, as expressed in some of Irving's publications.<sup>70</sup> Almost a year earlier, Irving had written to Chalmers, encouraging him to 'stand in the breach for the truth' in the Scottish Church. He ended his letter by writing: 'Mind my words when I say, "The Evangelical party in the Church of Scotland will lay all flat if they be not prevented."<sup>71</sup> Why did Chalmers not act on behalf of this circle, most of whom he knew well, and to at least one of whom he had expressed the hope that he 'might be got through'? Though only in sympathy with certain aspects of this circle's theology, why did he not use his influence, as Professor of Theology at Edinburgh, and emerging leader of the Evangelical party, to at least lighten the judgment pronounced against them? Chalmers himself was later to say concerning confessions of faith:

I look on Catechisms and Confessions as mere landmarks against heresy. If there had been no heresy, they wouldn't have been wanted. It's putting them out of their place to look on them as magazines of truth. There's some of your stour orthodox folk just over ready to stretch the Bible to square with their catechism: all very well, all very needful as a landmark, but what I say is, do not let that wretched, mutilated thing be thrown between me and the Bible.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>68</sup>J.M. Campbell, A Full Report of the Proceedings ..., p.143.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid. p.173.

<sup>70</sup>Oliphant, pp.178-79.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid. p.139.

<sup>72</sup>W. Hanna, Memoirs of Thomas Chalmers vol II (Edinburgh, 1854) p.729.



This sentiment is, in some respects, not far from the plea made by Scott and Campbell, that they should be judged by the Word of God alone, and is distinctly out of sympathy with the pronounced confessionalism of the 1831 Assembly. Perhaps Chalmers' silence should be interpreted more in terms of political expedience, for on the 28th May 1831, the day following Scott's deposition, the committee of ex-Moderators asked Chalmers to be the next Moderator of Assembly.<sup>73</sup> More likely, however, is Chalmers' silence to be understood in terms of his mixed, even confused, feelings for the theology of this circle, as expressed in his reaction to T. Erskine's Unconditional Freeness.<sup>74</sup> But the reasons for Chalmers' silence must always remain somewhat indefinite. The silence, however, does throw a new light on the relationship of the Scottish Kirk to Scott and his circle, for it is almost certain that Chalmers, the emerging leader of the national Church, did not stand alone in his partially sympathetic silence. The voting in the 1831 Assembly, unanimously opposed in the case of Scott, does not represent the embryonic sympathy, among some of the silent in the Church, with aspects of Scott's theology, which would soon begin to emerge. The resounding defeat of Campbell and Scott in the Assembly of 1831 does, however, indicate the enormous extent of their united opposition.

b) Reactions to the General Assembly of 1831

Oliphant's disparaging portrayal of Scott as a restless, dissatisfied thinker, whose deposition in May 1831 was not surprising, 'considering his opposition to most ecclesiastical propositions', deeply coloured, from the time of her Life of Irving's first publication in 1862, much of the historical reaction to the 1831 General Assembly's treatment of Scott. N.L. Walker, for instance, clearly echoed Oliphant when, in 1867, he wrote: 'One cannot but regret that a man so singularly gifted was lost to the Church of Scotland, but he was obviously one of those Free Lances who could never have been bound by the laws of any ecclesiastical organisation, and if he had not broken rank on one account he would certainly on

<sup>73</sup>See the New College Chalmers' MSS, a letter from John Inglis on behalf of the old moderators' meeting, dated 28th May 1831.

<sup>74</sup>Hanna, Memoirs of Chalmers II, p.194.

another.'<sup>75</sup> Such a picture, partly true, but generally defective in any real comprehension of Scott and his obedience to conscience, is exceedingly mild in its lack of sympathy with Scott, in comparison to the vindictive treatment he received in the months following the Assembly.

The assault on Scott and his circle expressed itself in print primarily through the Evangelical organ, The Edinburgh Christian Instructor. 'Modern Heresies shown to be Old Delusions' appeared, in June 1831, under the pseudonym of 'Perthensis', which, more clearly than the writer's real name would have, revealed his intention. Perthensis claimed that one of the 17th century 'Gangraena heresies', which taught that 'the Jewish Sabbath, or Saturday, is still to be kept by Christians for their Sabbath,' had reappeared.<sup>76</sup> Displaying his total misunderstanding of Scott's second objection to the Confession, namely, his opposition to sabbatarianism, Perthensis accused Scott of having resuscitated the old 'Gangraena heresy'. 'He had the hardihood to impugn several doctrines of the Church,' contended Perthensis, 'and among other strange lights, to propound the obligation by us as Christians to observe both Saturday and Sunday as Sabbaths.'<sup>77</sup> This sort of misrepresentation, probably not intentional, on the part of a leading religious journal, reveals the depth of 'orthodoxy's' misconception concerning the doctrines of Scott and his circle.

Perthensis went on to say, now with the doctrines of Christ's humanity and universal atonement in mind as well, that the adherents of this 'modern school of absurdity and heresy' had increased in number, 'which increase, all things considered, is not to be wondered at, as people of ignorance, and whim, and of unsettled principle, are generally attracted, brought together, and associated, in a proportion corresponding to the paradoxical nature of the doctrines addressed to them.' 'When these ephemeral visionaries and self-sufficient intermeddlers with things beyond the grasp of their intellect,' he continued, 'shall have accomplished their permitted

<sup>75</sup>N.L. Walker, p.344.

<sup>76</sup>Perthensis, 'Modern Heresies shown to be Old Delusions', The Edinburgh Christian Instructor vol XXX (Edinburgh, 1831), p.404.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid. p.405.

measure of annoyance to the church, they shall, after the lapse of a few years, like the other heretics who have preceded them, be forgotten.'<sup>78</sup> On this latter point at least, history has proved Perthensis to be incorrect.

Finally, Perthensis enthusiastically applauded the depositions of Scott and Campbell, and encouraged the Church to hunt down other heretics in her midst:

The decisions of the General Assembly in the cases referred to do honour to that venerable body, and are such as become a church whose confession of faith is Calvinistic. The speeches of several of the members bore directly on the necessity of a strict adherence by all ministers in their preaching to our orthodox standards, which was truly refreshing, and calculated to excite delightful hopes of a reviving zeal for the purity of the faith delivered to the saints. It is devoutly to be wished that a thorough purgation of our church from other heretical doctrines will be begun in several presbyteries, and carried through with equal spirit and decision by the superior courts.<sup>79</sup>

The National Kirk, especially over the next three years, was to take up Perthensis' 'devout wish' with an almost unabated zeal.

Another article in The Edinburgh Christian Instructor, after congratulating the Assembly on its deposition of Scott and Campbell for their violation of the Confession, incited the Church to further vindictiveness. Irving should have been called to trial, contested the writer. He looked with 'amazement, at the slackness of the General Assembly, in not asserting in this, as in every other case, its own supreme jurisdiction over all, in every place, who have at any time signed the standards of the Church of Scotland.' 'We have, it is true,' admitted the writer, 'a battery along all our coasts against him, and every Presbytery is bristled like the back of a porcupine to receive him; but then, if his self-love predominates, he can keep out of our way - he can keep his distance - and reckon himself as safe as Tam O'Shanter of old, merely because he has got across the stream.'<sup>80</sup>

<sup>78</sup> Ibid. p.410-11.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid. pp.410.

<sup>80</sup> 'Mr. Irving and the General Assembly', The Edinburgh Christian Instructor (Edinburgh, 1831) vol XXX, pp.604,605.

With this type of fierce polemic being conducted by The Edinburgh Christian Instructor against Scott and his friends, there came, in September 1831, a response, equally vehement, from The Morning Watch, in an attempt to vindicate the deposed ministers against the decisions of the General Assembly. The writer of The Morning Watch article entered this match swinging his fists as viciously as his opponents. He struck at their lack of understanding and incompetence to judge. 'The Sanhedrim at Jerusalem,' he contended, 'was not more incompetent to form a sound judgment upon the teaching of Paul and Peter, than such an assembly is to pronounce an opinion upon the doctrines of Messrs. Campbell and Scott.' And again, he said: 'A body that could decide as it did with respect to Messrs. Campbell and Scott, was as incapable of understanding the former gentlemen as they would be a dissertation in Russian or Chinese.'<sup>81</sup>

The same writer dealt just as ruthlessly with the Assembly when explaining the Scripture versus tradition antithesis which had manifested itself at the General Assembly in May, the 'orthodox' having appealed almost entirely to the Confession, and the deposed to the Scriptures. 'Whatever other characteristics Popery may have,' contended the writer, 'that which constitutes its blasphemy is the setting up of the decrees of its fathers and doctors above the Word of God. This blasphemous character is now assumed by the General Assembly. What Paul and Isaiah say is nothing to them: the sole question about which they concern themselves is, what Calvin and Knox has said.'<sup>82</sup>

The third line of attack used by this writer was that the Church of Scotland generally lacked love. 'Intellectualism and inordinate pride is their bane,' he claimed, evidencing very little love himself in this article, 'and runs through every part of their social and religious system; pervades their domestic arrangements, their legal proceedings, and their theological tenets. Most of their best theologians have yet to learn the immeasurable distance

<sup>81</sup>'Messrs. Campbell, Scott, and Maclean, versus the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland', The Morning Watch vol IV (London, 1832), pp.191,192.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid. p.187.

between an enlightened understanding and a loving heart. If the head be the seat of godliness, then may Scotland stand high in the scale of eternal truth: if the heart be the seat of the image of Christ, and if all knowledge be as tinkling brass without love, then there is not a part of the habitable globe which ranks lower.<sup>83</sup>

In spite of the uncharitableness of this writer, the blows which he delivered to the General Assembly contain some truth. It is true that the Assembly lacked an understanding of what was new and expansive in Scott's theology. They did not understand Scott's central doctrine of the universal love of God. The premise from which they worked was God's Sovereignty; all that was according to His will. How, therefore, could it be said that God loved all men? Was it not obvious that only some were loved and chosen? And Scott, more than once, was misinterpreted concerning his distinction between the Jewish Sabbath and the Christian Lord's day. Because Sabbath observance was a cardinal feature of Scotland's Westminster faith, some interpreted him to mean, not that sabbatarianism was to be abandoned by Christians, for that was unimaginable, but that observance of the Sabbath was to be transferred to Saturday, leaving Sunday for the exclusive observance of the Christian 'Lord's day'.

The Morning Watch article is also partly correct in its assertion that a Scripture versus tradition antithesis was apparent in May 1831, the Assembly appealing to the Confession, and Scott to the Scriptures. The difference, however, was not entirely clearcut, for the Assembly did believe the Confession to be based upon the Word of God. It is probably more correct to say that the difference lay in their respective approaches to the Scriptures, Scott viewing them through a glass tinted by his belief in the divine-human love of Christ, the General Assembly looking at Scripture through spectacles previously worn by the Westminster divines, and coloured by their principal belief in the Omnipotence of God.

The writer's third point, that the Assembly was lacking in love, also contains some truth, although he might have noticed the speck in his own eye. Rather than saying that the Assembly lacked

<sup>83</sup>Ibid. p.191.

love generally, although that is a tempting statement, it would be closer to the truth to say that the Assembly was not concerned to mix charity and theology. This is not entirely surprising, seeing as the pre-eminent attribute of the Westminster God was not, after all, love. If charity had not assumed a predominant place in their theology, what reason is there to expect that their theological enquiry and examination should be conducted in a spirit of love? Certainly the next fifteen years in the history of the Assembly would reveal the extent of their theological and ecclesiastical uncharitableness.

The Edinburgh Christian Instructor could not resist responding to The Morning Watch article. In January 1832, James Barr, of Port Glasgow, wrote an article for the Christian Instructor, entitled 'Last General Assembly Vindicated.' Barr contended, against The Morning Watch article, that the Assembly's decisions relating to Scott and his friends rested wholly upon the Word of God. Because the Assembly followed the Church's own interpretation of Scripture, and rejected that of The Morning Watch, Barr asked, 'does it follow that she accounts "the truth of Scripture as nothing", and arrogates to herself one of the worst attributes of Popery?'<sup>84</sup> Barr, quite correctly, delineated the difference between the Assembly and Scott's circle, not simply in terms of tradition versus Scripture, as had The Morning Watch, but more in terms of divergent interpretations of Scripture, the Assembly pursuing a more tradition-based approach to Scripture, Scott, on the other hand, following a more Christ-centred and conscience-based approach.

Barr also, in this article, sketched a philosophical distinction between Westminster theology and the new theology of Scott's circle, and The Morning Watch writer, which helps to clarify some of the differences between these schools of thought. Speaking of The Morning Watch writer, Barr stated:

As a philosopher, he looks down on the illustrious names of Bacon and Newton with contempt. The philosophy of these great masters consisted in deducing a knowledge of causes from the contemplation of visible effects, and in

<sup>84</sup> J. Barr, 'Last General Assembly Vindicated', The Edinburgh Christian Instructor, New Series, vol I (Edinburgh, 1832), p.21.

following out known causes to their proper consequences. But this is quite contemptible to the anonymous sage of The Morning Watch. ...To affirm the existence of a cause which produces no corresponding effect is the province of his philosophy. If, as he would have it, 'our Lord Jesus Christ is the exhibition of God's love to all men', we must, proceeding upon philosophical principles, conclude that all men would share alike in the blessedness of being the objects of God's love; and the acknowledged fact, that men do not all experience the same treatment at the hand of God, can be philosophically accounted for only by supposing that they are not all regarded by him with the same feeling of love.<sup>85</sup>

Scott, like his Morning Watch defender, did not employ the typically Baconian inductive method of proceeding from effects to cause, but rather began with the character and will of God as revealed in the humanity of Christ, holding on to that as the eternal truth which was not to be philosophically adjusted to accord with apparently contradictory phenomena. Westminster theology, on the other hand, observed that men were not equally blessed by God, and thus concluded, concerning the character of the Almighty Sovereign, that He did not love all men. This philosophical distinction contributed to, and partly explains, the radical divergence between Scott and most of his contemporary theologians in the Scottish Church.

Also in January 1832 there appeared a defence of sabbatarianism, which, while it was not an acknowledged reaction to Scott's opposition to the Sabbath before the General Assembly in May, was, in essence, a direct reply to Scott's doctrine, and clearly displays what Scott was up against in Scottish sabbatarianism. The writer of this article, entitled 'On the Sabbath', totally equated the Sabbath with the Lord's day, and asserted that 'the observance of the Sabbath may be regarded as the pulse of the national Christianity.' The true friends of religion in this country, he continued, have always held 'elevated views of the sanctity and obligations of the Sabbath.'<sup>86</sup> The writer called on Christians 'to plant their foot on the Sabbath, and to say to the infidel and latitudinarian innovator - "To innovate here is not to reform. This is the institution of God, with which man must

<sup>85</sup> Ibid. p.26.

<sup>86</sup> 'On the Sabbath', The Presbyterian Review vol I (Edinburgh, 1832), p.496.

not intermeddle!' <sup>87</sup> No nation is ever to be exempted from its obligations, he claimed: 'Its place in the decalogue, enshrines it amongst the universal and perpetual duties of mankind, declares it to be no local or Jewish or temporary institution, but made to last with the moral law itself; that, having begun with the creation of man, its obligations will only terminate on the creation of the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.' <sup>88</sup> While calling on ministers to 'frequently and solemnly inculcate' Sabbath observance, he asserted: 'If ever this country ceases to be a religious country, and Christianity be at point to die, it will be because the Lamp has not been fed with the oil of the Sabbath.' <sup>89</sup> The article, in its stark sabbatarianism, highlights Westminster theology's Old Testament dominated, legalistic doctrine of the Sabbath, in contrast to Scott's New Testament, Christ-centred understanding of the Lord's day. The chasm which stood between them was so enormous that we need not wonder at Campbell's description of the orthodox in relation to Scott, as 'men who understood him not.' <sup>90</sup>

Scott's opponents were not the only ones 'who understood him not', for, as Scott explained, <sup>91</sup> Irving and Campbell showed no real concern over his second and third objections to the Confession, relating to its doctrines of the Sabbath and ordination. And another member of his circle, Robert Story, in a letter written shortly after the Assembly, described in unsympathetic terms Scott's course of action before the ecclesiastical court. In June 1831, Story wrote:

Any licentiate of the Church of Scotland appearing at the bar of the supreme justiciary to avow that he held doctrines contrary to the standards could scarcely expect any other result than a declaration that, if so, he could no longer be recognised as entitled to preach the gospel with their sanction. The Assembly, however, decided recklessly, not looking beyond the standards. They ought to have said, as a court deliberating under the eye and authority of the

<sup>87</sup> Ibid. p.498.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid. p.504.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid. p.513.

<sup>90</sup> J.M. Campbell's letter to the editor, The Daily News, 3 June, 1862.

<sup>91</sup> A.J. Scott's letter to the editor, The Daily News, 26th May, 1862.



Lord Jesus Christ, the opinions you entertain are contrary to the Holy Scriptures, and therefore you can no longer be entrusted with the preaching of the gospel. The proposal on the part of Scott to reason the matter with them I have never been able to regard, although apparently reasonable, as in reality practicable. For every year there might be individuals travelling to the bar of the Assembly, challenging it on some other point or dogma, so that in fact there would be no other alternative than either to dispense with the Confession altogether, or to have incessant polemical discussions upon each or all of its doctrines.<sup>92</sup>

Story's conservatism and theological distance from Scott, revealed in this letter, indicate the extent of Scott's aloneness after the General Assembly of 1831, when even Story would not speak on his behalf.

Scott was not, however, without a faithful vindicator at this time. Irving, while not sympathising with Scott on all points, boldly defended his friend in a Morning Watch article entitled 'A Judgment upon the Decisions of the Last General Assembly'.<sup>93</sup> 'With respect to the case of Mr. Alexander Scott,' wrote Irving, 'it involves all for which the church contended against the Papacy; the right of appeal to the law and to the testimony without stopping short at the word of man.'<sup>94</sup> Scott should have been tried, not by the 17th-century Westminster Assembly's interpretation of Scripture, but, by the Word of God itself, contested Irving. He attacked the Assembly's confession-obsession, and their deposition of Scott for his not having agreed with the Confession in every point. Irving continued:

It is argued that a preacher having subscribed the said Confession is bound in honour and consistency to preach nothing contrary thereto. But the truth is, no man doth subscribe it as absolute truth, but as relative truth - truth relative to, and checked by the Holy Scriptures. At the time he subscribes it he gives his solemn declaration, that he believes it to be in all things agreeable to the Holy Scriptures. But he doth not commit

<sup>92</sup>R.H. Story, Memoir of Robert Story (London, 1862), p.189.

<sup>93</sup>This article by Irving was also published separately as A Judgment upon the Decisions of the Last General Assembly (Greenock, 1832).

<sup>94</sup>E. Irving, 'A Judgment upon the Decisions of the Last General Assembly', The Morning Watch vol V (London, 1832), p.87.

himself to one day, or week, or month, or year, thereafter but is expected to be in continual consultation of the Word of God, for more and yet more light; which, as he discovereth, he is to bring not to the confession, but the confession unto it. And if, as he grows in the knowledge of truth Divine, he divergeth from the confession, what is he to do? To make it known by all means; first, by preaching in the Congregation where his necessary duty lies; next, in the assemblies of the church, when occasion occureth. This is exactly what Mr. Scott did. And when this is done with all seriousness and decency, what is the duty of the Church? To hear their brother's views; and try them by the Scriptures. If they are right to adopt them, and alter the confession accordingly; if they are wrong, to deal with him, and endeavour to recover him to the footsteps of truth. But in this case, the General Assembly said the Westminster Confession is enough: doth he differ from it: then let him be dismissed from the number of our preachers; who are thereby declared to be responsible to a book of uninspired divines, not to the word of the Eternal and unchangeable God.<sup>95</sup>

Irving contended that, because the decisions of the last General Assembly had negated divine truth, there would come upon Scotland and its Church 'the most fearful judgments of God which have ever been seen upon the earth.'<sup>96</sup> He, therefore, called upon the people and ministers of Scotland to repent and to rally around the deposed ministers. 'My opinion is,' continued Irving, 'that as in the time of Athanasius, every orthodox bishop received and supported him, so now every orthodox minister in the Church of Scotland ought to receive in their pulpits, and into their most sacred communions, these faithful men of God.'<sup>97</sup> And stronger still, Irving asserted that 'for any of the people to turn their back upon them, is to turn the back on Christ; for any one to withdraw from hearing them, is to withdraw from hearing God, whose ambassadors they are.'<sup>98</sup> If necessary, said Irving, 'the true members of Christ' are to meet together apart from the Church, as did the Waldenses and the early Reformers. 'Till this grand act of apostacy on the part of the ministers,' explained Irving, 'I have steadily advocated the other and the opposite course of each man abiding constant to his church,

<sup>95</sup> Ibid. p.88.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid. pp.89-90.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid. p.93.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid. p.96.

and under his pastor, praying for better times, and contented to suffer. But I can do so no longer. I give it as my deliberate judgment, that it is sin to abide under the teaching of men, be they Churchmen or Dissenters, who bring with them their doctrines of devils, which had the sanction of the late General Assembly.'<sup>99</sup> Believing that some of the faith's essential truths had been denied by the Scottish Church's highest court, Irving ranked the Kirk's onslaught against Scott, Campbell, himself and others, along with some of the most historic contests of the Christian Church, such as Athanasius' stand or the Reformers' battles for truth, and advocated separation from the 'hard-hearted, blind mockers of the truth.'<sup>100</sup>

Irving indicated in this article that Scott's case had led him to reflect more carefully upon the nature and role of creeds and confessions in the Church. Irving now concluded that, while each generation of the Church should make a proclamation of their faith to the world through a creed or confession, the actual test of doctrine should be determined by the current faith of living men, with the Scriptures in mind, and guided by the Spirit, thus restoring to the Spirit its true guardianship of the Church:

I have come to the conclusion, that, while it is the right and duty of any minister with his church to put forth a confession of their faith unto the world, in the form of a testimony for the truth against the error, it is wrong for them to impose it upon another church, or upon another generation, as a complete testimony for the truth against all error, seeing that new errors arise which require new antidotes. ...The power of trying and proving all office-bearers should be vested in the living ministers and members of Christ, acting upon the Word, and guided by the Spirit of God. To attempt to do this, or any part of it, by a dead book, is to resile from our responsibility and to surrender our privileges. The Church standeth in persons, not in articles. ...And the Holy Spirit in the church is the living witness of the truth, whose guardianship to add to is in fact to subvert it altogether. And I believe that by nothing hath the Spirit been so quenched as by this substitution of the wisdom and the rule of some synod, in the room of his living presence and uttered voice. This conclusion has been forced upon me by the desperate dishonour which I see done on all hands to the word and Spirit of the living God, which alone are able to sanctify and quicken the soul.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>99</sup> Ibid. p.102.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid. p.101.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid. p.109.

Irving's conclusion was very much in tune with Scott's Spirit-dominated understanding of the Church. According to this view, the Church, an organism animated by the Spirit of God, could truly decide upon its doctrine, not primarily by reference to old interpretations and writings, but, only by direct reference to Scripture and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, its very source of life.

Irving was the only close friend to write in defence of Scott's course of action in May 1831, but Erskine's sympathy, while less vociferous than Irving's, was no less profound. For many years after that General Assembly, Erskine 'ceased to have any sympathy with the Church of Scotland, when not only the men, but the truth he most prized, had been so rudely trampled down. In his eyes, 'wrote his biographer, 'all the calamities that befell her were the natural sequel of, perhaps judgments for, the wrong she had done in 1831.'<sup>102</sup> And Principal Shairp, who, years later, spoke of these young rebels around 1830 as producing Scotland's most profound spiritual movement in the 19th century, described Erskine's reaction to the deposition of Campbell and Scott in the following words: 'Erskine felt that a grievous wrong had been done, and that the Church of Scotland, in casting out two of the most spiritual of her ministers, had inflicted on herself irreparable injury. Most candid persons', added Shairp, 'are now of the same opinion.'<sup>103</sup>

c) Scott edits A.N. Groves' Journal of a Journey from London to Baghdad, 1831, and Journal of a Residence at Baghdad, 1832

Scott, sometime in 1831, wrote an introduction to, and edited, A.N. Groves' Journal of a Journey from London to Baghdad. In 1828 Groves had been closely associated with J.N. Darby and other early founders of the group that came to be known as the Plymouth Brethren. He had at that time expressed his views concerning Christians meetings together in brotherhood with no other tenets than faith in Christ. Because this principle of Christian unity was an early emphasis among the Plymouth Brethren, Groves was considered by some to be one of its founders. But he disapproved of the narrow, sectarian tendency among

<sup>102</sup>Hanna, Letters of Erskine II, p.362.

<sup>103</sup>J.C. Shairp, 'Thomas Erskine', The Scotsman, 31 March 1870.

the Brethren. A letter written by Groves, at a later date, to Darby, which briefly mentions the Scotts, illustrates Groves' positive principle of unity combined with his desire for confessional freedom:

Was not the principle we laid down as to separation from all existing bodies at the outset, this: that we felt ourselves bound to separate from all individuals and systems so far as they required us to do what our consciences would not allow, or restrained us from doing what our consciences required, and no further? and were we not as free to join and act with any individual, or body of individuals, as they were free not to require us to do what our consciences did not allow, or prevent our doing what they did? and in this freedom did we not feel brethren should not force liberty on those who were bound, nor withhold freedom from those who were free? ...

Some will not have me hold communion with the Scotts because their views are not satisfactory about the Lord's Supper; others with you, because of your views about baptism; others (etc.) ... I receive them all and join with them. ... Nor shall I ever feel separation from the good for the sake of the evil, to be my way of witnessing against it, till I see infinitely clearer than I now do, that it is God's. I naturally unite fixedly with those in whom I see and feel most of the life and power of God. But I am as free to visit other churches, where I see much of disorder, as to visit the houses of my friends, though they govern them not as I could wish. <sup>104</sup>

Groves proceeded to encourage Darby to burst the bands 'which narrower minds than yours have encircled you with, and come forth again, rather anxious to advance ALL the living members of the living Head into the stature of men, than to be encircled by any little bodies, however numerous, that own you for their founder.' The Plymouth Brethren and the other significant Christian sect of the early 19th century, the Catholic Apostolics, both of which Scott was in some contact with, alike emphasised the principle of Christian unity while they themselves were to become increasingly narrow and sectarian.

In light of Scott's own emphases on the spiritual unity of the Church and conscientious freedom from Confessions, there must have been a strong attraction between Scott and Groves. In 1829 Groves had, with his family and some others, including Scott's later close friend, Francis Newman, set sail for Baghdad, where he took up residence as a teacher of Christianity unconnected with any sect or

<sup>104</sup> Mrs. A.N. Groves, Memoir of the late A.N. Groves (London, 1856), pp.533-36.

denomination. Scott, in 1831, edited, and wrote a brief introduction to, Groves' journal of the journey from London to Baghdad. Scott enthusiastically applauded foreign missionary work, which, at this time, was still in its infancy. With his broad belief in the universal love of God, he sympathetically quoted, in his introduction to Groves' journal, Isaiah's hope that salvation would proceed 'unto the end of the earth'. We must pray, contended Scott, with Isaiah's hope in mind: 'Such prayer is according to the mind of God, who willeth that the Gospel be preached unto every creature under heaven; and that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men.'<sup>105</sup>

Approximately a year after the Assembly of 1831, Scott edited and wrote an introduction, plus supplementary notes, to another missionary journal by Groves, Journal of a Residence at Baghdad. In this publication Scott expanded upon his doctrines of ordination and universal atonement, both of which had been principal factors in his refusal to sign the Westminster Confession of Faith. Scott also expressed, for the first and only time, an apocalyptic interest, which savoured of Edward Irving and The Morning Watch. In his introduction to Groves' second Journal, he contended, in agreement with the author, that world events were pointing to the 'return of Jesus of Nazareth'.<sup>106</sup>

More important than this touch of apocalypticism which was not to reappear in Scott's writings, was his more clearly articulated doctrine of ordination. Scott refused to recognise men as ministers of God, if they did not utter the truth of God, if they did not speak with the Spirit of Truth. 'The preaching of the Gospel is an ordinance of God,' stated Scott. 'The preaching of what is not the Gospel is no ordinance of God; and affords me no opportunity of shewing my respect for divine ordinances by my attendance upon it.'<sup>107</sup>

Scott went on to assert:

If the outward fact of what is named ordination, determines me to regard as now made of God a teacher, a pastor, an

<sup>105</sup> A.J. Scott's Introduction to A.N. Groves, Journal of a Journey from London to Baghdad (London, 1831), p.xi.

<sup>106</sup> A.J. Scott's Introduction to A.N. Groves, Journal of a Residence at Baghdad (London, 1832), p.x.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid. pp.xi.-xii.

evangelist, a bishop, him who, to all intelligent and spiritual perception, is what he was, in error, and ignorance, and carnality; this is not respect for divine ordinances at all, but a faith in the opus operatum, a faith in transubstantiation transferred to men, denying the truth of my own perception, and clinging to the conclusion of my superstition, just as in the mass the senses are denied, and bread and wine visibly unaltered, are called flesh and blood.<sup>108</sup>

Scott desired a real and living spiritual authority in men, and recognised that alone as ordination of God. He refused to recognise a spiritless and mechanical production of ministers by the ecclesiastical institution as, in any sense, a true ordination. And furthermore, argued Scott, the notion of only one person being ordained in any given congregation cannot be substantiated by an appeal to the Scriptures:

The Apostolic Epistles contain little, if any thing, to establish the pastoral authority in a single person of each church or congregation: and the omission of all allusion to such an occasion seeming to assure us, that it would have been mentioned had it existed. The Epistles of the Lord to the seven churches are therefore resorted to for proof of the existence and nature of the place of a single pastor with peculiar and exclusive powers. But neither there nor elsewhere is the fact of ordination once referred to, in relation to the receiving or rejection of those who claimed to speak in the name of Christ. In these very Epistles there is a commendation for disregarding for the truth's sake the highest titles of ecclesiastical office. 'Thou canst not bear them which are evil: thou has tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars' (Rev. 2:2). I believe, 'not to bear them which are evil' pastors, evangelists or apostles, is as commendable in England as in Ephesus in the eye of the Head of the Churches. Is there a syllable in the Bible to lead us to suppose that these liars were detected by any other means than those which Paul had already taught the Church? 'Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.' As for the ordinance, such passages as Titus 1:9, make selection a part of that ordinance: the bishop is to be one 'holding fast the word of truth as he hath been taught.' Now, on what authority shall this part of the ordinance, viz. selection, be omitted, and no flaw follow: while the presence or omission of a manual act in certain hands is to constitute the reality or absence of Divine ordination?<sup>109</sup>

<sup>108</sup> Ibid. p.xii.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid. pp.xiii-xv.

Scott's doctrine of ordination was consistent with his basic thirst for that which was living and dynamic, a thirst which characterised his entire life. The 'ordained' were those with living, Spirit-vitalised abilities to preach or teach, etc., rather than those who had received the external act of ordination at the hands of the visible Church.

While supporting Groves' gospel ministry without official ordination in Baghdad, Scott found it necessary to speak plainly against Groves' doctrine of limited atonement. Scott, before developing his criticism, emphasised that he felt 'much love' for Groves, and wished only as a 'brother' to correct his doctrine.<sup>110</sup> Groves based his understanding of the extent of the atonement upon such Scriptural statements as 'Christ loved the church and gave himself for it.' In response, Scott contended that these statements were not inconsistent with the universal love of God:

Of course, where a common benefit is received, its efficacy, as a motive to grateful returns, is limited to those who recognise and value it. A patriot has delivered millions of ignorant, suspicious, ungrateful countrymen. His services are to be used as an argument for joining in some effort for his honour; and those who acknowledge and bless his exertions are especially addressed, and reminded that 'he loved you, laboured for you, achieved happiness for you.' Would this contain even an insinuation, that they were the exclusive objects of his disinterested ardour? In such an address not only would the common benefit be mentioned peculiarly as a good bestowed on themselves; but their acknowledgment of it, and their distinguishing susceptibility to the feeling of its worth, would be referred and appealed to, as reasons why that was looked for and demanded of them, which from others might be as justly asked, but not so naturally expected. Such appeals are the apostolic epistles to the churches, as contrasted with their proclamation of Christ to the world.<sup>111</sup>

Related to Groves' doctrine of limited atonement was his Calvinistic notion of prevenient grace, whereby the elect are prepared in advance by the Spirit of God, and made willing to receive the Gospel. Criticising this doctrine of 'effectual calling', Scott claimed that the cause of spiritual life is 'the simple knowledge and belief' of the Gospel.<sup>112</sup> What, asked Scott, does Groves mean to assert:

<sup>110</sup> Ibid. p.289.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid. pp.290-91

<sup>112</sup> Ibid. pp.291-92.



Is it, that men have life in them first, to capacitate them to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man? This seems to be said: but himself hath said, 'Except ye eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man, ye have no life in you.' Not life then without the food, or before the food, but by the food. This banquet is to be spread before the dead. Thus only shall any live. Is spirit and life in men first from another source, and then do they take and profit by his words? But 'the entrance of his words giveth light,' and that light is life. 'The words that I speak unto you', says the Lord, 'they are spirit, and they are life': and that spirit, the spirit of his words, he tells us it is that 'quickeneth' or produceth life. Is there, then, no need for regeneration? Surely there is: but it does not follow that the principle of regeneration is one, and that of faith another to be superadded to it. 'We are born', says Peter, 'not of corruptible seed, but of the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever'; adding, in very remarkable language, 'This is the word which by the Gospel is preached unto you.' ... John tells us, that 'whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world', and if we ask, what is born of God? Is it a principle antecedent and necessary to faith? He answers, it is faith itself. 'This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.'<sup>113</sup>

Man, contested Scott, is to rest, not in the hope that he has been eternally elected and will be 'effectually drawn' to God, but only in a real and living faith in God which is able to overcome evil in the world.

Scott's third line of criticism concerned itself more with the nature, rather than the extent, of the atonement. This was almost twenty-five years before Campbell was to make his great contribution to Scottish theology in The Nature of Atonement (1856). 'The question,' stated Scott, 'is not whether the scheme of salvation is merely reconcileable with divine love and justice, but how it constitutes the grand proof and manifestation of these attributes, and in general, of the perfections of God. In it he undertakes to shew himself worthy of love, and thus to win our love to himself.'<sup>114</sup> The atonement of Christ leads man in to the knowledge of God's character. 'It will not do,' insisted Scott, 'to represent the Gospel scheme of salvation as not only leaving, but involving, the moral character of God in difficulty; and then to say we can still believe him holy, just, and good notwithstanding. The atonement was

<sup>113</sup>Ibid. pp.292-93.

<sup>114</sup>Ibid. p.293.

designed to prove and establish these attributes: to be the ground of our confidence in them, and of our love to God because of them. We are not to believe in them in spite of the plan of redemption; but, because of the plan of redemption.' 'I care not to be told' continued Scott, 'that they acknowledge love in their salvation notwithstanding. I repeat, the redemption is to prove the divine character, not merely to leave us the possibility of believing it.'<sup>115</sup> Our belief in the 'essential excellence of God,' said Scott, 'springs out of the display of that excellence in the cross of Christ.'<sup>116</sup>

d) The Scott-Irving divide I: the charismata

In spite of Irving's faithful defence of Scott after the General Assembly of 1831, the differences between the two men steadily widened until eventually they were forced to separate. Immediately after the Assembly, however, Scott having returned to Woolwich, the two friends continued, for some time, to enjoy a degree of communion together, apparently even avoiding an immediate rupture over the charismatic issue. Thomas Carlyle's letter to his wife, on the 22nd August 1831, reveals the continuing cooperation between Scott and Irving at this time:

Friday, I spent with Irving in the animali parlanti region of the supernatural. Understand, Ladykin, that the 'gift of tongues' is here also (chiefly among the women), and a positive belief that God is still working miracles in the Church - by hysterics. ... Irving hauled me off to Lincoln's Inn Field to hear my double, Mr. Scott, where I sat directly behind a speakeress with tongues, who unhappily, however, did not perform till after I was gone. My double is more like 'Maitland', the cotton-eared, I hope, than me; a thin, black-complexioned, vehement man, earnest, clear, and narrow as a tailor's listing. For a stricken hour did he sit expounding in the most superannuated dialect (of Chroist and so forth), yet with great heartiness the meaning of that one word Entsagen.<sup>117</sup>

As has already been mentioned, the first instance in London of these 'gifts', or 'hysterics' as Carlyle called them, had occurred

<sup>115</sup> Ibid. pp.293-94.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid. p.294.

<sup>117</sup> J.A. Froude, Thomas Carlyle (1795-1835) vol II (London, 1882), pp.176-77.

on the 30th April 1831 at the Cardale house, Mrs. Cardale having prophesied and spoken in an unknown tongue. Soon after this, Cardale's daughter, Emily, also manifested the extraordinary phenomena.<sup>118</sup> The Regent Square early morning prayer meetings, which had begun in May with the purpose of praying for the proceedings of the General Assembly, were continued, with a shift in emphasis. The devotees now gathered together to pray specifically for the expected restoration of the apostolic gifts.<sup>119</sup> At these meetings, Mrs. Cardale and her daughter, and later Edward Taplin and others, began frequently to exercise the charismatic 'gifts' of prophecy and tongues.

Scott attended some of the early morning sessions at Regent Square, and his presence one morning was recollected, years later, by the Rev. C.M. Birrell of Liverpool:

The first time I saw Scott was all but half a century ago in the church in Regent Square where Edward Irving held small meetings in the winter mornings to foster the gift of tongues. ...In the course of the meeting, a lady, after rocking backwards and forwards for a few moments, sprang to her feet and vociferated inarticulate cries which passed at length into rapid repetitions of the phrase 'He is coming!' Irving threw himself forward on his elbows, and buried his face in his hands, as if overcome with awe; but Scott, who had offered prayer earlier in the meeting, and whom I now discerned under the beams which had just struggled through the brown air into the church, sat erect, with compressed lips and knit brows, as if keeping his intellect poised for the formation of right judgment. The two men were revealed in those attitudes. The one fell below the fascination; the other stood firmly beyond its range.<sup>120</sup>

Irving lacked the critical intellect of Scott, or as Robert Lee later said: 'He carried too much sail and too little ballast.'<sup>121</sup> Having had ample opportunity to observe the extraordinary events in both Scotland and London, Scott was soon to abandon his neutrality and speak decisively against the charismatic phenomena. His disagreement

<sup>118</sup>For an account of the sequence of charismatic events in London, see P.E. Shaw, The Catholic Apostolic Church (New York, 1946), ch. 4, 'The Charismatic Period.'

<sup>119</sup>Hare, pp.104-105

<sup>120</sup>C.M. Birrell, 'Some Recollections of Prof. Scott', Sunday at Home (1881), p.664.

<sup>121</sup>R. Lee, 'Review of Oliphant's Life of Irving', The Scotsman, 26th May 1862.

with Irving deeply affected him. Mrs. Scott described her husband's look of anguish after scenes of stern disagreement with Irving as 'almost terrible to behold.'<sup>122</sup>

Scott continued to adhere to his belief that the charismata should be enjoyed by every age of the Church, but he increasingly diverged from Irving, 'seeing in the miraculous manifestations,' explained his friend and biographer, 'nothing more than religious hallucination, and the agency of animal magnetism.'<sup>123</sup> Finlayson also stated that Scott, once he had decided against these 'strange proceedings', remonstrated with Irving as earnestly as did Carlyle and that the latter's words of protest 'would fittingly summarise Scott's teaching from first to last.'<sup>124</sup> Carlyle, criticising Irving's almost sole dependence upon the '13th of the Corinthians', had said: 'Authentic "writings" of the Most High, were they found in old Books only? They were in the stars and on the rocks, and in the brain and heart of every mortal.'<sup>125</sup> Against Finlayson's statement, it should be said that Scott valued the 13th chapter of I Corinthians, and the 'old Books' generally, more than did Carlyle. It is true, however, to say that Scott's evaluation of these extraordinary events, and the development of his theology at large, was more characterised than was Irving's by an appeal to 'the brain' and the conscience of man. Another, but less sophisticated, response by Carlyle to the charismatic utterances was: 'Why wasn't there a bucket of cold water to fling on that lall-lalling hysterical mad-woman?'<sup>126</sup> This, needless to say, was less sympathetic than Scott's response at any stage to the charismatic events of the early 1830s.

Scott had explicitly concluded against the 'gifts' some time before December 1833, when Mrs. Rich, his wife, and he visited Erskine at Linlathen. 'They fear,' wrote Erskine, 'that the outward forms and magnificent utterances have that in them from

<sup>122</sup>H. Solly, p.78.

<sup>123</sup>J. Finlayson, 'Professor A.J. Scott', The Owens College Magazine vol XIII (Manchester, 1881), p.113.

<sup>124</sup>Ibid. p.113.

<sup>125</sup>T. Carlyle, Reminiscences (London, 1972), p.299.

<sup>126</sup>Ibid. p.298.

which the carnal mind draws nourishment, and that there is a temptation to put these things between God and the soul, and to take them on trust that they are of God, although the hearer himself personally may not be conscious of meeting God in them.'<sup>127</sup> Scott, explained Erskine, now believed it to be 'a delusion partly, and partly a spiritual work not of God. He conceives that there is a disposition to yield to spiritual influence, as in animal magnetism, which lays one open to such possession; but don't say anything in his name,' continued Erskine, 'except that he is separate as not believing it.'<sup>128</sup>

Oliphant, in her history of Irving, could not let Scott's opposition to the 'gifts' pass without vindictive comment, for had Scott not done 'much to perfect that belief in Irving's own mind, as well as in those of the first ecstatic speakers'?<sup>129</sup> 'The singular man who dropped this seed, obeying his fastidious instincts, as might have been predicted of him,' claimed Oliphant, 'rejected the phenomena which his own exertions had shaped into being.'<sup>130</sup> And Scott's openness with Irving, in candidly expressing his doubts, Oliphant interpreted as 'that questioning, unsatisfied, always fastidious philosophic soul, which seems to delight in undermining the ground on which the other great intelligence holds a precarious standing, a lessening one by one the objects of possible faith.'<sup>131</sup>

Scott was well defended in the press from Oliphant's assault on this particular point. 'Was it,' asked a writer in The National Review 'petty fastidiousness - was it not rather alike honourable and courageous in Mr. Scott to "reject phenomena" which, at the time, almost all his dearest friends regarded as of divine origin, but which he, after patient investigation, found wholly destitute of spiritual claim? It did not seem to him a duty to hold, that that which Mrs. Oliphant herself calls "splendid mischief" was specially the manifestation of the Spirit of Love and Order. He would not',

<sup>127</sup>Hanna, Letters of Erskine I, pp.204-205.

<sup>128</sup>Ibid. p.205.

<sup>129</sup>Oliphant, p.329.

<sup>130</sup>Ibid. p.107.

<sup>131</sup>Ibid. p.29.

continued the reviewer, 'abnegate his reason before hysterical platitudes from man or woman. He did not think that these platitudes were just the things for the sake of which the ordinary sequences of Nature had been, or were likely to be, interrupted. And Mrs. Oliphant cannot forgive him! What right had this "doubtful probationer" to suspect delusion or imposture? Irving had no suspicion.'<sup>132</sup>

J. Baldwin Brown, Scott's disciple, also jumped to the defence of his teacher, specifically in relation to Oliphant's charge that Scott had attempted to undermine Irving's faith. 'Is there any thinker among us', asked Baldwin Brown, 'more perfectly free from the unsettling tendencies with which Mrs. Oliphant charges him? Is there one who discerns more clearly the true subordination of the intellectual to the spiritual sphere?'<sup>133</sup>

Scott himself responded briefly to Oliphant on this point, describing her treatment of him as 'the will-o'-the-wisp who seduced Irving and his congregation into that vast embarrassment, and then left them.'<sup>134</sup> Scott objected to Oliphant having left the reader 'to choose between cowardice, treachery, and levity on my part as the explanation.' On the contrary, claimed Scott, 'it was steadfastness to the convictions of many years.'<sup>135</sup> Scott's response to Oliphant clearly implies that the charismatic events of the 1830s never, in his mind, matched the resurgence of the early Church's spiritual life which he had long hoped for. It also indicates that Scott's original silence over the extraordinary occurrences in Clydeside and Regent Square bordered more closely on silent judgment than on real neutrality.

Scott continued, however, it seems for the rest of his life, to express an interest in the apostolic gifts of the Church, as well as a certain fascination with the charismatic events of the 1830s. In 1839, for instance, Erskine wrote a letter to Ann Scott with extensive reference to a subject which would interest her husband. Erskine described for her a few extraordinary incidents of mesmerism

<sup>132</sup>The National Review vol. XV (London, 1862), pp.356-57.

<sup>133</sup>J. Baldwin Brown's letter to the editor, The Daily News, 12th June 1862.

<sup>134</sup>A.J. Scott, The Daily News, 26th May 1862.

<sup>135</sup>Ibid.

which had occurred recently on the continent.<sup>136</sup> And Scott continued his interest in the gift of tongues, although it assumed a new, and more linguistic, form. Scott's later notion, flavoured by the romantic desire for unity, was that the apostolic gift of tongues might contain the rudiments of a universal language.<sup>137</sup>

Erskine, who was described by his biographer as having been impressed with the speaking in tongues 'in the same manner and to the same effect' as Edward Irving,<sup>138</sup> and who, as we have seen, after having spent six weeks with the Macdonalds in Port Glasgow, had published his conviction that the 'gifts' were genuine, began to question his belief in the manifestations during Scott's visit to Linlathen in December 1833. Erskine, in a letter of the 21st December, while Scott resided with him, stated, for the first time, that he now had reason to disbelieve that it was the Spirit of God at work in the charismatics.<sup>139</sup> And immediately before setting forth the basis of the Scotts' doubts, Erskine wrote, concerning the Scotts and Mrs. Rich: 'I have much sympathy with much that I meet in them.'<sup>140</sup> In March 1834, three months after Scott's visit, Erskine explicitly disclaimed his belief in the genuineness of the charismatic events: 'I am now convinced,' he wrote, 'that I never did actually believe it. My conviction that the gifts ought to be in the church is not in the least degree touched; but a faith in any one instance of manifestation which I have witnessed,' continued Erskine, 'I am sure I have not, and never had, as far as I can judge on looking back.'<sup>141</sup> The expression of Scott's own doubt seems to have played a significant part in the dissuasion of Erskine. In 1837 Erskine formally retracted his earlier, published statements:

In two former publications of mine, the one entitled, a Tract on the gifts of the Spirit, - the other, the Brazen Serpent, - I have expressed my conviction, that the remarkable manifestations which I witnessed in certain individuals in

<sup>136</sup>Hanna, Letters of Erskine I, pp.350-52.

<sup>137</sup>J. Johnson, George MacDonald (London, 1906), p.65.

<sup>138</sup>Hanna, Letters of Erskine I, p.392.

<sup>139</sup>Ibid. p.204.

<sup>140</sup>Ibid. p.204.

<sup>141</sup>Ibid. p.209.

the West of Scotland, about 3 years ago, were the miraculous gifts of the Spirit, of the same character as those of which we read in the New Testament. Since then, however, I have come to think differently, and I do not now believe that they were so.

But I still continue to think, that to any one whose expectations are formed by, and founded on, the declarations of the New Testament, the disappearance of those gifts from the church must be a greater difficulty than their re-appearance could possibly be.<sup>142</sup>

With the exception of Irving, Scott's circle was soon, if not already, united in its opposition to the charismatic movement. Campbell, after his early endorsement of the 'gifts', had withdrawn into the silence of Scott. Story, in whose parish the unknown tongues had first occurred, also came to regard the movement as 'a delusion and a snare,'<sup>143</sup> although the date of his shift in opinion is uncertain. As early as 1831 Story had expressed some concern to Mary Campbell about the genuineness of her ecstatic utterances.<sup>144</sup> By late 1834 Story was unequivocally attempting to dissuade Irving from his acceptance of the 'gifts'. Story argued that Mary Campbell, earlier in the year, at the time of the discord between the Port Glasgow and London charismatics,<sup>145</sup> had confessed to him that 'she had spoken and prophesied in the name of the Lord God Almighty, when only giving vent to her own fancies.'<sup>146</sup> And at an earlier date than that, claimed Principal Story, Mary Campbell had written the following confession to his father: 'I had ... come to the resolution to write to you, and to confess my sin and error for calling my own impressions the voice of God. Oh! it is no light thing to use that Holy Name irreverently, as I have been made to feel.'<sup>147</sup>

<sup>142</sup>T. Erskine, The Doctrine of Election (London, 1837), p.571.

<sup>143</sup>R.H. Story, Memoir of Rev. Robert Story, p.226.

<sup>144</sup>Ibid. pp.214-15.

<sup>145</sup>C.W. Boase, Supplementary Narrative to the Elijah Ministry (Private Circulation, c.1870), p.773. Boase dates the schism as c.1834. It was at least some time before Story's letter to Irving, late 1834.

<sup>146</sup>R.H. Story, Memoir of Rev. Robert Story, p.231.

<sup>147</sup>Ibid. pp.231-32.



In spite of the appeals from Scott, Carlyle, Story, and others, to abandon ship, Irving was determined to nail his colours to the charismatic mast, and stay aboard. Why was it that Irving resisted the counsel of those he deeply respected, and especially of Scott, whom he honoured as a theologian of rare insight? A letter from Irving to Story somewhat explains Irving's course of action. 'Draw not back brother,' wrote Irving, 'but go forward. The Kingdom of Heaven is only to be won by the brave. Keep your conscience unfettered by your understanding.'<sup>148</sup> Irving's course was true to his own advice, for he was nothing if not brave, but he boldly strode forward without employing his critical faculty. He had earnestly been praying for the restoration of the apostolic gifts, and when these remarkable phenomena appeared, which are not easily explained, he almost immediately interpreted the manifestations to be the voice of God's Holy Spirit again speaking through His Church. The fact that most of the ecstatic utterances authoritatively confirmed Irving's own theological opinions is an element, not to be ignored in examining Irving's openarmed acceptance of the 'gifts'. Story, in a letter to Mary Campbell, feared that she 'would, without any intentional deceit, be led to do what was pleasing' to Irving.<sup>149</sup> And Principal Story asserted his own belief that Irving had mistaken 'the echo of his own voice for the voice of God.'<sup>150</sup> A writer in The North British Review explored this possible interpretation of Irving in relation to the 'gifts':

Irving opposed the Reform Bill; and a prophecy came, 'that it should not pass', and that 'the great Captain of Waterloo would again be made Prime Minister'. He had denounced the Test and Corporation Act; and accordingly Mr. Baxter prophesied stoutly against it. He had been sorely grieved with the Bible Society; and a prophecy was given 'that it was a curse going through the land, quenching the Spirit of God by the letter of the word of God.' ... He had declared the speedy coming of Christ; and lo! he is greeted with a 'Thus saith the Lord, within three years and a half this land shall be desolate.' We could easily multiply examples of this, not by any means to show that there was intentional deception, which we cannot for a moment believe;

<sup>148</sup>R.H. Story, 'Edward Irving', Scottish Divines (Edinburgh, 1883), p.258.

<sup>149</sup>R.H. Story, Memoir of Rev. Robert Story, p.215.

<sup>150</sup>Ibid. p.215.

but to explain how a little clique of good men, living, moving, and having their being in a glowing atmosphere of peculiar opinions, might naturally delude themselves and mistake their own fancies for a divine inspiration.<sup>151</sup>

The form of the prophetic utterances was, indeed, extraordinary, but their content seems never to have been greater than Irving's own theological opinion.

Whatever the explanation for Irving's continued attraction to the charismatic activity and his noncompliance with Scott's conclusion, in Oliphant's words, 'the two friends were now separated to drift further and further apart,' but not, as she exaggeratedly added, 'through all imaginable degrees of unlikeness.'<sup>152</sup>

e) The Scott-Irving divide II: High Church doctrine

'He had from the first,' Scott wrote of Irving, 'a strength of ecclesiastical, I might say, hierarchical feeling, impossible with my convictions.'<sup>153</sup> Scott, as has been seen, in both his writings and his protest before the Church courts, had rejected high doctrines of ordination and the visible Church. Where the spiritual life of God had incarnated itself among man, contended Scott, there was the true living body of Christ. The true church was not perpetuated by an external structure. When an individual spoke and lived with the authority and truth of the Gospel, that person should be regarded as ordained of God. Such a man, claimed Scott, need not have stood in the succession of ordained ministers in the visible Church. Scott's low doctrine of the visible Church conflicted with Irving's increasingly high doctrine. This disharmony between the intimate friends grew to a crescendo in parallel with their mounting clash of opinion over the 'gifts', so that the final rupture between Scott and Irving was due to both discordant issues exploding almost simultaneously.

A higher than Presbyterian doctrine of the ministry, the visible Church and its sacraments, was not a new attraction for Irving. He recalled, for instance, 'the venerable companion of

<sup>151</sup> The North British Review vol XXXVII (Edinburgh, 1862), pp.120-21.

<sup>152</sup> Oliphant, p.329.

<sup>153</sup> A.J. Scott, The Daily News, 26th May 1862.

my early days - Richard Hooker.<sup>154</sup> Hooker's 16th-century exposition of Anglicanism, with its high view of the priesthood and visible Church, and its more than symbolic, almost Receptionist, understanding of the sacraments, was increasingly applied by Irving to the Church of Scotland, its sacraments and ministry. In 1828 Irving developed his doctrine of the sacraments in Homilies on Baptism. While refusing to say that 'the Holy Ghost is necessarily tied to the ordinance of Baptism', Irving maintained that 'no man can take upon him to separate the effectual working of the Holy Spirit from baptism, without making void all the ordinances of the visible Church.'<sup>155</sup> Irving was verging on the doctrine of baptismal regeneration.

In September 1828, not long after the commencement of the Scott-Irving relationship, Irving expressed some of his 'hierarchical feeling':

The other day the new Bishop of Chester, Dr. Summer, confirmed about two or three hundred persons. ... It was to me very impressive, and I hope very profitable. ... His brother, the Bishop of Winchester, bore him company and I was much impressed with the episcopal authority and sanctity of their appearance. Indeed, the more I look into the Church of England, the more do I recognise the marks of a true Apostolical Church, and desire to see somewhat of the same ecclesiastical dignity transferred to the office-bearers of our Church; which hath the same orders of bishops, priest or presbyters or elders, and deacons, whereof the last is clean gone, the second little better, and the first hath more of worldly propriety, or literary and intellectual character, than of episcopal authority and grave wisdom. Oh, that the Lord would revive His work in our land! ... I would wish every parish minister to fulfil the bishop's office, every elder the priest's, and every deacon the deacon's; and I am convinced that, till the same is attempted, through faith in the ordinances, we shall not prosper in the government and pastorship of our churches.<sup>156</sup>

Irving's high ecclesiastical tendencies continued to develop away from Scott's position, and his involvement with the predominantly High Church Albury Prophets only increased the gap. When finally, in May 1832, the London Presbytery ordered Irving to be removed from the

<sup>154</sup> Oliphant, Life of Irving vol I, p.31

<sup>155</sup> As quoted by R.H. Story in 'Edward Irving', Scottish Divines: St. Giles' Lectures, p.242.

<sup>156</sup> Oliphant, Life of Irving vol II, pp.55-56

National Scots Church at Regent Square, Irving, with most of his followers, formed a new ecclesiastical body which was soon to become known as the Catholic Apostolic Church. Under the leadership of men like J.B. Cardale and H. Drummond, the first two 'Apostles', the new Church developed an extremely high doctrine of the Church and its ministry, thus, further feeding Irving's ecclesiastical aspirations and widening the Scott-Irving divide. The following is a letter from Irving to a certain Mrs. Sempill, revealing the hierarchical stance which he had already assumed by the second month of the new Church's existence:

My dear Madam,

You have grievously offended against the Lord Jesus Christ the Chief Shepherd, who hath called me in his grace to watch over your soul, in that you have set at nought all my counsels and would none of my reproof; and arise in direct rebellion against my authority and the Church of which I am the Angel under the Lord Jesus Christ. I require and command you, as you value your precious soul for which He died; and which is His that you would lay down the weapons of your rebellion and humble yourself in the sight of the Lord and confess your sin before his Church, and be absolved from it, and delivered out of the hands of the Enemy, who hath you now and if you repent not will have you for ever.

You have not resisted Man but you have resisted the Holy Ghost, and do resist Him; and He declareth of you that if you repent not, Jesus will come and cut you altogether out of his vine, wherein you have been grafted, and should bear fruit unto the Father's glory.

Oh let me have the joy of thee who hast caused me so much sorrow. Thou hast troubled Christ's Church, beware lest he trouble thee. I beseech thee by the mercies of God, that thou obey the word which he speaketh unto thee through his Minister and through his Prophets.

Meanwhile I have seen it to be my duty to set your Husband and you on the outside of the fold by resuming your Tokens, and I do call upon you to return again into the bosom of it by humbling yourself in the dust, and repenting, and confessing your sins. Then shall my heart rejoice which now grieveth over you.

I am

Your faithful Pastor,  
Edward Irving.<sup>157</sup>

As the Catholic Apostolic Church began to be organised in late 1832, 'Scott stood more and more aloof,' wrote Hanna, 'doubting

<sup>157</sup> Irving's letter to Mrs. Sempill, 6th December 1832, Scottish National Library MS. 1676 ff.232-3.

first, then disapproving, till the divergence between the two friends became extreme.<sup>158</sup> Under the severe strain laid upon their relationship, Scott's health, never very strong, gave way, 'to such a degree,' recollected Ann Scott, 'that Mr. Irving sent for me, that I might be the bearer of the earnest exhortation he desired to send to his dear friend, and at the same time save him the great excitement which their conversation then might occasion. It was the most solemn interview I ever had with any one,' continued Scott's wife, 'and in binding up in my own mind all that he desired me to be the messenger of to my husband I said, "you believe that organisation produces life; Mr. Scott believes that life alone can organise: does this then express your great difference?" He assented. After an hour's audience, in which with awful but affectionate seriousness he stated to me what were my husband's heresies, I said, "It is very clear to me that the antagonism of the views is as the north to the south pole, - that they are totally and purely opposite." He said, "It is so. Mr. Scott or I am in dangerous error. The end will show."<sup>159</sup> By December 1833, Erskine was able to say: 'Mr. Scott is entirely separated from Mr. Irving and his church.'<sup>160</sup>

Thomas Erskine followed Scott's lead in opposing the Catholic Apostolic doctrine of the Church. In March 1834, after having heard three of the 'Apostles', Drummond, Cardale, and N. Armstrong, and especially the 'Chief Pastor', J. Thompson, who had come to Edinburgh to instruct the members of the Catholic Apostolic congregation as to the nature of their Church, Erskine spoke against their hierarchical doctrines. Erskine explained that Thompson had frequently repeated that 'Christ was only to be met with in the church, and that the light in many only answered to the ministrations of the ordained ministers in the church. I know that this is not so,' contended Erskine. 'I feel very jealous of the urgency with which the teachers of that church cry down the sovereignty of the internal witness of the light in every man,' he continued. 'I cannot express to you how much I feel of atheism in putting anything whatever its name may be, above or

<sup>158</sup>Hanna, Letters of Erskine I, p.205.

<sup>159</sup>Ibid. p.205.

<sup>160</sup>Ibid. p.205.

in place of the witness of God in my own heart, the true light which lighteth every man.'<sup>161</sup> A word is to be received as truth, asserted Erskine in a letter to Irving, dated October 1834, not because it is spoken by an ordained pastor, but, because it appeals to the 'inward witness' in man.<sup>162</sup>

John McLeod Campbell also joined Scott in his disagreement with Irving and the Catholic Apostolics. Although Campbell in 1831 had not been in full accord with Scott's objection to the Westminster Confession's high doctrine of ordination, he now clearly echoed Scott's contention that a man is to be recognised as ordained of God only if he expresses the Spirit of truth. Writing to T. Carlyle, his lawyer in the General Assembly of 1831, and now one of the twelve 'Apostles', Campbell, in February 1834, asserted:

If you say, 'Christ is in the Ordinance; Christ rules, exhorts, proclaims the Gospel, warns, comforts: an Apostle, Pastor, Evangelist, Prophet, is but the mouth of Christ.' Be it so; I am content; only, let me know the voice of Christ. Are we then agreed? No; for you assume that it is the voice of Christ, and hold it obedience of faith to do so, because it is the appointed mouth. I dare not assume anything in the matter, but seek to know the voice itself, not venturing to infer it to be so because of the mouth. Do you say, 'Why not dare? Have you no faith in God's ordinances?' I have no such faith as you ask, seeing no warrant for it, but, on the contrary, everything to forbid my so putting an ordinance between my conscience and the living hearing of the living God.<sup>163</sup>

Campbell, many years later, offered a more mature reflection on this matter, still very much in line with Scott's position, in a letter to his oldest son, who had been reading Oliphant's Life of Irving:

Whatever of this preaching of Christ was present in dear Irving was mingled with and qualified by another ideal: viz., that of officially representing Christ by the taking of a personal standing, and exercising a personal authority distinct from the authority of truth. ... When a man speaks with authority, not any longer because he speaks truth, but because he is officially such an one, and others listen to him with an obedience which is no longer rendered to the truth as the truth, but to the man as an ordinance, the process to which I refer has culminated in the Kingdom of Christ's ceasing to be the kingdom of the truth, and men's

<sup>161</sup>Ibid. pp.210-11.

<sup>162</sup>Ibid. p.231.

<sup>163</sup>D. Campbell, Memorials of J.M. Campbell, vol I, p.118.

ceasing to honour Him as He honoured the Father; and correlatively, men's ceasing to receive His ministers in His name in the sense in which He desired to be received in His Father's name.<sup>164</sup>

It is interesting to note that the Scott-Irving divide over a high doctrine of the visible Church was contemporaneously paralleled at Oxford in the liberal-tractarian divide over a very similar issue. Scott was later to extend his disagreement with Irving in to a fullblown criticism of the Oxford Movement, but he was never to publicly criticise Irving himself. In spite of their separation, Scott's love for Irving never abated. Upon his friend's death in Glasgow on the 7th December 1834, Scott wrote:

Dear, dear large-hearted, noble-minded Edward Irving has left us - has been taken, I doubt not, into a fatherly presence for his filial heart - into a living light in which all errors and darkness flee away. I should not, I am persuaded, have shed a tear in thinking of him, as I did many, but for the feeling how cruel seemed the delusion under which, with the simplicity of a child, he had come away from London and remained here, counting, as it were, the time till strength should be restored to him, and he should be a mighty instrument in the hands of God for advancing his Kingdom. And now it is as it is.<sup>165</sup>

<sup>164</sup>D. Campbell, Memorials of J.M. Campbell, vol II, pp.22-23.

<sup>165</sup>D. Campbell, Memorials of J.M. Campbell, vol I, p.126.

## CHAPTER IV

THE WOOLWICH PERIOD



a) Scott and his Woolwich Congregation

Scott, unanimously deposed by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in May 1831, returned to his faithful congregation in Woolwich, who for the last six months, in opposition to the Scots Presbytery of London, had resolutely stood by their decision to have Scott as their minister, in spite of his refusal to sign the Kirk's Confession of Faith. With Scott's deposition, however, the battle was over. As long as he held his licence as preacher of the Gospel within the church of Scotland ministry the London Presbytery was powerless to interfere, but now, with his loss of licence, the congregation's position was defenceless. According to the Deeds of the Scots Church Woolwich: 'No one is eligible to be the Minister thereof who is not a Preacher of the Church of Scotland.'<sup>1</sup> On the 13th September 1831, the London Presbytery resolved 'that as Mr. Alexander John Scott (having been received into communion with this Presbytery as a licentiate of the Church of Scotland) has also been deprived of his licence by the General Assembly because of error in doctrine, he is therefore hereby declared to be no longer a Preacher within the bounds nor admissible to any of the pulpits belonging thereto.'<sup>2</sup>

Although the contest in the ecclesiastical courts had been lost, a large part of the congregation refused to be severed from the minister of their choice. Consequently, 'a very influential and numerous band of adherents'<sup>3</sup> withdrew from the Scots Church at Powis Street, and followed Scott to Providence Chapel in the New Road, where he continued his Woolwich ministry. The majority of elders from the Scots Church followed Scott, and contended that he was entitled to the 'Elizabeth Drake Endowment', an early 18th century endowment for the Protestant Dissenting Minister of

<sup>1</sup>Minutes of the Scots Presbytery of London, 22 February 1831.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. 13 September 1831.

<sup>3</sup>From an undated, untitled newspaper clipping concerning Scott and his congregation, in the 'A.J. Scott' file kept at the United Reformed Church History Society Library, 86 Tavistock Place, London.

Woolwich.<sup>4</sup> The London Presbytery, however, disagreed with Scott's elders, and took them to the Court of Chancery, where the suit was decided in favour of the Presbytery. The deserted Scots Church in Woolwich, however, was to be without a minister for seven years. Rev. W. M. Thompson was ordained to the Scots Church on the 9th August 1838, at which time the new minister and his elders signed a copy of the Westminster Confession of Faith.<sup>5</sup>

To Providence Chapel Scott attracted a 'company of thoughtful and earnest people', and developed a ministry which, in its openness and New Testament simplicity, J. Hunter thought, truly deserved the name of 'catholic and apostolic'.<sup>6</sup> Scott wished not to be sectarian, and always encouraged those who came under his influence to learn from all. 'He came more and more', wrote Scott's disciple, 'to adopt the attitude of the early English Independents, who held that the denominational idea was an obscuration of their one great principle, and believed that the single congregation of faithful men was the best, as it was the simplest, form of Christian organisation, and that the only true union beyond it consisted in inward sympathy with and outward recognition of all other Christian congregations of whatever name, without any formal alliance with them.'<sup>7</sup> Scott, as was consistent with his theological debate with the Church of Scotland, sought not an authority over his people based upon ecclesiastical ordination, but rather an authority which came with witnessing to the truth. 'There is,' asserted Scott, 'a harmony between that Truth which God would have us to possess, and the mind of man as God has constituted it.'<sup>8</sup> Let the reality of Truth itself, he said, judge between that which is right and wrong.

<sup>4</sup>For a brief history of this legal battle see 'The Scots Church Woolwich', The Woolwich Advertiser, 24 August 1839, or J. Cairns, A Biographical and Historical Account of the Presbyterian Ministry of Woolwich (Woolwich, 1913), p.20.

<sup>5</sup>See Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae, and Cairns, p.22.

<sup>6</sup>J. Hunter, 'Alexander Scott', The Expositor (8th series) vol 21 (London, 1921), p.400.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid. p.451.

<sup>8</sup>A.J. Scott, The Social Systems of the Present Day Lecture II (London, 1841), p.329.

In January 1839 'the friends of the Rev. Mr. Scott', as they appear to have been called locally, moved from Providence Chapel to the Welsh Chapel on Parson's Hill, near Herbert Road and Plumstead Common Road.<sup>9</sup> 'He has now a very nice small chapel', wrote Campbell in 1841, 'speaking in which is very easy. His congregation is increased from what it was when I was last with him, though it is still but small.'<sup>10</sup>

Scott and his wife lived in Plumstead Common, described by Campbell as, 'a nice healthy place.' 'Shooter's Hill', he said, 'rises just behind the Scott's cottage, and there is a dry walk up to it, and from it a very fine view of the Thames, with Woolwich and Greenwich in the foreground, and London in the distance.'<sup>11</sup> Residing with the Scotts, during their early period in Woolwich, was Erasmus Scott Calman, a Jewish convert to Christianity. Calman, a Russian Jew by birth, had come to Britain in order to escape the oppression of Jews in Russia.<sup>12</sup> Shortly after his arrival in this country, Calman came to know Scott and was baptised a Christian in January 1831. In November of that year, Calman, now a personal student of Scott's, became an inmate of his family and a member of his congregation in Woolwich. By late 1832 Calman decided to undertake a mission to the Middle East, especially to his fellow Jews, and, under the auspices of Scott and Mrs. Rich,<sup>13</sup> set out for Baghdad, where he joined, for a time, Anthony Groves and Francis Newman. Calman, the disciple of the deposed Church of Scotland minister, was able, in 1839, to render valuable service, largely through his Jewish ancestry and superior linguistic ability, to the Church of Scotland mission to Palestine.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>9</sup>'The Friends of the Rev. Mr. Scott', The Woolwich Advertiser, 12 January 1839. Neither the Providence Chapel nor the Welsh Chapel is now standing.

<sup>10</sup>D. Campbell, Memorials of J.M. Campbell I (London, 1877), p.160.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid. p.161.

<sup>12</sup>A Brief biography of E.S. Calman is given in Scott's preface to Calman's Description of Part of the Scene of the Late Great Earthquake in Syria (London, 1837).

<sup>13</sup>A.N. Groves, Memoir of A.N. Groves (London, 1856), p.525.

<sup>14</sup>'A.J. Scott and E.S. Calman', The Woolwich Advertiser, 14 December 1839.

In 1837 Scott edited Calman's Description of Part of the Scene of the Late Great Earthquake in Syria, which took the form of a letter to Scott and his friends. In the additional notes, Scott displayed both a depth of scholarly understanding of the historical development of Judaism, and an openness and readiness to acknowledge truth wherever it might be found. While criticising the antinomianism of the Chasidim sect of Jewish mystics, Scott, notwithstanding, wished to recognise their 'many sublime glimpses of truth.'<sup>15</sup>

Some changes occurred in the Scott family during the Woolwich period. In 1836 on the 26th March, Scott's father died. Scott was in the Middle Parish manse at the time, and the last moments were described by a friend of the family:

Half an hour before he died, his beloved son prayed with him, and so intense was his attention that every one observed it. He struggled with the pangs of death, and his breathing, in that moment of utmost weakness, was held, and almost suspended, that he might engage in devotion. At length, however, the king of terrors prevailed - the breath departed out of his nostrils - the struggling spirit was released.<sup>16</sup>

Dr. Scott being the senior minister of the Greenock Presbytery and a much respected character in Greenock society, his funeral on the 1st April was an important and solemn event, with the Magistrates and Town Council and members of the Presbytery all doing honour to the old minister by their presence.<sup>17</sup>

A more welcome change for the Scotts came in the birth of their first child, after ten years of childlessness. In October 1840, Scott, at the age of 35, became father to Susan Fisher Scott. 'I congratulate you and Mrs. Scott on this gift of God,' wrote Erskine, 'much desired, I have no doubt, with a desire the shadow and emanation of the desire of God when He said, "Let us make man after our image." A child is such an object for the outpouring of tenderness and pity, and for calling out hope, and the prayer of

<sup>15</sup> Scott (Ed.), Description of the Late Great Earthquake, p.30

<sup>16</sup> R. Smith, A Sermon in Memory of Rev. John Scott, D.D. (Greenock, 1836), p.38.

<sup>17</sup> Dr. Scott's funeral was reported in the Greenock Advertiser, 4 April 1836.

hope and trust to the Great Father on its behalf; born to trouble as the sparks fly upward, yet destined through that very trouble to learn the holiness and attain the blessedness of God.'<sup>18</sup> Six years later Ann Scott gave birth to their second and last child, this time a son, named John Alexander Scott.<sup>19</sup>

Scott continued, during the Woolwich period, his close relationships with Erskine, Campbell, and the Rich-Wedgwood circle.<sup>20</sup> In addition to these, many new friendships came to birth, one of which was with Francis Newman. Years later Newman recalled having met Scott upon his return from Baghdad in 1833, 'when I was immediately captivated by the union in him of deep devoutness, comprehensive charity, and very superior talents. A single hour's conversation made one feel the originality of mind and candour with which he approached every subject, and the spirit of pure kindness which penetrated all his views of men and parties. Our friendship, though interrupted by separation of place, has never been broken.'<sup>21</sup> Newman proceeded in this letter to describe Scott's comparative retirement during the Woolwich years, when he was able to immerse himself in a great variety of studies. 'To physical science and modern history, especially the history of literature and of mind, I know,' said Newman, 'he has devoted much attention.' And Newman, who was well qualified to testify, spoke of Scott's superior ability for languages. 'Scott, he asserted, 'is not only grounded in Hebrew, a scholar in Greek and Latin, a reader of German and a teacher of Anglo-Saxon, but he has a very unusual knowledge of French and Italian literature, with much miscellaneous information as to all languages. Yet in the midst of all his studies,' concluded Newman, 'theology in its largest and truest sense has been his constant goal. To explore and establish its foundations has been, I believe, his most burning desire.'<sup>22</sup>

<sup>18</sup>W. Hanna, Letters of T. Erskine II (Edinburgh, 1877), p.9.

<sup>19</sup>See D.N.B. article on A.J. Scott.

<sup>20</sup>Erskine in his letters to Scott often asked to be remembered to Mrs. Rich, H. Wedgwood, and occasionally to Miss Farrer, probably the sister of Sir Thomas Henry Farrer (D.N.B.), later a colleague of Scott's at Bedford College. See, for instance, Hanna's Letters of Erskine I, pp.236, 342.

<sup>21</sup>Testimonials to A.J. Scott (London, 1850), p.14.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid. pp.14-15.

While it is true that Scott was less active during the Woolwich period than he was either before or after, and thus more free to pursue uninterruptedly his various studies, he nevertheless did a considerable amount of preaching and public lecturing, 'for the double purpose,' wrote Thomas Hughes, 'of saying what he has to say and earning his bread.'<sup>23</sup> Scott's lecturing, as we shall see, was extensively reported by the press of his day, but very little material is obtainable concerning Scott's preaching at Providence Chapel and the Welsh Chapel. Seventy years after Scott's time in Woolwich, a member of his congregation, who must certainly have been very young during Scott's period, but who remembered Scott's 'noble figure and gracious bearing', was able to recollect a story passed down by a relative, concerning Scott:

One Sunday morning Mr. Scott did not come as expected. Two of the elders went round to his house, found him in his study, sitting on the floor, surrounded by his books. He had forgotten it was Sunday.<sup>24</sup>

The recollections of Scott's preaching in Woolwich, when he did remember it was Sunday, are very rare. They are to be found almost exclusively in the letters of Erskine, who, when in London, 'went down to Woolwich pretty often to hear him preach on Sundays, always with great satisfaction,'<sup>25</sup> and in the memoirs of Campbell, who occasionally felt it very refreshing and strengthening 'to be for a little under Dear Mr. Scott's teaching.'<sup>26</sup>

One sermon in particular represents the continuity in Scott's preaching between his earlier period and the Woolwich stage, while at the same time displaying the development of his thought. In June 1842, Erskine heard Scott preach from the text of Acts 19.<sup>27</sup> The text deals with one of Scott's earliest themes, the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit, but his treatment of it had noticeably

<sup>23</sup>T. Hughes, Memoir of Daniel Macmillan (London, 1883), p.119.

<sup>24</sup>'A Memory of A.J. Scott', The British Weekly, 20 September 1917.

<sup>25</sup>Hanna, Letters of Erskine II, p.27.

<sup>26</sup>Campbell, Memorials of J.M. Campbell I, pp.147, 176.

<sup>27</sup>Hanna, pp.24-25.

progressed from his 1830 preaching. No longer did he emphasise the actual gifts manifested in the New Testament period, but rather focussed exclusively on what had always been the kernel of his theology of the Spirit, that is, the vital Spirit of life which gives birth to the truly living. In order to be the living body of Christ, humanity needs to be moved by the very Spirit which inspired the humanity of Jesus. The seven sons of Sceva, explained Scott, were not motivated by the Spirit that was in Jesus, and in Paul, but rather thought they might use the name of Jesus as a charm to cast out evil spirits. Acts records their lack of success. Scott indicated that, since the days of Sceva's sons, many had, likewise, used the name and the doctrines of Jesus in the false hope that they might thereby overcome the evil of the world. Scott urged a participation in the very Spirit of Jesus rather than placing one's faith in outward form. He was aware, as we shall see, of the external emphases of the Evangelical and Anglo-Catholic movements, and wished to guard against an overdependence upon the merely outward in religion, whether of doctrinal statement or ecclesiastical form. The office of the Church, Scott asserted, is to teach in the spirit of Jesus.

Scott then proceeded to preach on the words, 'If ye be led of the Spirit ye are not under the law'. He pointed, said Erskine, 'at how little men seemed even to aim at being in the Spirit; how contented they were, even those who seemed religious, with doing things, not in the love of them, but because they were commanded by God to do them; and how they carried this same principle into the doctrines which they held as their creed, for they held them, not because they saw their truth in the light of the Spirit, but because they conceived that this creed was prescribed to them by God. He desired,' continued Erskine, 'that he might not be misunderstood, as if he had said that a man was to do nothing, and to believe nothing but what he himself loved or saw; but he only wished men to consider that so long as they were doing it in this way they were doing it not in the Spirit but under the law.'<sup>28</sup> Erskine outlined other

<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

Scott sermons as well,<sup>29</sup> but this one is of special significance in that it represents in Scott's preaching what he was so keen to emphasise in many of his public lectures on a variety of subjects. To a world too often preoccupied with the material and the external, Scott stressed the reality and pre-eminence of invisible and spiritual principles, and the life and freedom that come with a true knowledge of them.

In addition to the Sunday preaching, Scott lectured in the Chapel once a week, usually on a Friday evening.<sup>30</sup> He attracted to these lectures many who were not members of his congregation, and was often forced to make use of other church buildings to accommodate the large crowds. Many of these lectures were reported at great length in The Woolwich Advertiser, the local newspaper, which was always sympathetic to Scott and his cause, not infrequently offering him high praise. Scott demanded of his listeners a superior degree of intellectual ability, one example being his course of lectures on the 'Antiquities, Manners, Customs, etc. of Eastern Nations' designed to nurture an historically aware approach to the Scriptures.<sup>31</sup>

Not only did Scott make demands on the intellectual faculty of his people, but he also encouraged them to realise their own priesthood and to conduct worship without him, to be free from total dependence upon the ecclesiastically ordained. Scott, through Newman and Groves, may well have been influenced by Plymouth Brethrenism's lack of organised ministry. In 1869 Campbell recalled a Sunday morning service conducted in 1838 'by an old man of Mr. Scott's little flock'. Campbell remembered his commentary on a chapter in I John:

"God is love; I felt the love of God this morning when my children asked me for bread, and I had bread to give them."<sup>32</sup>

<sup>29</sup> See, for instance, Hanna, Letters of Erskine I, p.300, an outline of Scott's sermon on James 1:27.

<sup>30</sup> 'The Friends of the Rev. Mr. Scott', The Woolwich Advertiser, 12 January 1839.

<sup>31</sup> 'A.J. Scott on Natural History', Kentish Mercury, 8 July 1843.

<sup>32</sup> Campbell, Memorials II, p.240.



b) The Scott-Maurice relationship

Early in Scott's Woolwich period he met Frederick Denison Maurice, who, in 1836, had become chaplain to Guy's Hospital, London. On the 17th October 1836, Maurice wrote to Richard C. Trench: 'I have seen something lately of Scott, Irving's former assistant, who wrote two very striking tracts on the will of God and acquaintance with God. I am much interested in him, and with what he tells me of Erskine.'<sup>33</sup> The new friendship was an important development for Scott, especially at this isolated stage of his life, when he was cut off from his mother church, divorced from his close friend Irving, first by theological differences and then by the latter's death, and separated by distance from Erskine and Campbell in Scotland. Scott and Maurice, both aged 31, but Maurice having been ordained for only two years, found much in each other that was theologically compatible. Maurice had been greatly influenced by the writings of Coleridge, Erskine, Irving, and the sermons of Campbell.<sup>34</sup> These men had also been primary influences in Scott's theological development, but more important still, they had all, with the exception of Coleridge, acknowledged a depth of indebtedness to Scott. Maurice had found in Scott, then, a representative of that little Scottish band of reformers, whom he hailed as 'marking a new era in spiritual and intellectual progress.'<sup>35</sup>

Maurice increasingly came to acknowledge Scott's influence on him, and considered himself in relation to Scott, 'immeasurably his inferior.'<sup>36</sup> George MacDonald's biographer tells us that 'Maurice looked up to Scott with veneration, as one of the makers of thought and one of the foremost teachers.'<sup>37</sup> Daniel Macmillan, the publisher, later a friend of both Maurice and Scott, explained

<sup>33</sup>F. Maurice, The Life of F.D. Maurice I (London, 1885), p.208.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid. pp.176,183, and vol II, pp.406-7. It should also be noted that Maurice had taken a deep interest in the charismatic events at Regent Square, and, although he finally decided against them, had, for a while, been very hesitant to decide either way. See vol I, pp.118-119.

<sup>35</sup>J. Finlayson, 'Professor A.J. Scott', The Owens College Magazine vol 13, p.107.

<sup>36</sup>Testimonials to A.J. Scott (London, 1850), p.4.

<sup>37</sup>J. Johnson, George MacDonald (London, 1906), p.33.

to his wife, that Maurice greatly admired Scott, and 'thinks him an abler man than himself.'<sup>38</sup> In later life, after 30 years of friendship with Scott, Maurice publicly stated to some of Scott's students in Manchester, that he might 'put in a claim to be a fellow-student with them, inasmuch as he could say that he had learned more from the first Principal of Owens College than had those whom he was addressing.' 'It would have made a very much greater difference than he could well express to his own education,' said Maurice, 'if he had not had the benefit of Professor Scott's lessons on various subjects, if he had not been able to listen in private intercourse and in public discourses to his most remarkable depth of thought, - those thoughts which not merely travelled around the subject, but which penetrated into the very heart of it, and that wonderfully clear and precise language in which those thoughts were expressed.'<sup>39</sup>

Perhaps a more concrete example of Maurice's indebtedness to Scott during his Woolwich period would be his Introduction to William Law's Remarks on the Fable of the Bees, which John Sterling, on his deathbed, had requested Maurice to republish as a vindication of morality. In a letter to Scott, dated the 21st August 1844, shortly before the book appeared, Maurice explained that in the writing of the introduction he had been led into many thoughts which he had received through Scott. Maurice asked Scott to receive the introduction 'as a token of very earnest gratitude for seeds which you have scattered, and which, though they might have borne earlier and better fruit in a better soil, have not, I trust, merely lain on the surface.'<sup>40</sup>

William Law, in the early 18th century, in his Remarks on the Fable of the Bees, had contended that there are eternal moral principles which are to govern human life and thought. Maurice, in his eighty page introduction, reaffirms Law's doctrine of morality, and develops it in a way which is highly consistent with, and shows the marks of, Scott's treatment of similar subjects during his

<sup>38</sup>Hughes, p.181.

<sup>39</sup>'Owens College Evening Classes', The Manchester Guardian, 10 June 1868.

<sup>40</sup>F. Maurice, Life of Maurice I, p.377.

Woolwich period. Just as there are principles which govern the reality of the natural world, claimed Maurice, there are discoverable principles which govern the realm of morality. 'In the natural world', he stated, 'there is a method of arriving at what is. If you ask the things you see and handle what they mean, not contenting yourself with their first rude or incoherent reply, but tormenting them till they have manifestly told their secret, you feel that a truth has been made known to you upon which you may act. Is it altogether otherwise in the region of human thought and life?'<sup>41</sup> Man is able, Maurice asserted, to discover, through revelation, eternal principles of morality. Revelation, he explained, is 'the making known that which is, to the persons who are the most interested in knowing it.' Revelation does not supply a set of portable rules or maxims, but rather 'offers to lead the humble disciple into the apprehension of the laws and mysteries under which he is himself living.'<sup>42</sup>

Moral principles are to be valued in and by themselves, claimed Maurice. This is an interesting point in Maurice's Scott-influenced Introduction, because it anticipates to a very large degree, Maurice's controversial definition of 'eternity' which was to appear a decade later in his Theological Essays. Maurice complained of men only half believing that to be true and right is the best thing of all. 'We half fancy that there is a better thing to which this is only a means.'<sup>43</sup> We have forgotten, he continued, that evil is a present burden, crushing men to death now, as if evil had only a distant prospect of becoming a burden, when punishment should have been inflicted for it. 'We do not seem to believe', Maurice said, 'that good is a good now, only that it may prove to be so hereafter, when a certain amount of pleasure has been appended to it.'<sup>44</sup> Eternal life is to participate in the eternal moral principles.<sup>45</sup> This understanding of eternal

<sup>41</sup>F.D. Maurice, Introduction to William Law's Remarks on the Fable of the Bees (Cambridge, 1844), p.xix.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid. p.xxvii.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid. p.lxi.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid. p.lxii.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid. p.lxxiv.

life, which has nothing to do with time or infinite duration, is similar to that which had been expressed by Scott fourteen years earlier in his Hints for Meditation on Acquaintance with God, a publication which Maurice had studied and spoken highly of in his letter to R. C. Trench. Eternal life, Scott had said, is to know God and to be acquainted with his moral nature.<sup>46</sup>

In conclusion Maurice contended that man is not to divorce the moral nature of God from human morality. If this is done, then we lose our true standard of morality, our eternal moral principles. If this is done, then the theory that 'Private Vices are Public Benefits', the doctrine against which Law had contended, may be just as sound and rational as any other. The principles that dwell in the heart of the Creator, said Maurice, alone can hold human society together, and 'declare what at every moment of his life each of us is meant to be.'<sup>47</sup>

While Maurice acknowledged indebtedness to Scott, it should also be said that always there was to be a significant degree of disagreement between the two men, primarily over the doctrine of the visible Church and its sacraments. It is not surprising to find Maurice, the faithful Episcopalian, taking a higher view than did Scott of the visible Church, its sacraments, and the authority of bishops. In Maurice's very first reference to Scott in 1836, he mentions their discord on the subject of baptism. Scott believed that the sacrament signified God's relationship to all men, and thus was not to be seen as effecting a change in God's relation to the individual baptised. 'I can sympathise much in that feeling,' wrote Maurice, 'but I think it is a wrong one.'<sup>48</sup> Maurice explained that while he objected entirely to the High Church belief that the sacrament actually constitutes the relationship, he now saw, 'that every man practically denies the relationship who does not enter into the covenant (in which word I include claiming it for children), and that he puts himself and

<sup>46</sup> A.J. Scott, Hints for Meditation on Acquaintance with God (Greenock, 1831), p.3.

<sup>47</sup> F.D. Maurice, p.lxxix.

<sup>48</sup> F. Maurice, Life of Maurice I, p.208.

them in quite a different position by entering into it.'<sup>49</sup> Apart from the sacrament of baptism, contended Maurice, we are not members of the Body of Christ, and the Spirit of Christ does not dwell in us. The difference, he explained, is that to the unbaptised we are to declare the forgiveness of sins, accompanied by an invitation to become baptised members of the Body, whereas to the baptised we declare both the forgiveness of sins and the possession of the Spirit. Scott, on the other hand, took a more dynamic understanding of possession of the Spirit, and contended that only those who evidenced in their own lives the life of the Spirit could be said to be living members of the Body, and indwelt by the Spirit of Christ.

In spite of this type of disagreement, the Scott-Maurice friendship continued unbroken, and the two men contributed to one another's development. Scott and Maurice increasingly came to share many friendships in common, and just as Scott was to be instrumental in bringing Maurice into personal contact with Erskine and Campbell, so Maurice seems to have served as a catalyst in the formation of Scott's friendships with Sterling, Kingsley and others.

One of the most interesting common friends of Scott and Maurice was Rev. James Dunn, an Irish Episcopalian who, for the sake of conscience, had turned down a bishopric.<sup>50</sup> Dunn, who was much older than Scott and Maurice, was described by Sterling as 'tall, slender, and graceful, with a head which in form and character had a beauty at once magnanimous and delicate.'<sup>51</sup> 'There was in him,' continued Sterling, 'a faint flush of Irish nature, a strong tone of an older and more elaborate school of courtesy, than prevails now, the simplicity of a recluse student, the singularity of a mystical idealist, the freshness of a lover of all beauty and wisdom, whom no excess in intellectual indulgence had ever wearied of thought. ... His distinct personality seemed,' said Sterling, 'to consist in the unceasing continuity of generous and upward feeling, to which the graceful, the becoming, the right was not added as a qualification

<sup>49</sup>Ibid. pp.208-209.

<sup>50</sup>See Finlayson, 'Professor Scott', The Owens College Magazine vol 13, p.106; and T. Carlyle, Life of John Sterling (London, 1897), p.128.

<sup>51</sup>J. Sterling, Essays and Tales II (London, 1848), p.188.

or measure, but belonged to it, inhered in it, as its vital spirit.<sup>52</sup>  
 The whole aim of his thoughts and studies, explained Sterling, was to refer all causation in the universe to essential good. Concerning Dunn, whose disinclination to write was perhaps even greater than Scott's, Sterling said: 'The great work of his life was his life itself.'<sup>53</sup>

Maurice thought Dunn to be 'the most finely-formed Christian man' that he had ever met.<sup>54</sup> Carlyle, likewise, described him as 'one of the mildest, beautifulest old men I have ever seen', whose face with its kind true smile 'was a sort of benediction.'<sup>55</sup> R. C. Trench, while considering Dunn to have been 'one of the holiest of men', nevertheless thought his theology defective: 'Christ our example, Christ the revealer of the mind of God towards sinners, occupying the whole foreground, so that Christ the sacrifice is forgotten, or nearly so.'<sup>56</sup>

There was much agreement between Dunn and Scott, and the former came to speak of Scott in the highest terms. In 1833 Dunn, who had been an intimate of Alexander Knox and John Jebb, wrote of Scott, who was only 28 years of age at the time:

I allow, my friend, Mr. Scott, is somewhat obscure, but 'tis the obscurity which proceeds from depth, and not from muddiness; believe me, he is a sublime man, and, in my humble apprehension, knows more of the mind of Christ, and has penetrated nearer to the very substance of the everlasting righteousness which is the character and crown of His Kingdom, than any divine of the present day that I have ever met with.<sup>57</sup>

In January 1838, Scott took Erskine to meet Dunn, Erskine very quickly becoming fond of 'good old Mr. Dunn.'<sup>58</sup> Dunn kept an open house, where theological soirées appear to have occurred frequently, and Erskine described how other clergymen at Dunn's paid 'most

<sup>52</sup> Ibid. p.189.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid. p.193.

<sup>54</sup> Life of Maurice I, pp.252-3.

<sup>55</sup> Carlyle, Life of Sterling, p.128.

<sup>56</sup> M. Trench, Richard Chenevix Trench (London, 1888), p.221.

<sup>57</sup> J. Wedgwood, Preface to Scott's Discourses (London, 1866), p.xviii.

<sup>58</sup> Hanna, Letters of Erskine I, p.302.

candid and conscientious attention to many striking things which Scott said,' and how Dunn 'asked Scott to read and expound the Scriptures.'<sup>59</sup>

A few days after his introduction to Dunn, Erskine met Maurice at another one of Dunn's soirées. He is 'a very metaphysical man', said Erskine concerning Maurice. 'I have not got into him yet; I hope, when I return to London, to know him better.'<sup>60</sup> As it turned out, Erskine had another opportunity, before leaving London, to further his acquaintance with Maurice. In February, Erskine described yet another evening at Dunn's:

Wedgwood was there, and Maurice, who went home with me at night. Wedgwood is a delightful man, full of truth and heart to God and man, and well endowed intellectually also. However, although there were good materials for general conversation (for Scott was there too), yet there was none. We continued all in separate parties, which I always regret in such cases.<sup>61</sup>

Scott had brought together, at Dunn's, Maurice and Erskine, a friendship which was to last for life. A few month's later, at his Woolwich Chapel, Scott introduced Maurice to Campbell.<sup>62</sup> Campbell was also to meet Charles Kingsley through Scott.<sup>63</sup> It was largely through Scott, therefore, that a personal link was made between some of the leading theological reformers of Scotland and England. From 1838 onwards Maurice can be found corresponding regularly with Erskine, and at a later date can be found taking his summer holidays with Scott and travelling north to Linlathen to visit Erskine and Campbell.<sup>64</sup>

During his Woolwich period, Scott developed a relationship with Maurice's friend, John Sterling. Sterling and Scott may well have met through Dunn, for, in 1834, Sterling, still in deacon's orders at this time, considered himself a 'pupil' of Dunn's.<sup>65</sup> By 1836

<sup>59</sup>Ibid. pp.299-300.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid. p.300.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid. p.302.

<sup>62</sup>Memorials of Campbell I, p.147.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid. p.226.

<sup>64</sup>Life of Maurice I, pp.443-4.

<sup>65</sup>A letter from J. Sterling to J. Dunn, 15 July 1834, National Library of Scotland MS 1766 f.23.

Scott and Sterling almost certainly appear to have been together at Maurice's, along with Carlyle and others.<sup>66</sup> Like Maurice and Scott, Sterling felt indebted to Coleridge and Irving,<sup>67</sup> especially the former. This, combined with his ever increasing friendship with Carlyle, as was the case in Scott's life, indicates that there was much common ground between Scott and Sterling. The remains of this relationship are very scarce. There is, however, some indication of Sterling's opinion of Scott. Writing to Dunn in May 1837, Sterling, by this stage having experienced many doubts as to Christian orthodoxy, expressed his desire that Scott should write and publish his thoughts. He went on to say: 'I cannot consider him right in confining the energy of his intellect and zeal to the small circle in which it now acts. But sooner or later no doubt we shall hear more of him.'<sup>68</sup>

Sterling was to die in September 1844. Earlier in the same summer it appeared that Scott's life might also be cut short. His doctors had warned him that, due to a malfunctioning heart, he might at any moment die. Confronted with the death of both his dear friends, Maurice wrote to Scott, expressing his belief that it was during times of suffering that eternal truths were more clearly grasped, and that earthly affection took on a much higher and even eternal aspect. In conclusion Maurice wrote:

I am afraid I have tired you with a long discourse about things of which you know so much more than I do, but you will not think that my desire was to teach, but only to express what I do not believe that I have for a moment ceased to feel - very deep thankfulness for having been allowed to have intercourse with you and for what you have taught me, and every good wish which it is possible that any one can entertain for another or that God should fulfil.<sup>69</sup>

Maurice's depth of thankfulness for Scott was reciprocated with a feeling equally profound. Scott's high regard for Maurice led him to cherish his friend's letter of comfort and gratitude. Scott was

<sup>66</sup>Life of Maurice I, p.199.

<sup>67</sup>A letter from Sterling to Trench, August 1832, in M. Trench, R.C. Trench, p.119.

<sup>68</sup>A letter from Sterling to Dunn, 10 May 1837, National Library of Scotland MS 1766 f.44.

<sup>69</sup>Life of Maurice I, pp.377-9.



so fond of reading the letter that he carried it about in his waistcoat pocket until it had been worn to pieces.<sup>70</sup>

c) The Scott-Carlyle relationship

Thomas Carlyle also wrote a letter of comfort to Scott shortly after learning the doctor's prognosis concerning his friend. 'It was a painful surprise to me', wrote Carlyle. 'I was looking for a sight of you soon, as one of the compensations in store for me; - and it turns out all otherwise for the present, - not as I had ordered it, but as Another has.'<sup>71</sup> Carlyle proceeded to explain that he had, upon hearing the news, longed to utter himself in some kind of words:

And yet alas there were, and there are, as good as no words. It is so little that one man can do for another. We can weep and grieve for one another; we can bid one another be of courage, be of hope; - and that is, as it were, all! - The wretched state of my own spirits, and the deep confusions I am weltering in of late, have prevented me from doing even that.

My Wife was heartily gratified by the tone of your letter, which she heard read at the Wedgwoods'; it was brave, manful and calm, she said, as the words of a man could be. This is right; hold on by this, and quit it not. It is the anchor we have in these wild storms of Time and Chance, - a strength lent us by our Maker, and which, we may say, holds of Him. We are here in the Place of Hope always; and yet always we are to be prepared for Evil, since the Worst is, at all moments, near to every one of us.

Doctors are in no case infallible prophets to me; my Brother too says that your disease is one they are apt enough to be mistaken in: we know nothing yet for certain, except this, that the Eternal does rule in all things; that all shall be according to His will, - and that surely this shall be well. Well and best. Dear friend, what words can I say to you? There are no words, and I will say no more.

...

It would be cruel to trouble you when perhaps you are weak; but if at any good moment you felt disposed to write me a little word of any kind, I should be glad of it. My blessings on your good wife. May God's blessing be on you both always, and on us all. Good night.

Your affectionate,  
T. Carlyle.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>70</sup>Ibid. p.378. Maurice's son explained why the letter was, in parts, fragmentary.

<sup>71</sup>A. Carlyle, New Letters of T. Carlyle I (London, 1904), p.312.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid. pp.312-315.

The Scott-Carlyle friendship had commenced six years previous to this. They had, of course, through their mutual friend, Edward Irving, had some contact at an even earlier period, when Carlyle was yet an unknown quantity, but it was not until early 1838 that their friendship got under way. In February 1838, Carlyle, now the much acclaimed author of Sartor Resartus and the French Revolution, wrote to his brother, John: 'I have seen Scott, Edward Irving's Scott, a man much sobered now, tho' not at the end of his fermentations yet: who, for one thing, "has read the French Revolution four times over, every word of it!" What think you of that?' asked Carlyle. 'He has a good laugh in him; and brings one in mind of several good things. On the whole,' he continued, 'I take up my old love for the Saints. No class of persons can be found in this country with as much humanity in them; nay, with as much tolerance as the better sort of them have. The tolerance of others is but doubt and indifference; touch the thing they do believe in and value, their own self conceit, and they are rattlesnakes then! Most of the Saint people have been brought into our sphere by a couple called the Wedgwoods.'<sup>73</sup> Hensleigh Wedgwood, then, appears to have been instrumental in the birth of this new relationship. Carlyle's other 'Saint' friends were Scott's intimates, James Dunn and Thomas Erskine. Concerning the latter, Carlyle had written in the same letter: 'I have seen him several times lately, and like him as one would do a draught of sweet rustic mead served in cut glasses and silver tray. One of the gentlest, kindest, best-bred of men. He talks greatly about 'Symbols' and other Teufelsdröckhiana; seems not disinclined to let the Christian Religion pass for a kind of Mythus, provided men can retain the spirit of it well.'<sup>74</sup> Carlyle repeated, with great delight, to his devout mother, Erskine's opinion that Carlyle might well be considered more orthodox than any in his day.<sup>75</sup>

From 1838, Scott and Erskine increasingly became a part of Carlyle's life, and, although he stood on the circumference of the Christian circle rather than at its centre, they came to regard him highly. In 1843, for instance, Erskine wrote:

<sup>73</sup> Ibid. p.109.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid. p.109.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid. p.118.

His history of the French Revolution and his miscellaneous works and Sartor Resartus are all very remarkable, sometimes startling. I love the man; he has a real belief in the invisible, which in these railroad and steam-engine days is a great matter. He sees and condemns the evil and baseness of living in the lower part of our nature instead of living in the higher. He is full of thoughts, of genius, and of high imagination.<sup>76</sup>

Over the next ten years of their friendship, during which time they were in constant communication,<sup>77</sup> Carlyle's estimation of Scott steadily rose, so that in 1848 he was able to say of him:

Mr. Scott has long been intimately known to me as a man of great, solid, and original powers of mind, - of eager, persevering industry, - of a pure, high, and earnest character; whose rare merits the whole world, if at length the fit arena were conceded to him, might yet well come to recognise. A man of strong judgment, - of deep inquiring spirit, full of delicacy, and of energy, and of veracity; whose pilgrimage through the confusions, intellectual and other, of our time, has been that of a valiant, resolute, and modest man; a struggle (as I suppose) full of toil and painful effort and endurance, but rich also in noble victories, and of lasting result to him.<sup>78</sup>

While the two Scots and the old Irish clergyman made it on to Carlyle's Saints' list, the Anglican Maurice was less fortunate. 'One of the most entirely uninteresting men of genius that I can meet with in society is poor Maurice to me', wrote Carlyle in 1838. 'All twisted, screwed, wiredrawn; with such a restless sensitiveness: the uttermost inability to let Nature have fair play with him! I do not remember that a word ever came from him betokening clear recognition or healthy free sympathy with any thing. One must really let him alone,' concluded Carlyle, 'till the prayers one does always offer for him (pure-hearted, earnest, humane creature as he is) begin to take effect.'<sup>79</sup> Jane Carlyle shared her husband's feelings for Scott's close friend, to an even less charitable degree. 'Mr. Maurice we rarely see, nor do I greatly regret his absence;' wrote Jane to John Sterling, 'for to tell you the truth, I am never in his company without being attacked with a sort of paroxysm of mental

<sup>76</sup>Letters of Erskine II, p.36.

<sup>77</sup>W.H. Wylie, Thomas Carlyle (London, 1881), p.344.

<sup>78</sup>Testimonials to A.J. Scott (London, 1850), p.5.

<sup>79</sup>New Letters of T. Carlyle I, pp.108-109.

cramp! He keeps one always,' she continued, 'with his wire-drawings and paradoxes, as if one were dancing on the points of one's toes (spiritually speaking). And then he will help with the kettle, and never fails to pour it all over the milk-pot and sugar-basin!'<sup>80</sup>

Maurice did not fare very well at the hands of the Carlyles. He, nevertheless, while quite aware of Carlyle's estimation of him, continued to view the Sage of Chelsea with great respect.<sup>81</sup> He persevered in the relationship, and can be found in November 1838, for instance, arranging a dinner with Carlyle and Scott.<sup>82</sup> But, whereas the Scott-Carlyle relationship increasingly blossomed, Maurice and Carlyle came, more and more, to drift apart. By 1840 Maurice was expressing great concern about Carlyle's 'miserable vagueness' and his 'silly rant about the great bosom of Nature.'<sup>83</sup> In May of that year, Maurice attended, as did Scott, Carlyle's lectures on 'Heroes'. 'I know not how to tell you,' wrote Maurice to his wife after one of Carlyle's lectures, 'what an oppression I sometimes feel at the thought of what is coming on this generation. I feel it at Carlyle's lectures, especially in such wild pantheistic rant as that into which he fell at the close of yesterday's. And then I wonder how I can ever indulge in little bickerings and childish pettinesses when such perils are threatening some of the noblest and best spirits in the land,' said Maurice. 'The Scotts were at both the last lectures. It did me good to see him.'<sup>84</sup>

The Scott-Carlyle correspondence during the Woolwich period was primarily of a literary nature. In 1840 Scott was one of the early supporters of the London Library scheme, for which Carlyle was largely responsible.<sup>85</sup> In 1842 we find Scott contemplating a translation of some German work, and seeking Carlyle's

<sup>80</sup>J.A. Froude, Letters and Memorials of Jane Welsh Carlyle I (London, 1883), p.68.

<sup>81</sup>Life of Maurice I, pp.250-251.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid. p.253.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid. p.282.

<sup>84</sup>Ibid. p.283.

<sup>85</sup>MS on 'The London Library' held at the Scottish National Library, MS 531 f.30.

advice, whose own earliest literary efforts had been translations of the writings of Goethe, Schiller, Novalis, etc.. Carlyle's suggestions included biographies on Luther, Schiller, Frederick the Great, and Herder.<sup>86</sup> Scott's contemplated German translation, like most of his literary undertakings, never appeared. Scott, however, had in his friend, Carlyle, one of earliest pioneers in breaking down the insularity of the English mind by introducing it to the wider thought of Germany. Scott and Carlyle were among the very few in Britain, including such men as Coleridge, Sterling, and Scott's friend, J. C. Hare, and Hare's colleague, Thirlwall, who had a working knowledge of German, and were aware of the tendencies in German literature and philosophy. Scott later displayed his widespread knowledge of the general literature and philosophy of early 19th century Germany in his 1850-51 lectures at the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution.

Scott and Carlyle also exchanged a good many thoughts on the latter's Oliver Cromwell, both before and after its publication. In the summer of 1844, over a year before the book was to appear, and while Scott was still greatly disabled by his illness, Carlyle explained to Scott that the work on Cromwell 'has been in the highest degree dreary and disheartening, and hitherto, so far as appearance goes, seems altogether or almost altogether in vain.' But, Carlyle continued:

And yet I feel sometimes as if this sorrowful and perhaps impossible enterprise were appointed to do me good. It is a fruitful kind of study, that of men who do in very deed understand and feel at all moments that they are in contact with God, that the right and wrong of their little life has extended itself into Eternity and Infinitude. Very clearly I perceive that this is the highest condition of man, - his only true condition for being a man. I stand astonished at the sober indubitable fact of it: how the thing that we hear, every day, like a mere sound, was to these men a fact! It is at bottom my religion too; I seem to understand that it will, in the essence of it, have to be all men's. There are 'robes of light', as I say, encircling a man, without which the man is not luminous, but dark and unmanlike. - If I can gather this, and make it mine a little more conclusively, from my Puritans, my literary disappointment in the matter may be borne! Certainly it seems to me, this their practical contact

<sup>86</sup>New Letters of T. Carlyle I, p.275.

with the Highest was a fact, which can be imitated, which should be emulated by all men. ...

Dear Scott, I feel I do not weary you with these things. Thoughts of the like sort I do believe are daily in your own mind, and, in your sore struggling pilgrimage to spiritual manhood, have long been. If it please God, you shall yet be employed to make them clearer to yourself and others.<sup>87</sup>

Carlyle's Oliver Cromwell appeared in the autumn of 1845, while Scott was convalescing in Paris. Notwithstanding, Scott soon obtained a copy of the book, and, having read it, sent off his favourable impressions to Carlyle. The author responded to Scott in early December: 'Your letter reached me here a few days ago; and I may truly say has given me great pleasure. That you adopt the view I have taken up about Oliver, and approve of my most ungainly ineffectual labour in regard to him, and give me your kind and hearty 'Euge!' from over the water, - this is a really precious thing to me. The first voice of approval I have heard on the matter; of a sincerity and an insight not to be doubted. I will take it as the omen that by and by many more such, nay in a certain sense at last all such, will be added; and the poor work turn out to be actually worth something.'<sup>88</sup> While Scott was still in Paris, Carlyle sent a copy of his book to Plumstead Common. In late July 1846, Scott wrote a letter of thanks to Carlyle:

On my return from Paris last week, one of the first friendly welcomes home I got was from your Oliver. Best thanks; and the more for your kind thoughtfulness in joining the supplement to complete the copy we already had. We shall now be able to oblige our friends who want to read the book, and at the same time to keep one copy in the state of preservation that becomes the inward and outward merits of the book. You can enter into the comfort of this. - I do not value lightly kind regards of the author inscribed in such a work as this.<sup>89</sup>

Amidst Scott's high thoughts of Carlyle's literary ability, it should be noted that Scott's praise was not entirely untempered. In his lectures on the general literature of the early 19th century, Scott was to explain, that, while he greatly admired the grandeur of

<sup>87</sup> Ibid. pp.313-314.

<sup>88</sup> New Letters of T. Carlyle II, p.10.

<sup>89</sup> A letter from Scott to Carlyle, dated 27 July 1846, held in the Scottish National Library, MS 1766 f.170.

Carlyle's grasp, and 'the great combining powers of his representations,' he did not approve of the peculiarities and even 'uncouthness' of Carlyle's language.<sup>90</sup>

Another literary work which Scott and Carlyle discussed was Scott's proposed Life of Dante. Carlyle was very keen that Scott should proceed with this work. He had the highest regard for his friend's literary ability, and described Scott as approaching literature with 'a serious, manful, and noble aim; persevering instinctively towards the kernel and spiritual essence of the matter; leaving aside the pedantries, egoistic ambitions, and natural or accidental husks and adjuncts, as of no moment to him.'<sup>91</sup> Late in 1845, Carlyle wrote to Scott, saying that 'this Life of Dante, if you were once fairly in the heart of it, would prove an excellent thing for you; the beginning of still better things; for yourself and for all of us. Can you not begin straightway to write?' asked Carlyle. 'There is no end of inquiring; you never know what course you will go in, till you begin to experiment: it is a battle between the material and you.'<sup>92</sup> It is unfortunate that Scott never succeeded in completing this work, for his public lectures on Dante were considered to be among his best, and The Spectator later described Scott as 'the profoundest of modern students of Dante.'<sup>93</sup> A writer in The Scotsman, likewise, stated, upon Scott's death: 'Those who should know best say that with him has died more knowledge of the deep things of Dante than any one survivor could replace.'<sup>94</sup>

During Scott's Woolwich period he came to know Thomas Carlyle's brother, Dr. John Aitken Carlyle, who in 1843 had retired from his post as travelling physician to the Duke of Buccleuch, in order to give himself more fully to literary pursuits. In 1845 John Carlyle can be found dining with Scott and consulting him on his translation of Dante's Inferno. Scott's reaction to the translation as 'quite

<sup>90</sup> A.J. Scott, 'On the General Literature during the first half of the 19th century' Lecture IV, The Scotsman, 18 January 1851.

<sup>91</sup> Testimonials to A.J. Scott (London, 1850), p.5.

<sup>92</sup> New Letters of T. Carlyle II, p.12.

<sup>93</sup> 'A.J. Scott', The Spectator, 27 January 1866.

<sup>94</sup> 'The late Professor A.J. Scott', The Scotsman, 19 January 1866.

a surprising thing',<sup>95</sup> does not tell us much about Scott's opinion of the younger Carlyle's abilities. John Carlyle, on the other hand, gives us a clear expression of his opinion concerning Scott's abilities. 'He is a man of great talents and acquirements,' wrote Dr. Carlyle, 'and has such a power of setting forth his ideas in clear, terse, racy, simple language as is seldom met with. I know that he has long been familiarly acquainted with the old Provencal Literature and its ramifications, and with the literature of the Middle Ages generally - not at second hand, but at its sources. He has also gone through the elements of the Anglo-Saxon, the Maeso-Gothic, etc.', said Carlyle. 'He is a good German, French, and Italian Scholar, and has read the best authors in these languages. In particular, he has studied Dante's Works thoroughly, and in connection with the circumstances under which the great Poem was produced. He knows the English literature intimately and critically, from Chaucer downwards.'<sup>96</sup>

Other friends of Scott, whom he probably met through the Carlyles, were some of the exiled Italian revolutionaries. Scott took a great interest in the Carlyles' friend, Giuseppe Mazzini, the leader of the band of Italian heroes and liberators.<sup>97</sup> He knew Aurelio Saffi, who, along with Mazzini and Armellini, was a member of the short-lived Triumvirate of the Roman Republic in 1849. Scott also greatly admired and became a friend of Agostino Ruffini, who, while in exile taught Italian in Edinburgh, and, after the revolution of 1848, was elected deputy to the Sardinian Parliament.<sup>98</sup>

In this Scott-Carlyle relationship of primarily a literary nature, Scott, in his inability to produce any of the contemplated works discussed with Carlyle, does not come out with flying colours especially in comparison with the prolific Sage of Chelsea. There was one field, however, in which Scott was always Carlyle's superior, and that was, public lecturing. Carlyle did some public

<sup>95</sup> A. Carlyle, New Letters and Memorials of Jane Welsh Carlyle I (London, 1903), p.181.

<sup>96</sup> Testimonials to A.J. Scott (London, 1850), p.3.

<sup>97</sup> Johnson, p.36, gives information on Scott and the Italian liberators.

<sup>98</sup> D. Mason, Memories of London in the 'Forties (Edinburgh, 1908), pp.157-8.



lecturing between 1837 and 1840, but after his lectures on 'Heroes and Hero-Worship', he wrote to Erskine:

Let all that love me keep far away on occasions of that kind. I am in no case so sorry for myself as when standing up there bewildered, distracted, nine-tenths of my poor faculty lost in terror and wretchedness, a spectacle to men. It is my most ardent hope that this exhibition may be my last of such; that Necessity, with her bayonet at my back, may never again drive me up thither, a creature more fit for uttering himself in a flood of inarticulate tears than any other way.<sup>99</sup>

After listening to Scott lecture so ably on one occasion at the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution, Carlyle recollected to Scott his own feelings upon lecturing: 'When I had to give my lectures on Hero-Worship, I felt as if I were going to be hanged.'<sup>100</sup> Scott, on the other hand, appears to have delighted in public speaking, usually extempore, and his oratory, as we shall see, was increasingly and repeatedly remarked upon as unsurpassed in his day. 'He possesses singular gifts of utterance,' said Carlyle. 'With an intellect fit to master the most confused subject, and extort from it what its vital elements are, where its secret lies, and what the true method of expanding and describing it is, he combines a felicity in extempore speaking; which are of themselves rare, and are much rarer in such a combination as the above.'<sup>101</sup>

d) Scott's Lectures on Revelation and the Epistle to the Romans

1. Scott on Revelation

Early in the Scott-Carlyle relationship, when Carlyle still felt that Scott was not quite at the end of his 'fermentations', Scott delivered, in March 1838, at Exeter Hall, a course of lectures on Revelation. 'Very fluent, very honest-looking,' said Carlyle, but 'to me not instructive.'<sup>102</sup> Although he lacked Carlyle's approbation, Scott soon published the essence of these lectures as an Introductory Essay to a collection of Lectures on

<sup>99</sup>J.A. Froude, Thomas Carlyle (1834-81) I (London, 1884), p.184.

<sup>100</sup>Wylie, p.175.

<sup>101</sup>Testimonials to A.J. Scott (London, 1850), p.5.

<sup>102</sup>New Letters of T. Carlyle I, p.116.

the Epistle to the Romans, which he had publicly delivered in late 1837. In later years the Essay on Revelation was to appear again, both in Scott's Three Discourses of 1842, and in his 1866 collection of Discourses. Julia Wedgwood, in her preface to the latter, explained that Scott's lectures 'were always emphatically addresses. They were not, as valuable and interesting lectures very often are, merely his thoughts on a particular subject, spoken instead of written. They were addressed to his audience,' she said. 'No commentary can fill up the gap between the impressions of hearer and reader; nothing can compensate for that piercing glance which was felt as vivifying the spoken words into a force not their own, and approaching in its effect to a physical manifestation of Truth; for that varied rise and flow of utterance would have impressed on an intelligent foreigner ignorant of the language used, something of its import and much of its power.'<sup>103</sup>

At the beginning of his Essay on Revelation, Scott explained that the aim of the entire universe is to reveal God, to communicate God's spirit to man's spirit. The Scriptures, he emphasised, form but one element in God's manifold utterance of Himself. Scott, before proceeding to examine the principal means of revelation, explained that each class is not distinct and self-complete. There is a mutual dependence between all God's methods of revelation. 'The harmonious, combined result,' said Scott, 'is the manifestation of God.'<sup>104</sup>

The first means of divine revelation, considered by Scott, was the natural world of Creation. Scott took up the traditional Christian doctrine of God's revelation in creation, based on Romans 1:20, and gave it fresh emphasis. As with the Romantics of his age - with Wordsworth, for example, in his first book of The Prelude - the natural world had for Scott an infinite depth; there is in it a Presence communicating itself to man. Humanity, said Scott, holds 'manifold communion with a mind uttering itself in all surrounding nature.'<sup>105</sup> Increasingly he was to attach a

<sup>103</sup>J. Wedgwood, Preface to Scott's Discourses (London, 1866), p.vi.

<sup>104</sup>A.J. Scott, 'Introductory Discourse on Revelation', Lectures on the Epistle to the Romans (London, 1838), p.2.

<sup>105</sup>Ibid. p.3.

sacramental value to Creation. The divine knowledge obtainable by man through the natural world is not doctrinal or propositional, said Scott, but rather belongs 'to some deeper part of the human being.'<sup>106</sup> God is a living person, he asserted, and, man comes to a knowledge of Him as he does other living persons:

How does the babe, in the consciousness of its own life, feel saved from solitude by the present life of its mother, or its father? What do its senses reveal? Forms, colours, motions, sounds: these are not a soul, but through these it detects the presence of a soul, answering to its soul; it is happy, finding in them a being like its own, yet another than itself. The eye, the lips, the actions, the very dress of its parents are to it as a microcosm, or little world, in which it finds, like a subordinate and compendious God, the spirit whom it loves, and on whose love it leans. ... Even thus does a knowledge of the Highest Spirit come through his universe, the knowledge of a Father to his children; and those who have a child's heart own and welcome it.<sup>107</sup>

In attempting to hold together, and see the mutual relation between, natural revelation and the Scriptures, Scott asserted that the 'man with the Bible in his hand, is not discharged from the study of God in that other volume.'<sup>108</sup> A true sympathy with the Psalmist, for instance, is not attained, by merely studying his words, or abstracting them into doctrines, but by looking on 'that ampler page on which he looked, and reading, as there inscribed, what is the greatness, and how it makes marvellous the loving-kindness' of the Creator.<sup>109</sup> Similarly, said Scott, when Jesus points to the splendour of the flowered field as an argument for resting in the One who clothes the flowers, it is not the Bible to which He is directing our attention, but rather the natural world. God wears an expressive look in the created world, for the soul of man to see and feel.<sup>110</sup>

Scott next explored Providence as a means of God's communicating himself to man. A highly systematised theory of Providence which attempts to neatly explain the moral purpose of history, Scott

<sup>106</sup> Ibid. p.3.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid. p.4.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid. p.4.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid. p.3.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid. p.5.

opposed. He did, however, believe that God speaks by Providence to the conscience of man. A man may know, Scott contended, when certain events in his life have brought him into peculiar contact with the Being of God, for the purpose of learning what is morally eternal. 'The fundamental truth of Providence is, that its events have an inward key and commentary of conscience, often hidden from the onlooker,' said Scott. 'We are often utterly ignorant of the relation between the inward, or moral, and the outward history. Sometimes we may mistake it. This is a poor reason for not owning and using it when it is known.'<sup>111</sup> 'Providence seems to speak to us,' concluded Scott, 'lest creation should be regarded as self-sufficient, and become to us a veil, instead of a transparency through which a light of God is seen.'<sup>112</sup> Miracles, Scott's next class of revelation, are in a different manner adapted to the same end, said Scott. As we have already seen in Scott's Neglected Truths (1830), miracles, he held, are designed to lead man into a knowledge of the moral nature of God.

After Providence and Miracles, Scott proceeded to explore a concept which he had touched upon in earlier publications, the spiritual conscience. There is that within man 'which has to do with God simply as He is,' said Scott. The spiritual conscience is the capacity within man for receiving this eternal voice, and the language of that voice, 'being interpreted, is, Be ye holy, for I am holy.'<sup>113</sup> The voice spoken within the conscience calls man to unite with God, and presents a character which it commands man to be, absolutely irrespective of circumstance. It commands a goodness which is eternal, a goodness which participates in the essential moral nature of God. Scott wished to emphasise that the spiritual conscience is distinct from man's understanding and judgment. While there will be differing opinions as to how to act in accordance with the absolute 'Be thou' uttered in man's conscience, the mode of being enjoined by the conscience does not vary, for the moral principles commanded by conscience are those of God's Being.

<sup>111</sup>Ibid. p.7.

<sup>112</sup>Ibid. p.7.

<sup>113</sup>Ibid. p.10.

The spiritual conscience is a universal faculty in man, contended Scott. What occurred in the case of Job, for instance, 'peculiar probably in degree,' he said, 'was surely not in kind unexampled.'<sup>114</sup> With illustration from the Bhagavad-Gītā, Scott continued:

The ancient Indian, who wrote that 'God is the gift of charity, God is the offering, God is the fire of the altar, by God the sacrifice is performed, and God is to be obtained by him who makes God alone the object of his work', was one who had experienced somewhat of what Job had experienced, or learned from one who had.<sup>115</sup>

And with reference to Plato's Apology to Socrates, Scott asserted that Socrates also seemed, to him, to have learned something of the moral nature of the Father. And finally, after mentioning the case of a Mohammedan's living faith in the moral nature of God, Scott concluded: 'A greater and more living Teacher surely, was with this man, than the words of his Koran.'<sup>116</sup> While asserting his belief in a universal spiritual conscience, through which the Eternal addresses mankind, whether or not man is receptive, Scott displayed a charity and openness to other faiths which was exceedingly rare in his day.

The fifth means of revelation, considered by Scott, was God's supreme communication of Himself to man in the humanity of Christ. This central emphasis, Scott, as we have already seen, had clearly developed in his earlier publications and preaching. 'In the humanity of Christ, in human thoughts, human feelings, human joys and sorrows, God looks out and articulates Himself to us with a distinctness and a home impression beyond what any other form of manifestation can possess; and seeing him we emphatically see the Father.' This, said Scott, is 'the central and crowning revelation of God.'<sup>117</sup>

Scott then moved on to the final section of his Essay on

<sup>114</sup>Ibid. p.13.

<sup>115</sup>Ibid. p.13. J.W. Colenso in his controversial work on The Pentateuch (Part I), (London, 1863), p.154, quoted this passage from Scott, in his argument against the Scriptural infallibilists, who did not recognise a universal revelation to mankind outside the Scriptures.

<sup>116</sup>Ibid. p.14.

<sup>117</sup>Ibid. p.15.

Revelation, that concerning Scripture. The Bible is not exclusively revelation, nor even exclusively inspiration, said Scott, but rather a history and an exposition of God's manifold communication of Himself to man, through the various channels of divine revelation. 'We lose the lesson of a great part of the Bible,' said Scott, 'if we regard it merely as an inspired and authoritative announcement to us now; not historically, as recording for our example, the condition of human spirits under the power of divine inspiration of old.'<sup>118</sup> The Scriptures do not set before us, as in a creed, an injunction to believe in a particular way, but rather a history of the workings of God's spirit with man's spirit. 'Surely, the facts narrated by Josephus in his Jewish War,' asserted Scott, 'and the aspect of the Jewish people now, form pages in the volume of Divine Providence, as well as those dealings towards that people recorded in the books of Kings and Chronicles.'<sup>119</sup> The Scriptures do not profess to exhaust into themselves any channel of divine communication, so that the Bible might be substituted for the other means of revelation. Rather, its purpose is to point to, to explain the use of, and to leave open for man all the channels of divine revelation. The purpose of the Scriptures is to bring humanity into a living encounter with God Himself, not merely into an account of someone else's divine encounter. 'The Lord's complaint of the Jewish people,' said Scott, 'is, that they sought that life in the Bible, which the Bible testified to be not in itself, but in Him.'<sup>120</sup>

Scott then proceeded to distinguish between the human and the divine element in Scripture. Scott and his circle had been the first in 19th century Britain to emphasise the humanity of Christ, and to place the Incarnate Christ at the centre of their faith. It is not, therefore, surprising to find Scott now developing his understanding of inspiration, and the Scriptures, in analogy with his doctrine of the Incarnation. The inspired man, claimed Scott, is not a mere trumpet, through which the divine communication passes without participation on the man's part. The

<sup>118</sup> Ibid. p.15.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid. p.16.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid. p.16.

human mind of the inspired one is imbued with the Divine truth, the human feelings are imbued with the Divine affections. 'The Spirit of God is there present, present with all his authority, but present in the thoughts, the sentiments, the faculties of the man; and,' said Scott, 'if that man's words are saturated with the Holy Spirit, it is because, in the first place, his mind and his heart have been thus saturated with the Spirit of God.'<sup>121</sup> Even in the Old Testament, explained Scott, in Jeremiah chapters eight and nine, for instance, the utterances of the prophet express the feeling of the Spirit of God become the feeling of the man, Jeremiah, in whom He is here showing Himself, and to whose human sympathy with God all the expressions are appropriate. God mourns in him,' continued Scott, 'but it is Jeremiah, surely, that is hurt, that is astonished, that would weep day and night.'<sup>122</sup> The Spirit of God is incarnated into the spirit of the inspired man.

Scott then moved on to speak more directly about the relationship between Incarnation and inspiration. 'The Incarnation, if it mean anything at all,' said Scott, 'is a coming closer to man, a bringing the Divinity and humanity nearer to one another, a making the divine not to be present, beside the human merely, but in the human; a making the human to be divine by being entirely penetrated with the light of God. Such is it in the person of Christ Jesus, the Lord,' continued Scott, 'and as the foundation of a new series of God's dealings with mankind, we should expect that the principle manifested in his person should be characteristic of the whole dispensation.'<sup>123</sup> Referring to the writer of I John's assertion, that 'whoever confesses Jesus Christ come in the flesh, is of God', Scott continued:

Nothing comes up to this test, though acknowledging God's communications to man, or God's bringing himself nigh to man, if it stop short of the Divinity having entered into humanity; i.e. of that which is divine having entered into that which is human; so that a human heart thus penetrated shall continue to be human while it is full of Divinity, and that in giving forth human feelings its utterances shall be full of the heart of God. This we should expect

<sup>121</sup>Ibid. p.25.

<sup>122</sup>Ibid. p.26.

<sup>123</sup>Ibid. p.27.

from the character of the dispensation, and from the whole history of its Founder; this we should expect, I venture to say, in a very peculiar manner from all the indications of the condition of the mind of this very Apostle, as expressed in his inspired writings. There is a depth of human affection, a weeping over that which is evil, an indignation against that which is unjust, a longing for those who are astray, and a craving for the enjoyments of intercourse and sympathy with his friends, all of which are most especially human; and yet there is not one of them, of which it is not as just as it is soothing to think, that it is divine, that this is the way in which the Spirit of God works in the spirit of man.<sup>124</sup>

In conclusion Scott reiterated his belief that there is in inspiration a human element and a divine element. 'There is introduced in the inspired writings not merely a working of the divine mind through men,' said Scott, 'but a working of the human mind under the operation of the divine. The individual is not merged or lost, but appropriated by the Spirit of God.'<sup>125</sup> Scott also indicated, very briefly, that man's full intellectual capacity is to be employed in studying the human element of Scripture, i.e. the historical and literary aspects of Scripture. But the human element, he said, is merely the vehicle for the spiritual element, for the meeting of man's spirit with the Spirit of God.<sup>126</sup>

Scott's 'Discourse on Revelation' (1838) should be ranked alongside of T. Arnold's earlier essay 'On the Right Interpretation and Understanding of the Scriptures' (1831) and Coleridge's later Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit (1840), as preparing many in England and Scotland for the advent of historical and literary criticism. Scott, Arnold, Coleridge, and a few others, asserted that the Scripture's authority lay essentially in the spiritual, and thus they laid foundations which could not be disrupted by the inevitable extension of historical and literary criticism into the realm of Scriptural study.

## 2) Scott's Lectures on the Epistle to the Romans

In Scott's first lecture on the Epistle to the Romans, he focused almost entirely on the theme of freedom, using as his

<sup>124</sup> Ibid. p.28.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid. pp.29-30.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid. p.17.



starting point Paul's claim to be 'a slave of Jesus Christ'. Scott reflected, in his emphasis on freedom, and his theology of the spirit, the Romantic thirst for freedom in his day, exemplified perhaps most typically in Byron's 'Childe Harold', and the political cries for liberty heard all over Europe. As well as attempting to offer a true basis of liberty to the freedom seekers of his age generally, Scott was concerned to assert his doctrine of freedom in opposition to the legalism, the Westminster Calvinism, and, especially in England, the High Church authoritarianism prevalent in much of the contemporary religion. He explicitly directed a part of Lecture IV against the Westminster doctrine of election.

Scott strongly opposed the notion of freedom as being lawless self-will. Rather, freedom involves conformity to the law of one's being. Would it be freedom, asked Scott, for a plant, constituted to inhabit the water, to be rooted in dry land? Would the life of the plant be free to expand itself, or would it not rather be stunted and distorted by constraint? 'Law in its true sense, and freedom in its true sense, are one and the same thing,' said Scott.<sup>127</sup> The truth, it is, which will set mankind free. When man conforms to the true law of that being with which God has endowed him, he then is free. In Christ, asserted Scott, mankind is presented with the truly human, and thus the perfectly free, for Christ is at one with God, and the divine principles governing humanity. In those who follow the steps of Christ, explained Scott, God and man are made to be at one, and man conforms himself to the true principles of humanity. Man rooted in this soil is free to grow into the perfectly human.

Mankind is made capable of choice and love, said Scott, capable of choosing and loving God, capable of choosing to live by the true principles of his being. The kind of obedience that springs from love and choice is that which God desires to win from humanity, and he who walks according to his love and choice, contended Scott, is a free man. Scott proceeded to indicate the high place he gave to freedom:

I would rather see a man looking for the freedom of love and

<sup>127</sup> A.J. Scott, Lecture I of Lectures on the Epistle to the Romans, p.34.

choice, although he felt very uncertain in what quarter to look for it, than a man considering himself as having attained to the knowledge of Christianity, and yet not feeling that it was the service of choice and love that he rendered. I would consider the one as in a more hopeful state than the other, and as having more of the germ of a right spirit towards God, the spirit that crieth 'Abba, Father'.<sup>128</sup>

A grudging obedience, which has no love in it, an obedience without hope at its root, but rather fear, does not belong to the obedience of this royal law of liberty. A man who has learned that God's law is love, concluded Scott, ought to know that His service is perfect freedom.<sup>129</sup>

In the three remaining lectures, Scott's primary emphasis is his doctrine of the Incarnation. He explored two of its main implications: one, being, Christ's brotherhood with humanity; the other, the universal Fatherhood of God. Scott directed his attention in Lecture II to the historicity of the Incarnation. This being the central doctrine of the Christian faith, it was necessary, he said, to assert that its foundation was historical fact and not mere speculation.

Scott held that all theological understanding must be based upon the historical, incarnate Christ. Even Scott's doctrine of creation is Christ-centred. 'The whole lesson of the creation,' contended Scott, is 'gathered up in Christ.'<sup>130</sup> Using Romans 1:3,4 as his starting point, Scott asserted his belief that the term 'Son of God' is applied to Christ in his humanity, and not to the Word that was 'in the beginning'. The humanity of Christ was conceived by the Spirit of God in the virgin womb of Mary, and for this reason it is that Christ in the flesh was designated 'Son of God' as well as 'Son of Man'. The virgin birth of the Incarnate One thus reveals God to be the Creator of man out of the virgin womb of the universe, the Father of humanity. While it is important to consider all that distinguishes Christ from mankind, and to honour him as the Word that was in the beginning with God, 'it is quite

<sup>128</sup> Ibid. p.36.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid. p.38.

<sup>130</sup> Scott, Lectures on the Epistle to the Romans Lecture II, p.61.

as needful,' said Scott, 'to look on all that is common between him and us, that we may see wherein we have to do with that which God has wrought in and for him.'<sup>131</sup>

In Lecture III, Scott explained what he meant by the humanity of Christ:

He is just as emphatically man as he is emphatically God. We are very apt, I am afraid, to lose sight of this. We are very apt to forget to inquire why he calls himself 'the Son of Man'. If you show a botanist a few leaves of a plant, as they exist in nature, he will find in them some flaws and dead spots, that do not enter into his idea of what the plant truly and naturally is. He says, 'That is not natural; it arises from some foreign cause, from blight, or an aggression of insects, and so far this specimen does not truly exhibit to us the form and character of the plant'; although it may be one that he never saw before. The true idea of the plant, and its actual condition, are to him by no means the same. So when we look around us, at one and another brother man, we see in them humanity; but we see something that has stained, or restricted, or distorted humanity; and if we would conceive of man as he came from the hand of God, we conceive of something different from this; we leave out, in our idea, those breaks and excrescences. One comes who calls himself 'The Son of Man'; he calls upon us to observe his human life, and see that life without these flaws and distortions. ... He excels us, not in that He is less truly Man than we, but that He is Man in very truth.<sup>132</sup>

In Lecture IV Scott picked up his old emphasis of 'confidence in God', or as Campbell had termed it, 'assurance of faith'. Scott, now, more firmly rooted this doctrine in his understanding of man's brotherhood with Christ. Man's confidence in God is based upon the belief that the Father of Christ is the Father of all men. God is not merely the Father of the elect, or the baptised, or alone the Father of those who recognise Him as such. He is the Father of all humanity, in the same sense as He is the Father of Christ. It is in this Fatherhood that mankind is to rest confidently. But, said Scott:

If we shall establish this universal Fatherhood of God to man, remember we are not to be content merely to say, "I have no feeling of limitation about this matter, I allow that every man is entitled to think and to feel towards

<sup>131</sup> Ibid. p.61.

<sup>132</sup> Scott, Lecture III, pp.76-77.

God, as a child to a father": we are to see to it that we are in a condition accordant with the acknowledgment of such a relation. It is as great an evil to live without the practical use of this high truth, as if we were by our exclusive dogmas shutting that which God hath opened.<sup>133</sup>

After referring to a number of Scriptural inferences concerning God's universal Fatherhood, particularly Paul's address to the Athenians as 'God's offspring', and Christ's Sermon on the Mount in which he instructed men to pray, 'Our Father who art in heaven,' Scott concluded:

If we require and will honestly accept the express testimony of Scripture, I think these passages are very conclusive that it is Scriptural to say to every man, God is thy Father: if thou disobey, thou disobeyest a Father; if thou trust not in God, thou lackest confidence in a Father; if thou art brought to know thy sinful state, say, 'I will arise and go to my Father'; if thou wouldst pray, say, 'Our Father which art in heaven.'<sup>134</sup>

e) Scott's continuing contact with Scotland

Scott, as we have already seen, continued his close friendships with Erskine and Campbell. His Scottish friends often visited him in Woolwich, and were visited in return. What Hanna said of Erskine, can equally be said of Scott and Campbell in this triple friendship: Erskine never formed 'two stronger or more congenial friendships than those which bound him to Scott and Campbell.'<sup>135</sup> The three men, in their physical distance from one another, and their separation from all ecclesiastical institutions, felt extremely isolated. 'I sometimes think we might be more efficient together,' wrote Scott to Campbell in 1843, 'but it does not seem to be designed for us.'<sup>136</sup> Maurice explained that Scott was 'excluded from the knowledge and sympathies of many by his separation from all religious parties.'<sup>137</sup> Erskine expressed his sense of isolation in the following words: 'I feel the desolateness

<sup>133</sup> Scott, Lecture IV, p.95.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid. p.97.

<sup>135</sup> Hanna, Letters of Erskine II, p.2.

<sup>136</sup> Campbell, Memorials of J.M. Campbell I, p.171.

<sup>137</sup> Testimonials to A.J. Scott (London, 1850), p.4.

of being without a church; I feel the weakness and meagreness, and selfishness and speculativeness, that arise from our isolated condition.'<sup>138</sup> But Erskine and Scott agreed with Campbell's conscientious conclusion that 'to join any body of Christians for the sake of the prospect of greater usefulness, while I could only do so with a sacrifice of convictions, would be a doing evil that good might come.'<sup>139</sup>

During one of Scott's visits to Scotland, at Abbey Craig, Stirling, in July 1844, he wrote a sonnet, suggested by a stanza of Byron, which, while it expresses his isolation, indicates the noble light in which he viewed it:

Harold complains that mountain climbers find  
 The loftier peaks most wrapt in clouds and snow;  
 And that to conquer or excel mankind  
 Surrounds us with the hate of all below.  
 But peaks that hold communion with the stars,  
 And behold always the great face of heaven  
 Are vanguard for the vale in thundery wars;  
 By them deep soil and deepening streams are given,  
 And the high soul in coldest solitude  
 Is but beside himself for others' sake:  
 He bears for them the agitation rude  
 Of sternest thought: unknowing they partake  
 The fruit of toil far off, unseen: and here,  
 Proud thinker, mayest thou seek a thought to cheer.<sup>140</sup>

As well as continuing his Scottish friendships, Scott also preached occasionally for Campbell in Glasgow. After his deposition in 1831, Campbell had preached transiently throughout Scotland, usually in Methodist Chapels or in the open air, but early in 1833 he began a pastoral ministry to a more fixed congregation in Glasgow. Like Scott, however, he had no desire to form a sect. In September 1837 at the opening of his congregation's new chapel in Blackfriars Street, Glasgow, Campbell and Scott preached to very crowded congregations. Campbell described the 'very crowded chapel, passages

<sup>138</sup> Hanna, Letters of Erskine I, p.210.

<sup>139</sup> Campbell, pp.190-91.

<sup>140</sup> The original manuscript is held in the Scottish National Library, MS 3219 f.58. The sonnet was published in The Christian Leader vol II, 11 January 1883, Glasgow. In the MS copy of the poem, there is a questionmark beside the date, July 1844. It is certain, however, that Scott was in Stirling in July 1844. See Hanna, Letters of Erskine II, pp.42-43.

and lobby all full.'<sup>141</sup> While he considered Scott's preaching on this occasion to be 'precious' and 'deeply interesting', Campbell commented that Scott 'makes a larger demand upon the intelligence and also upon the knowledge of the English language of his hearers than I usually do, and than I think he used to do long ago.'<sup>142</sup> The next year, when Scott was substituting for his vacationing friend, Campbell, always a greater pastor than was Scott, made again a similar comment:

I have no later accounts from Glasgow, for which I long, hoping I am to be told that Mr. Scott succeeded in finding words more easy to be understood. His constant intercourse with very educated people puts him under a disadvantage. I learned to know what English the mass of people can understand, and what words are to them as Greek and Latin, when I was at Row; and the class of people gathered about me in Glasgow has been such as to keep in practice.<sup>143</sup>

Campbell's comments indicate the diverging directions of the two men's lives: Campbell confining himself, in particular, to pastoral responsibilities in Glasgow, and, in general, to the Scottish theological scene; Scott, on the other hand, ever widening himself to English and continental thought, and broadening into non-theological subjects. In addition to the occasional substitution, or special event at either Blackfriars or Woolwich, Scott and Campbell were also to exchange pulpits for four week periods or more.<sup>144</sup> Scott was thus enabled to continue his personal influence, however slight, on religious development in the West of Scotland.

One Scott biographer, frequently among Scott's Glasgow hearers, explained that while the number of his congregation was always considerable in Glasgow, 'an effort had to be made by the few that did appreciate. Some, indeed, travelled eight, twelve, and even five-and-twenty miles to hear him,' continued Macallum, 'but the many were but little interested, and indeed completely failed to understand, even remarking that they had never heard such

<sup>141</sup>Campbell, p.141.

<sup>142</sup>Ibid. p.141.

<sup>143</sup>Ibid. p.150.

<sup>144</sup>Ibid. pp.160-61.

a case of "speaking against time."<sup>145</sup> But Scott, explained Macallum, did not seek popularity, and was happy to teach the few. 'To awaken the germ - to cause the seed to fructify - was his ambition and aim, and wherever he spoke there were a few that felt the desire to attain to the same freedom.'<sup>146</sup> Scott was eager to lead others into an actual experience of freedom in relation to God, into a living confidence in God's Universal Fatherhood. According to Macallum, Scott used to say that 'life cannot be carried on by proxy.' Man must himself experience the joy of life with God, and once having experienced this, he will 'need no certificate of being alive.'<sup>147</sup>

Macallum, who heard Scott lecture on a variety of subjects in Glasgow, believed that his theological lectures and sermons were by far the richest:

His whole soul was roused; it was really the living man that spoke, and with what unction! Even his reading of the Scriptures carried light with it. He read with a grand, manly, and commanding air, rising with the upward flow of passage after passage. There was a firm grip about every word, and they seemed every one in the right place. We have heard many readers of Scripture, but, with one exception, we have never heard one that at all came near to Scott. So much of reverence, and such thorough understanding of what was read. Especially do we remember his reading of the 28th chapter of the book of Job. No description can adequately represent it. It was like one of those fine bursts that occur in our oratorios. So sympathetic was the reading that it might have been the reader's own experience. It was quite clear at least that he had come through deep waters, and equally clear it was that now he stood upon a rock. ...

On another occasion we heard him read the 11th chapter to the Hebrews. Singular enough it is that in our intercourse with men we have met more than once with persons, strangers to us, who like ourselves had the privilege of hearing his reading, and who after the lapse of some thirty years remembered the impression then made. ...

<sup>145</sup>P. Macallum, Recollections of Professor A.J. Scott (Greenock, 1878), pp.19-20. The Recollections were published anonymously but the New College, University of Edinburgh, copy, which belonged originally to John James Bonar, elder brother of Horatius, and one time assistant to Dr. J. Scott in Greenock, indicates that the author was Macallum of Helensburgh. Peter Macallum was a close friend of Scott, Campbell, and Erskine.

<sup>146</sup>Ibid. p.21.

<sup>147</sup>Ibid. pp.21-22.

With all Scott's grand earnestness, there was not a shade or shadow of cant or sentimentality. These he hated and deplored. He did not live by sight only, and was not careful to put on the downcast look, or air, or gait of the would-be better. He lived by faith. It was thus that he felt himself to be as one of the heroes, and to join company with that heroic band who had lived and died in faith, and we may well add his name to the hero roll, now that he has joined the Cloud of Witnesses.<sup>148</sup>

In attempting to delineate Scott's theological emphases, Macallum mentioned the following as peculiar to Scott in a unique way: an intense belief in the spiritual over the material; a broadness of vision and interest; and a noble understanding of man. Scott's belief in the reality of the spiritual nature of man was such, said Macallum, that he believed Heaven and Hell to be present realities, man becoming more and more the subject of either as he becomes conformed more or less to the moral nature of God. Macallum explained that, for Scott, the Kingdom had come: 'Heaven was! It was not the hope of a Heaven to come that carried him through the great depths.'<sup>149</sup> His universal vision partook of the breadth of Dante, Shakespeare, and Milton, said Macallum, and he never limited his view, but 'breathed in the free atmosphere of Truth.'<sup>150</sup> It was Scott's belief in the Universal Fatherhood of God, said Macallum, that gave to his view, a 'nobleness and dignity to all the vocations of life.'<sup>151</sup>

It appears that only two of Scott's Glasgow sermons were recorded in writing and published.<sup>152</sup> The sermons are very typical of Scott and display no really new tendency in his preaching. The first sermon, 'On the Natural Adaptation of Meekness and Quietness of Spirit to win Unbelievers', is based upon the advice given to wives, to win the unbelieving husbands to the faith, 'without a word', through 'a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight

<sup>148</sup> Ibid. pp.8-11.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid. p.12.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid. p.13.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid. p.15.

<sup>152</sup> The two sermons first appeared in Fragments of Truth (Edinburgh, 1856), a collection of sermons delivered by Campbell, Erskine, and Scott, after 1831. Until the 4th edition in 1898, the sermons were published anonymously.



is very precious.' Scott's emphasis in evangelism, in stark contrast to the reigning Evangelicalism in Scotland, was neither verbal nor doctrinal, but rather concentrated almost entirely on the living quality of one's faith. The Christian's calling is to be, in deed, a child of the Father, and to display in one's life His nature and spirit, thus truly witnessing to God's Being. There is a unifying principle in this, explained Scott, for it holds together man's right state in relation to God, and his right behaviour towards mankind. The gentleness and quietness of spirit, advised in I Peter 3, said Scott, is an eternal beauty, 'the beauty of God's own holiness, being a participation in His Spirit.'<sup>153</sup>

Scott's concluding advice on evangelism was:

Pray that you may be enabled to discipline yourselves to the exercise of that ornament of a meek and quiet spirit which, while it is of great price in the sight of God, is also the appointed means of winning others, even without the word.<sup>154</sup>

Scott's second sermon, 'God's Searching Eye Welcome to the Believer', is very much a reiteration of the Scott-Campbell emphasis on confidence in God, whose loving Fatherhood is universal. 'Let there then be no reserve', said Scott, 'let us commit ourselves entirely to God, to the known and to the unknown, in full confidence in the love of the Creator, - our choice being to receive what He chooses for us.'<sup>155</sup>

In addition to Scott's occasional preaching in Scotland, and the reprinting of some of his earlier Scottish publications,<sup>156</sup> there is evidence that even Scott's London publications were making an impact on some leading Scottish minds. George Gilfillan, a miscellaneous writer, and a leading minister within the United

<sup>153</sup> A.J. Scott, 'On the Natural Adaptation of Meekness and Quietness of Spirit to win Unbelievers,' Fragments of Truth (Edinburgh, 1898), p.324.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid. p.329.

<sup>155</sup> A.J. Scott, 'God's Searching Eye Welcome to the Believer', Fragments of Truth, p.332.

<sup>156</sup> Scott in the 'Advertisement' to his Three Discourses (London, 1842) explained that 'On the Divine Will' and 'On Acquaintance with God' had been frequently reprinted.

Secession, read Scott's Three Discourses, published in 1842.<sup>157</sup> Gilfillan was later to follow Scott's footsteps in strongly opposing the Westminster Confessionalism and Sabbatarianism of Scotland. Another noteworthy reader of at least one of Scott's London publications was Thomas Chalmers, who, as we shall see, read and greatly applauded Scott's First Principle of Church Government (1845).<sup>158</sup> Scott and Chalmers had by this stage established an acquaintanceship of some standing. As early as April 1843, a month before the Disruption, we find Scott in Edinburgh writing to Chalmers:

In the prospect of returning to Edinburgh there was nothing from which I promised myself more pleasure than availing myself of your kind invitation to see you again. But an affection of the chest, from which I have suffered for some time, has in the interval gained so much ground, that I am forbidden even the degree of exertion implied in another visit to Morningside. I am about to spend some weeks with our common friend Mr. Erskine at Linlathen; one of those rare friends, in whose kindness one can confide not to feel you a burden when you are burdensome to yourself.<sup>159</sup>

Scott's influence in Scotland had by no means ended with the General Assembly of 1831.

By April 1847 Campbell was able to write to his sister: 'There has been of late a great breaking up of the Calvinism of this country, and not only a preaching of the universality of the atonement, but a reaction against Calvinism.'<sup>160</sup> Scott, Campbell, and Erskine had, in no small way, contributed to this breaking up of Scottish Calvinism. Having spoken of the shift in opinion on the extent of the atonement, however, Campbell, in the same letter, mourned the lack of true teaching on the nature of atonement. What the theology of Scotland needed now, he said, was teaching which would supply this great want.<sup>161</sup> The Scott Circle was to effect a

<sup>157</sup>The University of Edinburgh New College copy of Scott's Three Discourses belonged to George Gilfillan.

<sup>158</sup>Hanna, Letters of Erskine II, p.383.

<sup>159</sup>New College MS, Chalmers' Collection. Letter from A.J. Scott, 4 April 1843.

<sup>160</sup>Campbell, Memorials of Campbell I, p.203.

<sup>161</sup>Ibid. p.207.

revolution in this field as well. From as early as 1832, as we have seen, there increasingly developed in Scott's theology an emphasis on the moral nature of God as revealed in the atonement. There came a similar emphasis in Erskine and Campbell, until in 1856, in the person of Campbell, this circle produced, perhaps, Scotland's greatest theological work, The Nature of the Atonement.

f) Scott visits the continent, 1838, and establishes new friendships

In August 1838, Erskine, having spent some time with T. Chalmers, and particularly with Campbell, in Paris, wrote to Scott:

I am ready to go with you to Switzerland on a day's notice, and I think that I could now safely leave Mr. Campbell, if he chose to be left. So come, bringing, as foresaid, Coleridge's Aids to Reflection and two copies of Keble.<sup>162</sup>

Scott crossed over to Paris, and, by early September, the two friends were in Switzerland, where, at Lausanne, they met Alexandre Vinet, the Professor of Theology at the Academy of Lausanne.

Erskine thought Vinet 'the most remarkable man in the French Protestant Church. He seemed to me large and free, and yet deeply serious,' explained Erskine. 'The sight of Vinet, and the reading of some of his books, gave me a hope for the Swiss and French Protestants which I scarcely had before. I am convinced that nothing but infidelity can be the consequence of holding that Calvinistic logic so prevalent through Scotland, and which is preached also, though in a more living way, through the French and Swiss Reformed Church. Men require something now which will commend itself to the conscience and the reason.'<sup>163</sup> Vinet, who had for many years been indebted to Erskine's writings, recorded in his diary one of his meetings with Scott and Erskine, and very briefly outlined their discussion: 'Entretien sur l'identité fondamentale de la justice et de l'amour dont l'un est le causitif de l'autre.'<sup>164</sup> As well as seeing more of Vinet, Erskine and Scott met with other Lausanne professors and ministers, many of them bearing the mark of Vinet, said Erskine. 'There is no narrowness

<sup>162</sup>Hanna, Letters of Erskine I, p.320.

<sup>163</sup>Ibid. p.327.

<sup>164</sup>E. Rambert, Alexandre Vinet (Lausanne, 1912), p.618.

about them, and they are more natural, apparently living less by rule than by a living instinct.<sup>165</sup> Vinet had that basis of thought in him, said Erskine, 'on which thoughts from all quarters can find a footing or a rooting.'<sup>166</sup> Scott and Erskine had met, in this great Christian apologist of the 19th century, a man whose theological emphasis, on man's spiritual conscience and freedom, was highly compatible with their own. Vinet has been considered the Schleiermacher of the French and Swiss Reformed Churches,<sup>167</sup> and John Sterling described Vinet's published sermons as 'nearer to Pascal's Pensées with higher finish and later and fuller information than to any other book I could name.'<sup>168</sup> In concluding a letter to his sister, in September 1838, Erskine wrote: 'I wish you could get Vinet; he is more of Scott's calibre than any person that I know.'<sup>169</sup>

It is not certain where else Scott and Erskine travelled in the autumn of 1838, but when Scott returned to Woolwich in October, Erskine wrote:

I am now living by myself, which I have not done since I left England, having first had Mr. Campbell and afterwards Mr. Scott for my companion. They are both remarkable men; but Scott is, in point of intellect, one of the first, if not the first, man that I have known. I had an interlude of Dr. Chalmers for some days as a variety.<sup>170</sup>

Scott occasionally returned to the continent, especially to Paris, during his Woolwich period, and established many friendships there, so much so that, by 1848, T. Carlyle was depending on Scott's Parisian connexions for correct information on the socio-political scene in France.<sup>171</sup> It is uncertain whether or not Scott met many of these Parisian friends during his 1838 trip with Erskine. It does, however, seem probable that Scott met at least two of his

<sup>165</sup>Hanna, pp.335-36.

<sup>166</sup>Ibid. p.341.

<sup>167</sup>L.M. Lane, The Life and Writings of Alexandre Vinet (Edinburgh, 1890), p.ix.

<sup>168</sup>A letter from J. Sterling to J. Dunn, 1 October 1836, the Scottish National Library, MS 1766 f.38.

<sup>169</sup>Hanna, pp.327-8.

<sup>170</sup>Ibid. p.331.

<sup>171</sup>A. Carlyle, New Letters of T. Carlyle II, pp.61-2.

artistic friends in Paris through Erskine's cousin and good friend, Jane Stirling, described by Chopin's biographer as 'a rich, clever, Scotswoman living in Paris.'<sup>172</sup>

Susanna Winkworth, authoress and translator, and later a close friend of Scott and his family, explained that he 'was intimate with the Scheffers, and above all with Chopin, whose Life he was engaged upon for some time.'<sup>173</sup> Jane Stirling was friendly with both of these artists. She studied under Frédéric Chopin, and to her the musician dedicated, in 1844, the two Nocturnes of opus 55.<sup>174</sup> Ary Scheffer, the French painter, was also an admirer of Erskine's cousin. In his 'Christus Consolator', Scheffer had presented in one of his figures the ideal of female beauty, and, upon meeting Jane Stirling, was greatly struck to find in her almost the exact embodiment of that ideal. Scheffer, thenceforth, introduced her in many of his pictures.<sup>175</sup> It was probably through Jane Stirling, then, that Scott came to know Scheffer and Chopin. There was in the art of both men that which would partly account for Scott's attraction. Under romantic influence Scheffer had produced numerous illustrative paintings of the works of Goethe, Byron, and Dante. And the originality, freedom, and improvisatory character of much of Chopin's music could not fail to impress the original mind of Scott, who also believed the immediate and extempore to be the highest form of expression.

Perhaps more important than Scott's artistic connexions was his growing interest in the socio-political situation of Europe, and particularly his observations on Socialism in France, upon which he was later to publicly lecture in England. Erskine's concerned expression, during his continental trip of 1838, represents somewhat the drift of Scott's mind at this time:

The thought of my country is a very melancholy thought to me. The whole social system is sick; there is no brotherhood. I sometimes feel as if I could enter into the feelings of the French nation, when, conscious of

<sup>172</sup>H. Bidou, Chopin (London, 1927), p.248.

<sup>173</sup>

M.J. Shaen, Memorials of Two Sisters: Susanna and Catherine Winkworth (London, 1908), p.44.

<sup>174</sup>Bidou, p.248.

<sup>175</sup>Hanna, Letters of Erskine I, p.8.

the entire want of brotherhood amongst them, they raised their frantic cry of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity or Death. They felt they needed these things, but they did not know how to set about getting them. They felt the want of brothers, and the only way that occurred to them of manufacturing brothers was to set the guillotine agoing, and cannons and muskets and bayonets agoing, and saying to all men, Be our brothers or die.<sup>176</sup>

g) Scott's Social Systems of the Present Day, Compared with Christianity

Scott evidenced his profound socio-political interests in his Social Systems of the Present Day, Compared with Christianity, a published set of lectures, which he delivered in Woolwich in 1840 and in London in the following year. In these lectures Scott examined the prevalent social systems of his day, including Chartism, Socialism, Conservatism, and the social implications of Anglo-Catholicism, and contrasted them with what he considered to be the true social principles of Christianity.<sup>177</sup> Over 35 years later, William Hanna remarked upon Scott's Social Systems:

The reader of Mr. Scott's lectures, as he reflects that more than the years of a generation have passed since their delivery, will be surprised that there is so little in them that is not as directly applicable to the present as to the past. They owe this to a quality by which all his handlings of such topics were distinguished, - that the merely temporary, secondary, adventitious was set aside, and in each case the root-principle was sought for, grasped, and alone dealt with.<sup>178</sup>

Scott, in the first lecture, set forth 'The Kingdom of Christ' as the standard by which the other social systems were to be evaluated. By 'the Kingdom of Christ' Scott was not referring to some supposed state in the future, but rather spoke of the social system 'which Christ has actually already founded and introduced into the world.' 'The Kingdom of Christ, in the sense in which I employ it,' said Scott, 'is strictly synonymous

<sup>176</sup>Ibid. pp.325-6.

<sup>177</sup>Scott's lectures on 'Chartism' and 'Socialism' will be dealt with in Chapter V in relation to Scott and Christian Socialism.

<sup>178</sup>Hanna, Letters of Erskine II, p.382.

with the social system of Christianity.<sup>179</sup> Christ, asserted Scott, came to bear witness to the truth of God's relation to man, both individually and collectively. Although the particular miracle of the Jewish Theocracy had already revealed the universal truth of God's Lordship over all nations, Christ came to reveal the true principles of social unity, and the real nature of God's Kingdom. Unlike the Jewish Theocracy, explained Scott, the Kingdom of Christ is a spiritual kingdom, which cannot be established by physical force, but only by witnessing to the truth of God's relationship to men, whether individually or as united together in societies. God's Kingdom is to be established only by men and nations entering into the spirit or truth of the Divine principles of social unity. The substance, the administration, and the means of Christ's Kingdom are altogether spiritual. The power of the Kingdom is a power which acts on the spirits of men. 'Such power alone,' said Scott, 'can Christianity, not to say rightly but possibly use. In motive and principle, Christianity sanctions nothing but what is Christian; an apparent truism, but pregnant with practical consequences.'<sup>180</sup>

While acknowledging the Kingdom of Christ as alone possessing essential right, Scott also recognised the providential government of God as distinct from His spiritual government. God's providential government does not require sympathy of spirit from those who act in it. The Christian man is to submit to 'the powers that be' as 'ordained of God', whether or not those powers are a part of Christ's Kingdom. The members of Christ's Kingdom willingly yield external submission to the powers that be, as long as there is not direct collision with the mandates of the underived and essential authority of God's Kingdom. Scott believed that the two lines of God's government, the providential and the spiritual, were convergent and would ultimately meet. Christianity, he said, was producing 'a gradual dawning of that day, when the kingdoms of this world

<sup>179</sup> A.J. Scott, The Social Systems of the Present Day, Compared with Christianity (London, 1841), p.305.

<sup>180</sup> A.J. Scott, 'Social Systems of the Present Day' Lecture III, The Woolwich Gazette, 26 December 1840.

should become the kingdoms of our God and his Christ.'<sup>181</sup>

Scott proceeded to offer some examples of how Christ's Kingdom had, with the weapons of Truth alone, influenced mankind, not only individually, but in societies and nations. The abolition of slavery in Europe was strictly the work of Christianity, contended Scott. It was by the priests of the Catholic Church, in the much despised middle ages, that the liberation of slaves was inculcated. The Church asked whether holding a man in slavery was love to a brother, whether it was right to hold him as a thing. The inhabitants of the great monasteries first manumitted all their own slaves, and then gradually induced the great proprietors to set free their slaves. This was not accomplished by an explicit Scriptural prohibition of slavery, said Scott:

I am one of those, who do not believe that slavery is prohibited in terms in the New Testament; while I am one of those who do believe that the whole spirit of Christianity is so decidedly against it, that we are not at all to wonder that it finally put an end to the slavery of European man.<sup>182</sup>

Another example, cited by Scott, of the Kingdom of Christ's influence not only upon men, but ultimately upon nations, was the birth of modern democracy. There is falsehood, and exaggeration and mischief associated with this idea in many minds, admitted Scott, but, notwithstanding, there is truth in it, the truth of the value and importance of each individual man, as man. The dignity of a human existence lies at the root of the idea of modern democracy. 'Who can doubt for a moment,' asked Scott, 'that the effects of this idea and its operation have been very mighty, not on individuals only, but on societies and on the organisation of society in the European nations? And whence came it? I say, without shadow of doubt on my own mind - From Christianity altogether. Heathenism had no such notion of man as man; it had no glimmer of the preciousness of a soul.'<sup>183</sup> Ask the Athenian, whose state contained at one time more slaves than freed men, said Scott. Ask the Roman, casting his Syrian or Egyptian slaves to the fishes, or making human

<sup>181</sup>Ibid. Lecture I, 5 December 1840.

<sup>182</sup>Scott, Social Systems, pp.318-19.

<sup>183</sup>Ibid. p.319.



life in the amphitheatre the mere sport for assembled men, women, and children, if they knew the value of man as man? 'No! it was a new idea! it was a Christian idea!' answered Scott. 'It was by putting such a value upon the human soul, as the world never heard of. It said, that this poor slave, who, at the mere caprice of his master, is liable to be tossed to the fishes, was loved of the eternal God, that God gave His Son to die for him, and assigned him a place in a coming eternity. It showed his inward and true enlargement,' continued Scott. 'Whoever believed these things, put a worth upon the soul of man, which was never before dreamed of by the noblest mind.'<sup>184</sup>

These examples indicate, said Scott, that the truth of Christ's Kingdom will exert a powerful influence on the kingdoms of this world. In conclusion, Scott asserted what he believed God's ultimate purpose to be in relation to nations:

I believe that ultimate purpose to be - Theocracy; and I believe that theocracy to be so, in a higher and purer sense than the Mosaic institutions, considered in themselves, could possibly have become. ... The Jews acknowledged a local presence of God, with local services, and on the ground of extraordinary interpositions; but mankind are called upon, individuals and societies and nations, to acknowledge the universal presence and government of God, and to acknowledge it with services, that being in the first instance of the heart and of the spirit, will nevertheless necessarily, in virtue of our compound being, pass out into outward act and manifestation. But it seems to me a very idle fear, that because the Church is based on that which is invisible, or because anyone judges that it is thus based, it may therefore peradventure happen, that the church should cease to become visible altogether. Spiritual principle operating in visible men, visible bodies of men, visible societies, will make itself very visible, in a world of the compound nature of that in which God has placed you and me.<sup>185</sup>

In consequence of Scott's assertion that a spiritual principle operating in a visible society will make itself visible, he was led in Lecture II to express his belief that, where the Kingdom of Christ has adequately rooted itself in a nation, there should be a national Establishment. Having criticised Dissenters for desiring

<sup>184</sup> Scott, 'Social Systems' Lecture I, The Woolwich Gazette, 5 December 1840.

<sup>185</sup> Scott, Social Systems, pp.319-20.

no national recognition of Christianity, which, he insisted, must either be nationally recognised or nationally denied by the acts of a nation, Scott stated:

It seems to me, that I cannot wish Christianity for myself, I cannot wish Christianity for my family, without wishing it for the nation; and that supposing that to take place, there must be national acts, indicating the presence of it. But from the position of the question it has come to pass, that whenever a man has been persuaded that there ought to be a national Establishment, he has been prone to take it for granted, that it can be no other than that which actually exists. The proof of the one is altogether different from the proof of the other.<sup>186</sup>

Having set forth what he considered to be the true social principles of Christianity, Scott proceeded, in the remaining lectures, to examine the other systems of social organisation, all of which, to some degree, he believed, stood in opposition to the essential principles of Christ's Kingdom. While Conservatism was not a formal social system, as such, Scott believed that it was a significant enough dimension of the society of his day to receive treatment in this set of lectures. Much of society, contended Scott, is governed by a 'Conservative Instinct', whose highest aim is that tomorrow might be as today, and whose final thought, on any change proposed, is, "Who knows what will happen, if ...?" Scott spoke clearly against a predominating Conservative Instinct:

To all that terminates in mere negation or restraint, nothing can be more opposed than the positive, active, propulsive spirit of Christianity. It is emphatically a life. It expands the man beyond the mere brute propensity to self-Conservation, by the force of love to man, grounded on a love unlimited, the love of God. It raises his views of the social weal beyond the narrow bounds of State-Conservatism, by the yet unapproached standard of human wellbeing which it holds before him, by the boundless applicability of its principles, by the infinitude of its resources, hitherto so scantily employed.<sup>187</sup>

Although a governing Conservative Instinct is opposed to the spirit of Christianity, on the other hand, said Scott, the 'Conservative Principle' is an important element in the social system

<sup>186</sup> Ibid. p.334.

<sup>187</sup> Scott, 'Social Systems' Lecture IV, The Woolwich Gazette, 2 January 1841.

of Christianity. 'Where life is,' he asserted, 'there is a Conservative Principle. The meanest plant, while it pushes out new growths, maintains the form and bulk which it had reached. The oak is condensing and strengthening its rings toward the heart, while a new layer of wood covers the old on which it forms itself. The land which has been turned up by the plough must have time allowed it to produce a crop.'<sup>188</sup> So it is, said Scott, with social institutions. Their capacity to maintain themselves is a necessary condition of their bearing fruit. The vitality of any living thing is in direct proportion to its self-preserving power. 'The general mind of society,' continued Scott, 'is enabled in this manner to keep the ground it has gained, in virtue partly of a conviction of the necessity of doing so, in order to the high aims of a social existence, and partly, of a sense of love and reverence for the past, of unity with man in the past. The two together constitute what we mean by the Conservative Principle', said Scott. 'To be conscious of my oneness with man of old, in Egypt or Syria, in Rome or Athens; to recognise myself in the past, to feel the temptations of the bad, but especially the authoritative voice of humanity in the wise and the good of all ages: to delight in that which is ancient, as a bond of this unity with that portion of the family who have gone before; - this is not only a sentiment worthy of a man, but is a necessary guidance for him who would keep undiminished, and put out to usury the patrimony of his race. For the nourishment of this principle,' asserted Scott, 'Christianity has done more, by many times, than all other influences together.'<sup>189</sup> Scott then recollected something he had heard S. T. Coleridge express, concerning the value of this union with the past:

'I may be filled with the truest apprehensions of spiritual objects, stirring the depths of my inner being, when a cold uncertainty will come over me whether this be not some stray movement, some morbid idiosyncrasy of my individual mind. I am in the midst of the moors of Cumberland, and am drawn into some little, old, barnlike church, where I hear the words, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob"; and then I know that I am no longer alone in my thoughts, but one with the righteous men of the earth

<sup>188</sup> Ibid.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

thousands of years ago.'<sup>190</sup>

Finally, Scott examined Conservatism as a 'Political Plan of Action'. When Conservatism asserts a creed and becomes a party, said Scott, setting out distinctly to share in political strife, it is usually a reaction against what it conceives to be an excess committed by the progressive forces of society. While Scott admitted that reactionary plans of action are sometimes necessary, he conceived 'reaction' to be 'the dullest word in the historical dictionary'.<sup>191</sup> The Conservative or reactionary plan of action lacks a positive tone of faith. 'The force displayed is mere violence of opposition, the struggle to shut the door in the face of one whose advance is dreaded,' said Scott. 'The reactive tendency may do as much for society as a drag on the wheels does for a traveller, but surely no more.'<sup>192</sup> Unlike the pure conservative reactionary, concluded Scott, the Christian unites a value and a reverence for the past, with unbounded hope and courage for the future, a hope which motivates all his action. This hope 'belongs naturally to that faith which not merely brings man into intercourse with the Infinite,' said Scott, 'but shows the Infinite consubstantiated with the human.'<sup>193</sup>

There was a certain degree of overlap between Scott's treatment of Conservatism and his examination of Anglo-Catholicism. Scott viewed the Tractarian movement, which had reached its peak early in 1841 with Newman's publication of Tract 90, as part of the great reaction against 18th century rationalism. He believed that the Anglo-Catholics had reacted against the use of human understanding, and were attempting to escape from the intellectual, moral, and spiritual struggles which confronted the early 19th century mind. The Anglo-Catholics, according to Scott, had retreated into an overdependence upon authority, illustrated, perhaps most strikingly, in the case of J. H. Newman, who wrote:

I loved to act in the sight of my Bishop, as if I was, as it were, in the sight of God. ... I desired to please him personally, as I considered him set over me by the Divine

<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

Hand. ... I considered myself simply as the servant and instrument of my Bishop. ... What to me was jure divino was the voice of my Bishop in his own person. My own Bishop was my Pope; I knew no other; the successor of the Apostles, the Vicar of Christ.<sup>194</sup>

While Scott admitted that a certain degree of authority was required in all fields of education, including the spiritual, he asked what were the limits of this kind of implicit faith. Surely, said Scott, implicit faith based on authority is but a means to explicit faith. The father, who, on the basis of authority, teaches his child that two and three equals five, hopes that eventually the child will come to a genuine understanding of that mathematical truth. There have been developments of the human mind and developments of truth, contended Scott, which do not allow man to remain in the region of implicit belief. In the realm of physical science, for instance, man has come, through the use of his understanding, to discoveries which he knows to be truth. It is, therefore, false, said Scott, to attempt now to tell man that he cannot come in contact with truth through the use of his understanding. Scott strongly opposed the Anglo-Catholic disregard for the physical sciences, and felt that it represented their general approach to reality:

I cannot but see in this a tendency to go out of the region of realities, - an abhorrence, indeed, to adopt the thing, just because it brings us in contact with realities, - a greater difficulty in maintaining a system of dreams about religion, than could have been felt before physical science had intruded on man's slumbers of that sort. The man who has come to knowledge, which he finds to be real knowledge ... in the exercise of his own understanding of things material, will not (if he is reasonable) look for a carrying on of precisely the same process in things spiritual, but he will look for something analogous; he will look for something, that will come home in like manner to his sense of reality; and wherever I see a distaste for this grand volume of God's utterance of His ideas, (I mean the volume of the material world,) I am afraid it is because it comes with an importunate test of our sense of reality - because it will not allow a man to think he knows a thing when he knows it not - because it will not give him the comfort of thinking he believes what he does not believe.<sup>195</sup>

<sup>194</sup> J.H. Newman, Apologia Pro Vita Sua (Glasgow, 1977), pp.133-4.

<sup>195</sup> Scott, Social Systems, p.367.

Scott also contended that the Anglo-Catholics had disregarded 'another burst of light, which has come in upon the world since the middle ages',<sup>196</sup> the Reformation and its truths. This is another development, claimed Scott, which will not allow man to be satisfied with only an implicit faith. Luther taught men to acquire spiritual knowledge by experiencing the spiritual realities for themselves; he stressed a living contact with the ipsa corpora. After comparing Luther's Reformation with the Reformation of science, which encouraged men to come to a knowledge of the material world by handling its realities for themselves, Scott continued:

It was after these things had taken place in our world, - after that magnificent range of opportunities for actual contact with what I will not hesitate to call the mind of God, even in the material universe, had been spread out before us, ... - it was after this had been done for us in the physical world, assuring man, by the blessing of God's providence upon his endeavours, that he was to make an honest use of his understanding, that he might know the truth of the things that God had set before him, - and it was after a far nobler result in the spiritual world, calling upon man to maintain an individual standing towards God, telling that a joint stock faith and a joint stock conscience would avail him nothing at all in this matter, - it was after this had been done, and when these two great truths were standing up before men, with the results and the trophies they had collected together for 200 years, that men came forth in a Protestant world to say, that implicit belief is better than this! I call that a new thing in the earth. I call it a voluntary sinking lower than man had ever abode.<sup>197</sup>

In Scott's opinion the fundamental principle of Anglo-Catholicism is submission to priestly authority, i.e., faith yielded up to a body of men who are accredited by alleged apostolic ordination. In the Anglo-Catholic system, even obedience to the State, represented in obedience to the person of the king who received his crown at the hands of the Church, is established on ecclesiastical grounds. Anglo-Catholicism, claimed Scott, attempts to organise society on an ecclesiastical basis of authority. The subject owes obedience to the king because he has been appointed by the Church which stands in the apostolic succession, and has been ordained head of that Church. Scott felt that this doctrine led

<sup>196</sup> Ibid. p.367.

<sup>197</sup> Ibid. p.368.

Anglo-Catholics into two major errors. Firstly this doctrine of the divine right of kings tended towards rebellion against God's providential government, for obedience was rendered not to 'the powers that be', but rather to the powers ordained by the Church. This tendency, said Scott, has been amply demonstrated in the histories of Anglo-Catholicism's predecessors, the Royalists under Cromwell, and the Jacobites under William. Secondly, said Scott, the Anglo-Catholic doctrine of the divine right of kings leads to an adulteration and misrepresentation of the spiritual government of God. It tends to confuse Christ's Kingdom with the Church-ordained kingdom. Charlemagne's granting of privileges to the proselytised, and death to those who refused baptism were the first fruits of Christened monarchy. Only those forces which are 'impregnated and actuated by the vital spirit of God',<sup>198</sup> said Scott, are forces which truly belong to Christ's Kingdom.

Scott contended that Anglo-Catholicism's overdependence upon external ecclesiastical authority was largely due to 'a scepticism in regard to the power of the Truth itself.'<sup>199</sup> 'The Truth itself is to judge between us,' said Scott. 'There is a harmony between that Truth which God would have us to possess, and the mind of man as God has constituted it.'<sup>200</sup> Truth, which is the Spirit of God, witnesses with man's spirit. Mankind will, of course, make many errors in interpreting that witness. 'Let us pity one another, let us pity ourselves, for the measure in which it may be so; but let us rather struggle on,' said Scott, 'in the knowledge that we are to meet with occasional failures and occasional difficulties of this sort, than abandon the hope of finding Truth, so as to know it for ourselves.'<sup>201</sup>

The depth of Scott's disagreement with Anglo-Catholicism is, perhaps, most forcefully expressed in his use of the word 'idolatrous' to describe their system. Idolatry exists, said Scott, wherever an object, or a person, or an external ordinance is considered to be

<sup>198</sup> Scott, 'Social Systems' Lecture II, The Woolwich Gazette, 19 December 1840.

<sup>199</sup> Scott, Social Systems, p.329.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid. p.329.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid. pp.328-9.

the pledge of a spiritual blessing from God, quite independently of whether or not that outward form has actually become the channel of God's address to man's spirit.<sup>202</sup> 'The sun was made to see by, not to look at', was Scott's response to a question concerning the proper use of religion.<sup>203</sup> With reference to the external ordinances of Anglo-Catholicism, Scott said:

I have been going on the supposition latterly, that the ordinances were really the ordinances of God; and I say, if they were as much appointed of God, as the serpent was originally appointed to be set up in the wilderness, the time might come, when it might be the duty of some Hezekiah to grind it to pieces and scatter it to the winds, and say, It is a mere piece of brass; I say, if it were as much an ordinance of God as ever was the temple at Jerusalem with all its sacrifices, the time might come, when God should issue a commission to some Titus, that he should level it to the ground, and sow the place where it was with salt, and that because of the superstition and the idolatry of those who had brought thither their homage. I know that there is some idea of an essential distinction in regard to this matter, in favour of the Christian Church. I know that it is said - 'Do you not believe, in regard to that complex of ordinances which constitute the Church, that the gates of hell shall never prevail against it?' But what is it, for the gates of hell to prevail against the Church? ... If the hand of God should prevail against your outward ordinances, against the external bonds between one man and another, that constitute them (as you say) to belong to a certain order, and against certain external institutions, - I will not go further, and say, if the hand of God should prevail against your buildings, your cathedrals, your dresses, your surplices, your mitres, - if the hand of God were to prevail against all that external apparatus of conveyance, supposing it had been of His own institution, it would by no means follow, that heaven or hell had prevailed against the Christian Church. That purpose which it was intended to serve in the world, that which it was intended to convey to the spirits of man, God is still able by His own means, by the essential power of His own Truth over those that are 'of the Truth', to accomplish.<sup>204</sup>

In concluding his treatment of Anglo-Catholicism Scott examined the subject of social unity. In his lecture on 'The

<sup>202</sup> Ibid. pp.332-3.

<sup>203</sup> A.P. Stanley, Lectures on the History of the Church of Scotland (Edinburgh, 1872), p.160.

<sup>204</sup> Scott, Social Systems, p.333.



Kingdom of Christ', he had asserted his belief that God was the Author of the laws of social unity. One of the major aims of Christianity, therefore, is a social unity based upon true spiritual principles. Scott applauded the Anglo-Catholic desire for unity, but felt that they were not aiming at 'a real unity.'<sup>205</sup> Their unity was based merely upon an external ecclesiasticism. It therefore, fell short of Christ's prayer that we should be one, even as Christ and His Father are one, 'the most inward of all unity', said Scott; 'the most spiritual of all unity; the unity, that works outwardly into all the various manifestations of the visible creation; the unity, that is not a unity at the branches at all, but a unity only at the root; the unity of the Godhead itself!'<sup>206</sup>

While the Anglo-Catholics, in Scott's opinion, did not aim at 'a real unity', the Evangelicals, he complained, aimed at no unity whatsoever. They generally looked upon discord and separation as the normal condition of things among mankind. The Evangelicals did not look beyond the disunity, to that which would be its solution. They seemed to have abandoned the hope that social unity could be established among men by spiritual principles. While Scott admitted that men would continually fall short of Christ's ideal for unity, he asked if they would not fall infinitely more short of it, if they had no such standard? He encouraged the Evangelicals to see that 'there is in the nature of Christianity that which can constitute the only bond of unity among mankind, ... having as much operation upon societies and upon nations as it has upon individuals.'<sup>207</sup> Scott concluded his remarks on unity by exhorting his audience:

Do not let the reality of Catholicism be monopolised by those, whom you regard in error as to what constitutes its essence: if they will be Roman Catholics or Anglo-Catholics, be you Human Catholics. Show that Catholicism, which is in the truth of God, and which is capable of uniting the hearts and the convictions of men around some common point of spiritual movement. Ally yourselves, I would say, with all truth. Be assured ... there is a

<sup>205</sup> Ibid. p.369.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid. p.369.

<sup>207</sup> Ibid. p.375.

harmony in all truth, a mutual dependence. All its lines converge. There is a point, in which meeting, they lean one upon another; and he who will try to do without any of them will find that the rest must suffer.<sup>208</sup>

Upon concluding his set of lectures on the social systems of his day, Scott explained to the audience why he had delivered the lectures extemporaneously. 'With the same modicum of faculty,' he said, 'there is always much more conveyed out of one mind into another, when it is the utterance of the real living speech - the confession of the thoughts, as they arise in the mind of him who speaks. It seems to me,' Scott continued, 'that the best writing, if one may speak of it relatively to the same case, is as mere daguerreotype in comparison with the living features of a man; and that with all the disadvantages to which one is exposed in the attempt at once to think and to utter, there is nearer contact, there is a more efficient conductor established, with the man who is really speaking, than the man who is merely attempting to galvanise his thoughts of yesterday, with the manner as if he were now speaking them.'<sup>209</sup> Scott, as has been seen, desired the immediately living and spontaneous. He attempted to realise in his public oratory the Romantic ideals of spontaneity and naturalness. Wordsworth, in his Preface to the Lyrical Ballads had described the poet as a 'man speaking to men'. The premeditated or mechanical form was to be avoided in favour of the free and the natural, because spontaneity was thought to have an inherent value in bringing the hearer closer to the speaker and to actual experience. A writer in The Spectator, having described Scott's 'almost unique power' of expressing his thoughts extemporaneously 'in the very act of thinking them', said that, consequently, 'there was a certain laboriousness and painfulness in his delivery, as if he was heaving away the difficulties of the subject at the moment, instead of fluently describing how he had best succeeded in doing so.'<sup>210</sup>

Among Scott's audience in the autumn of 1841 was James Baldwin Brown, then a theological student at Highbury College, and

<sup>208</sup> Ibid. pp.375-6.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid. p.376.

<sup>210</sup> 'Professor A.J. Scott', The Spectator, 27 January 1866.

later a leading Congregationalist theologian. 'The hearing of those lectures,' said Baldwin Brown, 'formed an era in my life.'<sup>211</sup> From that time onwards, said Baldwin Brown's wife, he sought every opportunity of contact with Scott, 'the man whom he always recognised as his master.'<sup>212</sup> Hunter informs us that, again and again, Brown was to tell him that he owed most to A. J. Scott.<sup>213</sup> And many years later, Baldwin Brown himself was to write to Scott: 'I can say but one thing - and it is not lightly uttered - that you seem to me to be the greatest and truest teacher who has ever crossed my path.'<sup>214</sup>

h) The Woolwich Institution, and Scott's Lectures on Education

The Woolwich Institution for the Advancement of Literary, Scientific and Mechanical Knowledge was established in May 1838. Similar institutes for the diffusion of knowledge were springing up all over Britain in the first half of the 19th century. Scott appears to have been involved in the Woolwich Institution from its inception,<sup>215</sup> and can be found publicly lecturing at the Institution from July 1840,<sup>216</sup> as well as holding evening classes with dockyard labourers,<sup>217</sup> of whom there were about 4,000 in Woolwich out of a population of approximately 22,000.<sup>218</sup> In November 1840 Scott was elected Vice President of the Institution,<sup>219</sup> and in the following year was unanimously elected to succeed as President his close friend, the late Dr. Olinthus Gregory, a mathematician, whose most important contribution to science had been his calculation of the

<sup>211</sup>J. Hunter, 'Alexander Scott', The Expositor (8th series) vol 21 (London, 1921), p.452.

<sup>212</sup>E. Baldwin Brown, In Memoriam: James Baldwin Brown (London, 1884), p.6.

<sup>213</sup>J. Hunter, 'Baldwin Brown', The Expositor vol 21, p.304.

<sup>214</sup>Testimonials to A.J. Scott (Edinburgh, 1856), p.21.

<sup>215</sup>A.J. Scott, 'Presidential Speech to the Woolwich Literary Institution', The Kentish Mercury, 30 October 1841.

<sup>216</sup>'The Woolwich Literary Institution and A.J. Scott', The Woolwich Gazette, 25 July 1840.

<sup>217</sup>J. Hunter, 'Alexander Scott', The Expositor vol 21, p.456.

<sup>218</sup>P.M.E. Erwood, Woolwich in 1846 (Kent, 1846), p.4.

<sup>219</sup>'Woolwich Literary Institution', The Woolwich Gazette, 7 November 1840.

velocity of sound.<sup>220</sup> Scott poured a great deal of energy into this educational society, and also into the comparable institution in nearby Greenwich. He believed that such institutions, through their extension of education, 'were preparing the most harmless, the most beneficial, and the most stupendous of revolutions.'<sup>221</sup>

At the Woolwich Institution, and elsewhere throughout the country, Scott delivered lectures on education, many of which were reported in newspapers. In some of these public lectures Scott focussed on the aim of education. The procuring of a better subsistence, the acquisition of an intellectual badge which distinguished a higher class, and the obtaining of political power, were subordinate objects of education, the first and last of which Scott had some sympathy with, but they were not the ultimate aim of education. The goal of education is not to have something more, said Scott, but rather to be something higher and better than what we are.<sup>222</sup> The object is to harmonise our minds and lives with the reality of things. The end of education is to seek the knowledge of truth for its own sake, to feel the same delight in the knowledge of reality as the child feels in knowing things, or the young lamb receives from the exercise of its muscles. Education pursued with this end in view would make better and wiser men, said Scott, and would operate both to the advantage of the individual and of society. A number of years later, Charles Kingsley explained, in a letter to Mrs. Scott, that his object in education was to make 'bold, energetic, methodic, liberal-minded, magnanimous' men. 'That is what is wanted,' remarked Scott, 'and it is what Charles Kingsley will do.'<sup>223</sup>

In teaching a man to read, asserted Scott, we open up for him a road to knowledge, 'to the best and highest thoughts of the best and highest men, and to an acquaintance with the ideas of the Creator

<sup>220</sup> Scott, 'Presidential Speech to the Woolwich Literary Institution', The Kentish Mercury, 30 October 1841.

<sup>221</sup> A.J. Scott, 'Address to the Greenwich Society's Festival', The Woolwich Gazette, 12 June 1841.

<sup>222</sup> A.J. Scott, 'A Lecture on Popular Education', The Woolwich Gazette, 10 October 1840.

<sup>223</sup> C. Kingsley, Charles Kingsley I (London, 1877), p.199.

himself.'<sup>224</sup> 'If Sir Isaac Newton had really discovered the idea on which the solar system was constructed, he had found out, not his own idea, but the Divine idea,' said Scott. 'All truth, whether it belonged to the natural or spiritual world, had the same relation to the mind of man that light had to the eye, air to the lungs, and food to the structure of the body, and that soul was endued with the greatest health and strength which was permitted access to the Divine ideas.'<sup>225</sup> The highest and noblest end of education was a harmony with eternal reality. Scott urged his listeners 'to go on increasing their knowledge of truth, not only by a direct knowledge of God, but by a knowledge of all these subordinate truths, each of which is a witness for God, and all of which in itself is the chorus of the universe to his Praise.'<sup>226</sup>

Scott's hope was that all men might have the opportunity of being educated, and in his public lectures set out to answer the common prejudices against a universal system of education.<sup>227</sup> In this he can perhaps be seen as transposing into his educational thought that which already existed in his theology of universal atonement. Scott often spoke in glowing terms of education in Scotland as opposed to England. While in the latter country university education had become almost a privilege of aristocracy, in Scotland even 'the cottage produced its aspirants after literary distinction.'<sup>228</sup> Every portion of the nation ought to be educated, claimed Scott, for an uneducated portion was like a paralysed limb which had its effect on the whole body. Each part of the body had its special function to discharge. Scott could not agree with professional education being confined to the clergy and the legal profession, who had institutions of their own, from which all others were practically excluded. He believed that a regular

<sup>224</sup> A.J. Scott, 'A Lecture on Education', The Manchester Examiner, 12 October 1847.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid.

<sup>226</sup> Scott, 'A Lecture on Popular Education', The Woolwich Gazette, 10 October 1840.

<sup>227</sup> A.J. Scott, 'The Extension of Education', The Woolwich Gazette, 24 July 1841.

<sup>228</sup> A.J. Scott, 'On the Scholars of Germany', Kentish Mercury, 8 April 1843.

system of professional education should be created to train men for whatever walk of life they were called upon to move in.<sup>229</sup>

While he advocated a universal system of education, Scott, in his unwavering belief in freedom, strongly opposed any form of compulsion in regard to education.<sup>230</sup> One of the major principles of education, asserted Scott, was freedom. How, therefore, could true education be compulsorily enforced by a government? Related to this was Scott's desire for a uniform plan of national education, coupled, however, with a firm belief that it could properly be attained only through voluntary effort and co-operation, followed by national support, rather than through the imposition of a governmental structure.<sup>231</sup> This was Scott's recurring emphasis appearing again, that life will organise itself, as opposed to organisation producing life. He encouraged his audiences to first of all nurture a living interest in education through such voluntary associations as mechanics' institutes, after which, if a living desire for such education is displayed, a government might then be justified in adopting a national plan of similar institutes. The history of the Universities was the history of voluntary association nationally sanctioned. Students flocked, of their own accord, to men who offered themselves as teachers, and were considered able to teach. Such, said Scott, was the simple origin of those great national institutions. The same now remained to be done for the mass of the people.

#### i) Scott's Lectures on History

Scott delivered, at the Woolwich Institution and elsewhere, lectures on History. Most of these were designed simply to encourage an historical awareness and the study of history, but some of the Lectures also reveal Scott's philosophy of history. As will be seen there are traces in his understanding of history, of German idealism,

<sup>229</sup> Scott, 'Address to the Greenwich Society's Festival', The Woolwich Gazette, 12 June 1841.

<sup>230</sup> A.J. Scott, 'A Public Speech on the Factory Bill', Kentish Mercury, 20 May 1843.

<sup>231</sup> Scott, 'The Extension of Education', The Woolwich Gazette, 5 June 1841; and 'Address to the Greenwich Society's Festival', The Woolwich Gazette, 12 June 1841.

which generally did not affect British theology until after 1860.<sup>232</sup> Given Scott's German linguistic ability, his friendship with Carlyle, and his indebtedness to Coleridge, both of whom were greatly influenced by German idealism at an early stage, it is not surprising to find traces of German thought in Scott's philosophy of history. W. B. Hodgson, an educational reformer and friend of Scott, later commented upon Scott's lecturing ability, with particular reference to his treatment of philosophical and historical subjects:

For nearly twelve years it was part of my duty to hear lecturers on very various subjects, in very distant places; and I have never in this country met Mr. Scott's superior, or even equal, in the art of unwritten exposition, especially of subjects usually considered difficult and abstruse. In Philosophy and History he seems to me to rank with Faraday in Physics, as a teacher successful alike with 'wise and simple', with old and young. He possesses not that worthless fluency which too often means inaccuracy, redundancy, and shallowness, but a power of easy, natural, yet precise, apt, and orderly expression, which springs from his intimate familiarity with his theme, and which engages the interest of even a general audience, so that the unlearned exclaim 'how simple!' but the more learned - 'how profound'.<sup>233</sup>

Scott evidenced and encouraged in his lectures on History an historical consciousness and awareness. 'How mysteriously is the whole man derived throughout all the past', exclaimed Scott. 'From what countless and unfathomed sources proceed the actual condition of his existence. The material particles of my frame have come to me from the herb and from the living creature; ages ago they floated in the stream, or were suspended in the clouds of the sky. No intellect is wide enough to conceive the extent and variety of the contributions which that little structure has levied on all regions of nature. And is it otherwise with the mind?' asked Scott. 'Thoughts and feelings have come to me from the earliest inhabitants of this world. The recondite philosophy of one age is the common sense of the succeeding one. The discovery with which Bacon or Newton may have startled himself, is in our

<sup>232</sup> See V.F. Storr's treatment of German Idealism, and its impact on English theology, in, The Development of English Theology in the 19th Century (London, 1913), chapters 8 and 9.

<sup>233</sup> Testimonials to A.J. Scott (Edinburgh, 1856), p.10.

day a thing taken for granted by children and diffused in the general atmosphere of thought. Other men have laboured, and we have entered into their labours. Of what we take for the most natural conditions and inevitable impressions of our own minds, how little would have been there, had there been no spiritual and intellectual inheritance for mankind.'<sup>234</sup> Mankind has received a prodigious inheritance from the past, which he is to master and use, in order to become more, and not less, than his past. Against the mind which did not recognise a debt to history, and which considered the present to be of its own making, Scott stood firmly opposed, and asserted the principle that 'that which has been, lives in that which is.'<sup>235</sup>

There is a great delight in historical consciousness, said Scott. It can be compared to the traveller's delight, when he has journeyed far down the course of the Rhone, and gained an elevation from which he may look up along the Valais, and lose himself in the imagination of the various contributions of the bordering mountains. This, said Scott, 'is the feeling of all men in hearing of their forefathers, natural, spiritual, and intellectual.'<sup>236</sup> Scott encouraged his hearer to conduct all his pursuits in a spirit of historical awareness. 'Let him, in all his reading, observe the date of the works he reads, and the relation they bear to the spirit of their age, and to its measure of knowledge,' said Scott. 'Even such monuments of the past, as we all have access to, may be considered with reference to the mind of their respective ages. Westminster Abbey, with its roof elevated like a gloomy artificial sky, the recumbent images of its ancient dead, with hands laid together in attitude of deprecation, all reminding of mortality, eternity, and man's relation, in both, to God: presents to us, at the same time, the expression of an age widely contrasted, in its modern monuments; where the soldier, in the posture of war, the

<sup>234</sup>A.J. Scott, 'On the Study of History', The Woolwich Gazette, 27 February 1841.

<sup>235</sup>A.J. Scott, 'The Existing Elements of English Society Historically Considered', Supplement to the Manchester Examiner, 14 October 1848.

<sup>236</sup>Scott, 'On the Study of History', The Woolwich Gazette, 27 February 1841.



mechanic devising the steam-engine, the orator with gesture of declamation, throng in as though they were so many intruders on the solemnity of a scene of worship.<sup>237</sup>

Scott also emphasised in his lectures the use of historical method in the proper study of any subject. If the past lives on in the present, if the works of the past are like a fulcrum on which the lever of our thought and activity moves, then a correct understanding of any subject must involve a knowledge of its history.<sup>238</sup> Scott was later to make full use of the historical method in his course of lectures on 'The Existing Elements of English Society Historically Considered'. In the introduction to that course he indicated that he would be showing 'how our English society was a different thing, than what it would have been, because of what the Celt, the Roman, the Saxon, and the Norman had been, and had done in the midst of us.'<sup>239</sup> The history of the Anglo-Saxons, for instance, was the history of the childhood of our own age, and the explanation of its manhood.<sup>240</sup> Another indication of Scott's belief in the modern historical method was his highly appreciative lecture on Christian Gottlob Heyne, the great German philologist, whom Scott hailed as one of the fathers of the new school of historical enquiry, of which Niebuhr, the Schlegels, Thirlwall and others were members.<sup>241</sup> The true historian, asserted Scott, must be able to empathise with another age. 'The historian should in some degree assimilate his mind to the characteristics of the age of which he is treating, and should possess a better discriminating power than to judge of past times

<sup>237</sup> A.J. Scott, 'The Method of the Study of History', Kentish Mercury, 30 October 1841.

<sup>238</sup> A.J. Scott, 'On the Study of History', The Woolwich Gazette, 27 February 1841; and 'A Lecture on History', The Manchester Examiner, 2 October 1847.

<sup>239</sup> A.J. Scott, 'The Existing Elements of English Society Historically Considered', Supplement to the Manchester Examiner, 14 October 1848.

<sup>240</sup> A.J. Scott, 'The Existing Elements of English Society Historically Considered', The Edinburgh Evening Courant, 15 December 1849.

<sup>241</sup> A.J. Scott, 'The Scholars of Germany', Kentish Mercury, 20 May 1843.

by the present, or great men of byegone ages by the same rule which he would apply to those of his own time.'<sup>242</sup> The historian must acquire the proper equipment. Like Heyne, for instance, 'he has to acquire the languages of past generations, languages not living in our day, that he may go among them speaking and hearing in their own tongue, receiving the fresh impression of their own utterance.' 'The monuments, the coins, the manuscripts, the fables, the poetry, the philosophy of other times, he must explore, that he may know the times themselves. Such are the men who preserve the continuity of the human race, who are to save an age from being and feeling as if none had preceded it, who are the treasurers of the inheritance of mankind.'<sup>243</sup>

History, said Scott, does not consist in catalogues of names, dates and events. These are at best the skeleton of historical knowledge. An account of the economic or political condition of human life at any given point could not truly be called history, just as the human system of bones could not be called the human body; nor could the muscular or nervous systems be called the human body. 'Not one of these is the human body', said Scott, 'nor indeed are all put together: unless actuated and pervaded by the common life which has organised them and maintains their unity. What we seek in history in like manner is the common life of humanity vivifying the special details and circumstances of a time, and thus modified into the peculiar spirit of that time.'<sup>244</sup> The historian attempts to discern the unity in humanity amidst its diversity. 'There is a mutable in humanity, but there is a permanent in it also, and it must be the study of history to recognise the enduring substance under the varying form and measure.'<sup>245</sup> Macallum described Scott's philosophy of history in the following terms:

<sup>242</sup> A.J. Scott, 'On the History of the Middle Ages', The Caledonian Mercury, 13 December 1847.

<sup>243</sup> Scott, 'The Method of the Study of History', Kentish Mercury, 23 October 1841.

<sup>244</sup> Scott, 'On the Study of History', The Woolwich Gazette, 27 February 1841.

<sup>245</sup> Scott, 'A Lecture on History', The Manchester Examiner, 2 October 1847.

In his view history was not a jumble - it was a living thing. Beating and throbbing underneath, there was the great inarticulate heart, grinding under the yoke of the many forms of oppression, but never fairly submitting to be bound. He traced the stream mingling its sweet and bitter waters, its clear and dark, as it flowed on ever widening and enlarging in its course. Fed by the life of the people, it changed its hue and colour as they changed - now progressing and again retrograding, but ever advancing, though by a tortuous path. Underneath all there was the true leaven working and fermenting, forbidding peace when as yet there was none.<sup>246</sup>

In addition to this vast succession of the common life of humanity, said Scott, there could be traced in history a presiding Spirit, which was the ultimate object of historical study.<sup>247</sup> A newspaper reporter described Scott as speaking of 'this great idea at once with a devoutness and a candour which could not fail to give impressiveness to his words. While acknowledging it as a truth without which history was reduced to a rubbish-heap of fragments, he frankly stated the difficulties in the way of its reception.'<sup>248</sup> Scott argued against any attempt to make logic the measuring rod by which a belief in the presiding Spirit of History should be evaluated. There are bonds, said Scott, which are stronger than those of logic. 'Why should it not be in the world of our superhuman moral relations, as in that of our human?' asked Scott. 'That trust and that affection whose grounds are capable of logical analysis and proof, are not the deepest or the best founded, or the weightiest in practice.'<sup>249</sup> Man is not to depend exclusively upon his understanding in evaluating the experience of this Sovereign Agency behind nature and history. The attempt of the natural theologians, such as Butler and Paley was to give a scientific dissection of this general experience. 'This was well,' said Scott. 'But what did it matter to, how did it affect the correctness of, this general experience in which man, gazing on the lineaments of nature, described a bright and awful experience looking through them? What did it matter whether the scientific

<sup>246</sup> p. Macallum, Recollections of Professor A.J. Scott (Greenock, 1878), p.5.

<sup>247</sup> Scott, 'A Lecture on History', The Manchester Examiner, 2 October 1847.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid.

dissection was accurate or inaccurate? In any case the experience remained a fact, and its soundness was unaffected by the success or failure of the natural theologian. Why should our impression of that great truth be a false one because these men cannot tell how it came?' asked Scott. 'Shall we put out our eyes because we are dissatisfied with the theory of optics? We will rather look for a better, or be content to see without one.'<sup>250</sup>

j) Scott's Lectures on 'Unity' and 'The Harmony of Natural and Revealed Truth'

Scott's lecture on 'Unity' and his course of lectures on 'The Harmony of Natural and Revealed Truth' can be considered together. Both were delivered in Woolwich in the summer of 1840, and both concentrated on the harmony of the Christian faith and scientific pursuit. Science was increasingly occupying a place of great importance in the 19th century, and was viewed by many as antagonistic to the cause of true religion. Charles Lyell's Principles of Geology (1830 - 1833) was seen as contributing to a growing gap between science and religion. In opposition to the theory, which harmonised with the biblical story, of a succession of violent catastrophes to explain the present state of the earth's surface, Lyell asserted a uniformitarian theory, which held that the forces now at work modifying the face of the globe were adequate to account for all its past history. Involved in this was a denial of the biological doctrine of the fixity of species, thus further opening the way for evolutionary thought. By the time of Scott's lectures, Darwin, now married to the sister of Scott's good friend, Hensleigh Wedgwood, had completed the Beagle expedition, and was putting together his large mass of evidence in favour of evolution, which in the form of his Origin of Species (1859) evoked from many 19th century religious minds an outraged reaction.<sup>251</sup> Considering

<sup>250</sup> Ibid.

<sup>251</sup> J.R. Moore, in his Post-Darwinian Controversies (Cambridge, 1979), demonstrates that the controversies after Darwin's Origin of Species cannot simply be seen in terms of full-scale war between science and theology. The historiographical imagery of massive conflict between science and religion, such as the picture which emerges from the Wilberforce-Huxley debate at Oxford in 1860, inadequately represents the diverse religious reaction to Darwinian

the closeness of the Wedgwoods and the Scotts, Scott may well have known something of Darwin's theory, the first rough sketch of which he wrote in 1842.<sup>252</sup> Whether or not Scott possessed any knowledge of Darwin's theory, he firmly believed that all truth was of God, and, in his 1840 Woolwich lectures, was prepared to assert the essential harmony of scientific and religious truth, thus preparing at least a section of the religious public for the conflicts which were to ensue in the post-Darwinian controversies.

Scott's lectures on 'The Harmony of Natural and Revealed Truth'<sup>253</sup> drew such large crowds in Woolwich that it was necessary to move from the Welsh Chapel to a larger auditorium for the remaining lectures.<sup>254</sup> This course of lectures Scott was to repeat a number of times in England and Scotland. In September 1842, for instance, Erskine wrote: 'I spent about three months this spring or summer in London, having gone up primarily to hear Scott lecture on his old subject, the mutual relations of religion and philosophy. I felt an increasing value for his views on the subject, and an increasing admiration for his talents as a lecturer.'<sup>255</sup> Maurice also attended the 1842 lectures, along with Erskine, and expressed to Scott at the beginning of the course: 'I cannot tell you how much I feel the importance of the line of thought upon which you are entering.'<sup>256</sup> A few weeks later, Maurice wrote to his wife:

thought. Darwin did precipitate, of course, crises of faith concerning creation, Providence, and design, but these, Moore shows, were largely resolved within the framework of established religious belief. Moore stresses the deep continuities between evolutionary thought and Christian theology. The bulk of religious anti-Darwinism emerged not from a conflict between Darwinian thought and specifically Christian beliefs, but rather from a conflict between Darwinian doctrines and certain fundamental philosophical tenets, such as the fixity of species. Notwithstanding, there was a strong undercurrent of popular anti-evolutionary religious feeling.

<sup>252</sup> See D.N.B. article on Charles Darwin.

<sup>253</sup> The first lecture of this course was actually entitled 'The Mutual Relations of Religion and Philosophy', a title which Scott was to use on subsequent occasions. The word 'philosophy' was often used synonymously with the word 'science'.

<sup>254</sup> See A.J. Scott, 'Lectures on the Harmony of Natural and Revealed Truth', The Woolwich Gazette, 1,8 August 1840.

<sup>255</sup> Hanna, Letters of Erskine II, p.26.

<sup>256</sup> F. Maurice, The Life of F.D. Maurice I, p.322.

I have just returned from Mr. Scott's lecture, and have been pleasantly detained since I left it by a walk with Mr. Erskine. ... Scott's lecture was rather more difficult today. It was partly on the interesting preparation to Newton's 'Principia'; partly on the history of electricity and chemistry, and of the gradual discovery of a common principle and power in both. The great object was to show that all science is a progress from the sensible and material to the principle of Powers, and of a unity in Powers. He had established this fact in reference to astronomy; in this lecture he carried the proof into the other departments of physical study. The conclusion referred to the discovery of a still higher identification between the God of nature and the God of the spirits. It was, as you may suppose, very striking. The lecture was better attended than any of the former, and it was pleasant to see so many people one knew, who seemed to take an interest in the discourse.<sup>257</sup>

Scott also delivered his course of lectures on the harmony of religion and science in Edinburgh, where Sir William Hamilton was among his audience. 'I was then strongly impressed by the clearness and facility and force with which he expounded, in extemporaneous language, doctrines by no means of the easiest apprehension,' wrote Sir William, 'and still more by the depth and originality of the doctrines themselves. The impressions from these lectures made me afterwards look with interest into some of Mr. Scott's Publications, and these, which were religious discourses, confirmed all I had been induced to expect.'<sup>258</sup>

One of Scott's principal assertions in these lectures on religion and science was, that, 'if there is one God, there can be but one source of truth.'<sup>259</sup> Scott encouraged a bold confidence in the study of all truth. There is no incompatibility between true religion and true science. The God who is contemplated in the spiritual world is the God who is revealed in the reality of the natural world. It is a false religion that is contrary to true science, and it is a false science that is contrary to true religion. Too many religious people, complained Scott, do not see the relation between God's spiritual and physical modes of utterance. They see two universes quite unconnected with each other, quite abstracted

<sup>257</sup> Ibid. p.323.

<sup>258</sup> Testimonials to A.J. Scott (London, 1850), p.21.

<sup>259</sup> A.J. Scott, 'Lectures on the Harmony of Natural and Revealed Truth', The Woolwich Gazette, 12 September 1840.

from each other. Did they not know that the relationship which exists between a parent and a child, exists between God and creation, and that a discovery of any law which governs physical reality is a discovery of a Divine idea? The knowledge of the Almighty, said Scott, is implanted in the natural world.

Rather than religion and science being incompatible, science, in fact, is the means of a greater knowledge of God. A knowledge of God through the natural world is, of course, not dependent upon science, admitted Scott. He recalled having met countrymen, scientifically ignorant, 'who had said that God spoke to them in the growth of the tree, in the sun, in the stars, and in the moon - showing that they felt this harmony in their inmost being, and that the seeking after and finding it was the greatest object of their being.'<sup>260</sup> But scientific knowledge would further nurture man's appreciation of God revealed in creation. Scott compared a man, ignorant of science, gazing upon a drop of water that hung suspended upon a spray, and the eye of a Faraday gazing upon the same object. 'To the mere eye the impressions were perfectly the same,' said Scott, 'but upon the mind of the man of science the impression was magnificent. He saw there the same power that appeared in the thunder bolt and the lightning flash - the power that holds stars, and suns, and systems, and the whole universe together. It was present not merely to his feeling and his fancy - it was in his very soul, and with such feelings he walked in a more glorious universe than that trodden by other men.'<sup>261</sup>

Scott evidenced in his own life a harmony between scientific and religious truth. Upon his death, a writer in The Spectator said of him: 'He was one of the few men who, with a mind thoroughly familiar with all the aspects of modern science, and thoroughly saturated with philosophy, was still at bottom a Christian theologian of the highest order, with a deeper insight into the world of spiritual life than ninety-nine out of every hundred pure theologians.'<sup>262</sup> Scott displayed in his 1840 lectures an extensive knowledge of science and its development. C. R. Sanders' description of Coleridge as

<sup>260</sup> Ibid.

<sup>261</sup> Ibid. 22 August 1840.

<sup>262</sup> 'Professor A.J. Scott', The Spectator, 27 January 1866.

'swimming beneath the water from sea to sea, from poetry to literary criticism to philosophy to theology to psychology to science, back and forth again and again and again,'<sup>263</sup> is a description just as worthy of Scott. 'I often wondered at the number and variety of matters in which he evidently took interest, and which he had made himself master of,' said Erskine concerning Scott, 'and yet I always felt that he never lost sight of the relation of each department to the great whole, - the place which it held in the hierarchy of things. I believe that God was a great reality to him.'<sup>264</sup>

As well as swimming from sea to sea, Scott's study of any particular subject, and of all subjects generally, was characterised, as was Coleridge's,<sup>265</sup> by a search for unity. Scientific investigation in the early 19th century had brought into prominence the idea of the unity of the universe. Everywhere identical forces were seen to be operating. In 1820 Ampère and Oersted had independently established the connexion between electricity and magnetism. In 1833 Faraday had proved the identity of the different forms of electricity. Earlier in the century Dalton had developed the atomic theory, a masterpiece of synthesis. The idea of unity, therefore, was very much present in the early 19th century. What characterised Scott and Coleridge was their wide application of the principle of unity. Scott contended that 'the human mind in its researches into truth, was led, from its very constitution, to look for unity of purpose throughout all creation. Man found himself surrounded and stimulated by an infinity of objects - an infinite chaos, and it was the end of science to reduce this chaos to order.'<sup>266</sup>

Scott believed that the search for unity was the true method of discovery and advance in knowledge. 'To understand', he said, 'is to find a unity.'<sup>267</sup> Just as a child comes to understand a sentence by discovering its unity and the relation of each word to

<sup>263</sup>C.R. Sanders, Coleridge and the Broad Church Movement (Durham, 1942), p.19.

<sup>264</sup>Hanna, Letters of Erskine II, p.186.

<sup>265</sup>S.T. Coleridge, Aids to Reflection (Edinburgh, 1905), pp.56-7.

<sup>266</sup>A.J. Scott, 'A Lecture on Unity', The Woolwich Gazette, 25 July 1840.

<sup>267</sup>Ibid.



the other, so Newton, for instance, made his great scientific discovery by finding the unity of the sentence written by Copernicus, Kepler, and Galileo. By holding together his own observations along with Copernicus' heliocentric theory, Galileo's telescopic discoveries, and Kepler's ideas on gravitation, Newton discovered the principle of universal gravitation. And more recently, Faraday had made his great contribution to scientific knowledge by discovering the unity of the different forms of electricity. 'Thus has science proceeded,' said Scott, 'men looking for unity in the phenomena which take place around them, and discovering of new unities between each class of phenomena.'<sup>268</sup> Scott encouraged this method of unity in all studies,<sup>269</sup> and spoke against the scientific tendency to become overly analytical, to the exclusion of synthesis. He feared that too often scientists paused at the taking to pieces stage, and merely presented a hortus siccus of God's creation, forgetting that all the parts combined to form a living whole. If, however, scientists continued their search for unity, Scott believed that eventually there would be discovered a unity which pervaded all the physical sciences. This idea was remarked upon at the time as 'most original and sublime.'<sup>270</sup> Twenty-six years later, Julia Wedgwood, the niece of Charles Darwin, also commented upon Scott's belief that there was to be found an organic unity in the forces and principles of the physical world: 'he was surely the first to reflect this dawning truth, even now only just above our horizon.'<sup>271</sup> In addition to Scott's contention that scientists would eventually discover this universal uniting principle in the physical world, he also believed that if men consistently sought unity in all fields they would be led to seek the living source of all unity. Men would come finally to an understanding of 'the highest unity which man could discover, - the

<sup>268</sup> Ibid.

<sup>269</sup> Scott's lectures 'On the various races of Europe' at the Greenwich Society, reported in the Kentish Mercury, 5 March 1842, is a good example of Scott's use of unity as a method in the study of a subject. Scott contended that a discovery of the linguistic unity of Europe would greatly aid an understanding of the European races.

<sup>270</sup> 'A.J. Scott's Lecture on Unity', The Woolwich Gazette, 25 July 1840.

<sup>271</sup> Scott's Discourses (London, 1866), pp.xiii-xiv.

unity of the mind of the Author.'<sup>272</sup> And thus physical science would become 'a Jacob's ladder, whose foot indeed rests upon the earth, but the angels of God are ascending and descending upon it, and the Lord God stands at its summit.'<sup>273</sup>

In relation to this last point, Scott quite confidently asserted, as had Coleridge before him, that science, rightly conducted, would render a belief in mechanical materialism impossible.<sup>274</sup> 'It is a universal truth in regard to science, that it lies beyond the sphere of the senses,' said Scott. 'The presiding and central principle of astronomy, and, to a great extent, of mechanics, is gravitation. We see and feel its effects; we feel the impact of a falling body; we see the change in the places of the planets; but who has seen gravitation itself?'<sup>275</sup> The man who says, "Let me see God with my physical eyes, and I will believe him", should be asked, "Let me see gravitation with my physical eyes, and I will believe in its existence." Only the effects are seen. 'To remain within the region of sense, is to remain in ignorance. I know not how otherwise to define it,' said Scott. 'To remain within the region of sense, is to remain within that region where impressions are made that ought to stimulate and rouse the faculties, that look for an answer far beyond the region of sense.'<sup>276</sup> Scott believed that scientists more and more were obliged to acknowledge that in the physical world invisibles are great realities. If the physical sciences are rightly pursued, 'the habit will be formed of dealing with powers which cannot of themselves be handled and heard and touched; and this habit formed, it will be no new thing to the chemist or to the astronomer, when he enters on the contemplation of God, to say, "Here also is a power, an unseen power indeed, but I know that is no proof of unreality; and if the powers I have hitherto been dealing with are known only by their effects, by their effects these

<sup>272</sup> Scott, 'A Lecture on Unity', The Woolwich Gazette, 25 July 1840.

<sup>273</sup> Scott, Discourses, p.176.

<sup>274</sup> See Scott, 'Lecture on the Harmony of Natural and Revealed Truth', The Woolwich Gazette, 29 August 1840; and S.T. Coleridge, Aids to Reflection, pp.354-58.

<sup>275</sup> Scott, Discourses, pp.173-4.

<sup>276</sup> Ibid. p.175.

also by the same law are to be known."<sup>277</sup>

Scott concluded his lectures on the harmony of religion and science with a plea that the study of creation should not be understood as separate from the knowledge of God:

The sum of the whole matter is this - that thus to unite the spiritual being, the existence of God, with the earthy or temporal being is the highest work for man to do from year to year, from month to month, from hour to hour - to combine earth and heaven, time and eternity, is the highest work that man can do. The sensual man grasps all of this world; the enthusiast is astonished and confounded at the things of eternity, and forgets that he is a creature of this world; the vulgar man wavers between the one and the other; but the complete man seeks to bring down heaven and eternity into the common actions of life. He finds them in their true dignity and importance forbidding him to consider them mean or low. And who can gaze upon the moon beams stealing through the boughs of the dark forest trees - or the fir or the mountain ash glowing in relief against the clear amber sky, or the mountain scenery which seems to partake more of the sky above it than of the soft verdure that reposes at its feet - without feeling that they all speak of this world transformed and glorified, and of the world above made ours.<sup>278</sup>

k) Scott's Lectures 'On Schism'

In May 1842 Scott delivered two lectures 'On Schism' in London. The principle of unity again took central place, although in these lectures it was primarily the unity of the Church upon which Scott concentrated. Church unity was a subject very much alive in the minds of Scott's religious contemporaries. The Tractarian desire for 'One, Holy Catholic, and Apostolic Church', at the one end, and the Jerusalem Bishopric scheme established by liberal Anglicans and Lutherans, at the other, formed the immediate background to the lectures on 'Schism'. Scott, while eager to address himself to this search for Christian unity, wished not to deal specifically with particular movements. 'I am not anxious to enter into controversy upon these questions,' he said. 'I do not propose to arm myself with what may appear to me the utmost attainable amount of argument against this party or against that party. I believe mere negative contention of this sort to be a great deal

<sup>277</sup> Ibid. p.177.

<sup>278</sup> Scott, 'Lectures on the Harmony of Natural and Revealed Truth', The Woolwich Gazette, 12 September 1840.

worse than useless. I believe, I may have confuted all the errors in the world, and rejected all falsehoods, in the shape which they take in other men's understandings, and remain an abyss of mental and moral darkness in myself all the while. I feel,' continued Scott, 'that little is done by this. But if we are able to get hold of the true, positive, guiding, principle, and if we are able to see how that principle is made more distinctly intelligible to us, how we may more clearly perceive and apprehend it, by some of the forms in which it is applied in the actual experience of the world, that may be of use to us in a far higher object, than showing our talent or our contempt of our fellow-men.'<sup>279</sup>

Schism, said Scott, is separation. It is a cutting ourselves off from that to which we ought to be united. And the root of schism is the separation of man from God. The man divorced from God is 'out of harmony with the universal and ruling system of things. In this way he is out of harmony with all that remains under that presiding system. And the crime of schism lies in this:' continued Scott, 'that it is a contest with Him, who has instituted that system: that it arises out of our repugnancy to Him, or (to take the lowest view of it,) out of our want of understanding of the principles, which He has established, for the unity of the world that He has made.'<sup>280</sup> Redemption, explained Scott, is the overcoming of schism; it is the restoration of harmony of will and spirit with God at the centre, and thus the restoration of harmony with all else that surrounds it. 'All separateness between man and man,' said Scott, 'is a portion of the result of the separateness between the soul of man and God.'<sup>281</sup>

How is man to discern schism? 'By what marks are we to know it in our own experience,' asked Scott, 'that we may avoid it? Are there some outward things, so inseparably associated with God, that our separation from them is a separation from God, and therefore contains in it the sin of schism? and is it chiefly by looking out for the marks of that, which retains this outward unity with God,

<sup>279</sup> A.J. Scott, 'On Schism' Lecture I, The Pulpit vol 41, 28 May 1842, p.513.

<sup>280</sup> Ibid. p.505.

<sup>281</sup> Ibid. p.507.

that we are to be saved from that sin? Or, on the other hand,' continued Scott, 'is this union with God, in its own essence, of that nature, that it may be recognised by the spirit of man?'<sup>282</sup> Scott asserted that there is a spiritual conscience or perception in man which is the basis of his duty in regard to schism. He did not mean by this that the spiritual faculty is infallible. When it is said that a man has the use of his senses it is not meant that he is never deceived in the use of these senses. Although the spiritual conscience, like any other faculty, is not infallible, we are bound to make the most of it, said Scott. 'We cannot do without it. There is a region - and the highest of all regions of our inquiry and of our practical demeanour in this world - in which, if we have not this guidance, we have none. For it is no answer to say - "We have God, we have the Bible, we have the Church." I say not one of these is to be read, otherwise than by the spiritual faculty within us. This,' said Scott, 'is as if you were to tell a blind man, that he has light to guide him; as if you were to affirm in regard to a deaf man, that he needs not ears, because there is a voice speaking to him.'<sup>283</sup> There is a spiritual eye in man which can discern the light of God, whether directly from God or refracted through another man. 'Man may know when that is presented to him, from which he dare not be out of communion, under penalty of being out of communion with God; and he may know when the contrary is presented to him. A faculty little cultivated, little exercised - this is our condemnation; but a faculty which exists, or it would not be our condemnation.'<sup>284</sup> The condemnation is especially great when we shut out the light of God as it appears in humanity, for we are not only refusing to love the original object of love, but refusing to love the created object of love, 'into whose circle God has entered, and would with himself take the brother man.' 'Spiritual, as well as all other being, is not presented in its highest purity to us in our fellow-men,' said Scott, 'but in its greatest nearness, with the opportunity of the most vivid and warm contact with it. And if

<sup>282</sup> Ibid. p.507.

<sup>283</sup> Scott, 'On Schism', Lecture II, The Pulpit vol 41, 9 June 1842, p.544.

<sup>284</sup> Scott, 'On Schism' Lecture I, p.510.

that which is thus brought to us, which has the amiability of our own human family likeness upon it, in addition to the beauty of the Divine holiness upon it - if this be not loved, we altogether deceive ourselves in supposing that the pure and primal beauty is any more the object of our love and choice.'<sup>285</sup>

To separate from the light of God, wherever it might shine, is to commit the sin of schism, said Scott. And the majority may be just as schismatic as the minority; the most prominent authority may be just as schismatic as the humblest man. 'It is just as possible for a body, century after century, to be schismatic,' said Scott, 'as for a sentence, that I might utter to you tonight for the first time, and which might never have been heard in the world before.'<sup>286</sup> God has not pledged himself to be present in any particular external form or body of men. This, however, is not to say, Scott explained, that there is not an exceedingly great value in the outward thing through which God expresses himself to man:

I believe, in the eye of spirits, this is the value of the sun, moon and stars, of earth and sea, of trees and flowers, of the bodies of men, the looks of human countenances, the tones of human voices. I believe, that all these ultimately are so many means, through which God is expressing himself to man, and man may express himself to God. I believe, that the man who wishes for symbols and for characters, in which a correspondence with heaven may be carried on, need nowhere and at no time be at any loss.<sup>287</sup>

Wherever the life of God is, there is the divine light which can be perceived by man's spiritual conscience. The Church, the Bible, internal or external evidences, are not the light of men. Rather, 'the life' is the light of men. 'He who has some life to show me, has some light to show me. That man, that book that has some life of God to show, has some light to show too. He who has not, has none,' contended Scott. 'The measure of the light is the measure of the life; the measure of "that eternal life, which was with the Father, which has been manifested to us", which is presented to me in any quarter, so that my eye can see it, and be attracted towards it, if I love light; and be repelled from it, if I hate light, not

<sup>285</sup> Ibid. p.511.

<sup>286</sup> Ibid. p.512.

<sup>287</sup> Ibid. p.511.

for want of sight, but because my deeds are evil.'<sup>288</sup>

Scott emphasised that the real centre of Christian unity is spiritual, for it is, in the first place, a unity with God. Christ's prayer for the Church was that we might be one as he and the Father are one, the most intimate of spiritual unities. This is not to say, explained Scott, that by means of spiritual unity no visible unity should come forth. It is only to say that the real life of the unity of the Christian Church is in the Spirit. 'Is this come up to by bringing people under the same roof, by making them repeat the same creed, by making them go through the same formalities, by making them recognise the same external government?'<sup>289</sup> The real unity of the body of Christ is constituted by the Spirit, just as the unity of the natural body is constituted by the principle of life. It is a real unity because there is a common life pervading the whole mass. The illustrations of unity given in Scripture are throughout physiological, said Scott, for the object is not unity alone but, rather, 'unity by life.'<sup>290</sup> For this reason the analogy used by Paul to illustrate the unity of the Church is the unity of the human body, rather than the unity of a mass of stone, or the unity of a machine. 'It is quite wonderful how we learn to look upon the body of man as one, and yet how strangely multifarious are the portions of which it is composed.'<sup>291</sup> 'The unity of impression, which we derive from the human body,' asserted Scott, is 'dependent upon the circumstance, that a single spirit is expressing itself through all its movements, and making servants of every one of its members - the spirit of the life of that individual man. Now this it is, that the apostle has chosen for his comparison; and the life of that individual man it is, that organises the body of the man, that makes it to be that one body. It is because there is this life in it, that it is one. Suppose for a moment,' continued Scott, 'that a portion of the body shall lose its life; that it continues indeed outwardly attached to the body, but that that life which pervades the rest of the body does not extend to it. Then, to

<sup>288</sup> Ibid. p.512.

<sup>289</sup> Scott, 'On Schism' Lecture II, p.546.

<sup>290</sup> Ibid. p.549.

<sup>291</sup> Ibid. p.550.

all intents and purposes, it ceases to be of the body. The body acts upon it precisely like a foreign substance, and it acts upon the body precisely like a foreign substance. Mechanically it is in it; vitally it is not of it.'<sup>292</sup>

How is the Church to achieve this spiritual unity of life? It is not by opinions, or forms, or by any other sort of external cohesion, answered Scott. Rather, it is the Truth that is to unite men:

The man who desires unity will desire Truth, exactly in the same proportion; and he will mourn over untruth, that untruth which he can see to be touching anywhere this vital Truth, which will organise men into one living body. He will mourn over any such untruth, wherever he discerns it, with a force exactly proportioned to his desire of unity. The man who is careless as to men's judgments about Truth, is really careless about unity. He is contented that each man should live apart - that he might have a little sanctuary or shrine for himself, with which his neighbour is not to meddle, making with his neighbour a compact, that on the other part he will leave to him a corresponding little sanctuary of his own. This is infidelity. ... I care not - it is needless for any of us to care - for any man's opinion, who does not regard Truth as a thing above him, out of him, and entitled to absolute rule and authority over him; a thing over which he has no rights, but which has a boundless right over him.<sup>293</sup>

The basis of this spiritual unity through the Truth is man's submission to the God-given spiritual conscience which exists in every man. Over this conscience, man has no rights whatsoever, claimed Scott. 'We are not to believe any thing because we like; we are to believe because we are bound to believe - because we are bound to seek to know the Truth, discerning what commends itself as the Truth. We are bound to yield ourselves to the Truth, not in our form of thought only, but in our form of practice.'<sup>294</sup> The spiritual conscience is not a portion of one's private property; nor is it a piece of one's private feelings. Such an approach to the spiritual conscience, said Scott, is an untrue and baseless liberalism. 'This false liberalism is grounded on a forgetfulness of the distinction, between that in us which is entitled to rule over us, and that in us which we are bound to rule.'<sup>295</sup> The spiritual conscience we are

<sup>292</sup> Ibid. p.551.

<sup>293</sup> Ibid. p.551.

<sup>294</sup> Ibid. p.552.

<sup>295</sup> Ibid. p.552.



always to stand under. 'It would scarcely be unsafe to say, that this is the only thing over which a man has no rights at all, but which has an absolute and an infinite right over him.'<sup>296</sup>

Scott's lectures 'On Schism' made a significant impact on a number of minds. Not only were Thomas Erskine and James Baldwin Brown present at the lectures, and ready to acknowledge the force of Scott's ideas,<sup>297</sup> but Daniel Macmillan, the publisher, also attended and was deeply impressed with Scott, whom he described as a 'noble-hearted, truth-loving man - as yet scarcely known.'<sup>298</sup> Daniel Macmillan, who was later to publish material by Scott, Maurice, Kingsley, Campbell, and others in this circle, attended Scott's lectures with his brother, Alexander. 'We were surprised,' wrote Daniel, 'not only at his depth and clearness, but that so noteworthy a man should be so little known. I immediately procured his lectures on 'The Social Systems of the Present Day', and after reading them attentively my reverence for the man greatly increased,' continued Macmillan. 'He is, I think, second to few men of our time or any time.'<sup>299</sup> Macmillan also explained in this letter to another publisher, J. Maclehose, that he had since heard Scott deliver four lectures on the Reformation: 'I never heard or read anything on the same subject at all equal to them. His many-sidedness is really wonderful.'<sup>300</sup> Wondering how he could best share his discovery of Scott, Macmillan sent copies of Scott's lectures 'On Schism' and 'On the Social Systems of the Present Day' to Julius Hare, archdeacon of Leves, accompanied by a letter concerning Scott, which Hare, in turn, passed on to A. P. Stanley.<sup>301</sup>

In July 1842, Hare replied to Macmillan, expressing gratitude for having been introduced to 'the writings of so wise and good a man':

I had heard him spoken of several times with high praise by

<sup>296</sup> Ibid. p.552.

<sup>297</sup> See Hanna, Letters of Erskine II, pp.26-7; and Hunter, 'Alexander Scott', The Expositor vol 21, p.452.

<sup>298</sup> T. Hughes, Memoir of Daniel Macmillan (London, 1883), p.103

<sup>299</sup> Ibid. p.102.

<sup>300</sup> Ibid. p.102.

<sup>301</sup> Ibid. p.130.

his friend and mine, Mr. Maurice; but through some great carelessness I had never yet read a page of Mr. Scott's. Now I feel anxious to read all the utterances of his great mind; and I have accordingly procured his lectures on the Romans, and his three treatises. It is, indeed, a consolation under the grief for the loss of my noble-hearted friend Arnold, to find that there is another pure lover of truth like Mr. Scott living among us. Hardly anything I have read since Coleridge has taught and strengthened and delighted me so much as these lectures.<sup>302</sup>

By September 1842, Hare was still speaking of Scott in glowing terms. Macmillan visited Hare's home at Hurstmonceux, along with W. Whewell, the Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, and the Chevalier Bunsen, the Prussian ambassador to England. He recorded in a letter at this time that the conversation at Hurstmonceux 'often turned on Mr. Scott of Woolwich. Hare thinks very highly of him,' continued Macmillan. 'I am sure he admires him more, and thinks him a greater man than Carlyle. He did not say so, but I heard him speak of no one with such unmingled respect, always excepting Coleridge.'<sup>303</sup>

Scott and Hare soon established a lifelong friendship. For Scott it must have been a broadening relationship of great interest. Hare had been one of Thomas Arnold's closest friends, and, as F. D. Maurice's teacher at Cambridge, had been the dominant influence on Maurice's intellectual and theological development. Probably of even greater interest for Scott was the fact that Hare had for many years been one of Coleridge's most loyal disciples. His Guesses at Truth (1827) was permeated with Coleridgean thought. Hare was well equipped to understand Coleridge, for he was possibly the best German scholar of his day in England.<sup>304</sup> Hare and his friend, Connop Thirlwall, had translated B. G. Niebuhr's History of Rome, a book which was to change the course of English historical scholarship. Scott had entered a friendship with one of England's leading theological reformers.

By 1848, after years of friendship, Hare was able to say of Scott, that he believed him to be 'one of the first thinkers and

<sup>302</sup> Ibid. pp.121-2.

<sup>303</sup> Ibid. pp.139-40.

<sup>304</sup> See S. Prickett, Romanticism and Religion (Cambridge, 1976), p.124; and O. Pflaiderer, The Development of Theology (London, 1909), pp.372-3.

writers of the age.'<sup>305</sup> And as a lecturer, said Hare, Scott 'excels any I have ever heard, from the singular clearness, definiteness and brevity with which he expresses the deepest and subtlest thoughts, and works out a chain of logical argument, drawing the intelligent assent of his hearers along with him.'<sup>306</sup> And the great German scholar was even able to speak highly of Scott's acquaintance with the German language.<sup>307</sup> Hare's friend, The Chevalier Bunsen, also bore witness to Scott's 'accurate and extensive knowledge' of German.<sup>308</sup> It was through Hare that Scott came to know Christian Bunsen,<sup>309</sup> the German scholar and ambassador, who quite recently had been involved in establishing the Anglo-Prussian Jerusalem Bishopric. The Scott-Bunsen relationship began some time before October 1848, for at that time Bunsen testified to his friendship with Scott, and proceeded to speak of him in the following words:

Love of truth, without prejudices of party, combined with the patient reading and honest enquiry of a mind capable of doing justice to a grand subject, seems very seldom to have been so eminently united with a most astonishing power of elocution. ... Whoever has heard him will, I am sure, agree with me in saying, that few men living have so much the power of riveting the attention of their audience, and leave to them, at the same time, the conviction of having bestowed it for a lasting benefit.<sup>310</sup>

1) Scott's First Principle of Church Government (1845)

Early in 1845 Scott preached a sermon at the Welsh Chapel in Woolwich, which he subsequently published as The First Principle of Church Government. Scott asserted, in this work, in opposition to both the 'Biblicists' and the 'Traditionists', that the first principle of Church government is 'the exercise of spiritual wisdom on the part of the Church in the selection of means fitted to promote the great

<sup>305</sup> A letter from J.C. Hare to A. De Morgan, 26 August 1848. MS in the Senate House Library, University of London, A.L. 159/5 (iv).

<sup>306</sup> Testimonials to A.J. Scott (London, 1850), p.8.

<sup>307</sup> Ibid. p.9.

<sup>308</sup> Ibid. p.12.

<sup>309</sup> Johnson, George MacDonald, p.28.

<sup>310</sup> Testimonials to A.J. Scott (London, 1850), pp.11-12.

end of her being.'<sup>311</sup> The Church's end, explained Scott, is 'man's being made one with God, and thereby, also, one with his fellow man.'<sup>312</sup> The means are good because of their fitness to attain the end, and for no other reason, said Scott.

The Biblicist, Scott explained, believes that the means to be employed by the church are adequately laid down in Scripture. We are not only to follow the spirit of the New Testament Church, but to strictly adhere to their forms and methods, claims the Biblicist. The ordinance that is not found in Scripture is not to be acknowledged, for it is merely human. The Traditionist also recognises a certain rule of Church government and instruction, based upon the force of enactment in its favour, rather than upon its suitability to achieve the object of the Church's mission. In the Traditionist's case, however, the rule is Church tradition. Whatever she has ordered has for ever a divine authority.

Scott asked how far the Scriptural history of ecclesiastical institutions corresponded with the Biblicist and Traditionist thinking. If it is to be found, upon examination, that the principle of expediency, or fitness to an end, was employed during the New Testament times, is such a principle inadmissible now? What was suited to a particular purpose in Judaea, in 34 A.D., may be the best way of effecting the same thing in England in 1845, said Scott, but, if not, let it be changed:

The sun-dial, if it stand now surrounded by walls that shut out the rays, must be shifted into the sunshine. If the sea has receded by miles from the ancient harbour let every stone of it be carried down within the water-mark. The Church is too venerable in her primeval and eternal essence, and too busy with the real work to do, for her to need or to care to amuse an antiquarian curiosity, with the maintenance of mere monuments of necessities that exist no longer.<sup>313</sup>

Scott proceeded to substantiate his argument by citing a number of examples from Scripture, where institutions grew out of expediency rather than explicit divine appointment. These were examples, he said, 'of that inward power of adaptation to circumstances, which

<sup>311</sup> A.J. Scott, The First Principle of Church Government (London, 1845), pp.v-vi.

<sup>312</sup> Ibid. pp.1-2.

<sup>313</sup> Ibid. p.7.

belongs more or less to all living things, and is found most where is the greatest energy of the highest form of life.'<sup>314</sup> With specific reference to the institution of deacons, as recorded in Acts, Scott asserted:

Surely, whoever supposes that this institution was proposed in the first instance with the force of divine authority, and on that ground accepted, arbitrarily adds to the narrative an element at war with all that it actually contains. Here we find simply an emergency, the perception of that emergency and the appropriate manner of meeting it; throughout, a sound exercise of spiritual discretion on the part of the Apostles, and of those under their direction. That some corresponding office is required in all ages of the Christian Church, I can well believe. But certainly I find nothing here to lead me to suppose that the reason for retaining the office at this moment in London is because it existed eighteen hundred years ago at Jerusalem; or that its title, or the precise limits of its functions, are in anywise essential to be preserved; not to descend to vestments and postures, and seats in the synagogue.<sup>315</sup>

The whole tenor of the New Testament history, in regard to matters of this kind, said Scott, is the effect of the Spirit of wisdom in the selection of suitable means for the great end of the Church.

'The mere existence of a regulation in the Church, or its existence during the biblical ages, or the wisdom of the Spirit in him who introduced it, or its express divine authority at the season and in the place of its introduction,' asserted Scott, 'constitutes of itself no authority, divine or human, for that constitution abiding in the actual state of things.'<sup>316</sup> Because Roman court houses, for instance, were used centuries ago, for the meeting places of the Christian Church, which, for convenience, the Church accepted, churches nowadays, said Scott, feel compelled to have the ground plan of a Roman court house, whether convenient or not. 'In short, because it was wise and good to act in a certain manner in certain circumstances, we fancy it wise and good to mimic the mere outward details of that procedure, when all the determining circumstances are changed: as if, because protection against rain is the great need of our climate, missionaries were to be prepared

<sup>314</sup> Ibid. p.37.

<sup>315</sup> Ibid. pp.42-3.

<sup>316</sup> Ibid. p.51.

with garments of waterproof for the dry heats of Egypt.'<sup>317</sup> The truth is, said Scott, that this principle of Church government wars too much with man's sluggishness. The demands of the Spirit are too heavy. A Church that is to remain vital only by a perpetual struggle with the realities of her situation is too great a strain. It is much easier to substitute rules for thinking.

How is the Church to present the clearest image of eternity in the midst of the mutations of time, asked Scott:

This she is to do by the inward vigour of the essential principles of her life, dropping off forms no longer useful, as the oak has done the leaves of last summer. The live oak abides the same by its vitality, while it changes form and dimensions by growth: the mass of squared timber has lost its power of assimilation, its command of resources; death enables it to remain unchanged in form till death brings decay that changes form and substance. What is dead is changed from without; what lives changes from within. Even in forms and methods the old is not to be set aside merely for being old; nay, this is of itself so far in its favour. Let its antiquity be considered as a reason, not as foreclosing all reasoning about it.<sup>318</sup>

Scott published his First Principle of Church Government in early March 1845. By the 22nd March, Thomas Chalmers, having read the publication, wrote an appreciative letter to the author:

Yours is no every-day pamphlet; and I have read it with the most entire and cordial satisfaction. ... How the adoption of your principle ought to speed the cause of Christian union!<sup>319</sup>

Chalmers' approval of Scott's First Principle can be largely understood in terms of the great churchman's overwhelming desire for a vital and effective national Kirk, so powerful that he had been willing, largely for this reason, to quit the old forms of the Scottish Establishment in 1843.

1845 was, in effect, Scott's last year in Woolwich, for in the autumn of that year his health again failed him. By December Scott was convalescing in Paris,<sup>320</sup> where he remained for seven

<sup>317</sup> Ibid. p.52.

<sup>318</sup> Ibid. p.50.

<sup>319</sup> Hanna, Letters of Erskine II, p.383.

<sup>320</sup> See Johnson, p.28; and A. Carlyle, New Letters of Thomas Carlyle II, p.10.

months. Upon his return to Woolwich in late July 1846, Scott wrote to Carlyle:

I have not gained much ground since last autumn. I enjoyed a little trip I made from Paris a month ago and was the better for it: but on the whole I give up thoughts of a physical regeneration, and am disposed to make the best of an agonisation that never leaves me two days free from pretty severe pain, and of whose inconveniences pain is by no means the greatest.<sup>321</sup>

Some time after July, in 1846, Scott and his family moved to London.<sup>322</sup>

<sup>321</sup>Letter from A.J. Scott to T. Carlyle, 27 July 1846. The Scottish National Library, MS 1766 f.170.

<sup>322</sup>The D.N.B. article on Scott states that he left Woolwich in 1846. The earliest sign of his residence in London is February 1847; see C.N. Ray, The Letters and Private Papers of W.M. Thackeray vol II (London, 1945-6), p.282.

**CHAPTER V**

SCOTT IN LONDON, 1846 - 1850.



a) Scott returns to London and broadens his circle

In the latter half of 1846, Scott, now aged 41, moved from Woolwich, with his wife and two children, to 40 Gloucester Crescent, Regent's Park, London.<sup>1</sup> After sixteen years in Woolwich, Scott had returned to London, with all its memories of Edward Irving days. He now resided within a mile of the Scots Kirk at Regent Square, where the charismatic events and ecclesiastical trials of earlier years had taken place. The Scotts were joined at Gloucester Crescent by Ann Scott's sister, Miss Ker, who came in the double capacity of governess to Scott's children and personal nurse to Scott, whom she served for the rest of his life. Campbell later wrote to Miss Ker, concerning her 'many-sided relation' to Scott: 'your teacher and guide, your friend and brother, - sharing so much of his thinking with you, and of his feeling; caring for you also as a father since you became one of his family; and, besides all this receiving from him, the giving his love back by you in loving nursing, in all his varied need of nursing, through so many years of broken health.'<sup>2</sup>

The location of Scott's new residence allowed him more contact with his London friends, especially with Hensleigh Wedgwood who lived nearby in Regent's Park.<sup>3</sup> Two of Scott's more immediate neighbours, and new friends, were W.B. Carpenter and W.H. Wills, who, along with Scott, both lived on Gloucester Crescent.<sup>4</sup> Harry Wills was a miscellaneous writer, and one of the original literary staff of

<sup>1</sup>Ray, Letters of Thackeray II, p.282. Scott's house at 40 Gloucester Crescent was, and still is, situated in a very respectable part of London. During the first two years in the city, before becoming a Professor at London University, Scott appears to have lived on the income from his not infrequent public lectures, both in England and Scotland, on philosophical and literary subjects. Carlyle also, as we have seen, depended for a brief period on public lecturing. In addition to this, Scott would have received payment for writing the occasional review. See Ray, p.282. Scott's income was also likely supplemented by his regular course of Sunday evening lectures, which will be considered in the next section. At no point in their history do the Scotts appear to have been in need financially.

<sup>2</sup>Campbell, Memorials of J.M. Campbell II, p.124

<sup>3</sup>H. Wedgwood lived at 42 Chester Terrace, Regent's Park. See Testimonials to A.J. Scott (London, 1850), p.6.

<sup>4</sup>J.E. Carpenter, 'Introductory Memoir', in W.B. Carpenter's Nature and Man (London, 1888), p.43.

Punch. From 1846 he became closely associated with Charles Dickens, in 1849 becoming assistant editor to Household Words, and for the rest of Dickens' life one of his most intimate friends. Wills was also the brother-in-law of Robert Chambers, who in 1844 had anonymously published Vestiges of Creation, the precursor of Darwin's Origin of Species.

William Carpenter, Scott's other friend and neighbour, also greatly anticipated much of Darwin's evolutionary thought. Carpenter was, at this time, Fullerian Professor of Physiology at the Royal Institution, Fellow of the Royal Society, and Professor of Forensic Medicine at University College, and of Anatomy and Physiology at the London Hospital. Carpenter, as well as being a widely respected scientist, whose scientific help was sought by Chambers and Darwin,<sup>5</sup> was a committed Christian thinker, of the Unitarian school, and like Scott, occasionally lectured on the harmony of religion and science. In 1845, for instance, Carpenter lectured on the harmony of Christianity with a scientific belief in the evolution of the entire organic world:

There is surely nothing more Atheistical in the idea that the Creator, instead of originating each race by a distinct and separate act (the notion commonly entertained), gave to the first created Monad those properties, by the continued action of which, through countless ages, a Man would be evolved - than there is in the idea to which we are irresistibly led by Physiological study, that the Creator has given such properties to the first germ-cell of the human ovum, as enable it to become developed into the human form in the course of a few months.<sup>6</sup>

Carpenter, while still advocating the presence of design in evolution, was among the first to applaud Darwin's Origin of Species in 1859.

Scott had entered a relationship with one of the leading scientists of the day, and Carpenter, in return, came to think highly of his neighbour. A couple of years after the commencement of their friendship, Carpenter expressed himself to Scott:

That which has most strongly impressed me in my intercourse with you has been, on the one hand, the catholicity of spirit which leads you to appreciate merit in every School of Philosophy, Literature, or Art: and, on the other, the

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. p.41

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. p.36.

clearness and precision of your own opinions, which have always presented to me a scientific definiteness and consistency rarely to be met with amongst literary men.<sup>7</sup>

The scientist also spoke of Scott's philosophical commitment to the methods of scientific investigation, and went on to say that 'the course of my own physiological pursuits having frequently led me to communicate with you on topics of psychological inquiry, I have uniformly found you capable, not merely of clearly and fully informing me of the state of philosophical opinion on all such matters, but also of imparting to me original views, bearing the impress of profound thought, and tending to the elevation and extension of the study of the mind under all its aspects.'<sup>8</sup>

Early in Scott's return to London, probably through Harry Wills, he came to know William Makepeace Thackeray, who also was writing and illustrating for Punch. Thackeray's Vanity Fair was, at this time, appearing in monthly instalments, although he was still better known as 'Michael Angelo Titmarsh', the pseudonym under which he had published his earlier writings. The earliest surviving piece of correspondence between Scott and Thackeray is dated the 25th February 1847, but it is obvious from this letter that the two men had known one another for some time. Scott had written a review for The North British of February 1847, in which he described Thackeray as 'that most entertaining humourist, most vigorous writer, and most thoroughly humane man, Mr. Thackeray, better known as Michael Angelo Titmarsh. He is the good genius of the incomparable Punch; his wit has no malice - his mirth no folly. He is himself an artist, and his pencil often conveys to the eye what his kindred pen cares not or is unable to express. But we refer at present,' continued Scott, 'specially to his serious, beautiful criticisms upon the pictures in the Louvre, or his Parisian Sketch-book, and to several notices of the London Exhibitions in Fraser's Magazine. They are slightly done, but indicate his knowledge, and his affection for all that is true and good in painting'<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup>Testimonials to A.J. Scott (London, 1850), p.7.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid. p.27.

<sup>9</sup>A.J. Scott, 'A Review of Modern Painters', The North British Review vol 6, February 1847 (Edinburgh), p.403.

Shortly after the appearance of Scott's anonymous review, he invited Thackeray to an event, probably at Gloucester Crescent, to which Thackeray replied: 'My dear Scott, I will come with pleasure, more so as I recognise the hand of the North British Reviewer. I thought it was you certainly, and was going to write and ask. Praise in the right place is awfully sweet: and when you touch my humanity you "stap my vitals",' said Thackeray. 'I am much touched by your good opinion.'<sup>10</sup> Thackeray's letter indicates that this was probably not Scott's first review. It also indicates that Thackeray already had a fairly good knowledge of Scott. The Scott-Thackeray friendship was to last for life, and included within itself a warm relationship between the two families. By September 1847, for instance, we find one of Thackeray's daughters being invited to Susie Scott's birthday party.<sup>11</sup> Thackeray played a part in broadening Scott's circle of contacts. He can be found, for example, inviting the Scotts to dinner along with Sir Jonathan Pollock, a former Attorney General, and, by this stage, Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer, the Carlyles, and Rev. William Brookfield, a close friend of Tennyson's, and Inspector of Schools.<sup>12</sup>

During their residence in London, the Scotts set aside one night each week for an at-home evening, to which all their friends were welcome. Early in their return to London, the evening set aside was Wednesday, and in April 1847, Thackeray can be found apologising for his absence:

I shall be too late to make a bow to Mrs. Scott in the evening; but I will remember your Wednesdays and will not fail to ask soon for a cup of tea.<sup>13</sup>

Carpenter described one of these Scott soirées in the spring of 1847, relating to his sister an encounter between Carlyle and Francis Newman:

I met Carlyle in society last night, and listened to a long debate between him and Newman, in which Carlyle vehemently denounced toleration as the destruction of all individuality. His language was very forcible, and many of his views had much

<sup>10</sup> Ray, pp.282-3.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid. p.317.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. pp.347-8.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. p.290.

truth; but he evidently pushed them to an extreme, either intentionally or through habit.<sup>14</sup>

On this occasion at Scott's, Carlyle went so far as to defend Calvin for burning Servetus. Carpenter described how, when Carlyle had departed, Newman held up his hands in amazement, and asked: 'Does Mr. Carlyle always talk like that?'<sup>15</sup> Augustus De Morgan, the mathematician, and his wife, also occasionally attended Scott's at-homes, and, years later, Sophia De Morgan recalled having seen Carlyle and John Ruskin at one of Scott's evenings:

Mr. Carlyle and Mr. Ruskin were talking earnestly together, and Archdeacon Hare, Mr. F.D. Maurice, and my husband, who all stood near, joined occasionally in the conversation. The subject, suggested by some passing event, was the social and political state of Europe generally, but many special moral evils were dwelt upon. According to Mr. Carlyle, the look-out was dark in all directions, but Mr. Maurice and Mr. Scott threw in gleams of hope from one quarter of the social, or, rather, the religious, horizon, and Archdeacon Hare supported their views. I well remember Mr. Carlyle's expression as he looked up and said: 'Show me the remedy'. And just after, resting his head upon his hand, and his arm upon a little table, he never perceived that his elbow was plunged in a nosegay of lilies of the valley which stood upon it.<sup>16</sup>

The Scott-Ruskin relationship came to birth during this time in London, but the intimacy which eventually existed between Ruskin and the Scott family did not begin until a later period.<sup>17</sup> Ruskin later spoke of admiring Scott's 'tranquility of faith', and counted himself 'among his lovers'.<sup>18</sup> By 1846 Ruskin had published his second volume of Modern Painters. Although published anonymously, his authorship was by this time an open secret. Scott found much to sympathise with in Ruskin's profound appreciation of the beauty of nature, the dignity of art, and the mystery of life. Scott, who was

<sup>14</sup> Carpenter, pp.42-43

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. p.43.

<sup>16</sup> H.A. De Morgan, Threescore Years and Ten (London, 1895), pp.227-8.

<sup>17</sup> J.H. Whitehouse's collection of letters in The Solitary Warrior (London, 1929), consists largely of correspondence between Ruskin and the Scotts, dating from 1855 onwards.

<sup>18</sup> G. MacDonald, George MacDonald and His Wife (London, 1924), p.192.

described as 'a devoted admirer and discriminating critic of painting',<sup>19</sup> contributed to a review of Ruskin's Modern Painters, which appeared in The North British Review of February 1847.<sup>20</sup> The other contributor was John Brown, M.D., of Edinburgh, who later wrote Rab and his Friends.<sup>21</sup>

The North British Review had been established in 1844 to fill a special need in periodical literature. To the founders of The North British, the religious magazines of the day seemed too exclusively theological in substance and sectarian in tone, while the literary, political, and scientific journals either excluded religion or gave it only a subordinate place. In The North British all topics were to be dealt with 'in their highest relations', and religious articles were not to advocate the 'peculiarities of any particular sect'. The review was to be both 'liberal in politics and Christian in tone.'<sup>22</sup> Scott was a highly suitable writer for a periodical with such predilections, and William Hanna, the editor, recognised him as such. Hanna, the son-in-law and biographer of Thomas Chalmers, spoke of Scott as possessing a 'spiritual faculty of insight and reflection which in originality, subtlety, depth, and comprehensiveness was scarce surpassed by any pure thinker of his time.'<sup>23</sup>

In Scott's review of Modern Painters,<sup>24</sup> he described Ruskin

<sup>19</sup>M.J. Shaen, Memorials of Two Sisters: Susanna and Catherine Winkworth (London, 1908), p.44.

<sup>20</sup>Thackeray had recognised Scott's hand in this article. See Ray, Letters of Thackeray II, p.282.

<sup>21</sup>It is not certain that Scott and Brown knew one another in 1847. At a later date, however, they appear to have developed an acquaintanceship, and shared common friendships with Thackeray, Ruskin, and Erskine. See J.H. Whitehouse, The Diaries of J. Ruskin vol II (Oxford, 1958), p.602. W.E. Houghton's Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals vol I (Toronto, 1966), p.670, lists John Brown as one of the contributors to this review, and acknowledges that there was another writer involved.

<sup>22</sup>Houghton, p.663.

<sup>23</sup>Hanna, Letters of Erskine II, p.384.

<sup>24</sup>It is not entirely clear, in the review of Ruskin's Modern Painters, which parts are by Scott, and which by Brown. The review, however, is self-consistent in its high estimation of Ruskin's philosophy of art and there is nothing in the article which clashes with Scott's thought in general. In highlighting aspects of the

as enabling his readers 'to open their eyes upon a new world - walk under an ampler heaven, and breathe a diviner air.' Ruskin, said Scott, shows his reader 'the earth and every common sight transformed before him, - what is base, and personal, and evanescent, yielding to what is eternal, spiritual, divine, - and leaves him there more than delighted, instructed, strengthened, ennobled under the sense of having not only beheld a new scene, but of having held communion with a new mind, and having been endowed for a time with keen perception, and the impetuous emotion of a nobler and more penetrating intelligence.'<sup>25</sup>

Having summarised Ruskin's first volume, and entered into his high regard for Turner's landscapes, Scott spoke of Ruskin's power of preserving the unity of his subject, keeping it before him as a whole:

If he gives you the natural history of the Alpine gentian, he lets you know, somehow or other, that he is not forgetting, and that you ought not to forget, that the heavens are overhead and the earth underneath, and the viewless vital air everywhere. If he describes with a minute truthfulness we have never seen matched, the features of the higher clouds, he does not leave them by themselves, he gives you 'the broad field of the sky', over which they wander, now like flocks of sheep, now lying motionless like ships waiting for the wind, or drifting like swift birds before it, now kindled up by the setting sun and pierced through with unimaginable splendour, like the very gates of heaven; and, what is more, he seems never to forget, though he in no way obtrudes, the omnipresence and omnipotence and infinite loving-kindness of Him who knows their balancings, and out of whose treasures they come, and of whose feet they are the dust. So that as his great and avowed object is to show how painting may show forth His glory, he in doing so gains the same great results.<sup>26</sup>

In conclusion Scott expressed his personal appreciation of Ruskin's two volumes:

In our own case, not only did his thoughts come to us like manna from heaven, but they came likewise to us in the wilderness - when in glorious autumn we found ourselves with

review I shall refer to Scott as its author, and shall concentrate on passages which appear to me to be, either, by Scott, or highly consistent with his thinking.

<sup>25</sup> Scott, 'A Review of Modern Painters', The North British Review vol 6, February 1847, pp.401-2.

<sup>26</sup> ibid. p.412.

all our friends elsewhere, 'in populous city pent where houses thick and sewers annoy the air', bringing by contrast into our minds the breath of pleasant villages and farms, the airs of the uplands and mountain tops, the voice of the great deep, the smell of grain, of teded grass, of kine, each rural sight, each rural sound. - This book which we then got for the first time, gave us wings, opened new doors into heaven, brought the country into the town, made the invisible seen, the distant near.<sup>27</sup>

Susanna Winkworth, who had described Scott as, 'a devoted admirer and discriminating critic of painting', continued by saying, that he was no less so in regard to music and drama.<sup>28</sup> The historian of University College, London, also described Scott as 'a lover of music.'<sup>29</sup> His musical tastes had, no doubt, been further nurtured during his convalescence in Paris, by his friend, the composer, Frédéric Chopin. Chopin now visited England and Scotland for about eight months in 1848, within a year of his death from consumption. Chopin, whose compositions were already known and admired in England, played at a few concerts and evening parties, primarily for the élite of London society, and on one occasion before the Queen. Scott saw something of Chopin during his visit, although there remains little evidence of their time together.<sup>30</sup> Chopin spent most of his time with Erskine's cousins, particularly with Jane Stirling, who, in fact, was primarily responsible for his visit to Britain.<sup>31</sup> There developed a rumour at this time that Chopin was about to marry Erskine's cousin. Chopin denied this rumour, claiming that Jane Stirling was too much like himself. 'How could you kiss yourself?' asked Chopin in a letter of November 1848. 'Even if I could fall in love with someone, as I should be glad to do, still I would not marry, for we should have nothing to eat and nowhere to live. And a rich woman expects a rich man, or if a poor man, at least not a sickly one, but one who is young and handsome. It's bad enough to go to pieces alone, but

<sup>27</sup> Ibid. p.430.

<sup>28</sup> Shaen, p.44.

<sup>29</sup> H.H. Bellot, University College, London (London, 1929), p.260

<sup>30</sup> See A. Carlyle, New Letters of T. Carlyle II, p.62.

<sup>31</sup> See Chopin's letters from April to November 1848, in H. Opieski, Chopin's Letters (America, 1932).



two together that is the greatest misfortune,' continued Chopin. 'I may peg out in a hospital, but I won't leave a starving wife behind me.'<sup>32</sup> Chopin died in October 1849. Scott began a life of Chopin and worked on it for some time. Illness, however, prevented his finishing the work, 'as it did many others which he had begun,' wrote Susanna Winkworth. 'His constant ill-health left him for the most part barely able to get through the lectures on which he depended for his livelihood, and only at long intervals writing for a short time at various works which he contemplated.'<sup>33</sup>

Scott's interest in drama primarily evidenced itself in his relationship over the years with Fanny Kemble, the actress and writer, and daughter of the famous actor, Charles Kemble. Also, among Scott's close friends was Fanny's brother, John Mitchell Kemble, the philologist and historian.<sup>34</sup> John Kemble, a former editor of the British and Foreign Review, as well as being the Examiner of Stage Plays, was, by 1847, England's leading Anglo-Saxon scholar, and can be considered to have laid the foundations of our modern knowledge of the Anglo-Saxon period. Scott came to know the Kembles early in his return to London. Fanny Kemble had met with great success on stage, as early as 1829, and listed among her warmest admirers S. Rogers, T.B. Macaulay, Sydney Smith, and other distinguished literary men of the period. She is described as having had 'a sparkling, saucy, and rather boisterous individuality.'<sup>35</sup> In 1834 Fanny had married a southern planter from America, but in 1848 was to divorce him, largely over the slave issue. In December 1847 she stayed a little while with the Scott's in London, and on the 10th of that month wrote as follows:

I left the Scotts this morning with deep regret. Mr. Scott has not been well during this last visit I have paid them, and I was much shocked to hear that he is threatened with disease of the heart, sudden death at any moment. His wife and her sisters are excellently kind to me; she has but two faults, an excessive humility and an excessive conscientiousness; they wouldn't be bad for virtues, would they?

<sup>32</sup> Ibid. p.397.

<sup>33</sup> Shaen, pp.44-5

<sup>34</sup> Ibid. p.44.

<sup>35</sup> See D.N.B. article on Frances Anne Kemble

Mr. Scott's intercourse is delightful to me; his mind is deep and high, logical and practical, humorous and tender and he is as nearly good as a man can be. He has a still calm manner, and slow, quiet speech, very composing to me. I wish it might be my good fortune to see more of him.<sup>36</sup>

After many years of friendship, Fanny Kemble was to describe Scott as 'one of the most influential persons I have ever known, in the strongest sense of the word. I think the term, "an important human being", by which Sydney Smith described Francis Horner, might justly have been applied to Mr. Scott,' said Fanny. 'The intimate friend of Edward Irving, Carlyle, and Maurice, he affected, to an extraordinary degree, the minds and characters of all those who were familiar with him; and his influence, like all the deepest and most powerful human influence, was personal.'<sup>37</sup>

b) Scott's Sunday evening lectures

Late in 1846, Scott began to preach in hired rooms at the Marylebone Literary Institute in Portman Square, London, without connecting himself to any existing denomination. Although the attendance was usually small, Scott numbered among his occasional hearers, friends such as Maurice, Carlyle, Thackeray, Macmillan, John Kemble, and Henry Crabb Robinson.<sup>38</sup> Crabb Robinson, the diarist, and friend of some of the most notable literary men in Europe, came to know Scott during his London period of residence. 'He is a man from whom you are sure to hear unusual matter,' wrote Robinson to a friend who had attended one of Scott's Sunday evening lectures. 'He is always suggestive; and his orthodoxy is never offensive.' Robinson concluded by saying to his friend: 'If you lived in his neighbourhood you would, I have no doubt, seek his acquaintance. I have a high opinion - perhaps I should rather say, a strong impression - concerning him.'<sup>39</sup> Daniel Macmillan, another one of Scott's occasional Sunday evening hearers, wrote from his home in Cambridge to a London friend:

<sup>36</sup> F.A. Kemble, Records of a Later Life vol III (London, 1882), p.283.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid. p.284.

<sup>38</sup> Ballot, p.260.

<sup>39</sup> T. Sadler, Diary, Reminiscences, and Correspondence of Henry Crabb Robinson vol III (London, 1869), pp.356-7.

I should recommend you to hear a very remarkable man preach or lecture next Sunday night. I mean Professor Scott. ... On Sunday evenings he preaches in a Literary Institution in Edward's Street, Portman Square. He is a man of very great mark. His mind is singularly clear, orderly, scientific; yet he has a most warm, devout, reverent heart. I wish he would write more: for he is one of the best thinkers of our day: and his influence is always wholesome.<sup>40</sup>

One of Scott's more regular attenders was Emily, the sister of Susanna and Catherine Winkworth, the translators. In describing one of Scott's sermons, Emily said: 'I never heard such bold thinking with such reverent devotional spirit.'<sup>41</sup>

Francis Newman also attended the Marylebone Literary Institute on Sunday evenings. Among Scott's constant hearers, recorded Crabb Robinson, 'is Newman, the archheretic, who joins in the singing, and seems most devout.'<sup>42</sup> Scott's old university friend, William Gaskell, and his wife, Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell, the novelist, often attended Scott's Sunday evening sessions when visiting London. Mrs. Gaskell, a warm admirer and close friend of Francis Newman, having spoken of him 'with true reverence' in a letter to Eliza Fox, proceeded to say:

You may often if not always see him at Mr. Scott's lectures. He sits in one regular place. I think I see him now stealing in rather late to his usual place on the back benches to the right hand of Mr. Scott. <sup>43</sup>

Newman, who, in Scott fashion, had conscientiously refused to sign the thirty-nine articles to take his M.A. in 1830, and who had known Scott since 1833, moved to London the same year as did Scott. 'Do you know Frank Newman, the new Latin Professor at the London University College?' asked Scott in a letter to Carlyle, dated July 1846. 'I am very glad of his appointment for my own sake, as well as for his. It brings within reach a man whom I much like and value,' said Scott. 'He is a brother of John Newman's; but you must, I suppose, have heard Sterling and Maurice speak of him.'<sup>44</sup> The historian of University

<sup>40</sup> T. Hughes, Memoir of Daniel Macmillan (London, 1883), p.181.

<sup>41</sup> Shaen, p.43.

<sup>42</sup> Sadler, p.356.

<sup>43</sup> J.A.V. Chapple, The Letters of Mrs. Gaskell (Manchester, 1966), p.87.

<sup>44</sup> Letter from Scott to T. Carlyle, 27 July 1846. The Scottish National Library MS 1766 f.170.

College, London, described Newman as 'altogether a strange figure, as eccentric in outward seeming as he was in opinion. A man of naturally striking appearance, he made himself doubly conspicuous by the oddity of his garments,' said Bellot. 'With a soft felt hat, white or light grey, with a very broad brim, set far back on his head, a high Gladstone collar, and a black and white shepherd's-plaid scarf wound round his neck, he wore, in dirty winter weather, trousers of which the lower six or eight inches were of black leather and an outer garment consisting of a rug with a hole in the middle through which to put his head.'<sup>45</sup> A different picture is drawn by Mrs. Gaskell who described Newman's face and voice as immediately indicating that 'he had been with Christ.'<sup>46</sup>

During Newman's time of attendance at Scott's Sunday evening meetings, he published The Soul (1849), which, against both the Scriptural and Church infallibilists, asserted the autonomy and validity of spiritual experience, and Phases of Faith (1850), a highly controversial, autobiographical account of his religious changes. Newman, in advocating the vital role of the spiritual conscience, or 'the soul' as he termed it, contended that Christians were bound to degenerate the moment they began 'to worship Apostles and books and church rules and precedent and tradition, and thus to sip at other men's buckets, instead of drawing living water from the true fountain, God himself.'<sup>47</sup> Christians must learn, stated Newman, that 'inspired words were not meant as premises for syllogisms, nor as ready-made weapons against heretics, nor as barriers against free thought and feeling; but as torches that kindle new souls, so that the child in the Spirit is as truly inspired as the parent: for the heart of man is still young; the Spirit of God has not died out. The Bible is a blessed book, rightly used,' said Newman, 'yet the Bible may be causing more spiritual evil than any other book, if by it you smother the Holy Spirit within yourselves, and condemn those who love God. A great revolution of mind is wanted. The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, nor sermons and sabbaths, nor history and

<sup>45</sup> Bellot, p.256.

<sup>46</sup> Chapple, p.88.

<sup>47</sup> F. Newman, The Soul (London, 1905), p.338.

exegesis, nor a belief in the infallibility of any book, nor in the supernatural memory of any man; but it is, as Paul says, righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. And he who in these last is minded as Christ, is accepted with God, and shall at length be approved by men.<sup>48</sup>

In the more controversial work, Phases of Faith, Newman explained that, although his religious belief had changed, he had not drifted into unbelief. The most vital point in Christianity for him now was 'to sympathise with the great souls from whom its spiritual eminence has flowed; - to love, to hope, to rejoice, to trust with them; - and not, to form the same interpretations of an ancient book and to take the same views of critical argument.'<sup>49</sup> Newman stated that although he increasingly saw moral and spiritual imperfection in the Bible, he by no means ceased to regard it as a quarry where he 'might dig precious metal, though the ore needed a refining analysis.'<sup>50</sup> In describing the type of Christians with whom he wished communion, Newman, in fact, described something very similar to Scott's Sunday evening group. These were Christians, said Newman, 'who love their creed, only because they believe it to be true, but love truth, as such, and truthfulness, more than any creed: with these I claim fellowship. Their love to God and man, their allegiance to righteousness and true holiness, will not be in suspense and liable to be overturned by new discoveries in geology and in ancient inscriptions, or by improved criticism of texts and of history, nor have they any imaginable interest in thwarting the advance of scholarship,' said Newman. 'It is strange indeed to undervalue that Faith, which alone is purely moral and spiritual, alone rests on a basis that cannot be shaken, alone lifts the possessor above the conflicts of erudition, and makes it impossible for him to fear the increase of knowledge.'<sup>51</sup>

After a few years of frequent attendance at Scott's Sunday evening sessions, Newman described Scott's addresses as having 'the

<sup>48</sup> Ibid. pp.339-40.

<sup>49</sup> F. Newman, Phases of Faith (London, 1850), p.188.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid. p.188.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid. p.202.

form of sermons, but they cannot be popular, for the very reason that they are in fact philosophical lectures on spiritual religion. I believe I may say, it is not my opinion only, but the opinion of all competent minds among his hearers, that he displays both insight and logical powers of a very high and rare quality; and that he is one of the very few men in England, who is competent to originate a new and fruitful school of metaphysical and moral thought,' asserted Newman. 'It is rare with me to meet a learned man who is less burdened by his own learning. Whatever he receives is fused into homogeneity by the power of his mind, so that it becomes his own.'<sup>52</sup>

Scott's hope for the Sunday evening sessions at the Marylebone Literary Institute was that the Christian faith, concerning man's relation to God, 'can and ought to be applied to the solution of the same questions with which the philosopher, the economist, and the politician are engaged. Of course, detail and science are not our business here, but fundamental principle is. Thus,' said Scott, 'there may be a significance and a suitableness in our assembling, with worship and reading of the Sacred Word, on the Christian day of convocation, in a place set apart during the week to the study of natural and intellectual laws.'<sup>53</sup>

Only two of Scott's Sunday evening addresses, between 1846 and 1850, were published; they appeared as Scott's Two Discourses in May 1848. The first discourse, entitled 'The Kingdom of the Truth', was largely a restatement of Scott's thoughts on the Kingdom of Truth as expressed in his earlier lectures on The Social Systems of the Present Day and Schism. The Kingdom of Truth, said Scott, is to be established by witnessing to the Truth, and this witness will attract to itself whatever is congenial. 'As from the air, and soil, and water, the life in the germ elicits what can partake of itself, and makes leaves and fruit and solid boughs of what was before unseen altogether, or confounded in the inert mass; so should this witness assimilate from out humanity what could participate in a life of Truth.'<sup>54</sup> To be of the Truth does not mean holding certain doctrines

<sup>52</sup> Testimonials to A.J. Scott (London, 1850), p.15.

<sup>53</sup> A.J. Scott, Two Discourses (Cambridge, 1848), p.23.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid. p.7.

of Christianity; it does not have to do with opinion. To be of the Truth, is to be, in one's life and thoughts, consistent with the reality of things. 'There is an inward correspondency between humanity as God means it, and the entire reality of things,' said Scott. 'The sense of truth is the experience of this harmony.'<sup>55</sup> Truth, as Scott had insisted in his previous lectures, cannot be conquered; it is only to be submitted to. The great obstruction to the Kingdom of Truth is man's unwillingness to commit himself to the practical results of truth. In conclusion, Scott stated that his own Sunday evening ministry was based upon this conception of Truth. 'No authority is claimed here on the ground that it has been conferred or recognised by any organised community,' said Scott. 'If truth be spoken here, it has truth's authority; if divine truth, it has God's authority. Men may have additional rights to your attention,' added Scott, 'higher than this they cannot have. And what have they without this? I, at least, if I have not this, have none.'<sup>56</sup>

Scott, in his second discourse, entitled 'The Range of Christianity', emphasised the breadth and all-encompassing nature of Christianity. Life is not to be divided up into the religious and the secular, for it is a living whole. The Kingdom of God involves the totality of man, not just the sacrifice of one dimension in order to escape future punishment:

How religion ever came to be another name for self-interest, or at best for its extension into eternity; how future happy circumstances, or (something far meaner) a safe escape, has been regarded as the end and aim of it, and at length men have thought it safe to be engrossed with the thought of safety, which is false, even in the meanest dangers; how a pretext has been afforded to the Pantheist for representing Christianity specifically as the grand development of egotism the great obstruction to the sense of universal humanity, and to the free exercise of all our being; how the graces of the divine nature have been degraded into mere proofs of faith, and faith into a mere security, payable at death or the judgment; how it has been thought possible to love God and man, and whatever things are pure and lovely and honourable, out of terror, or out of prudent regard for ourselves; how the care of the soul is first made the one thing needful, and then made no care properly for the soul at all, but only for what may befall us in another world: - all this

<sup>55</sup> Ibid. p.19.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid. pp.22-3.

degeneration we cannot now pause to explain; but we must advert to it as a main cause why Christianity, which combines the faith that all things are yours, temporal and eternal, with the faith that ye are not your own, has become narrower in its claims and its aspirations than Judaism or Platonism.<sup>57</sup>

Surely Jesus did not mean so to limit us, asserted Scott. The very centre of the Christian gospel is 'the union, not of the individual merely, but of humanity, with God: God manifest in the flesh is the point of meeting. What is most human becomes the most divine: what is most divine, the most human. In what is God's,' said Scott, 'man acquires the interest of an heir, nay, of one who dwelleth in God, and in whom God dwelleth: in what is man's, God hath taken to himself all the interest of man.'<sup>58</sup> In Christ we come in contact with 'human faculties and affections, and pass through this conducting medium into the mind and being of God. There is, then, no part of my nature, as God made it and means it, that is not brought into the dearest nearness to Himself,' contended Scott. 'There is nothing on which it is adapted to exercise itself that does not concern Him as it does me.'<sup>59</sup>

Scott asserted that the growing humanitarianism of his day, and the loftier ideas concerning humanity, were an outgrowth of Christ's teaching. It was taught to us by him, who in his humanity, said: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father"; and, "inasmuch as ye did it to the least of these my brethren, ye did it to me". 'Our humanitarianism,' said Scott, 'is a growth of Christianity, though men detach it from the trunk, and try to substitute it for the root. One great reason why they have done so is, because professing Christians have been so apt to divide the truth as exclusively, though on the other side. A theology that shut out human interests,' claimed Scott, 'has taught men a humanity that shuts out God and Christ.'<sup>60</sup>

The range of Christianity is universal. No aspect of life is excluded. In every sphere of activity whether politics, business

<sup>57</sup> Ibid. pp.31-2.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid. p.33.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid. p.34.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid. p.46.



or art, 'the Christian's calling', said Scott, 'is to be a "fellow-worker" with God the creator, the Preserver, the Giver of the victory.'<sup>61</sup> For God is 'the Being on which all being rests, the Intelligence according to which all things have their law,' and 'is the illumination by which each thing is beheld.'<sup>62</sup> The religious man who, for instance, shuts out science, and the man of science who would do without faith, must be told, said Scott, 'that their synthesis, the light that burns at their polar contact, is a brighter thing than either alone: that what the dew-drop is to him who sees the thunder sleeping in it as science has detected it, is in comparison with the dew-drop glittering only to the eye of the body, so is the whole natural world to him who sees the supreme life looking through it, compared with what it is to him who knows it only as a congeries of facts or forces.'<sup>63</sup> Scott also illustrated the range of Christianity in terms of art. The true artist, he said, must listen to and receive from the First Artist's creation:

Where there is the most, and of the highest and purest kind of life embodied, art is nearest nature: it is man's joyful answer, or echo, of the supreme Artist. Every fragment of truth in art is a snatch caught up of man's part in the choral harmony, whose burthen is, 'The Lord reigneth, let the earth be glad'; or an oppressed longing after it: which part, when man shall have fully learned, when he shall take the lead in this rejoicing, shall he not hear all round him that 'the mountains and the hills break forth into singing, and that all the trees of the forest clap their hands?' ...Were God indeed all in all, his name hallowed, his kingdom come, his will done on earth as it is done in heaven, that name might be too all-pervading an element of life and thought to be often mentioned. ...Were God felt in all, then created forms in their variety would be cherished as His utterances, and used as our utterances of Him, and to Him; and the mystery of music would be solved; and the composition and poesy of all things would be both his voice to us, and ours to Him.<sup>64</sup>

'To combine time and eternity, heaven and earth,' concluded Scott, 'is the highest task, of the most difficult, and accordingly of the most precious accomplishment, here appointed to man.'<sup>65</sup>

<sup>61</sup> Ibid. p.45.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid. p.36.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid. pp.40-1.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid. pp.43-4.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid. p.47.

George MacDonald, later Scott's friend, and, probably, his closest disciple, first encountered Scott at one of his 1849 Sunday evening sessions at the Marylebone Institute, and was hospitably invited into Scott's home by Ann Scott.<sup>66</sup> MacDonald having related this to his fiancée, Louisa Powell, she replied by saying how glad she was that he had found in Scott 'at least a man who could preach and give the message from God direct', and hoped that MacDonald would 'miss no opportunity of hearing him.'<sup>67</sup> It appears that MacDonald did in fact make use of every opportunity of sitting at Scott's feet. MacDonald had moved to London in September 1848, at which time he entered Highbury Theological College to prepare for the Congregational ministry. Although the Principal of the College explicitly disapproved of Scott and his teaching, MacDonald persevered in his attendance at the Marylebone Institute on Sunday evenings, and even persuaded other Highbury students to accompany him.<sup>68</sup> It was probably due to Scott's powerful influence on him, which from the very beginning was profound,<sup>69</sup> that MacDonald became dissatisfied with the theological training at Highbury. 'One may hazard a guess,' wrote a MacDonald biographer, 'that his chief pleasures at this period had to do with the lectures of Professor A.J. Scott.'<sup>70</sup> MacDonald left Highbury College before his course was finished. Notwithstanding, he was ordained to the Trinity congregational chapel in Arundel in 1850. Scott and MacDonald were, thus, temporarily separated, but their friendship continued. A number of years later, MacDonald wrote a poem to Scott, which expressed the poet's indebtedness to Scott for his early acceptance of him, and his continued friendship:

To A.J. Scott

When, long ago, the daring of my youth,  
Drew nigh thy greatness with a little thing,  
Thou didst receive me; and thy sky of truth

<sup>66</sup>J. Johnson, George MacDonald, p.22.

<sup>67</sup>G. MacDonald, George MacDonald and his Wife (London, 1924), p.125.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid. p.115.

<sup>69</sup>Johnson, pp.22-3.

<sup>70</sup>H. Gray, 'A Brief Sketch of the life of George MacDonald', The Bookman vol 29 (London, 1905), p.63.

Has domed me since, a heaven of sheltering,  
 Made homely by the tenderness and grace  
 Which round thy absolute friendship ever fling

A radiant atmosphere. Turn not thy face  
 From that small part of earnest thanks, I pray,  
 Which, spoken, leaves much more in speechless case.

I see thee far before me on thy way  
 Up the great peaks, and striding stronger still;  
 Thy intellect unrivalled in its sway,

Upheld and ordered by a regnant will;  
 Thy wisdom, seer and priest of holy fate,  
 Searching all truths its prophecy to fill;

But this my joy: throned in thy heart so great,  
 High Love is queen, and sits without a mate.

May 1857<sup>71</sup>

c) Scott's Lectures at Edinburgh and Manchester

In addition to lecturing regularly in London, Scott during his London period, lectured occasionally in Manchester and Edinburgh. In Manchester Scott delivered courses of lectures at the Athenaeum and the Royal Institution, and in Edinburgh he annually addressed the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution.<sup>72</sup> The latter institution, based at 4 Queen Street, Edinburgh, had been founded in 1846.<sup>73</sup> During this period of Scott's lecturing at the Institution, between

<sup>71</sup>G. MacDonald, George MacDonald's Poetical Works vol I (London, 1911), pp.280-81.

<sup>72</sup>Scott's lectures in Manchester were as follows: October 1847, 'Six Lectures on the History of the Middle Ages'; October 1848, 'Six Lectures on the Existing Elements of English Society, Historically Considered.' These lectures were extensively reported in The Manchester Examiner. Scott's lectures at the Edinburgh Philosophical were as follows: December 1847, 'Six Lectures on the History of the Middle Ages'; December 1848, 'Six Lectures on the Philosophy of History'; December 1849, 'Six Lectures on the Existing Elements of English Society'; December 1850, 'Four Lectures on the Progress of Mental Philosophy during the first half of the 19th century'; and January 1851, 'Four Lectures on the General Literature of the first half of the 19th century'. These lectures were briefly reported in most of the Edinburgh newspapers. See bibliography.

<sup>73</sup>For a short history of the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution, see, W.A. Miller, The 'Philosophical' (Edinburgh, 1949). See also, The Edinburgh Philosophical Institution Reports, etc., 1846-67, at the Scottish National Library.

1847 and 1851, John Wilson, the Professor of Moral Philosophy, or 'Christopher North' of Blackwoods, was its President, and Robert Chambers one of the Directors. Among the Institution's Extraordinary Directors were Cockburn, Jeffrey, and Macaulay, and the list of lecturers included Wilson, Macaulay, Whately, Thomas Guthrie, and Ralph Waldo Emerson. Years later a member of the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution recalled Scott's lectures:

Mr. Scott was one of the earliest and one of the most powerful of our lecturers here. He gave short courses on the Philosophy of History, of Literature, on Dante, on Mental Philosophy, etc. etc., and always with distinguished acceptance. There was something in the man which transcended while it enriched his words, and entranced his hearers - something that made them feel that, if what reached them was good and great, there was something greater and better still unreached and there, if it only could be uttered. There was an exuberance of living, instant thought, and that of the purest and highest kind, which by its very richness and fulness prevented its adequate expression - not that he was a confused or imperfect thinker, or even cloudy, except such clouds as our visible heavens must always have - and his were always in the upper heavens - at once their glory and its gloom; but he thought, and felt, and was moved at the very moment he spoke, and his words partook somewhat of the fine confusion of immediate, formative life. It was like seeing and listening unawares to the spontaneous movements and the heart-music of the soul, working out for its own delectation its own deepest themes.

This it was that made Mr. Scott's written thoughts so ineffectual to give anything like a true and rounded idea of his nature and of its powers - it was as if he had to stop the machine when recording its doings. You felt in his lectures that he came there, not thoughtlessly it is true, but not with ready-made thought, much less ready-made words: he was going to think aloud and before you. Instead of telling of his mental experiments yesterday, he, like a high spiritual chemist, performed them before the eyes of your mind. It was wonderful the charm this gave him over those who were willing and able to be so charmed.

Hence, too, it came that men of the finest nature and culture - men themselves dealers in truth at first hand - men among the foremost of our time - had for Mr. Scott's conversation and improvisatore prelections a regard quite peculiar, and prized him as a true fountain of living thought - not a laborious pump or an insipid cistern.<sup>74</sup>

In both Manchester and Edinburgh, Scott delivered a course of six lectures on 'The Existing Elements of English Society,

<sup>74</sup>'The late Professor A.J. Scott', The Scotsman, 19 January 1866.

Historically Considered'. Scott's belief in the historical method is clearly displayed in these lectures. He attempted to understand the English society of his day in terms of its history. 'The very life, motives, and being of a nation,' said Scott, 'were different from what they would have been if the antecedents of its history had been different.'<sup>75</sup> As he had contended in his lectures on history, the past lives in the present. What the Celt, the Roman, the Saxon, and the Norman had been, and had done in the past, significantly coloured and shaped the various elements of English society. Death always feeds life, said Scott. That which dies does not remain dead, for 'there is a better and a greater life in the crops of the valley than in the crystallisation of the granite peaks which had been broken down to afford them soil.'<sup>76</sup>

Scott briefly sketched in these lectures the development of many elements of English society. He considered the history of its religion, the progress of our national literature, the Church's early nurturing of music, architecture, and education generally, and then the liberation of these fields from strict ecclesiastical domination. In tracing the evolution of the English language, Scott spoke proudly of its motley character, and opposed the linguistic purists who contended that Anglo-Saxon was the only true form of English. One had only to open a page of Shakespeare, said Scott, to be thankful that the language had an affluence of resources. 'Let any one see how Shakespeare and Milton had used those portions of our tongue derived from various sources, and then say if he would wish them to be limited a hair's breadth.'<sup>77</sup> Scott's treatment of the English language was typical of his generally positive view of the past's manifold influence on the present.

When he came to consider the English class structure, however, his propitious treatment of its historical development revealed a certain conservative credulity in Scott, particularly in relation

<sup>75</sup> A.J. Scott, 'The Existing Elements of English Society, Historically Considered' Lecture I, Supplement to the Manchester Examiner, 14 October 1848.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Scott, 'Existing Elements of English Society' Lecture III, The Manchester Examiner, 17 October 1848.

to the aristocracy. In Saxon England, explained Scott, it was possible that any man might become a nobleman. This, said Scott, is the substance, 'the bone and muscle of our society':

In our time, the highest powers of government had been wielded by the sons of merchants and manufacturers, because, in fact, the old Saxon state of things had continued; and men, either by express title like Lord Sydenham, or by acknowledged social position, like recent premiers, were considered as a portion of the aristocracy. The aristocracy of England received a continual infusion of all the kinds of power which were developed in other classes of the community, whether in the shape of wealth, talent, or learning. The position of the aristocracy continued to be, in this country, as high as it was elsewhere, very much higher than it actually is elsewhere; but here it continued to be accessible from other social positions, in a manner in which it had not been in any other country. ...The peculiarity of our social state was, that the distinctions of social position were greater than they were anywhere, and yet, that the boundaries between them were the most easily passed.<sup>78</sup>

Scott asserted that many of the noblest attributes of the aristocracy had penetrated all classes, and he contended that there did not exist an insurpassable gulf between men of the highest and lowest classes in Britain. The fact that 'every intermediate position was filled up'<sup>79</sup> seemed to tone down, for Scott, the enormous disparities which did exist in the class structure of mid 19th century England. In a spirit of moderation, rather than anything approaching radicalism, he desired that the lowest condition might be elevated, and that 'by some gradual and not violent diminution of the proportion of the highest, we could attain to a greater diffusion of the enjoyments of life through all classes.'<sup>80</sup>

In historically considering the various elements of English society, Scott did mourn the loss of one important aspect of the past, and that was, the personal dimension of the employer-employed relationship. Pecuniary obligation was rapidly substituting itself for personal obligation, said Scott. Industrialisation had largely done away with apprenticeship as the prevailing element in the

<sup>78</sup> Scott, 'Existing Elements of English Society' Lecture IV, Supplement to the Manchester Examiner, 21 October 1848.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

relationship between the employer and the employed. 'A single man,' explained Scott, 'now employed, not half a dozen or a dozen, but hundreds, and in some cases thousands of individuals.'<sup>81</sup> This impersonal arrangement increasingly fuelled an antagonism between the classes. 'This was the problem of our times,' said Scott, 'the solution of which would be the nucleus of a new society.'<sup>82</sup> It was 'a problem not to be solved by any sudden flash of the imagination; but by painstaking care to discharge the mutual relations which have become important to the whole world, as they always were to those immediately involved in them. That there are those who are extending their relations as employer or employed beyond the very narrow line of pecuniary obligation,' concluded Scott, 'is one of the most hopeful symptoms, with regard to the manufacturing and commercial classes, of the age in which we live.'<sup>83</sup>

Through his lecturing in Manchester and Edinburgh, Scott's circle was again greatly enlarged, as he entered into many more new friendships. In Manchester he came to know William B. Hodgson, the educational reformer, who, between 1847 and 1851, was Principal of Chorlton High School, Manchester. Hodgson spoke of Scott as a man 'of great natural ability, matured by culture, with simplicity of manner, benevolence, quiet energy, and deep moral earnestness.'<sup>84</sup> In Edinburgh one of Scott's new friends was William Smith, who had made his mark as the translator and biographer of Fichte, the German idealist. In Smith's eyes Scott possessed 'that happy union of original genius with profound and extensive learning.'<sup>85</sup> Smith was one of the founders of the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution, and Chairman of its Directors. He described Scott's lecturing style there as 'clear and unembarrassed', and spoke of 'the terse and nervous eloquence' of his language.<sup>86</sup> Other friends included James Pillans, the Professor of Humanity at Edinburgh;<sup>87</sup>

<sup>81</sup> Scott, 'Existing Elements of English Society' Lecture VI, Supplement to the Manchester Examiner, 28 October 1848.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Testimonials to A.J. Scott (Edinburgh, 1856), p.9.

<sup>85</sup> Testimonials to A.J. Scott (London, 1850), p.18.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid. p.13.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid. p.31.

Francis Russel, an Edinburgh Advocate;<sup>88</sup> and Willaim Gregory, the Professor of Medicine in Edinburgh, who regarded Scott as 'one of the first philosophic intellects of the age', and described Scott's personal character as being 'as amiable as his intellect is vigorous and acute.'<sup>89</sup> James MacKenzie, another friend, and one of the Extraordinary Directors of the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution, thought that Scott's private conversation was as powerful as his public lecturing.<sup>90</sup> The last new friendship of note, which came to birth through Scott's lecturing in Edinburgh, was with Leonhard Schmitz, the translator and historian, and the private instructor of many European royalty, including the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Edinburgh. Schmitz, a close friend of Bunsen and Thirlwall, had translated, along with William Smith, the third volume of Niebuhr's momentous History of Rome, the first and second of which had been translated by Hare and Thirlwall. Scott had thus come in contact with yet another mind which was thoroughly acquainted with the German historical method. In return Schmitz saw Scott as 'one of the master-minds of our age and country.'<sup>91</sup>

d) Scott continues to lecture to the working classes

In addition to lecturing at intellectually respectable institutions, such as the Edinburgh Philosophical and the Manchester Royal, Scott continued to lecture to the working classes, as he had done in Woolwich.<sup>92</sup> Often, in fact, his lectures at mechanics' institutes were contemporaneous with his more high-powered addresses.<sup>93</sup> Scott had a respect for the working classes, which often evidenced itself in his lectures. His admiration of

<sup>88</sup> Ibid. p.4.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid. p.12.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid. p.13.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid. p.5.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid. p.22.

<sup>93</sup> See, for instance, Scott's lectures at the Glasgow Mechanics Institute, reported in The North British Mail, 7,10,28 December 1847, and The Glasgow Constitutional, 16 December 1848, or his lectures at the Rhodes Mechanics' Institute near Manchester, reported in The Manchester Examiner, 12 October 1847, and 24 October 1848.



at least two workers is recorded: the first being William Bowie, a Paisley weaver;<sup>94</sup> and the second, a Glasgow mason, named George Galloway, whom Scott described as 'one of the nobles of nature.'<sup>95</sup> Such was Scott's respect for the workers that he did not wish to merely inculcate ideas, but rather to enable the working classes to understand for themselves. 'Never once did he give the impression that he was the repository of a knowledge that was denied to his hearers,' explained Macallum. 'Rather it was that he sought to allure others to taste and to know for themselves. It was an open secret that he held; what he aimed at was to awaken an inquiring habit.'<sup>96</sup> Scott himself said, during one of his mechanics' institute lectures, that if he had a 'drenching horn', for making the workers swallow all his ideas, he would have no desire to use it. 'What is received implicitly,' said Scott, 'is not truly received.'<sup>97</sup> Let the working classes reflect, read and inquire, and they will understand for themselves. 'I have no interest to serve but that of the truth,' said Scott.<sup>98</sup>

Scott first lectured at the Glasgow mechanics' institute, called the Glasgow Athenaeum, in December 1847. This institute, consisting of about 1900 members, had begun only two months earlier, and Scott was its second guest lecturer.<sup>99</sup> Two months later, Emerson was to be another one of the Athenaeum's earliest distinguished speakers. Scott's subject in 1847 was the Middle Ages. 'It seemed,' said Macallum in describing Scott's Glasgow lectures, 'as if the speaker played with his subject - such a consciousness of thorough and complete mastery, and so fine a sense of reliance. It did seem wonderful that without note or memorandum he neither halted nor hesitated, never at a loss for a

<sup>94</sup> A.J. Symington, Some Personal Reminiscences of Carlyle (Paisley, 1886), p.48.

<sup>95</sup> D. Campbell, Memorials of J.M. Campbell I, p.275.

<sup>96</sup> P. Macallum, Recollections of Professor A.J. Scott, p.6.

<sup>97</sup> A.J. Scott, 'The Foundations of Society, Moral and Economical', The Manchester Examiner, 24 October 1848.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> For a brief account of this institution's early history, see, 'Glasgow Athenaeum Soiree', The North British Mail, 29 December 1847.

word, and always the right one. Sentence after sentence came, and marvellous it was to listen to them as they straightened and marshalled into their place, always ending right.'<sup>100</sup> Scott's fourth Athenaeum lecture in December 1847 was at William Anderson's United Presbyterian Church, on John Street in Glasgow.<sup>101</sup>

Anderson, who might be considered the Norman Macleod of the Glasgow United Presbyterians, had, like Scott, in earlier life, come under the theological influence of Edward Irving. Politically, Anderson eagerly advocated reforms in the interest of the working classes, and generally supported liberal measures. Scott's lecture at Anderson's Church, on Dante, was so well received that it led to the formation of a committee, designed to institute an annual course of lectures, to be called 'The Scott Lectures.'<sup>102</sup> Scott was persuaded, in subsequent years, to occasionally return to the Glasgow Athenaeum, but not annually. It was through his Athenaeum lectures that Scott came to know James Craik, the minister of St. George's, Glasgow, and later a Moderator of the General Assembly. Craik highly admired Scott and spoke of him 'as a man eminently distinguished by intellectual power.'<sup>103</sup>

In Manchester, Scott's mechanics' institute lectures, during this period, were organised by Salis Schwabe, a friend of Cobden's, and a successful printer.<sup>104</sup> In October 1847, Scott lectured on education at the Rhodes Mechanics' Institute. The following year he addressed the workers on 'The Foundations of Society, Moral and Economical.' In this lecture, Scott asserted that true society exists only where there is cooperation, where there is combined exertion and arrangement towards a common end. The moral foundations of society, he said, are the dispositions which bind the members of society to one another, and encourage them to work together rather than to compete. The economic foundations are the arrangements

<sup>100</sup> Macallum, pp.5-6.

<sup>101</sup> A.J. Scott On the Middle Ages' Lecture IV, The North British Mail, 28 December 1847.

<sup>102</sup> See J. Finlayson, 'Professor A.J. Scott' II, Owens College Magazine vol 21; and P. Macallum, pp.4-5.

<sup>103</sup> Testimonials to A.J. Scott (Edinburgh, 1856), p.23.

<sup>104</sup> See the report of A.J. Scott's 'Lecture on Education', The Manchester Examiner, 12 October 1847; and 'A.J. Scott at the Rhodes Mechanics' Institution', The Manchester Examiner, 21 October 1848.

by which members of society are to live and make the best possible use of available resources. The true foundations of society, contended Scott, can be discovered by examining the past in relation to the present, and ascertaining how the degree of progress which exists at the moment has been brought about. Further progress will not be essentially different from that achieved in the past. 'The historical method of considering a subject,' said Scott, 'is the most efficient and instructive.'<sup>105</sup> This is not, he explained, to adopt a conservative attitude which resists all change. It is merely an attempt to learn from the experiences of the past, and to acknowledge that there are discoverable laws upon which society ought to be based.

The greatest obstruction to this true society of cooperation, claimed Scott, is man's individual selfishness. This basic selfishness cannot be overcome, he contended, by a socialist or communist economic arrangement of society. While Scott applauded the socialist cooperative aims, and, of course, desired a society of 'brotherly kindness towards all men', he did not believe that political ideology was able to make a man 'such a lover of his race that he would at any time sacrifice his own interest to that of another or the whole.'<sup>106</sup> The solution, Scott asserted, is to be found in the principles which govern human nature. How is the limited selfishness of man to be got over? How has it been overcome in the past? Scott believed that the seed of the solution is to be found in the family. The family unit was the beginning of the makings of society. Here it is that the limited selfishness of a man is expanded. Scott admitted that this is a very narrow extension of love. 'But the first step is the hardest,' he said. 'To get a man to care for anything but himself is a state of prodigious progress beyond that in which he cared for nothing but himself.'<sup>107</sup> And if a man truly loves his wife and children, he will develop an interest in the welfare of other family units. This living interest in others will then organise itself into serving those in society who are in

<sup>105</sup> A.J. Scott, 'The Foundations of Society', The Manchester Examiner, 24 October 1848.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

need. Basically Scott desired a continued laissez-faire economic arrangement, whereby men would make full use of their individual faculties for the provision of their families, and in which individuals, families, and larger collective units, would be free to cooperate in the creation of a society which nurtured brotherly kindness to all men. In conclusion, Scott admitted that there had been many injustices and failures in the present system. The answer, however, was not to entirely reorder society according to the tenets of, for instance, Louis Blanc's French socialism, but rather to work for the clearing away of particular injustices in British society as it then existed.

e) The beginnings of Christian Socialism, and Scott's Lectures on Chartism and Socialism

Christian Socialism came to birth at the time of the great Chartist petition in April 1848. Chartism was by no means a new political force in the country; formally, it had begun ten years earlier, with the drawing up of the 'People's Charter'. The mass of the workers in industrial centres supported Chartism, which essentially saw the sufferings of the working classes as due to their lack of direct influence upon the government. While many Chartists advocated only the use of moral force, a great number were prepared to employ violent methods. As early as February 1839, Scott can be found addressing himself to the Chartist position. Erskine, in a letter at this time to Mrs. Scott, having made reference to a Scott visit to Paisley operatives, said:

I wish we saw some more men, rightly qualified, who would go through these disturbed masses, and explain to them, that they need something else than a repeal of the corn laws, and universal suffrage, to make them happy. It would be a great thing to let them understand that they are treated with indignity when they are addressed as if they had only temporal interests, and as if they were necessarily dependent on second causes.<sup>108</sup>

By 1841 Chartism was reaching its peak, and the 'physical force' wing, with Feargus O'Connor at its head, was leading the movement. It was in that year that Scott, in his 'Social Systems of the Present Day, Compared with Christianity', delivered a few lectures on Chartism.

<sup>108</sup>Hanna, Letters of Erskine I, p.349.

Scott began his lectures on Chartism by reaffirming his belief that Christianity is not to be unrelated to the political world, nor, in fact, to any sphere. 'I know not with what religion has nothing to do,' said Scott. 'I know that the greater any subject of human thought is, and the more intimately it concerns the well-being of men, the more religion has to do with it.'<sup>109</sup> And, thus, contended Scott, Christianity has something to say concerning the proposed political system and spirit of Chartism.

One of the central tenets of Chartism was that the working classes should exercise an increasingly direct influence on the government of the nation. Scott began his consideration of this subject by exposing some of the vague and ill-defined prejudices against Chartism. One of the most notorious Church-based objections to the Chartist plea for political equality was that the distinction of ranks was divinely instituted and that any attempt to dissolve the distinction was rebellion against the providence of God. 'I suspect, this is one of the arguments, which owes its force a good deal to the vagueness in the form of expression, and to a vagueness arising from listlessness in the minds of those who accept it,' said Scott. 'If you say, that God has instituted the distinctions of ranks, I ask what ranks, and what distinctions between them. Do you mean a distinction of ranks, precisely such as those which exist in Great Britain in the year 1841? or do you mean a distinction of ranks, such as subsisted in the days of the apostle Paul? or do you mean a distinction of ranks, such as subsisted in the age of feudalism?'<sup>110</sup> Scott contended that Christianity, far from opposing change, had been responsible for prodigious changes in society. He repeated his earlier claims that the Church, through her nurturing of education, for instance, had introduced the seeds of substantial change, and that the spirit of Christianity had, in fact, given birth to modern democracy. 'Christianity has done too much in altering the relation of the various ranks of society one to another, for us to say now, "Thus far and no farther, - thus far she permits it, but she permits no more."<sup>111</sup>

<sup>109</sup> A.J. Scott, 'Chartism', The Social Systems of the Present Day, Compared with Christianity (London, 1841), p.336.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid. pp.339-40.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid. p.341.

Scott moved from his exposure of the many ill-defined religious prejudices against Chartism to a treatment of the more purely political biases. He explained that political power, historically considered, has generally passed from the hands of the few to the many, with, of course, the occasional relapse. But just as a winding river may occasionally seem to linger or even return towards its source, said Scott, its total progress is actually downward, to the ocean. Classes have generally come to share in political power in proportion to their growing political consciousness. From the time of the 1688 revolution until the 1832 Reform Bill, explained Scott, in spite of the occasional windings of the stream, real power was steadily finding its way to a wider level. Real political influence, without yet being formally recognised, was passing more and more into a new class. The Reform Bill recognised the descent of the qualification for formal political power. While not feeling qualified to comment on the limit set by Parliament in 1832, Scott did believe that it was clearly right to hold that a class which has attained a political voice, should have a legal channel and opportunity for uttering it. 'It is positively good,' he said, 'that a real power should act in a legal shape, as it is evil that it should be forced into an unlegalised form of action.'<sup>112</sup> And if this principle is recognised, 'it seems certainly very unintelligible, that there should be a line drawn, beneath which it is assumed that the qualification for a just political influence cannot possibly descend.'<sup>113</sup> Scott believed that an 'unquestionably safe' basis for the extension of political power would be a certain degree of education, and he applauded the Chartist appeal for a greater education of the lower classes. 'I do not dread the result of men really seeking to be taught,' said Scott. 'There is a power in truth, acknowledged even where it is not obeyed, which assures me that those who desire and endeavour to learn will, on the whole, find and embrace it rather than error.'<sup>114</sup>

Scott strongly criticised those who opposed Chartism for selfish

<sup>112</sup>A.J. Scott, 'Chartism', The Woolwich Gazette, 16 January 1841.

<sup>113</sup>Scott, 'Chartism', The Social Systems of the Present Day, pp.341-2.

<sup>114</sup>Scott, 'Chartism', The Woolwich Gazette, 30 January 1841.

reasons, those who believed that an amelioration of the education and political power of the lower classes would necessarily have adverse effects upon the other classes. 'If there be such an incurable hostility between the interests of the many and of the few,' asked Scott, 'which is to prevail? If there were no other consideration before us than this, I would say - Let the interest of the minority be sacrificed to that of the majority.'<sup>115</sup> But Scott did not believe that there was an incurable opposition between the interests of one class and those of another. On the contrary, a remedy of the sufferings of the lower classes, he asserted, would be a great boon for the whole of society. Scott opposed the spirit that dreads the idea of any invasion of its own superiority, that feels robbed if another man is equally intelligent or influential, and he commended the spirit that desires to communicate to others that which it most values for itself. The spirit of Christianity, he contended, looks on the responsible sharing of political power as desirable, if possible:

If it be possible that men should move with an intelligent unity in political affairs, that they should understand one another, understanding as far as is necessary the objects of the great national acts and of the national legislation, - if it be possible that there should be a lawful way appointed of each man uttering his feelings and contributing his share to the general influence, - then the spirit which desires it, is not evil, but a good spirit. And the question of its possibility, I fear, is very often hastily decided under the influence of that which is not a good, but an evil spirit; I mean, that jealousy which would retain in our own hands all the superiority of distinction, which the existing system of society allows us.<sup>116</sup>

Scott called for a much greater depth of understanding between the opposing political parties of his day, and pleaded that they might end their imputing of evil motives to one another:

When will the time come, that the trade of pandering to bad passions in that manner, will cease to be a profitable trade? When will men honestly desire to understand one another, so as to know what measure of truth there may be in their opposed conceptions, and what measure of right feeling there may be in their opposite party zeal? If you hear that a Chartist regards

<sup>115</sup> Scott, 'Chartism', The Social Systems of the Present Day, p.342.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid. p.344.

you, as a landlord, with cold-blooded cruelty starving the people for the sake of a higher rent - as a manufacturing capitalist, squeezing your percentage out of the blood and sinews of the most helpless portion of your fellow-creatures, - or, worse than either, as a religionist, vending to both the pretended sanction of Heaven that he may share with both in the ease and the profit of the existing constitution of things, - and if your own heart bears you witness that he is either misconceiving or misrepresenting, why, then, ask yourself if that deceiving distance that is between you may not be equally misleading you in your apprehension of the workings of his mind; whether you may not thus be idly imputing to him a preference for misrule and anarchy, and a readiness to set at defiance all fear of God and regard to man, for the sake of the cravings of a selfish vanity and need. Selfishness enough there is no doubt on both sides; of all the monopolies in the world, there is no monopoly of selfishness; but doubtless there are good motives also on both sides. Sufficiently so, that if there were a sufficient recognition of this, it would establish a certain measure of sympathy, between you; and there would be a certain measure of co-operation, although meanwhile your opinions are confronting one another in the direst of contrarieties.<sup>117</sup>

In addition to his call for greater understanding, Scott also directed some severe criticism at both parties. Scott accused the established camp of an excessive faith in things as they are, and of an attempt at overruling the ignorance of the lower classes, and stifling their 'first notions of living thought.'<sup>118</sup> And the opponents of a more equal sharing of political power often supported religion, said Scott, not for religion's sake, but for order's sake and for property's sake. Standing before his largely non-Chartist audience, Scott addressed himself particularly to those who had abused religion for order's sake:

God is the God of order, but not necessarily pledged to that particular form of order, by which your quiet and your wealth seem to you to be best secured. He will not be taken into your pay; He will not submit to act as a preventive police for you. God stands neuter in the strife of human selfishness; 'those that honour Him, He will honour'; He is on the side of those that are on His side, whose hearts and whose actions are on the side of brotherly kindness and truth and holiness. On no other terms is His alliance attainable. To seek it on any other, is hypocrisy and profanation.<sup>119</sup>

<sup>117</sup> Ibid. p.345.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid. p.345.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid. p.346.



At a time when the Chartist movement was at its height, and causing great uneasiness among the more established orders of society, Scott spoke with the conviction and power of a prophet. Julia Wedgwood later described these lectures as revealing the 'full manliness and generosity' of Scott.<sup>120</sup>

Although Scott's generosity had been evidenced in his emphasis on a responsible sharing of political power, he also unsparingly criticised the Chartists. The Charter of 1838, contended Scott, did not truly represent Chartism. It was, he said, a harmless and insignificant document, which, if carried into effect, would 'as much astonish and disappoint its advocates as the Reform Bill' had done.<sup>121</sup> Scott's criticism, therefore, was not directed at the Charter, but rather at certain features and central principles of the Chartist movement. Chartism, especially in its abject materialism and lack of recognition of spiritual realities, reflected many of the general evils of society, thought Scott. And their excessive faith in a new political arrangement of society Scott deprecated. In Carlyle's words, the Chartist viewed freedom and blessedness in terms of having his 'twenty-thousandth part of master of tongue-fence in National Palaver.'<sup>122</sup> The Chartists were deluded in their hope that a direct influence upon government by the lower classes would eventuate in Utopia. Scott also strongly disapproved of Chartism's faith in the force of numbers, and its readiness to employ violence and intimidation to achieve its ends. He deplored the Chartist leaders' demagoguery and use of flattery in gaining influence over the working classes. But essentially Scott opposed Chartism because he saw it merely as an attempt to counterbalance the selfishness of different classes. Chartism proposes that the selfishness of the poorer and more numerous classes should have a sufficient check upon the selfishness of the richer and less numerous classes. It is the selfishness itself, however, which has done the mischief, explained Scott, not its being the selfishness of this or that particular class. 'My friends,' said Scott, 'the poorest machine that is, does not mainly

<sup>120</sup>J. Wedgwood, Preface to Scott's Discourses (London, 1866), p.viii.

<sup>121</sup>Scott, 'Chartism', The Woolwich Gazette, 16 January 1841.

<sup>122</sup>T. Carlyle, Chartism (London, 1842), p.94.

consist of checks. You may have fly wheels and safety valves and governors and drags, and a thousand contrivances; but the one single consideration of the moving power outweighs all these, and without an adequate and appropriate moving power, all these are utterly vain, lifeless and useless.'<sup>123</sup> It is equally so in society, explained Scott, which cannot move as a unity unless a common principle of life is operating in all its parts. Scott illustrated his subject by taking the example of a body in an extreme state of decay, due to multiple causes. Where is a check to be found for all these agents of decay? 'There is only one check for all these, in the organised matter of the living body,' said Scott, 'and that is, the presence of the principle of life. And to look, in the organisation of human society, for the vital principle, is the great problem in all questions of social unity.'<sup>124</sup> As Scott had emphasised in his first lecture of The Social Systems of the Present Day, men, as individuals, and collectively in societies, must yield themselves to the only principle of life capable of being universal, the Spirit of God. God's spiritual Kingdom is not an external polity, but rather is a principle operating from within; and a lack of conformity to this true system of God's moral government will destroy any other method of government, 'not as with the axe or the saw, but by a rottenness at the root. I declare to you my conviction,' stated Scott, 'that on no scheme otherwise grounded can society permanently exist or be blessed; that God is the only true centre of unity for his moral creatures; that the failure of every trial of any other is his theme and purpose in the drama of political history; that he will overturn, overturn, overturn, until the throne be yielded to Him whose right it is.'<sup>125</sup>

In 1842, the year after Scott's lectures, Chartism entered a period of decline, but with O'Connor's election to Parliament in 1847, and especially with the triumph of French Socialism in the February 1848 revolution in Paris, Chartist enthusiasm revived. Chartism and Socialism were increasingly joining forces, and Robert Owen, the leader of British Socialism, was a significant

<sup>123</sup> Scott, The Social Systems of the Present Day, p.372.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid. p.372.

<sup>125</sup> Scott, 'Chartism', The Woolwich Gazette, 9 January 1841.

mouthpiece and organiser of working class discontent. Scott, in his Social Systems of the Present Day, had also lectured on Socialism, concentrating on the Socialism of Robert Owen, but also displaying a considerable knowledge of the socialist thought of Fourier, the early advocate of French Socialism. Scott's lectures were attended partly by proponents of Socialism, a number of whom told him after the lectures that he was the first man who, not belonging to their system, had ever represented it fairly.<sup>126</sup>

Scott expressed great interest in Socialism's cooperative experiments and hoped that they might benefit society. He sympathised with Owen's belief that competition gives rise to strife and rivalry in society. Essentially there is nothing in the cooperative system which requires to be compared and contrasted with Christianity, said Scott. But socialism's cooperative scheme of arranging society was, at this time, overshadowed by its secularist creed. Scott was therefore at pains to sharply distinguish between the cooperative system and the secularist creed of Socialism. Their scheme of arranging society is 'intrinsically independent of their doctrines',<sup>127</sup> insisted Scott, for men deciding to live together cooperatively and communally, in its very nature, is not opposed to Christianity. And furthermore, said Scott, the cooperative system historically has been disconnected from all that is peculiar to Socialism. 'The life of those whose labour and whose fruits of labour are in common, is no modern invention.'<sup>128</sup> There were the schools of Hebrew prophets, who appear to have lived communally, the Essenes, the early Christian ascetics, the continuing monastic communities, the Moravians, and the Rappites and Shakers of America. Scott's hope was that people would embrace the cooperative scheme quite apart from the secularist creed of Socialism. He also desired 'that socialists would reconsider their metaphysical nostrums, both as to their truth and their utility to their scheme of a community;

<sup>126</sup> Wedgwood, p.xv.

<sup>127</sup> A.J. Scott, 'Socialism', The Woolwich Gazette, 13 February 1841.

<sup>128</sup> Scott, 'Socialism', The Social Systems of the Present Day, pp.359-60.

and that the latter would be fairly tried without this needless and mischievous addition.'<sup>129</sup>

Robert Owen had, as a young man, abandoned Christianity, and his socialist creed entirely omitted any consideration of a spiritual dimension in man. This, of course, was for Scott anathema. 'In the spun and woven goods, that are the property of the sovereign of this realm, there is a thread invoven, which cannot be taken out without the destruction of their entire texture,' said Scott, 'and in the being of man there is invoven a fibre of royal workmanship, nay, out of royal nature, the destruction of which, the annihilation of which, I have no apprehension.'<sup>130</sup> Scott admitted that many Socialists had not formally accepted the secularist creed of Owen, but he believed that they did so in practice. These Socialists contended that they could not be certain concerning the spiritual aspects and needs of man, and that they would, therefore, confine their charity to the obvious physical and material needs of society. In Scott's eyes this type of Socialism was merely a practical agnosticism. He asserted that the true charity of a Christian would differ from that of a Socialist in both kind and degree, for it would take into account the spiritual dimension of man.

Owen's Socialism included a form of positivism. That which cannot be brought before the senses cannot be proved, asserted Owen. This restriction of evidence to the senses, he contended, would obviate the discord in society caused by speculative and theological differences of opinion. Scott strongly opposed this tenet of the Socialist creed, arguing that in no department of thought, not even in the physical sciences, is man better off by confining himself to that which is clearly brought before his senses. A universal Owenism, said Scott, would have denied to the world the Newtonian discoveries, for is it not obvious to the senses that the sun revolves around the earth? 'I protest against introducing into mental science this off-hand process which is found good-for-nothing in physical,' said Scott. 'I believe Mr. Owen, and men like him, are to do us most valuable service in this very matter. They

<sup>129</sup>Scott, 'Socialism', The Woolwich Gazette, 13 February 1841.

<sup>130</sup>Scott, 'Socialism', The Social Systems of the Present Day, p. 348.

will lead us to the intelligent and systematic expulsion, from the region of self-government and social arrangement, of that final award allowed to sense (miscalled common sense), which has already been absolutely and definitively rejected in regard to things purely material. For, from the whole domain of material science it is banished, absolutely and definitively,' asserted Scott. 'It is a universal truth in regard to science, that it lies beyond the sphere of the senses.'<sup>131</sup>

In opposition to the secularist Socialism of his day Scott asserted his belief in the spiritual dimension of man, and contended that man has a capacity for spiritual insight. Scott acknowledged that it was impossible in any logical manner for Christians to meet the influence of Socialism, except by presenting the realities of an invisible world. 'To present them is, as I have endeavoured to show you,' said Scott, 'not merely to speak of them, but to live as those who are actuated by them, in the utterance of our lips indeed, but also in the daily workings of our hands.'<sup>132</sup>

A central aspect of Owen's Socialism was his doctrine of physical determinism. A man's character, asserted Owen, is composed purely of his original make-up and of the influence of circumstances on that genetic constitution. As a result Socialism encouraged a positive environment, especially for children in their formative years of development. Owen's doctrine of determinism also gave rise to the Socialist denial of man's moral responsibility. If we are creatures of mere circumstance how can it be said that a man is morally responsible for his thoughts, feelings and actions? Owen's hope was that this doctrine would prevent the division of society caused by men blaming one another. Scott ardently opposed Socialism's denial of man's responsibility. 'Responsibility,' said Scott, 'is the great fact of human existence. That a man must take the consequences of his acts, is the lesson of all experience, and the ground of all rules of conduct. The child begins to learn it, when he shuns the fire that has once burned him.'<sup>133</sup> The law of responsibility occupies the same place in the moral world that

<sup>131</sup> Ibid. p.352.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid. p.372.

<sup>133</sup> Scott, 'Socialism', The Woolwich Gazette, 13 February 1841.

gravitation does in the physical, asserted Scott. Take it away and man is once more reduced to chaos. 'Whether I am acting as a physician, or whether I am acting with a dietetic care of my own bodily health, or whether I am acting from a similar and higher dietetic and nutritive care of the health of my spirit, or whether I am acting as in relation to God and with a view to eternity, one thread runs through the whole, like that fiery band of the galvanic principle, which holds all material nature combined; and that one thread is this principle - that "what a man soweth, that shall he also reap." It is this one principle of man's responsibility.'<sup>134</sup>

In concluding his attack against this central tenet of Socialism, Scott said that if man is irresponsible then the history of mankind has been a system of the blackest tyranny. 'Under what a cruel despotism of blind fate has all humanity groaned up to the present hour,' asserted Scott. 'I do not speak of earthquakes, plagues, famine, but of things in the ordinary lot of mankind; of bereavements, disappointments, struggles and anxiety for daily bread, weariness of life in those whose natural wants are all supplied; and I say, if these be inflicted without a moral cause and a moral aim, as they must be if we are irresponsible creatures of circumstance, then the whole looks like the workmanship of a malignant and persecuting fiend. I would not live under such a constitution of things. I would not. I would choose,' said Scott, 'if there were any issue out of such a universe, to follow that issue.'<sup>135</sup> If man is irresponsible, continued Scott, then misery without a cause or an object is the law that mankind is under. 'I had thought all was the work of One just and merciful, into whose meaning I might at least inquire; I had thought it was inflicted on creatures conscious of sinfulness, and to whom it might work together for the highest good; I had interpreted all this death into a universal law, that out of death cometh life: and now I am told,' said Scott, 'the misery has happened merely because of the dominance of a blind power, in whose hands the innocent have been made tormentors of the innocent; that this power is omnipotence itself; and for comfort, - that Robert Owen designs that things shall go otherwise in future! I may be excused

<sup>134</sup> Scott, The Social Systems of the Present Day, p.358.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid. pp.358-9.

for despairing of his success.<sup>136</sup>

Seven years after Scott's lectures on The Social Systems of the Present Day, there ensued a socialistic victory in the February 1848 revolution in Paris. The news of this triumph resounded throughout Europe; the British workers took courage and began talking about following suit. Chartism and Socialism, the political and social movements which Scott had described as essentially opposed to Christ's Kingdom, now coalesced. The demand for the People's Charter was linked up with the idea of a Socialistic order of society. Chartist riots followed. As the month of March 1848 drew on, excitement mounted and the fear of revolution spread among the wealthier classes. The Chartists decided to call an enormous mass meeting on Kennington Common for the 10th April, when they would march to Parliament with their National Petition. The public seriously believed this to be the starting signal for the revolution in Britain. The Government responded by instructing the military to occupy all strategic points in the city. On the rainy 10th April 1848 the workers, anticlimactically, were quietly dispersed by police order and O'Connor with a small deputation submitted the Petition to Parliament.

On the evening of the 10th April, Scott's close friend, F.D. Maurice, met with C. Kingsley and J.M. Ludlow to discuss the events of the day.<sup>137</sup> They were filled with the thought that something had to be done, for in their eyes the anticlimactic proceedings at Kennington Common were only a postponement of a stormy outburst. Ludlow, an English barrister, had visited Paris after the February revolution and in March had expressed to Maurice his belief that Socialism had acquired a firm hold of the Parisian working classes, and that 'it must be Christianised or it would shake Christianity to its foundations.'<sup>138</sup> Maurice had circulated Ludlow's letter among his friends, no doubt including Scott.<sup>139</sup> On the morning of

<sup>136</sup> Ibid. p.359.

<sup>137</sup> T. Christensen, Origin and History of Christian Socialism (Aarhus, 1962), pp.71-2.

<sup>138</sup> F. Maurice, The Life of F.D. Maurice I, p.458.

<sup>139</sup> C.C. Binyon, The Christian Socialist Movement in England (London, 1931), p.74. Scott, being one of a small number of men

the 11th April, Kingsley reported that all was still quiet, but that the special constables, the police, and the military were still under arms. He proceeded to say that he would be meeting that evening with Scott, Hare and Maurice, to help 'in a glorious work.'<sup>140</sup> On the evening of the 12th they met again.<sup>141</sup>

This group of four, plus Ludlow, can be seen as the founders of the movement which came to be known as Christian Socialism. Scott was well qualified to be an originator of this movement. For the last ten years he had been attempting to nurture the social conscience of Christians, on the one hand, and, on the other, to present to Socialists and Chartists the truths of Christ's Kingdom. Scott's lectures of 1841 largely anticipated the twofold nature of Christian Socialism, as expressed by Maurice in 1848, in its attempt to christianise Socialism and to socialise Christianity.<sup>142</sup> Scott's part in the beginnings of Christian Socialism was not insignificant. His friend, J.C. Hare, one of the other originators present on the 11th and 12th April 1848, said of Scott: 'There are scarcely three men in England who have meditated so deeply on the great moral and social problems of the age; and assuredly there is none who would possess the same power of uttering his thoughts in clear, strong, convincing words.'<sup>143</sup>

The discussion between Hare, Kingsley, Maurice and Scott, on the 11th and 12th April, centred primarily on the possibility of a periodical. After the first evening Kingsley expressed it in terms of 'a new set of real "Tracts for the Times"'.<sup>144</sup> And on the 13th April, Maurice explained, in a letter to Ludlow, that Hare had proposed 'to Kingsley, Scott and me, that there should be something

involved in Christian Socialism from its origin, must surely have seen this letter from Ludlow which Maurice put into circulation.

<sup>140</sup>Mrs. C. Kingsley, Charles Kingsley: His Letters and Memories of his Life I (London, 1877), p.155. Kingsley and Scott had been acquainted from as early as 1847, when Maurice had suggested that Scott, Tennyson, and others, should be consulted concerning Kingsley's Life of St. Elizabeth. See Ibid. p.147.

<sup>141</sup>Ibid. p.157.

<sup>142</sup>Maurice, Life of F.D. Maurice I, p.461.

<sup>143</sup>Testimonials to A.J. Scott (London, 1850), p.24.

<sup>144</sup>Kingsley, p.156.



of a paper set up, not like our present, but more like Cobbett's Political Register, for short, pithy weekly comments on the great questions of the day in a religious spirit'.<sup>145</sup> Both of these descriptions indicate the essentially religious nature of this new movement. Like Scott's Social Systems of the Present Day, Compared with Christianity, it was an attempt to understand and shape the socio-political situation in Britain in terms of the principles of Christ's Kingdom. For Scott and Maurice, Hare's suggestion that a weekly paper should be established was not a new idea. As early as 1842 Scott and Maurice, along with Hare and Daniel Macmillan, had toyed with the possibility of a weekly paper.<sup>146</sup> At that stage Scott had been greatly struck with the idea.<sup>147</sup> Nothing, however, came of it until 1848.

The weekly paper, which had originally been conceived in the early 1840s, and which the circumstances of April 1848 brought closer to birth, first appeared on the 6th May 1848, under the title, Politics for the People. Maurice and Ludlow were its joint editors and it sold weekly in both England and Scotland at one penny per copy. In the first issue a 'Prospectus' expressed the purpose of the periodical. If Scott's direct influence cannot be traced in this article, it can at least be said that the ideas expressed are in complete harmony with the thoughts set forth in Scott's Social Systems of the Present Day. Politics are not to be divorced from Christianity, it claimed. 'The world is governed by God; this is the rich man's warning; this is the poor man's comfort; this is the real hope in the consideration of all questions, let them be as hard of solution as they may; this is the pledge that Liberty, Fraternity, Unity under some condition or other, are intended for every people under heaven.'<sup>148</sup> Politics for the People stood for a universal fraternity among men, based not upon agreement of political opinion, but rather upon the universal Fatherhood of God as revealed in man's elder

<sup>145</sup> Maurice, p.460.

<sup>146</sup> See Maurice, pp.329-31; and T. Hughes, Memoir of Daniel Macmillan (London, 1883), pp.122-8.

<sup>147</sup> Maurice, p.330.

<sup>148</sup> 'Prospectus', Politics for the People Number I, 6 May 1848, p.1.

Brother, Jesus.<sup>149</sup> This explicitly Christian paper was committed, and here much of its uniqueness lay, to a direct approach to the workers, and a willingness to learn from them. It refused to degrade them by flattery, and insisted on appealing to the highest attributes of the working classes.<sup>150</sup>

Ludlow was very keen that the paper should, from a Christian point of view, undertake a full discussion of Socialism, for the minds of the workers, he contended, were greatly occupied by the doctrines of Socialism. Ludlow looked to Maurice to take the lead in this discussion, but the latter hesitated, contending that he was not competent to do so.<sup>151</sup> While the principle of cooperation was emphasised in the paper, the only attempt to begin a real discussion of Socialism itself was Scott's series of three articles, 'On the Development of the Principle of Socialism in France.'<sup>152</sup> Scott traced the development of French Socialism from its origin in Saint-Simon, through Fourier, to its then present leader, Louis Blanc. Apart from the details of its historical development in France, Scott's treatment of Socialism did not differ from his earlier and more extensive examination of it in his Social Systems of the Present Day.

Scott's three articles were intended to be introductory to a fuller consideration of Socialism. A more complete discussion, however, never ensued, for by the end of July 1848 Politics for the People was discontinued. Although its list of contributors, in addition to Kingsley, Ludlow, Maurice and Scott, had included such able men and writers as R. Whately, A.P. Stanley and R. C. Trench, Politics for the People had remained unnoticed by the public at large, and had never reached a paying circulation. The weekly paper had been a noble attempt at communicating the belief that political and social issues were to be dealt with in light

<sup>149</sup> Ibid. pp.3-4.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid. p.2.

<sup>151</sup> Christensen, p.86.

<sup>152</sup> A.J. Scott, 'On the Development of the Principle of Socialism in France', Politics for the People, Numbers II,III,V, 13th, and 20th May, and the Supplement for May, 1848. These articles were an abridged report of a lecture delivered by Scott on 14th April 1848.

of the Christian faith, but it had not succeeded.<sup>153</sup>

Although Politics for the People had failed in terms of sales, it had, notwithstanding, succeeded in broadening the Christian Socialist circle of sympathisers, for its circulation had reached two thousand.<sup>154</sup> Upon the demise of the paper, the weekly meetings, which had been held by the core group at Maurice's house, were continued for the discussion of social problems. These meetings soon began to include working men.<sup>155</sup> From this there also developed, at the end of 1848, a weekly class for the study of Scripture. In 1850 the Christian Socialists, in their desire to promote the principle of cooperation, started a Cooperative Tailors Association, soon followed by the foundation of other associations. The sources for this period of Christian Socialism's history are very sparse, and it is, therefore, difficult to know exactly what was Scott's involvement in all of these activities. Mrs. Gaskell, however, in a letter dated February 1850, named Scott, along with Ludlow, Kingsley and Maurice, as one of the leaders of Christian Socialism, and as one of the founders of the Cooperative Tailors Association.<sup>156</sup> Scott and his friends, in advocating the cooperative principle at a time when 'cooperation' carried dark and revolutionary connotations, made a significant contribution to the gradual recognition of this principle among the educated classes. In 1852 the Christian Socialists were to play an important part in the passing of the Industrial and Providential Societies Act which gave a legal status to cooperative bodies. Scott, as will be seen, even after his departure from London in 1851, continued to be involved in the activities of Christian Socialism, and especially in their educational pursuits.

<sup>153</sup> See Christensen's treatment of the failure of the paper, pp.87-9.

<sup>154</sup> Maurice, p.482.

<sup>155</sup> For a brief and accurate history of Christian Socialism at this stage, see the D.N.B. article on F.D. Maurice.

<sup>156</sup> J.A.V. Chapple, The Letters of Mrs. Gaskell (Manchester, 1966), p.105.

f) Scott's Appointment to the Professorship of English Literature and Language at University College, London, November 1848

A few months after the beginnings of Christian Socialism, the Chair of English Literature and Language at University College, London, fell vacant through the resignation of T. Taylor, who afterwards became the Editor of Punch. Scott, now a literary figure of 'established reputation',<sup>157</sup> according to the historian of University College, saw that he stood a good chance of gaining the Professorship. Unlike the older seats of learning in England, University College, in its defence of religious freedom, and its omission of any religious test for either professors or students, was an ideal setting for Scott. He formally applied for the Chair on the 5th September 1848.<sup>158</sup> Even before Scott's formal application some of his friends were busily promoting his cause. Francis Newman, the Professor of Latin at University College, had already written to the Secretary of the Senate, indicating that he had heard of Scott's interest in the vacant chair. 'As I have a very strong opinion that we could not easily get and should have little chance of keeping, another so good man as Mr. Scott,' wrote Newman, 'I am anxious not to lose the opportunity, when it comes, of putting in my word for him.'<sup>159</sup> Thomas Erskine was also active on Scott's behalf. In late August 1848 he wrote to Lord Rutherford, formerly a Lord Advocate, and a proponent of the abolition of religious tests in Scottish Universities:

If you have anything to say with any one who has influence in the nomination of Professors in the London University, you may do a service to the cause of literature and true philosophy by recommending for the vacant chair of English Language and Literature my excellent and highly gifted friend Mr. Scott. I once took you to hear him deliver a lecture in the Marylebone Institution Hall, near Portman Square. ... You may have the fullest confidence in recommending him, for he is a first-class man, high both in faculty and acquirement. ... I propose this because I know that it would be a good service to your country, and a grace to thee, as well as a

<sup>157</sup> H.H. Bellot, University College, London (London, 1929), p.260.

<sup>158</sup> A letter from A.J. Scott to C.C. Atkinson, Secretary to the Senate, 5 September 1848, College Correspondence, University College London MS Library.

<sup>159</sup> A letter from F. Newman to C.C. Atkinson, 1 September 1848, College Correspondence, University College London MS Library.

living vocation to a noble character, that seems almost lost at present for want of a constant and adequate object. 'Spirits are not finely touched but for fine issues'; and yet these issues seem slow of coming, for lack of material opportunity.<sup>160</sup>

Another friend who was furthering Scott's cause before the latter's formal application was J.C. Hare. On the 26th August Hare wrote to Augustus De Morgan, the Professor of Mathematics at University College, on behalf of Scott, 'a person for whom I have the highest esteem, and whom I believe to be one of the first thinkers and writers of the age,' said Hare. 'I understand that the Professors exercise a good deal of influence in the election of their new colleagues. If so, I am sure, that any influence you may be able to exercise in behalf of Mr. Scott, will be employed most beneficially for the College, for those who are to be his hearers, and for the body of Professors who will be associated with him.'<sup>161</sup> Hare even went the length of transcribing for De Morgan parts of Scott's personal correspondence in order to display the latter's superior linguistic ability and moral character.<sup>162</sup> When it came time to formally testify before the Council of University College, Hare, having spoken in the highest terms of Scott's lecturing ability, continued as follows: 'In conversing with him, I have always found that the discriminating judgment and analytical power which he shows in the investigation of religious and moral truth are combined with a fine discernment of that which is just and true in poetry and other departments of literature. His high sense of the dignity and duties of literature is set forth in his recent Discourse On the Range of Christianity. Though he has not made Philology his peculiar study, the bent of his mind has always led him to an analytical consideration of words as the exponents of thoughts.' Hare concluded with the following words: 'On the whole, I have a strong conviction that his lectures would not only be very instructive to his Pupils, but that they would tend to elevate their

<sup>160</sup> Hanna, Letters of Erskine II, pp.65-6.

<sup>161</sup> A letter from J.C. Hare to A. De Morgan, 26 August 1848, The Senate House Library, University of London, A.L. 159/5(1v).

<sup>162</sup> University College Council Minutes for 4th November 1848, University College London Library, AM/43, pp.11,13.

minds to lofty thoughts and noble purposes.'<sup>163</sup>

References in favour of Scott also came from Carlyle, Bunsen, Wedgwood and other friends. Maurice, as Professor of English literature at King's College, London, spoke of having never met 'with any one who combined so much of the method and accuracy which can only be acquired from scientific studies, with a thorough knowledge of literature, the most general appreciation of all that is best in it, and great critical power. As a lecturer,' continued Maurice, 'Mr. Scott seems to be unrivalled for clearness, for his command of the language which is best fitted to express his thoughts, for the highest kind of eloquence, and for self-restraint in avoiding all useless and idle displays of it. I should rejoice to see him connected with any College or University, in which he could have the means of habitually influencing the minds of young men.'<sup>164</sup>

W.B. Carpenter, Scott's neighbour and the Examiner of Physiology in the University of London, also took up Scott's praise, and indicated that his independence and freedom of thought would ensure a healthy independence of thought among the students. Carpenter concluded a letter addressed to Scott at this time in the following words:

I should do violence to my own feelings were I not to express in the strongest terms, my appreciation of your powers as a lecturer. I have never heard any public speaker who could be compared with you in masterly arrangement of materials, lucid method of exposition, ready choice of the most apposite language, freedom from all redundancy, force and vigour of expression, beauty and aptness of illustration, - in a word, in all those qualities which fix the attention of your hearers, and carry them along in your own luminous trains of thought.<sup>165</sup>

The Committee appointed by the Senate of University College to examine the candidates for the vacant Chair of English Literature and Language drew up its report on the 21st October 1848. One of the other candidates examined by the Committee was Arthur Hugh Clough, the Victorian poet. Clough's strong recommendations by B. Jowett and A.P. Stanley greatly impressed the Committee. 'His qualifications are so high,' stated the report, 'that the Committee would have had

<sup>163</sup> Testimonials to A.J. Scott (London, 1850), p.9.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid. p.4.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid. pp.7-8.

no hesitation in recommending the appointment of Mr. Clough, if it had not appeared that similar qualifications are possessed by the remaining candidate, Mr. Scott, with the addition of much greater special fitness by nature of his studies and attainments for the Chair of English Language and Literature.'<sup>166</sup> The Committee reported Scott's linguistic skills as well as his lecturing ability and literary qualifications.<sup>167</sup> It remarked upon the consistently high estimation with which Scott was regarded by men who had known him for many years. 'All his intimate friends,' continued the report, 'speak in the strongest possible language of the excellence of his moral character; and the extracts from his private letters which Archdeacon Hare sends to Mr. De Morgan place in a very favourable point of view his conscientiousness and his unaffected modesty.'<sup>168</sup> On the 21st October the Committee 'agreed unanimously to advise the Senate to recommend Mr. Scott to the Council for election to the Vacant Chair.'<sup>169</sup> On the 4th November 1848 the Council of University College accepted the Senate's recommendation and elected Scott to the Professorship of English Language and Literature.<sup>170</sup>

Scott wrote a letter of acceptance to the Council on the 8th November. 'I beg you to accept my thanks for the distinguished honour you have conferred upon me,' stated Scott. 'My sense of it can be adequately expressed only by an earnest discharge of the duties of an important office.'<sup>171</sup>

g) Scott's Inaugural Lecture at University College, London

On the 25th November 1848 at University College, London, Scott delivered his inaugural lecture, 'On the Academical Study of a

<sup>166</sup> University College Council Minutes for the 4th November 1848, p.9.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid. pp.11-13.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid. p.13.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid. p.1.

<sup>170</sup> G. Cameron, The Scots Kirk in London (Oxford, 1979), p.48, incorrectly states that Scott was elected to the Professorship of English Language and Literature in 1838.

<sup>171</sup> A letter from A.J. Scott to the Council of University College, 8 November 1848, College Correspondence, University College London MS Library.

Vernacular Literature'. Scott began his lecture by attempting to describe what is literature. 'The typical, or representative form of literature,' he explained, 'is poetry.'<sup>172</sup> Poetry is quite distinct from science, the latter being essentially analytic in its approach to the universe. Poetry, on the other hand, is synthetic, 'moving toward every object with all the parts, passions, and affections of our being; regarding each in its wholeness and with all its accompaniments; seeking unity within and without. It can accept the service and the contribution of all knowledges, but is restrained to the method of none. It utters the freedom and the dominion of the soul of man, not its limitations and restrictions.'<sup>173</sup> Literature aims to delineate man and his circumstances, 'not dissected,' explained Scott, 'but in vital combination.'<sup>174</sup> And, thus, in studying the mind of any people we are led first to their poetry. In becoming acquainted with the thought world of Greece and Rome, for instance, we study Homer, Virgil, and Aeschylus. And 'a poet of the first order,' said Scott, 'is the voice of a great era.'<sup>175</sup> This is Dante to Italy, Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Milton to different ages in England. 'It is Europe re-organising that speaks in Goethe.'<sup>176</sup>

Although poetry is literature's typical form, it is, by no means, literature's only form. Historical works constitute a portion of literature as well, contended Scott. History is a science in its collection of facts, but a man is not an historian because he knows certain events. 'To the historian, properly so called,' said Scott, 'events are what a character of Shakespeare is to a tragedian, or a sonata of Mozart to a musical performer. In either case, wilfully to alter anything is a breach of trust; in either case, merely to possess the materials is what stones are to a house. We shall call the historian the chief of representative artists,' said Scott, 'the poet of fact. Fidelity is his first

<sup>172</sup> A.J. Scott, On the Academical Study of a Vernacular Literature (London, 1849), p.8.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid. p.8.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid. p.9.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid. p.8.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid. p.8.



duty; faithfully to convey long bygone actualities to the minds of others. Out of what scattered and scanty materials must he reconstruct living wholes! What dry bones must history make to live!'<sup>177</sup>

At a time when English Literature was not yet a part of the formal curriculum at the older seats of learning in Britain, Scott strongly defended the formal study of a vernacular literature. The study of the literature of a living language and nation may be just as valuable and academically respectable as the study of Greek or Latin, contended Scott. The English language's rich etymology and delicacies of syntax, and its literature's copious history of verse make it a worthy subject of study. Scott asserted that an accurate distinction in the sense of words, and in the modes of constructing sentences, can be attained by studying the works of any great writer, whether he be English or Greek. 'And in the case of the English author, a more complete and satisfactory knowledge is attainable: the fitness of his word or phrase, and his intention in using it, can be thoroughly known.'<sup>178</sup>

What are the requisites of an academical study? Scott contended that a college education is designed primarily to prepare young men for the duties of manhood. He who is imperfectly prepared for the life of a man, is ill equipped for any particular profession or business, said Scott. An academical study, therefore, must contribute to this preparation for the duties of manhood. By 'duties' Scott did not mean to omit rational enjoyments. 'There are duties of being, as well as of doing', said Scott. 'These are the highest; the others are dependent on them. To seek a full development of his life is the duty of the student; and it is best that he should regard this, in its entirety, as a duty, and not under any subordinate aspect.'<sup>179</sup>

The academical study of a vernacular literature can make an enormous contribution to the preparation for manhood and its duties, for, to introduce a young man to the thoughts of the greatest authors of his nation, is to bring him into 'the very loftiest

<sup>177</sup> Ibid. pp.9-10.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid. p.17.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid. p.13.

society.'<sup>180</sup> Scott welcomed the higher literary criticism's emphasis on the relation which exists between a work of literature and its author. In a literary work, it is the writer himself we study, and his subject as reflected in him. 'Certainly had no one else mentioned them,' said Scott, 'and were every autobiographical passage erased from their works, there would still be no three modern souls we should better know than those of Dante, Shakespeare, and Goethe. They uttered themselves; and not by speaking of themselves. Literary study, as such, has nothing higher to offer than the acquaintance to which we are thus invited,' said Scott. 'These men are manifesting themselves in relation to all the great realities of spiritual and outward life: and surely with a fullness and distinctness in our own speech, and as partakers of our national character and circumstances, not conceivable where the great gulf is fixed that separates us from those who spoke a language now dead.'<sup>181</sup>

Scott in conclusion contended that 'literature, as contrasted with science and with archaic learning, stands as it were on the frontier of the university, to connect it with the world, and to prepare the passage between them, - and that it does this precisely because it is the humanity it cultivates, and not any separate faculty. There is surely some law involved in the fact that it is men of letters, as distinguished from men of science and men of learning, who have been men of affairs, of public and social life.'<sup>182</sup> The historians and poets have been the most politically involved contended Scott. Having described Dante as the founder of European vernacular literature, Scott also spoke of him as 'incomparably the most sagacious, and one of the most active of Italian statesmen.'<sup>183</sup> Chaucer, Milton, and Shakespeare, Scott also listed as men of affairs, as well as Goethe - minister, stage-director, physiologist, and poet. These men who stand at the head of vernacular literature were men of human and social action, said Scott. 'It is that for which there

<sup>180</sup> Ibid. p.21.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid. p.21.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid. p.25.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid. p.26.

is no specific training, but which the more emphatically demands the cultivated man.<sup>184</sup>

John and Thomas Carlyle, along with another literary gentleman, George Craik, were among Scott's hearers on this occasion, and conveyed to him their high opinion of the inaugural lecture. Scott responded with thanks to Thomas Carlyle:

Cordial thanks for your cordial and cheering words. I do not know that any other man has it in his power to say such as could do me more good, or as much. No inward consciousness, were it clearer than mine, makes a man independent of the view ab extra, if taken by one who can see. ... Your brother's opinion, and Mr. Craik's, (with whom I lately made acquaintance through his book) I also truly value.<sup>185</sup>

h) Scott's Professorship at University College, London, 1848-50

Scott had become the Professor of English Literature and language at the only seat of higher learning and research in Britain totally free from religious tests. Present were dissenters and agnostics of all colours, churchmen who believed in religious freedom, and even unflinching opponents of all religion, such as George Grote, one of the earliest promoters of London University.

Scott's circle of contacts greatly increased upon his appointment to the Professorship.<sup>186</sup> Some of his colleagues, such as Carpenter and Newman, Scott already knew well. Thomas Graham, the Professor of Chemistry, known for the originality of his work and the boldness of his theorising, had studied with Scott in Glasgow. Arthur Hugh Clough, although unsuccessful in his contest with Scott for the Chair of English Literature, took up the headship of University Hall in 1849, and later succeeded Scott in the Professorship. It was through University College that Scott came to know Henry Crabb Robinson, who, as we have seen, occasionally attended Scott's Sunday evening lectures. Robinson was a fascinating character who had known nearly every literary man of distinction in England and Germany for almost fifty years, including Goethe and

<sup>184</sup>Ibid. p.28.

<sup>185</sup>A letter from A.J. Scott to T. Carlyle, 27 November 1848. The Scottish National Library, MS 1766 f219.

<sup>186</sup>For a description of Scott's many colleagues at University College, see H.H. Bellot, University College, London (London, 1929).

Schiller, and Coleridge and Wordsworth, the latter two with whom he had very close friendships. Scott also came to know Robinson's good friend, Augustus De Morgan, the Professor of Mathematics, a man of profound intellect and amiable nature. Mrs. De Morgan, in the memoir of her husband, listed Scott as one of their frequent visitors at this time.<sup>187</sup> De Morgan had become heterodox at an early age, and throughout life called himself a 'Christian unattached.'<sup>188</sup> Like Scott and Newman, he had, in earlier life, refused to sign religious articles, in De Morgan's case for the M.A. degree at Cambridge. After a year and a half of friendship De Morgan spoke of his admiration for Scott's originality of thought and power of articulation.<sup>189</sup> Outside the University one of the people whom Scott came to know and respect during this period was David Masson.<sup>190</sup> Masson, who was later to occupy Scott's Chair of English Literature at University College, was probably introduced to Scott through Carlyle, with whom Masson had a close friendship.

Scott's professorship greatly widened his reputation. His newly attained position was very different from the relative isolation in which he had lived after his deposition from the Church of Scotland, seventeen years earlier. As the Professor of English Literature at University College he was increasingly well known, especially in literary circles. An instance of this was Scott's invitation to a select meeting, called after William Wordsworth's death in 1850, to consider the erection of a monument in memory of the great poet.<sup>191</sup> In attendance were C.J. Blomfield, the Bishop of London, Sir John Taylor Coleridge, a close friend of Wordsworth and the nephew of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, H.H. Milman, the Dean of St. Paul's and author of the much disputed History of the Jews, Samuel Rogers, the Nestor of living poets in the first half of the 19th century, and Connop Thirlwall, the early advocate of historical criticism in

<sup>187</sup> S.E. De Morgan, Memoir of Augustus De Morgan (London, 1882), p.173.

<sup>188</sup> See D.N.B. article on Augustus De Morgan.

<sup>189</sup> Testimonials to A.J. Scott (London, 1850), p.18.

<sup>190</sup> Testimonials in Favour of David Masson (London, 1852), pp.25-6.

<sup>191</sup> See T. Sadler, Diary, Reminiscences, and Correspondence of Henry Crabb Robinson vol III (London, 1869), pp.360-61.

Britain. In addition to these were Scott's friends, Julius Hare and Henry Crabb Robinson. It was decided at this meeting that there should be a Wordsworth bust in Westminster Abbey, as well as memorials and scholarships elsewhere in the country.

Scott, after his appointment to University College, continued his at-homes, now held on Tuesday evenings.<sup>192</sup> 'I am very dependent on this habit,' wrote Scott to a friend, whom he was inviting to one of his Tuesday evening soirees, 'as I never go out in the evening except on business. You may meet some people worth talking to, possibly Gützlaff, the Chinese historian.'<sup>193</sup> Scott's wife, who normally was very much a part of these at-homes, was, for a time, due to illness, prevented even from staying in London. From Kensington House, East Cliff, Bournemouth, which appears to have been the Scott country house during Scott's time at University College, Mrs. Scott wrote to a friend: 'I have been a great Invalid, almost constantly on the sofa, and my eyes are so much affected by the weak state I am in that Lubreich forbids my using them. As the Doctors wish me to be out of London as much as possible I have remained here by myself, but I hope to return home on Monday. It is very trying being away from Dear Scott, and very dull for me, as after luncheon I can do nothing and when I cannot drive out it is a very long afternoon and evening.'<sup>194</sup>

Concerning Scott's duties at University College, it is known that he approached his professorial responsibilities with vigour. Over the two years of his professorship Scott increased the number of his lectures from two to six per week, and doubled the number of students.<sup>195</sup> In addition to his regular classes Scott offered special courses on Anglo-Saxon which were open to the public.<sup>196</sup> There remain no records of Scott's academic lectures at University

<sup>192</sup> A letter from A.J. Scott, 10 December 1849, College Correspondence, University College London MS Library.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid. Karl Friedrich August Gützlaff (1803-51), was a German missionary to China.

<sup>194</sup> A letter from Ann Scott, 30 January, College Correspondence, University College London MS Library.

<sup>195</sup> Testimonials to A.J. Scott (London, 1850), p.13.

<sup>196</sup> See two letters from A.J. Scott concerning the Anglo-Saxon public lectures, dated 10, 12 December 1849. College Correspondence, University College London MS Library.

College. A glimpse, however, of Scott's lecturing method on a literary subject can be gained by looking at the reports of his well received course of four lectures at the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution on 'The General Literature during the first half of the 19th century.'<sup>197</sup> These lectures, in which Scott attempted to trace a general tendency towards Catholic humanity in the literature of the 19th century, reveal Scott's breadth of literary knowledge. At the end of Scott's time at University College, the Senate spoke of Scott as 'a man of remarkable originality, deep thought, extensive reading, and great power of expression.'<sup>198</sup> The Senate, however, did not represent everyone's opinion. Henry Enfield Roscoe, later a colleague of Scott's in Manchester as Professor of Chemistry, recollected his student days under Scott in the English class at University College:

A.J. Scott was the professor of English, and I attended his class, little thinking that in a few years I should be his colleague in Manchester. His subject for that session was Anglo-Saxon, and after explaining to us the construction of the larynx he proceeded to instruct us very fluently in the history of Beowulf, Bede, and others, giving us some illustrations of the Anglo-Saxon language. He was, however, very prosy and lengthy, and the end of the session came before he had finished the Anglo-Saxon period. Next year the course announced was the literature of the Elizabethan era; this I thought would be extremely interesting, and consequently I entered the class, though I was much occupied with other subjects. On the first day, however, Scott looked round the class and said: 'I see there are a number of gentlemen present who did not hear my lectures last session on Anglo-Saxon, and as the knowledge of this portion of English Literature is necessary for a proper appreciation of subsequent periods, I propose to devote a few lectures to the study of Beowulf.' I was somewhat disappointed, but hoped soon to get to Elizabeth. This, however, was not to be, for almost the whole of the session was taken up as before with Anglo-Saxon, and we only got a lecture or two on the Elizabethan people.<sup>199</sup>

<sup>197</sup> See A.J. Scott, 'On the General Literature during the first half of the 19th century', The Edinburgh Evening Courant, 9 January 1851, and The Scotsman, 8, 15, and 18 January 1851.

<sup>198</sup> Testimonials to A.J. Scott (London, 1850), p.13.

<sup>199</sup> H.E. Roscoe, The Life and Experiences of Sir Henry Enfield Roscoe (London, 1906), p.27.

i) The Early Development of the Ladies' College in Bedford Square, London

Early in Scott's Professorship at University College he came to know Mrs. Elisabeth Reid, probably through either Henry Crabb Robinson or Augustus De Morgan, both of whom were close friends of this Unitarian lady of property.<sup>200</sup> For many years Mrs. Reid had hoped to found a ladies' college in order to provide a higher standard of women's education, for where women's education did exist it was in a state of superficiality. Her hope was not merely to provide better governesses for women of the upper classes, but to broaden the lives and perspective of women and to give them an educated freedom, equal to that received by young men.<sup>201</sup> In March 1848, F.D. Maurice and others had, in response to the need for women's education, opened Queen's College, the constitution of which, however, did not entirely satisfy Mrs. Reid. It was Church of England dominated and had no women on its governing body. Many parents objected to the religious teaching offered at Queen's, and Mrs. Reid and her friends believed there was room for another College, founded, like University College, on the principles of religious freedom.<sup>202</sup>

Although Mrs. Reid had, for many years, envisaged such an institution and had been willing to back it financially, nothing of significance happened until she secured the aid of her academic friends, Scott, Newman, De Morgan and Carpenter.<sup>203</sup> According to the historian of Bedford College, Scott 'lent a hand at its birth.'<sup>204</sup> By early 1849 there were three trustees of the future college, including Scott's close friend, Hensleigh Wedgwood, and Scott's acquaintance, Erasmus Darwin.<sup>205</sup> Wedgwood also became the

<sup>200</sup> See S.E. De Morgan, Memoir of Augustus De Morgan, pp.173-4; and M.J. Tuke, A History of Bedford College for Women (London, 1939), p.7.

<sup>201</sup> Tuke, pp.xiii, 25, and De Morgan, p.174.

<sup>202</sup> Tuke, p.24 and De Morgan, p.175.

<sup>203</sup> Tuke, p.63 and De Morgan, p.174.

<sup>204</sup> Tuke, p.66.

<sup>205</sup> The third trustee, Thomas Farrer, married Hensleigh Wedgwood's daughter, and may well have been the brother of Miss Farrer, the frequent companion of Scott's close friend, Mrs. Rich. Mrs. Rich was also involved in the early days of the College. See Tuke, p.46.

chairman of the General Committee of the College, on which Scott's friend and disciple, James Baldwin Brown served. Brown was now the the Congregational Minister of Claylands Chapel, Clapham Road, London. Soon the professors began to be appointed. Scott, De Morgan, Newman and Carpenter, all holding chairs at University College as well, were the most eminent on the list, and created a close relationship between University College and the new Ladies' College in Bedford Square, where Mrs. Reid had rented accommodation for the new institution.

The close connexion between the Ladies' College and its unorthodox neighbour, University College, plus the fact that Mrs. Reid was herself a Unitarian and most of those engaged with her either Unitarian or heterodox in their views, made the new institution in Bedford Square a somewhat suspect place in the eyes of many.<sup>206</sup> Even Scott's close friend, F.D. Maurice, had many reservations about the new Ladies' College. Scott had asked Maurice, if he and some of his Queen's College colleagues would be able to cooperate with the promoters of the new College and make contributions to its development. Maurice responded by saying that he could not associate himself with this new scheme, for it would be impossible to freely cooperate with such people as Francis Newman and Harriet Martineau, the novelist and reviewer, and member of the famous Unitarian family. 'I fear for myself,' wrote Maurice to Scott, 'and in a measure - so far as I may do so without offence - for you, the loss of moral strength which must arise from the feeling in the minds of others, still more in one's own, that a single conviction is to be suppressed, pared down, softened in expression, lest some person with whom we are connected should take offence at it.'<sup>207</sup> To further the establishment of a college in which most of the teachers hold contrary views would be too great a compromise to make, contended Maurice. Two of Maurice's colleagues, however, from King's and Queen's College, J.S. Brewer and C.G. Nicolay, did not share Maurice's scruples and agreed to join Scott, Newman and the others in professorial duties at Bedford Square. Before the Ladies' College opened, however, Dr. Jelf, the Principal of King's College, refused to give Brewer and Nicolay permission to hold office, even

<sup>206</sup>Tuke, .p.25.

<sup>207</sup>F. Maurice, Life of F.D. Maurice I, p.470.



for a term, in an institution so much imbued with dissent. In order to hold on to their King's College professorships, Brewer and Nicolay were forced to resign their chairs at the Ladies' College.<sup>208</sup> The College, nevertheless, opened early in October 1849.

j) Scott's Inaugural Lectures at the Ladies' College, October 1849

Scott had been elected to both the Professorship of English Literature and the Professorship of Moral Philosophy. He therefore delivered two inaugural lectures at the opening of the Ladies' College in October 1849, the first of which was 'English Literature as a study recommended to ladies'. Scott expressed the hope in this first lecture that the new College in Bedford Square might not produce pedantic women of affected learning, but rather well-educated gentlewomen, who, in turn, would make a real contribution, direct and indirect, to the education of both the women and men of England.

English literature is an important tool in the preparation of young men and women for the duties of manhood and womanhood, but it is 'a vast educational power left, till recently, altogether uncontrolled,' said Scott.<sup>209</sup> The higher seats of learning in Britain, with the exception of London University, had left this powerful sphere of education totally unattended. English literature, with its ability to provide 'the living contact of spirit with spirit,'<sup>210</sup> must not be left to operate upon people only spontaneously, contended Scott. This is not to say that the study of English literature is to interfere with the free and spontaneous interest in literary material. The formal study of literature ought not to detract from the sheer delight of reading a novel, for instance, nor ought it to assume an entirely moral character:

Is the schoolmaster or the professor to hunt us boys and girls into the bedroom; take Guy Mannering or David Copperfield from under our own bolster, spread it open and transmute it, by a fearful alchemy, into a sermon on propriety, integrity, or obedience to parents? ... shall our first acquaintance with Prospero and Miranda no longer be from the kind lips of a mother, communicating her enjoyment, but, from a bearded Professor ruthlessly triumphing that he can turn anything

<sup>208</sup>Tuke, p.64.

<sup>209</sup>A.J. Scott, Suggestions on Female Education: Two Introductory Lectures on English Literature and Moral Philosophy delivered in the Ladies' College, Bedford Square (London, 1949), p.6.

<sup>210</sup>Ibid. p.10.

into a lesson? From such awful prospects must we be delivered! If such be the business of a Professor of English Literature, far be it from me. Compared with being influential in the extinction of all those voyages of literary discovery in childhood and youth, of all those stolen joys, those subjects of many of men's sweetest remembrances, I am not sure but the murder of a single boy or girl ought to sit lightly on a man's conscience.<sup>211</sup>

The aim of the study of English literature, contended Scott, is to establish its true literary principles. The study of principles is a means of heightening the interest and enjoyment of any subject. In mathematics, for instance, if a person has not grasped the basic principles of addition and depends instead entirely on the authority of rules to know that two plus three equals five, he will find mathematics a tedious study. The true study of mathematics consists in 'putting the mind in a position to discern for itself the principles of certain relations. It has then attained a freedom which is not arbitrariness or licentiousness,' explained Scott. 'When we discern a principle for ourselves, then, thus far, the truth makes us free; and such emancipation (not mere limits and regulations) it is the business of the higher education to impart.'<sup>212</sup> Scott further illustrated his subject by saying that in science the knowledge of physical principles heightens one's interest in the observation of natural objects. 'In fact the variety and beauty of natural objects stimulate us to long for this more intimate understanding of them, as a closer communion, and, as it were, spiritual possession. We would,' continued Scott, 'in the words of Coleridge, turn all matter into thought. In this sense the impulse to philosophy is, as Novalis has said, a homesickness; the mind would be everywhere at home.'<sup>213</sup>

It is a general truth, then, that the study of principles communicates additional powers of perception. 'There is no study to which these remarks may not apply,' said Scott. 'What is uninteresting, is not understood. What is not understood, is

<sup>211</sup>Ibid. p.10.

<sup>212</sup>Ibid. pp.20-21.

<sup>213</sup>Ibid. p.22.

uninteresting. Everything becomes interesting when known in its principles.'<sup>214</sup> Scott complained that the education of women had too often stopped short of the study of principles. And in literature, 'I must be excused for saying, that men have merely not taught what they have not themselves learned.'<sup>215</sup> No body of literary philosophy has been formed in England, asserted Scott. No investigation has been applied to the laws of literary truth.

One of the basic principles of literature concerns expression by words. The force and beauty of an expression depends on the precision with which each word is fitted to convey the mind. This definiteness in the meaning of words, said Scott, will be learned only if language is, in some way, made the object of study. This principle of expression is elementary in the study of literature, but without it we cannot truly attain the highest literary point of view, the relation between the work and the living author. Unless the principle of true expression by words is developed in us 'the word will still be an obstructive medium between us and the light of the thought,'<sup>216</sup> rather than a means of entering a living communion with the spirit of the author.

The study of the principles of English Literature, said Scott, will lead to a preference for the true over the false, and the higher over the lower. A poem may strike us as a fine piece of writing because of its sonorous phrases or because it contains fine words vaguely applied and vaguely apprehended, but if it does not convey the mind of the author it is not a true piece of literature. And, furthermore, a poem may convey the mind of its author without thereby being a precious piece of literature, for its value depends upon the mind which it conveys. Scott discouraged too great a concentration upon the mere execution of any literary work. Jane Austen, for instance, adequately depicted the ordinariness of ordinary people in ordinary life, but 'this is but a small thing done right,' said Scott. 'To show the greatness that lies beneath common life, the volcanic caverns and subterranean rivers that are far under the high-road or the cottage-garden, is a task for

<sup>214</sup> Ibid. pp.22-3.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid. pp.23-4.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid. p.26.

altogether a different hand.'<sup>217</sup>

Scott concluded his first lecture by indicating that he would employ composition as a means of enabling his students to express themselves more clearly and to further understand the literary expressions of others. 'We shall endeavour to be true to the first end of speech,' said Scott, 'to guard against all modes of language which do not embody actual forms of thought; to show that fine style is a fraud and a counterfeit, unless it be the true expression of a fine meaning; that none of us can know that it is our vocation to be fine writers till we find the elevated thought demanding elevated utterance; and that this discovery is made only in looking to our universal vocation, of using speech for the adequate conveyance of our mind. When all can and will say what they mean, it will be fairly judged whose meanings are the finest. This,' said Scott, 'is a moral as well as an intellectual discipline.'<sup>218</sup>

Among Scott's audience on this occasion was Caroline Fox, the diarist. In describing his inaugural lecture on English literature she spoke of Scott's 'infinite fund of dry humour, which people seldom take in until two minutes too late.' She also indicated that generally many people felt Scott to be 'very vague, whilst others crave that a sort of Scott system may survive him. But we must take the men whom God sends us,' she wrote, 'and be thankful, without cutting and squaring them like awkward tailors as we are.'<sup>219</sup>

A week after his lecture on English literature, Scott delivered his second inaugural lecture at the Bedford Square Ladies' College, this time as the Professor of Moral philosophy. In introducing his lecture, entitled 'Moral Philosophy for Young Ladies', Scott indicated that he had no intention of training young ladies at Bedford Square to talk familiarly about a subject which they did not essentially understand. The aim of the course was not to enable young ladies to speak with apparent knowledge about the Ethics of Butler, for instance, but rather to nurture in them a 'reverence for truth, - the sense of the relation between thought

<sup>217</sup> Ibid. p.32.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid. pp.34-5.

<sup>219</sup> C. Fox, Memories of Old Friends (London, 1882), p.254.

and reality, - love and honour for the duties and virtues thus made subjects for display, - and the true use of the intellect itself.'<sup>220</sup> Scott regarded the historical method as the most powerful and effective means of mastering any study, and no subject more so than Moral Philosophy. But the historical method must be something very different from a list of the schools and of their arguments. The true study of the various historical schools of moral philosophy 'is to perceive the basis for each of them in the realities of man's moral life. The seminal principle of each of those systems is in the bosom of each one of us,' asserted Scott, and 'in the heart of the society around us.'<sup>221</sup> 'He who does not find the world of ethical science in the nursery, the parlour, and the workshop, need look for it nowhere. For him, indeed, to whom it is not exhibited in his own breast, it is everywhere invisible,' continued Scott. 'The doctrines of all the schools may be used, by looking for their germs in the nature of things, and dealing with it there, and not in the text-books. The germ of all moral philosophies is in us, and around us. It is an element of reality, a source of right, and a source of wrong. Let us deal with it there.'<sup>222</sup>

A fundamental aspect of moral philosophy, then, is the acquisition and use of moral experience, for moral experience, said Scott, is the very object which moral philosophy contemplates. From a very early age children find themselves involved in a network of moral relationships. The moral life continues to be exercised throughout life, and, 'I may say,' said Scott, 'throughout eternity.'<sup>223</sup> Moral experience is really the most important constituent part of moral philosophy. 'A superiority in reasoning soon reaches its limits,' explained Scott, but 'to have felt, sympathised, entertained sentiments of duty, reverence, and the like, at once more deeply and more observantly than others, confers a penetrating power, gives to a heart entrance into the hearts of others.'<sup>224</sup>

<sup>220</sup> A.J. Scott, Suggestions on Female Education, p.41.

<sup>221</sup> Ibid. p.46.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid. p.61.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid. p.52.

<sup>224</sup> Ibid. p.52.

Moral experience in a person is soon accompanied by occasional reflection, and, as his intellect expands, man ought increasingly to reflect upon his moral experiences and to seek in them a unity of meaning. Scientific reasoning, said Scott, 'is prompted by the instinct which urges us to look for unity in diverse appearances, and calls into exercise the power of systematising, of comprehending multifarious particulars in an orderly organic whole.'<sup>225</sup> Moral philosophy, then, in its search for governing principles and unity of meaning is a scientific pursuit.

In conclusion Scott emphasised the importance of holding moral experience together with moral reasoning. 'Were I bound,' said Scott, 'to characterise what appears to me the right method in teaching, by a few words, I would say not a training to experience and observation, not a training to reflection and argument, not the one first and the other in addition to it, but the combination and, as it were, consubstantiation of the two. They must often be pursued separately; but it is like the strands of a rope, that they may be afterwards made one,' said Scott. 'What is wanting in English women is neither right feeling nor active and discursive intellect, but the harmony of the two, - the heart in the head, the head in the heart - the equipoise of the soul.'<sup>226</sup> Scott sought the united mind, the mind which did not speculate in a vacuum, but rather put all its knowledge to the test of reality. 'The highest type of mind,' he said, 'is that which, like Wordsworth's cloud, "moveth altogether if it move at all." The rainbow is gay with refracted colours, but the white, undecomposed light serves the eye best both for work and for enjoyment.'<sup>227</sup>

k) Scott's Professorships at the Ladies' College in Bedford Square, and his appointment as the first principal of Owens College, Manchester

Scott took on the Professorships of English Literature, and Moral Philosophy at Bedford Square while retaining his Chair at

<sup>225</sup> Ibid. p.47.

<sup>226</sup> Ibid. p.62.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid. p.64.

University College. Although the Ladies' College had been founded, and was largely run, by many of Scott's friends and acquaintances, his involvement at the College again increased his circle of contacts. Two of Scott's new colleagues were Dr. James Booth, a friend of Francis Newman and a well known educationist, and Francis Stephen Cary, a painter and prominent art instructor.<sup>228</sup> Some ladies of note whom Scott came to know at the College in Bedford Square were: Lady Caroline Romilly, wife of the Attorney-General, who being a member of the Church of England, brought an element of orthodoxy to the College; Anna Jameson, the authoress and intimate friend of Lady Byron; Anne Procter, the centre of a highly cultivated literary circle in London; and Anna Swanwick, one of the most learned women of her time, a Greek and Hebrew scholar, a translator of Goethe and Schiller, and an early and devoted advocate of higher education for both women and working men.<sup>229</sup> Some of the other ladies involved in the life of the College, either as Lady Visitors or members of the Council, were Mrs. De Morgan, Mrs. Rich, Mrs. Wedgwood, and Mrs. Scott.

As Professor of Moral Philosophy Scott professionally entered a field which had long occupied much of his attention. 'Though eminent in many departments of scholarship,' said W. Hodgson concerning Scott, 'Philosophy, in its true sense, has long been his favourite pursuit.'<sup>230</sup> 'Whatever he teaches becomes Philosophy,' said Erskine, 'because in every thing he seeks for meaning and eternal truth under all conventional and traditional phrases, and he teaches others what he seeks himself. He is essentially philosophical, and appears in constant communion with the great common fountain from which all the streams of human knowledge flow.'<sup>231</sup> William Smith, the biographer and translator of the German philosopher Fichte, who considered Scott to be an original genius of the highest order, later said that 'the Higher Metaphysic' was with Scott 'less a professional pursuit than a

<sup>228</sup> See Tuke, p.64, and D.N.B. articles on J. Booth and F.S. Cary.

<sup>229</sup> In addition to Tuke's History of Bedford College, see the D.N.B. articles on the above mentioned ladies.

<sup>230</sup> Testimonials to A.J. Scott (Edinburgh, 1856), p.9.

<sup>231</sup> Testimonials to A.J. Scott (London, 1850), p.29.

life-study.' Scott's philosophical inquiries had not remained mere speculations, said Smith. 'They have been habitually applied to the illustration and advancement of all that is most refined in human inquiry and honourable in human pursuit.'<sup>232</sup>

There remains no record of Scott's philosophical lectures at the Ladies' College in Bedford Square, other than his Inaugural Lecture. Scott's course of lectures, however, 'On the Progress of Mental Philosophy during the first half of the 19th Century', delivered during this period at the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution, was briefly reported in The Scotsman.<sup>233</sup> William Smith, vice-president of this Institution, described Scott's course as 'a masterly resume of the great philosophical movements in our own age in Germany, France and Britain; and of their relation to, and influence on, each other.'<sup>234</sup> Scott's four Edinburgh lectures reveal his broad knowledge of 19th century philosophy, particularly of the German idealist school. The great attraction of this school of thought, said Scott, is that it shows how 'the spiritual power of man is superior to all matter.'<sup>235</sup>

Scott's course on Moral Philosophy in Bedford Square was very successful, so much so, said Francis Newman, 'that a large number of elder ladies attend it as extraordinary pupils.'<sup>236</sup> In the first year Scott's Moral Philosophy class was the most well attended, attracting over one third of the pupils.<sup>237</sup> Harriet Martineau explained to Henry Crabb Robinson and Derwent Coleridge, a son of the poet, that Scott was 'a great favourite of the ladies.'<sup>238</sup> She added, however, that she had not yet found why this was so. Although Scott's courses

<sup>232</sup>Testimonials to A.J. Scott (Edinburgh, 1856), p.15

<sup>233</sup>A.J. Scott, 'On the Progress of Mental Philosophy during the first half of the 19th Century', The Scotsman, 11, 14, 18 and 21 December 1850. For a more extensive report of the first lecture see The Edinburgh Evening Courant, 12 December 1850.

<sup>234</sup>Testimonials to A.J. Scott (Edinburgh, 1856), p.16.

<sup>235</sup>Scott, 'On the Progress of Mental Philosophy', The Scotsman, 21 December 1850.

<sup>236</sup>Testimonials to A.J. Scott (London, 1850), p.15.

<sup>237</sup>Tuke, pp.323-4.

<sup>238</sup>E.J. Morley, Henry Crabb Robinson on Books and Their Writers vol 2 (London, 1938), p.683.



were successful, in both Moral Philosophy and English Literature, the first year of the College was, in many respects, disappointing. Only sixty-eight students enrolled during the first term, and Carpenter's Natural History course, for instance, attracted only three.<sup>239</sup> The College also suffered severe criticism when its Professor of Ancient History, Francis Newman, published his 'heretical' Phases of Faith.<sup>240</sup> Further preventing the growth of the young College were the resignations in 1850 of De Morgan and Carpenter, both due to the pressure of work.<sup>241</sup> In addition to these first year difficulties there came another blow to the newly born College, which its historian described as calamitous.<sup>242</sup> On the 24th April 1850, Scott wrote: 'I have been induced to offer myself as a Candidate for the Principalship of Owens College, Manchester, with the Professorships of Moral and Mental Philosophy and of the English Language and Literature.'<sup>243</sup> The Ladies' College in Bedford Square, which could ill afford another loss, was about to lose its Professor of Moral Philosophy and English Literature, whose lectures in the first year had been the most well attended. Furthermore, wrote the Bedford College historian, Scott's 'personal character and high attainments had been a strength to the institution.'<sup>244</sup> In spite of these early adversities, the Ladies' College, later known as Bedford College, continued to grow, and in 1869 was incorporated into the University of London.

Early in May 1850 Scott received a letter from Maurice, encouraging him in his application to Owens College, especially concerning the Professorship of Philosophy. 'I believe that Moral Philosophy and Logic are the subjects to which all your friends would wish that you should especially devote yourself,' wrote Maurice. 'I have observed that you never present your hearers or

<sup>239</sup>Tuke, pp.62, 323.

<sup>240</sup>Ibid. p.27.

<sup>241</sup>Ibid. p.65.

<sup>242</sup>Ibid. p.66.

<sup>243</sup>A letter from A.J. Scott to the Senate of University College, London, 24 April 1850. College Correspondence, University College London MS Library. Concerning the same see letters from Scott, 7, 16 May, 1 November, and 16 December 1850.

<sup>244</sup>Tuke, p.66.

readers with mere digests of opinions or systems, but are most careful to bring living men before us, and to connect their views with themselves and with the times to which they belong. I have felt this peculiarity of yours most striking myself,' continued Maurice, 'and I know that in some attempts which I have made to lecture and to write treatises on these subjects I have derived more assistance from hints which you have dropped than from any of the compendiums which are so numerous in our times.' Maurice proceeded to say that Scott's philosophical teaching had had the effect of awakening 'manly thought, zeal for truth, a lively sense of the relation between moral life and intellectual theories, unwillingness to strain that relation into an excuse for condemning others, or desire to make it a reason for watchfulness and self-suspicion.'<sup>245</sup>

Among Scott's many references for the position of Principal of Owens College, one came from J.C. Hare and another from Thomas Erskine. Hare spoke primarily of Scott's profound study of the moral and social problems of the 19th century, and therefore of his ability to develop an institution of higher education which would meet the needs of an industrial city such as Manchester.<sup>246</sup> Erskine, before writing his testimonial to the Trustees of Owens College, wrote a letter to Scott, encouraging him, as did many of his friends, in his course of action. 'For any situation which requires at once an intelligence large and delicate and cultivated, and a practical understanding for guiding men without offending them, I believe that you possess a fitness shared by few,' wrote Erskine to Scott. 'I am myself glad of any opportunity of putting myself under your instruction, and I do not think I could easily devise a greater kindness to the people of Manchester, than to be in any measure assisting to them in getting you for the superintendent of the education of their youth. So rare a gift it is to be at once in the highest sense original and uneccentric.'<sup>247</sup> On the 9th May 1850 Erskine formally testified on behalf of Scott:

<sup>245</sup>Testimonials to A.J. Scott (London, 1850), pp.25-6.

<sup>246</sup>Ibid. p.24.

<sup>247</sup>Ibid. p.28.

He is especially fitted to be the Principal of a College, as his own mental character would tend to give a unity of meaning and of purpose to all the branches of education taught there. As a teacher, and as a superintendent of teaching, I believe him to be gifted above any man that I have known. And I also believe in his fitness to be the head of the body of Professors; for I know that he possesses great firmness of character, and that his moral and intellectual weight give him great authority, without its being necessary for him to assume any, and, at the same time, that he has a most just and delicate consideration of the rights and feelings of others.

It is not always easy in a Testimonial to mark the distinction between an ordinary man of good talents and acquirements, and an extraordinary man. If then in what is written above this distinction is not sufficiently manifested, I think it right, before concluding, to supply the defect by saying, that I believe Mr. Scott to be not only an extraordinary man, but a very extraordinary man; and I will venture to add, that those who help to make the right use of him and his faculties will do themselves much honour, and their country much service.<sup>248</sup>

On the 20th October 1850, Scott wrote to a colleague at University College: 'I consider myself virtually elected.'<sup>249</sup> He continued by saying that Owens College, which, like University College, was to be a place of higher learning entirely free from all religious tests, would probably get under way in the new year. By the 23rd October Scott's appointment to Owens College was certain, and was announced and welcomed by The Manchester Examiner and Times. 'If anything could reconcile us to the extraordinary delay of the trustees in their appointment of a Principal of the new College, it would be the fact that their choice has at last fallen on Mr. A.J. Scott,' wrote the editor. 'And yet, to those who know anything of Mr. Scott's attainments as a scholar, his power as a thinker, his aptitude for teaching, and the respect in which he is held by many of the first minds of the day, it cannot but seem strange that nearly five months and a half of deliberation should have been needed to enable the trustees to decide on his election,' continued the editor. 'We question whether any man could be found better qualified than Mr. Scott.'<sup>250</sup> Scott

<sup>248</sup> Ibid. p.29

<sup>249</sup> A letter from A.J. Scott to H. Malden, 20 October 1850. College Correspondence, University College London MS Library.

<sup>250</sup> 'Owens College - Appointment of Principal', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 23 October 1850.

formally announced his resignation to the Council of University College on the 1st November 1850.<sup>251</sup> Clough, the poet, was soon appointed to succeed Scott in London. Immediately after Scott's appointment to Owens College, he received a letter of congratulations from John MacLeod Campbell. 'Much is expected from you,' wrote Campbell, 'while I believe that your own ideal will be your hardest taskmaster.'<sup>252</sup>

<sup>251</sup>A letter from A.J. Scott to the Council of University College, 1 November 1850. College Correspondence, University College London MS Library.

<sup>252</sup>D. Campbell, Memorials of J.M. Campbell I, p.224.

## CHAPTER VI

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THE MANCHESTER PERIOD, 1851-1866

a) The birth and early development of Owens College, Manchester

Scott and his family took up residence in Manchester early in 1851 with a view to the new college opening in March.<sup>1</sup> Scott had been somewhat hesitant to leave his London circle of friends and influence, 'but the prospect of a wider influence and of having, in measure at least, the moulding of the new institution and of helping forward a higher standard of education,' wrote one of Scott's friends, 'seems to have enabled him to make the choice.'<sup>2</sup> Scott's appointment to Owens College was 'a very popular one',<sup>3</sup> and, as we have seen, was warmly greeted by the Manchester press. The mayor of Manchester publicly welcomed Scott as a man whose 'labours had already made him known to the country.'<sup>4</sup>

Scott had arrived in a centre of burgeoning industrial and commercial activity. This hive of industry was characterised by a fervent nonconformity, vigorously renewing its intellectual and moral culture, and generating a political liberalism.<sup>5</sup> Increasingly there was a desire for higher education, but, for Manchester dissenters, religious tests still barred the way to Oxford and Cambridge. John Owens, who in his own person represented the successful, dissenting, Manchester liberal, deeply interested in education, died in 1846, leaving close to 100,000 pounds for the establishment of a college totally free from all religious tests.<sup>6</sup> According to Owens' will, 'the students, professors, teachers, and other officers and persons connected with the said institution, shall not be required to make any declaration as to, or submit to any test whatsoever of their religious opinions, and that nothing shall be introduced in the

<sup>1</sup> From 1851 to 1866 Scott lived at 2 Park Place, Halliwell Lane, Manchester.

<sup>2</sup> P. Macallum, Recollections of Professor A.J. Scott (Greenock, 1878), p.25.

<sup>3</sup> 'Owens College - The First Principal', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 8 July 1880.

<sup>4</sup> 'Owens College - Principal Scott's Inaugural Address', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 4 October 1851.

<sup>5</sup> See H.B. Charlton's brief account of the rise of Manchester over the hundred years before the birth of Owens College, in Portrait of a University 1851-1951 (Manchester, 1951), p.13.

<sup>6</sup> The Owens College: A Descriptive Sketch (Manchester, 1891), pp.1-2.

matter or mode of education or instruction in reference to any religious or theological subject which shall be reasonably offensive to the conscience of any student, or of his relations, guardians, or friends, under whose immediate care he shall be.'<sup>7</sup> It should be noted that Owens was not opposed to Christianity, but rather to a denominational monopoly of higher education. Owens College, unlike University College, London, the only other place of higher education in Britain totally free from religious tests, did not evidence the secular, or Benthamite tang of the latter institution. The trustees appointed in Owens' will were all drawn from the leading Protestant religious bodies of Manchester.<sup>8</sup>

By early 1851 Scott's colleagues had been appointed, and a building, formerly the house of Richard Cobden, had been secured for the purposes of the new college.<sup>9</sup> The building stood surrounded by squalor, and was 'guarded by a very Scylla and Charybdis of disreputable licensed houses,' wrote one of Scott's students. 'On the one hand was the Dog Inn, a fully licensed house with singing room, at the back of which shocking scenes were enacted. On the other hand was a beerhouse of an equally dangerous character. In this, traditions of our day reported that a former Owens College porter had been inveigled, robbed and ejected in puris naturalibus.'<sup>10</sup>

Rather than waiting to begin a full academic year in the following October, it was decided to open the first session of Owens College on the 12th March 1851,<sup>11</sup> with a student body of twenty-five.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>7</sup>Extracts from the Will of John Owens (Manchester, n.d.), pp.7-8.

<sup>8</sup>See E. Fiddes, Chapters in the History of Owens College and of Manchester University (Manchester, 1937), pp.17-18.

<sup>9</sup>The original building of Owens College still stands at the corner of Quay St. and Byrom St.. It is now used as the County Court. Scott's colleagues at Owens College in the first year were: J.G. Greenwood, A. Sandeman, E. Frankland, W.C. Williamson, T. Theodores, and A. Podevin.

<sup>10</sup>H. Brierley, Memories of Quay Street and of Owens College (Manchester, 1921), pp.6-7.

<sup>11</sup>'Owens College', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 5 March 1851.

<sup>12</sup>W.A. Shaw, Manchester Old and New vol 2 (Cassell, 1896), p.97. It should be noted that the Owens College Senate Minutes from 1851-1869 are not in existence. The John Rylands University Library Archives in Manchester hold the Senate Minutes from 1870.

Scott had intended to deliver an inaugural address at the opening of the College, but a few days beforehand his health failed him. One of Scott's students described what happened when he arrived at the college for an interview with Scott:

Principal A. J. Scott's private room was duly indicated, and the youth of 16 years was instructed to knock. That which followed can never be forgotten, bound up as the event was with a crisis in the history of the College. A sound came from within the room, and the would-be student entered. The Principal motioned him to a chair, but uttered no word of welcome. After a few moments of trying suspense, it became evident that he had been seized with illness. The visitor summoned assistance. The invalid was removed to his home, and, during the whole of that brief session of three months, the duties of Principal were fulfilled by him who was destined also to act on subsequent occasions of his senior's indisposition.<sup>13</sup>

Scott's friend and colleague, J. G. Greenwood, the Professor of Classics and History, acted as Principal during the first session, while Scott rested over the spring and summer of 1851, for some of that time in the countryside of Gloucester.<sup>14</sup>

Scott was well enough to resume his duties in the autumn, and to deliver his inaugural lecture on the 3rd October 1851.<sup>15</sup> He was greatly supported and encouraged in the early days of the College by local politicians and ecclesiastics, as well as by old friends.<sup>16</sup> The Bishop of Manchester, James Prince Lee, formerly a friend of Thomas Arnold's and a master at Rugby School, actively supported Scott and the new institution, and is nearly always reported as being present at the public events related to Owens College. W. M. Thackeray can be found at Scott's opening address to the students in October 1851. 'A very noble speech I thought he made to his boys and young men,' wrote Thackeray, 'and I wished I was a boy myself that I might learn something but I am too old a boy to learn much

<sup>13</sup>J. Worthington, 'In 1851 and Later', The Owens College Jubilee (Manchester, 1901), p.38.

<sup>14</sup>H. Solly, These Eighty Years (London, 1893), p.77.

<sup>15</sup>See A.J. Scott, 'Inaugural Lecture on University Education', British Eloquence of the Nineteenth Century (London, 1855). See also 'Owens College - Principal Scott's Inaugural Address' (two articles), The Manchester Examiner and Times, 4 October 1851.

<sup>16</sup>See, for instance, 'Owens College - Inaugural Address of A.J. Scott', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 4 October 1851; and D. Campbell, Memorials of J.M. Campbell I, p.225.



now I fear.'<sup>17</sup>

Enrolment at Owens College, which from May 1851 was actually a member college of the University of London, was very encouraging in its earliest years, the first full year producing a total of 62 students, with the third year more than doubling that number.<sup>18</sup> But, despite the rising numbers, Scott expressed disappointment very early on concerning the low standard of preliminary education offered in Manchester, and thus the inadequate preparation of students for the higher instruction of Owens. 'In some of our classes,' wrote Scott, 'much time has been wasted on what ought to have been done elsewhere, and often the advantages of our special methods of instruction have been entirely lost to students simply because they have had no proper training at school. It is not our business to be schoolmasters conducting a superior sort of school. That would be rather competing with schools than fulfilling the proper destination of a college.'<sup>19</sup> This, as we shall see, was to be Scott's line all along. He fought for and achieved a stiffening of entrance examinations, quite willing to allow enrolment temporarily to drop in the interests of a higher quality of education.<sup>20</sup> He also worked diligently for the upgrading of preliminary education in Manchester. 'We desire it to be clearly understood,' stated Scott, 'that the standard of preparation must be steadily, if somewhat gradually raised.'<sup>21</sup> In the second year of the College's history Scott introduced evening classes for schoolmasters,<sup>22</sup> and subsequently can be found visiting local schools in the interests of

<sup>17</sup>G.N. Ray, The Letters and Private Papers of W.M. Thackeray III, p.96.

<sup>18</sup>See Owens College, Manchester. Annual Reports of the Principal (Manchester, 1852-54).

<sup>19</sup>A.C. Magian, An Outline of the History of Owens College (Manchester, 1931), p.13.

<sup>20</sup>G. MacDonald, George MacDonald and his wife (London, 1924), p.193.

<sup>21</sup>Owens College, Manchester. Annual Report of the Principal, June 1852 (Manchester, 1852), p.v.

<sup>22</sup>Owens College, Manchester. Annual Report of the Principal, June 1853 (Manchester, 1853), p.iv.

better education at all levels.<sup>23</sup>

Not all the students in the early years of Owens College were ill prepared for the higher education offered by Scott and his colleagues. There were, as Scott always emphasised, notable exceptions in all departments, and in his own classes the names of P.W. Bunting, R. M. Pankhurst, and E. C. Van Cutsem repeatedly appear on the prize lists.<sup>24</sup> Percy William Bunting, the grandson of the great Wesleyan Methodist, Jabez Bunting, later became a prominent social reformer, and, for many years, editor of the Contemporary Review. Richard Marsden Pankhurst also became a passionate socio-political reformer, primarily known for his advocacy of women's suffrage. Scott's other star pupil in the early years, Van Cutsem, described Scott as a teacher who could impart something of his own warm and genial nature to every subject which he handled, and who was able to convey to others the enthusiasm which vivified his own soul. 'When we attended his lectures,' said Van Cutsem, years later, 'we knew that our attention would be rivetted by striking and original ideas, conveyed in the most vivid and eloquent language, and that we should rise from our seats with our minds stored with matter for reflection long afterwards. Ideas gathered in these lectures are, I feel sure, floating in the minds of many of us; and although their source may be forgotten ... yet they exert an influence over us the value of which it would be difficult to over-rate.'<sup>25</sup>

Many of Scott's students later testified to the powerful influence which he exercised over them. 'His personality was unique,' said Jeffrey Worthington, later a nonconformist minister deeply indebted to Scott. His class lectures 'abounded in suggestiveness', and inspired a 'reverent regard.'<sup>26</sup> 'I attended all his lectures,' wrote another student, 'and well do I remember those frequent times when he would

<sup>23</sup> See, for instance, 'A.J. Scott and the Distribution of Prizes at Chorlton High School', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 7 June 1854; and 'Owens College and the Schools', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 14 June 1854.

<sup>24</sup> See Owens College, Manchester. Annual Reports of the Principal (Manchester, 1852-55).

<sup>25</sup> The Scott Testimonial (Manchester, 1860), p.5.

<sup>26</sup> J. Worthington, 'In 1851 and Later', The Owens College Jubilee, p.38.

suddenly turn half-round in his chair, and, drawing his gown over his knees and closing his eyes, would rhapsodise so that one almost felt one's heart beating and brain whirring. Even now, as I write, I can hear that vibrating voice and see again that sunlit room, which was to me a very grove of Academe, though it only looked out upon St. John's churchyard.'<sup>27</sup>

Scott's classroom, used for both his English and his philosophy lectures, was situated on the first floor of the Quay Street building.<sup>28</sup> Years later a former student recollected that in Scott's classroom no one thought of misbehaving: 'I can recall no breach of discipline of any kind. Scott's majestic appearance and fine voice ... were enough to damp the slightest approach to student folly.'<sup>29</sup>

Scott always attempted to open himself to personal relationships with his pupils. At the end of the first academic session Scott apologised to the students for not having been able to mingle with them as frequently as he would have liked, and promised to enjoy greater intimacy with them in the future.<sup>30</sup> Two Owens College students to whom Scott did open himself and his home were F.W. MacDonald and G. Harwood. Frederic MacDonald, later a prominent theologian and leader of the Wesleyan Methodists, and the uncle of Rudyard Kipling, spoke of Scott's personal kindness to him as a student and his invitation into the Scott home. He was characterised by 'a weighty and impressive personality,' said MacDonald. 'Scott was a scholar of wide and varied knowledge, a philosophic thinker whose genius was akin to that of Coleridge on the one side, and Sir William Hamilton on the other, and a speaker of remarkable force and beauty. All things with him moved ultimately into the sphere of the unseen and the eternal, and though a master of logical forms and processes, he was essentially a mystic, a sane and large-souled mystic. As a teacher he exercised an extraordinary influence over students whose

<sup>27</sup>'Principal Greenwood and Owens College', The Manchester Guardian, 10 December 1889.

<sup>28</sup>H. Brierley, Memories of Quay Street and of Owens College, p.9.

<sup>29</sup>'Owens College Forty Years Ago', The Owens College Union Magazine N.S. vol 6, May 1899, p.120.

<sup>30</sup>'Owens College - Annual Distribution of Prizes', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 3 July 1852.

minds were at all attuned to his, an influence best described as spiritual, quickening and calling forth not only thought but aspiration, and opening up paths that it would be good to follow, and goals that might at least be aimed at.'<sup>31</sup> Another student who came close to Scott was George Harwood, who later became a Liberal M.P., a reforming deacon within the national Church, and a friend of A.P. Stanley and T. Hughes. In 1901 Harwood spoke of his one year at Owens College as having more to do with the destiny of his life than all the other years put together, and this largely because of his personal intimacy with Scott. 'Upon a youth feeling acutely the burden and the mystery of all this unintelligible world, Scott's brooding spirit was sure to act as the most exhilarating stimulant,' said Harwood. 'In common with all really great men, Scott was as natural, and simple, and gentle, as a child, and as easily amused. I remember once having to take him out of the theatre because he was laughing too much; I think it was at Lord Dundreary. Since those far-off days I have been privileged to know rather intimately several men whose names are great on the world's tongue, and who were truly great in themselves; but I have never come across one to whom could be so fitly applied Keats' sublime saying about Wordsworth's "catching his freshness from archangel's wing."<sup>32</sup>

Scott also fostered an acquaintance with his students outside the classroom by actively encouraging and occasionally participating in the Owens College debating society. Shortly after its beginning in 1851 Scott wrote to the society's chairman:

I have to acknowledge the vote of thanks to myself passed by your society, and communicated through you. I do so with feelings of sincere gratification. I am sure you do not over-estimate my interest in yourselves personally, and in the success of the undertaking.<sup>33</sup>

Only on one occasion did Scott veto a topic for debate: an Eastern

<sup>31</sup>F.W. MacDonald, As a Tale that is Told (London, 1919), p.94.

<sup>32</sup>G. Harwood, 'A Few Reminiscences and Conclusions', Owens College Jubilee, p.44.

<sup>33</sup>H. Brierley, 'Owens College Unions', Scrapbook, Cuttings relating to Owens College, John Rylands University Library, Archives UA/18/7.

student had intended to propose 'that a man ought to have more than one wife.'<sup>34</sup>

Not all Scott students were prepared to praise him unreservedly. 'It was a treat to hear him thunder out lines of Anglo-Saxon poetry,' wrote one of Scott's students. 'But in preparation for examination we rather chafed at his methods, for he waxed so enthusiastic over the earlier periods of his subject that we never got a word of teaching on later periods.'<sup>35</sup> Some students, as had been the case at University College, London, were less than enthusiastic about Scott's lecturing. One Owens College historian records that Scott's class 'would on occasion unobtrusively disappear from the room.'<sup>36</sup>

In addition to his regular classes in logic, moral philosophy, and English language and literature, Scott was the Professor of Hebrew from 1851 to 1860,<sup>37</sup> and also offered a weekly course of lectures open to the public on 'The Relation of Religion to the Life of the Scholar.' The latter two departments of Scott's teaching, plus Professor Greenwood's course on New Testament Greek, were given their precise form and boundary through an early controversy over the inclusion of religious instruction in the Owens College curriculum.<sup>38</sup> The trustees had recommended that 'religious instruction should be provided for all the students who may desire to avail themselves of it.' It was hoped that such religious instruction might 'elevate and strengthen the moral and religious character of the students, without encroaching on the liberty of conscience.'<sup>39</sup> Although it was made clear that attendance would be entirely optional, the nonconformist camp in Manchester raised a storm of protest against the recommendation. It would not be possible to safeguard sincere religious instruction from sectarian bias, they claimed. Even the

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

<sup>35</sup>H. Brierley, Memories of Quay Street and of Owens College p.9.

<sup>36</sup>E. Fiddes, Chapters in the History of Owens College, p.35.

<sup>37</sup>The Calendar of Owens College Session 1862-63 (Manchester, 1862), p.69. G. Cameron in The Scots Kirk in London (Oxford, 1979), p.48, incorrectly states that Scott was only Principal and Professor of Hebrew at Owens College.

<sup>38</sup>See E. Fiddes, p.16, and H.B. Charlton, p.39.

<sup>39</sup>Charlton, p.39.

editor of the Manchester Examiner and Times, usually supportive of Owens College, expressed great concern. While there is no fear of Scott and his colleagues introducing sectarian thought, he said, 'it is not unlikely that their successors under the government of other trustees may gradually introduce doctrinal discussions, and thus pervert the will of the Founder of the Institution.'<sup>40</sup> The outcome of the storm, a solution which seems to have pacified the protesters, was that the New Testament would be studied in Greek, the Old Testament in Hebrew, and Scott would offer a weekly course of public lectures on religion in relation to the life of the scholar.

For over ten years Scott delivered this weekly course of public lectures on a Wednesday or Thursday afternoon, usually in the chemistry lecture theatre at Quay Street.<sup>41</sup> 'These lectures,' wrote one of his hearers, 'profound in style and character, and delivered with marvellous extempore power, gathered audiences of the most varied kind, Manchester citizens being there as well as College students, and, as I remember, the first Bishop of Manchester, James Prince Lee, himself being among them.'<sup>42</sup> Scott explained that his purpose in these lectures was not theological instruction. 'My endeavour has been to give an upward direction to the habitual business of the place. Nothing has gratified me more, during the course of my occupation of office here,' said Scott in 1860, 'than the warm acknowledgment of lasting help - help in the far off islands of the ocean - which I have received, not once or twice, from those who have had the opportunity of attending these lectures.'<sup>43</sup>

In these lectures Scott considered issues such as the harmony of religion and philosophy, or the influence of religion in the lives of different scholars. 'This was an inexhaustible subject,' wrote one regular listener, 'justifying excursions throughout the universe, past,

<sup>40</sup>'Owens College', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 15 March 1851.

<sup>41</sup>H. Brierley, Memories of Quay Street and of Owens College, p.9. See 'Principal Scott's course on the Relation of Religion to the Life of the Scholar', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 18 January 1854 and 25 October 1855; and Owens College, Manchester. Annual Reports of the Principal (1852-53).

<sup>42</sup>F.J. Powicke, David Worthington Simon (London, 1912), p.34.

<sup>43</sup>The Scott Testimonial, p.11.

present and future, and very wonderful these excursions were.'<sup>44</sup> One Scott friend described how he traced down through the centuries the life of religion, 'how it existed and was fed and grew and developed, ever and again breaking out and bursting through all forms - the strength, power, and endurance that it gave to men, and how, under the least healthy conditions, it rejected what was false and assimilated what was true. How its influence had blest the world. How unseen and in secret it wrought, changing the outer form.'<sup>45</sup>

A writer in the Manchester Examiner and Times claimed that these Scott lectures 'brought home to Manchester society generally the fact that a new and original mind had come amongst them.'<sup>46</sup> But not everyone reacted favourably. One of Scott's former students, while admitting that many adults had greatly appreciated the lectures, complained that the students of his day had been 'too young to comprehend them.'<sup>47</sup> Jeffrey Worthington, however, as a student, felt himself to have been one of a large company 'who felt the magnetic touch of his power' at these lectures.<sup>48</sup> Joseph Thompson, later the Owens College historian, similarly expressed himself:

Business men and thoughtful women came to them, theological students, young men wishing to train themselves to think of something beyond business also came, and those who did come went away with an impression that never left them - an impression of deep reverence for the teacher and of gratitude to him for what he taught. The effect on me was to bring me to the College as a student that I might be one in Professor Scott's class of Moral Philosophy.<sup>49</sup>

Professor H.E. Roscoe, formerly a student of Scott's in London, and appointed to the Chair of Chemistry at Owens in 1857, but never one of

<sup>44</sup> J. Hunter, 'Alexander Scott', The Expositor (8th series), vol 21, p.458. See also the syllabus of three courses of these Scott lectures in J. Thompson's The Owens College (Manchester, 1886), p.130.

<sup>45</sup> P. Macallum, Recollections of Professor A.J. Scott, p.27.

<sup>46</sup> 'Owens College - The First Principal', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 8 July 1880.

<sup>47</sup> Brierley, p.9.

<sup>48</sup> J. Worthington, 'In 1851 and Later', The Owens College Jubilee, p.38.

<sup>49</sup> J. Thompson, 'Recollections of the Old College', The Owens College Jubilee, p.41.

Scott's warmest admirers, could only say that these lectures 'were, of course, mainly attended by ladies who were much impressed by the rhetoric of the Principal.'<sup>50</sup> But Professor Greenwood, later to succeed Scott as Principal, expressed deep gratitude for the lectures:

I attended such of the lectures as my engagements would allow, and bore away from them undying recollections, not only of eloquent and stirring words, but of thoughts that I hope will not be unfruitful in my own mind, and that will be to me a great source of mental, and, I think I must add, of spiritual, growth.<sup>51</sup>

Perhaps the most fruitful aspect of Scott's public lectures on 'The Relation of Religion to the Life of the Scholar' was the contact it afforded him with the theological students of the Lancashire Independent College in Manchester. The Principal of the theological college, Dr. R. Vaughan, also editor of the British Quarterly for twenty years, encouraged his students to sit in on Professor Greenwood's classical lectures at Owens College. Many of them also attended Scott's public lectures. 'The students of the Lancashire College used to go down in a body every Thursday to hear him,' wrote one of Scott's appreciative listeners. 'When I tell you that this made return to dinner impossible, and that poor old Dr. Vaughan continually found himself to his amazement, presiding over an empty dinner table you will feel that there is unimpeachable evidence of some strong attraction.'<sup>52</sup> Another theological student later wrote:

A good many of our students availed themselves of the free, original, suggestive, and very instructive lectures, or talks of Principal Scott, and preferred them to the more formal prelections of their own professors -- a fact which produced in the paternal bosom of Dr. Vaughan a flutter now of jealousy and again of alarm. For just at that time, partly through Scott's teaching and that of his friends, Baldwin Brown and George MacDonald, the latter of whom settled for a while in Manchester; and still more through the teachings of Coleridge, Maurice, and Kingsley, and the Broad Church Party, the minds of men, and of students among the first, were fast opening to wider, more rational and more merciful views of religious truth.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>50</sup> H.E. Roscoe, The Life and Experience of Sir Henry Enfield Roscoe, p.103.

<sup>51</sup> The Scott Testimonial, p.15.

<sup>52</sup> J. Hunter, p.458.

<sup>53</sup> F.J. Powicke, pp.16-17



Scott opened himself to the Lancashire Independent students, as he had done with his own students, and made room for personal friendship. Two of the students in particular entered a close relationship with him, D.W. Simon and J.A. Picton.<sup>54</sup> David Worthington Simon, later a leading Congregational theologian and Principal of the Congregational College in Edinburgh, is said to have owed his intellectual self to Scott.<sup>55</sup> 'I remember having a dread and disdain of sciolism, or would-be knowledge burnt into my soul whilst still a student by a man whose published writings give no adequate idea of his eminence as a thinker and of the personal influence which he wielded,' wrote Simon over fifty years after his student days. 'I have never ceased to be grateful to him; for though I have only too frequently and grievously offended the fair mistress to whom he introduced me, to have known her has been one of the best blessings of my intellectual life.'<sup>56</sup>

Simon's contemporary at the Lancashire Independent College, James Allanson Picton, also came close to Scott during his student years in Manchester. Picton, later a Congregational minister, frequently suspected of heterodoxy, and then a radical politician actively involved in promoting the education and rights of the working classes, came to know Scott through his public lectures on religion. Scott, said Picton, was able in these lectures to communicate the essential truths of religion to people of all shades of theological opinion.<sup>57</sup> He appeared in the lecture room, explained Picton, without a manuscript, 'unless a nearly blank sheet of quarto with perhaps three words scrawled across it in three lines can be called so. He entered, sat down at his desk and began to talk as though we had been making a morning call, and a subject of conversation had just occurred to him. By and by he would take up a pen and twiddle it; then he would stop, and drop it as a point of some perplexity made him pause. Then he would flash out a profound suggestion that - to our young minds - seemed inspired. Then he would range through Dante, Homer, Plato, the

<sup>54</sup> Ibid. p.34.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid. p.19.

<sup>56</sup> D.W. Simon, The Making of a Preacher (London, 1907), p.12.

<sup>57</sup> The Scott Testimonial, p.8.

Vedas, the Zenda-a-vesta, the Koran, and so on for illustrations. Then some aberration of modern vulgarity would be remembered, and he would throw his grand head back and his eyes would burn, and his voice would rise as near to tones of thunder as is possible in conversation. When we went away "our hearts burned within us" - though really we could not always have told why.<sup>58</sup> Picton received slightly more definite impressions from Scott's course on 'Natural Theology'. 'The somewhat platitudinarian Dr. Vaughan was giving a similar course at the same time, and why we should want to hear Scott when our own revered tutor was exhausting the same subject was to him a greater mystery by far than any theological difficulty.' Having contrasted Vaughan's understanding of natural theology with Scott's, Picton, later the author of The Mystery of Matter, recalled, forty years after these Manchester lectures: 'There remains on me now the impression Scott created by contrasting the fathomless mystery involved in the mere existence of a pebble with the tricks of arrangement in eye or hand that may be imitated by finite and conditioned ingenuity. The Power that can say "Be!" and a pebble is, transcends any glorified watchmaker.'<sup>59</sup> Picton concluded his recollection of Scott by saying that he had 'rarely, if ever, known a man with such a searching, rousing, inspiring power over young men.'<sup>60</sup>

b) Scott's Philosophy of Higher Education

For many years, both in Woolwich and in London, Scott had been involved in education at various levels. The extension of knowledge was of the highest importance for Scott, for all knowledge was God-related. To understand the laws of creation in any of its departments was to come to a greater knowledge of the Creator. Scott had thus been led to work for the education of neglected groups in society, for the development of working men's education, for the higher education of women, and for the university education of conscientious objectors to religious confessionalism. In Manchester, Scott, at the helm of Owens College, was forced to further develop

<sup>58</sup>Hunter, pp.458-59.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid. p.459.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid.

his philosophy of education, in his repeated attempts to justify the existence of an institution of higher education to a city increasingly subject to the values of materialism, and preoccupied with the utilitarian ideals of greater and more efficient production.

Scott contended, from his very first public address as principal of Owens College, that higher education is not pursued primarily for practical ends. An academic's discovery of a great truth will, no doubt, be practically applied, but this does not constitute his principal guidance or inducement. Often, in fact, the practical application is unforeseen by the discoverer. 'It is truth for her own sake he has sought,' explained Scott. 'Men gather fruit from his knowledge, because truth is prolific. But the progressive applications of a great discovery during centuries, or to the end of time, are an incomplete measure of the pregnancy of the original truth, which, by its principle of active life, is greater and more precious than all of them.'<sup>61</sup> Truth, however, is prolific in practical application, and Scott, in his defence of higher education, did not hesitate to remind the Manchester businessman of this fact. Kepler, for instance, may have been aware that an improved knowledge of the planetary motions would improve navigation, but his contemporary merchants and seamen were not likely to see the practical value of his apparently abstract calculations. 'And yet,' said Scott, 'in the commerce of all our ports is Kepler living, thinking, working, even now, daily and hourly, with a ubiquity and effect against which no services of individuals directly engaged in it are for a moment to be measured; discharging functions for which the payment of annual thousands in perpetuity would be a scanty recompense.'<sup>62</sup>

Astronomy, explained Scott, is only one example of the high role played by all abstract study in the history of the most practical improvements. For its own good, therefore, human society ought to ensure that its members do not all become mainly practical men, and to afford opportunity and encouragement for a permanent system of higher education, in which the results of profound inquiry and speculation are continued from age to age. In reference to the popularity in

<sup>61</sup>A.J. Scott, 'Lecture on University Education', British Eloquence of the Nineteenth Century (London, 1855), p.219.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid. p.220.

Manchester of applied science over the study of science in its principles, Scott asserted that the former differs from the latter as much as the living root does from the branch, or the flower or the fruit. Although the fruit and flowers may be desirable, or even necessary, 'the root is more than all of them, because it is alive, and because it is capable of giving us the rest.'<sup>63</sup> The substitution of applied science for pure science, said Scott, would be like a child's garden in which the flowers were stuck into the earth without roots. Scott urged his listeners to understand that their provision for the highest investigations of pure mathematics was, in fact, their provision for future engineering and navigation. Scholarship, said Scott, nourishes practical application, 'to which it is as the hidden moisture of the ground is to the produce of our fields.'<sup>64</sup> Provision for an academic study of literature and philology is provision for commerce with past ages and remote peoples, 'whose imports are so essential to all the uses of life, and make a nation truly a member of the great community of mankind; without which, indeed, it is stranded and islanded in time, and shut up to a narrowness of resources.'<sup>65</sup> One of the most important aspects of the educated man, claimed Scott, is his historical awareness, his living connexion with the past. The educated man profits by the commerce of books, 'trafficking, as it were, between the coasts of remote ages',<sup>66</sup> holding together the events of the present and the past. In this sense, the man of books, far from being deficient in experience, is, in fact, knowledgeable in the ways of the world, and is of immense value to society. The historian of the Roman Empire, for instance, has lived for centuries, said Scott. Without systematically educated men society would be left to the mercies of those 'whose tendency is to precipitate society too fast into the future, because they know not enough her essential relations

<sup>63</sup> A.J. Scott, 'A Public Address at the Owens College Annual Distribution of Prizes', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 2 July 1853.

<sup>64</sup> Scott, 'Lecture on University Education', British Eloquence of the Nineteenth Century, p.231.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid. p.225.

<sup>66</sup> A.J. Scott, 'Education in Manchester, America, etc.' The Manchester Examiner and Times, 21 October 1856.

with the past.'<sup>67</sup>

But Scott did not wish ultimately to justify higher education in terms of its practical fruitfulness. Usefulness is the attribute of means, said Scott, not of ends. There is the goodness of a thing in itself. 'The relish of food, the smell of a rose, the sweetness of music, the contemplation of truth, aye, the peace of a man's conscience; these are instances, higher or lower, of that which is good, apart altogether from its being useful.'<sup>68</sup> Useful knowledge is not necessarily the highest kind of knowledge, nor usefulness its highest quality. The musical composer, for instance, as opposed to the musician of entertainment or the musical mechanic, is directly engaged with the end, with the life and spirit of music. He occupies the highest place in his art, and 'sits with Phidias and the poets of form, with Titian and the poets of colour, with Dante and Shakespeare and the poets of speech - every man after his measure. And so the man of science, of literature, of philosophy, stands not upon the usefulness of his pursuit,' asserted Scott, 'but upon its intrinsic worth and nobleness. His main business is with the good that is in it, not with the good that it is for.'<sup>69</sup>

Scott feared that the current of thought in his day ran too exclusively in the direction of the utility of knowledge, as opposed to the intrinsic worth of all knowledge. There is, he said, an original appetite in the human soul responding to the attractions of knowledge in itself, just as there is an appetite in the body responding to the attractions of food, quite apart from its usefulness. 'I believe,' said Scott, 'that such a monitor there is in the soul of man. It may get confused and perplexed; it may be more or less benumbed, as the bodily appetite is benumbed, with a certain degree of fatigue; but we are not therefore to deny its existence, nor to refuse the wholesome satisfaction of its demands.'<sup>70</sup> This original

<sup>67</sup> A.J. Scott, 'College Education', Supplement to the Manchester Examiner and Times, 16 October 1852.

<sup>68</sup> Scott, 'Lecture on University Education', British Eloquence of the Nineteenth Century, p.227.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid. pp.229-30.

<sup>70</sup> A.J. Scott, 'Self-Education: the opening lecture at the Salford Mechanics' Institution', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 18 January 1854.

appetite for a true understanding of reality manifests itself in the unspoiled mind. Never does contact with the minds of children 'act more like a refreshing bath in the fountain of our original life than in that true disinterested delight in knowing, for the sake of knowing, which we find in the child,' said Scott. 'What becomes of the child's delightful thirst for knowing more about the flowers, the trees and rivers, the blue sky and the bright stars? "The cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke it."' <sup>71</sup> If this dimension of man is not allowed its scope, contested Scott, then the human mind, and the mind of society, will not work harmoniously, the machine of human society will get out of its bearings. When a man comes to think of his mind as a mere tool, how many pounds he can get out of so many strokes of it, as though it were a chisel and a mallet, he has become less than human, an artificial product. Like a body denied free exercise of all its faculties, the mind of society will become decrepit and paralysed.

The professor of higher education, thought Scott, was to encourage the exercise of the student's mind in all directions, to nurture a delight in the imagination, and to expand the affections. He was to do this, however, not by making teaching his main business, but, rather, by further mastering and advancing his particular branch of knowledge. Even if he is defective in the art of instruction, 'from the master in any knowledge, something is to be caught that no other can impart. And if he have also in any measure the special gifts of a teacher, all will come forth from him with a life and love, with a power, a fulness and freshness, which you will look for in vain from the man whose main business you make it to communicate, and not to possess something worth communicating. Accordingly,' said Scott, 'a college is originally a provision for study and contemplation. ... He who learns from one occupied in learning, drinks of a running stream. He who learns from one who has learned all he is to teach, drinks "the green mantle of the stagnant pool". To catch information is something; to catch the life and spirit of the pursuit and contemplation of truth, is infinitely more. The one you may get from him whose studies are a hortus siccus; the other from him only whose knowledge is a garden of living plants, putting forth fruits in their

<sup>71</sup>Ibid.

seasons, changing their aspects as they grow. The existence of such men is communicative. Their manner of being leavens that which is around them, even an entire people.'<sup>72</sup>

The truly educated man, said Scott, is not merely the man who has acquired an enormous amount of information, but, rather, is the man, who, through long discipline and continuity of study, possesses the power of giving unity to a wide range of facts and observations. He possesses the power of sticking to the point, not merely in conversation, but in his thoughts, - the power of observing the central principle in an entire subject, and of pursuing it through all its details. Scott saw himself as living in an increasingly informed age, the press being greatly responsible for this. But information, contended Scott, is quite distinct from education. Information consists of detailed facts, considered in isolation, and of rules immediately applicable to practice. A systematic education, on the other hand, puts a man in possession of the central principles of his subject; it allows a man to understand a subject for himself. Principle gives a living unity to a wide range of facts, contended Scott. The knowledge of educated men is methodised, so that they can readily apply it. 'Their mind is like a well-arranged cabinet, where everything deposited lies in its appointed place, and can be brought forth when required. It is principle that methodises it.'<sup>73</sup> The vast number of facts in astronomy, for instance, could not, as isolated facts, be retained by any one mind. 'By the discoveries of Kepler and of Newton,' said Scott, 'in the known laws of gravitation, as determining the elliptical movement of the planets, we have a principle which connects the facts, for instance, of the relation of their velocity to their distances with the facts of the accelerated descent of a body falling upon the surface of our earth. The knowledge of that principle gives a simplicity, a clearness, an all pervading unity to this whole scheme of facts. It is one tree, with its various branches, and the unity of the tree preserves a coherence in the mind of the astronomer between the facts which would otherwise be scattered,

<sup>72</sup> Scott, 'Lecture on University Education', British Eloquence of the Nineteenth Century, pp.232-33.

<sup>73</sup> Scott, 'Self-Education', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 18 January 1854.

isolated, and altogether impossible to be retained. Now here is a real power bestowed upon the mind by the possession of a principle.'<sup>74</sup>

Scott believed that higher education concerned itself with more than just the intellectual life. Feeling and imagination were to be cultivated. The end product was to be a harmoniously proportioned man, fitted for the duties and rights of manhood, a man whose moral nature had grown along side his intellect. 'The moral development of man,' said Scott to his students, 'consists of the development of moral strength, which is will; the development of moral right, which is conscientiousness; and of moral beauty, which is, - shall I call it by the higher name of Love, or by the more practical name of disinterestedness? These are the things you are to seek to acquire, as you advance towards manhood.'<sup>75</sup> The human intellect is not like a sack into which knowledge can be poured while it remains passive, claimed Scott. It is more like the digestive system of the natural body, in which there must be a living reaction, if the food is to be properly integrated into the body. Similarly no amount of information will be of real value, unless the will has been morally disciplined to allow for continuity of study and perseverance. This disciplined continuity gives a unity to the student's knowledge and pursuits, and enables him to steadfastly follow through an interrogation into his subject matter. The cultivation of this moral strength, which should occur in higher education, is an essential ingredient of manhood. 'I am persuaded,' said Scott to his students, 'that no man who has spent the years of your time of life in steady manly conflict with the difficulties and tedium of such tasks, will regret that his moral character has undergone such a culture.'<sup>76</sup> One of the other essentials of manhood, which Scott hoped would be developed at Owens College, was moral right, the sense of conscientiousness. This moral quality largely concerned itself with one duty, under which all others are comprehended, man's duty to the Creator, the responsibility of fully developing the wonderful and mysterious faculties bestowed on humanity, the sense that life is

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> A.J. Scott, 'Address to the Students of Owens College', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 20 October 1852.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.



from God, and that right and wrong are right and wrong as before God. If moral right is being developed in a man, he will begin to evidence the third moral quality, that of moral beauty. This consists, said Scott, of a readiness to care for others as one cares for oneself, 'at the cost of self-sacrifice.'<sup>77</sup> Scott's hope was that gentlemen of moral beauty as well as of intellectual manhood would be produced at Owens College, that they would recognise in others 'the same rights we claim for ourselves; the same right to have their feelings regarded, and the same right to have their place regarded, and due scope for the performance of their duties. We have a right to conjecture that a man does not respect himself aright, when he does not recognise this right on the part of other men.'<sup>78</sup>

c) Scott's literary friends in Manchester, and his philosophy of poetry

As the Professor of English literature at Owens College, Scott became a leading literary figure in Manchester society. Foremost among his literary friends were Mr. and Mrs. Gaskell. William Gaskell, a contemporary of Scott's at Glasgow University, was now a leading unitarian minister and an active promoter of education and learning in Manchester. He usually conducted the English literature classes at Owens College during Scott's occasional periods of illness.<sup>79</sup> Gaskell's wife was the popular English novelist, Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell, the authoress of Mary Barton and a regular contributor to Dickens' Household Words. The Gaskells, as we have seen, had been occasional hearers of Scott's Sunday evening lectures in London. Upon Scott's removal to Manchester the relationship between the two families grew intimate. In Mrs. Gaskell's collected letters there are repeated references to one or other of the Gaskell family dining or having tea with the Scotts at Halliwell Lane,<sup>80</sup> and the following letter from Mrs. Gaskell is quite typical of the relationship:

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> See D.N.B. article on William Gaskell.

<sup>80</sup> See J.A.V. Chapple, The Letters of Mrs. Gaskell (Manchester, 1966).

My dear Mrs. Scott,

It would give both Mr. Gaskell and me great pleasure if you and Mr. Scott could spend next Friday Evening with us quite quietly. We shall drink tea at half past seven, and I hope you will be able to join us.<sup>81</sup>

The Gaskells were great supporters of Scott's public lectures, William Gaskell often listed as being present at the Principal's opening and closing lectures at Owens College. In 1859 Mrs. Gaskell wrote to Ann Scott concerning a forthcoming set of lectures by Scott:

I came home last night from Scotland sooner than we expected and heard of your kind message about the ticket to Mr. Scott's lectures, which I should be very glad to have. Much would always have more, you know, - Would it be too much to ask for another ticket for one of my girls? Would it be too much to ask for - No! I am afraid that would be too much!<sup>82</sup>

Susanna and Catherine Winkworth, both translators and authoresses, were a part of this Scott-Gaskell literary friendship in Manchester. They had long been on intimate terms with the Gaskells, and probably came to know Scott through them. Susanna referred to Scott as 'one of our most valued friends.'<sup>83</sup> There was much in Catherine and Susanna which would account for the mutual attraction between Scott and the Winkworth sisters. Both were very able linguistically, and were particularly interested in the literature and thought of Germany. In 1853 Catherine published the first series of her Lyra Germanica, a book of German hymns translated by herself, including many hymns still in common use today, such as, 'Now thank we all our God', and, 'Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation'. Susanna's translation a year later of the German mystical treatise, the Theologica Germanica, was equally popular, and went through numerous editions. Susanna also published, amongst many other books, a translation of the life of B.G. Niebuhr, and upon the death of Scott's friend, J.C. Hare, completed the latter's Life of Luther. In addition to this mutual interest in German literature, the Winkworths, like Scott, were committed to the promotion of higher

<sup>81</sup>Ibid. p.804.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid. pp.565-66.

<sup>83</sup>M.J. Shaen, Memorials of Two Sisters (London, 1908), p.43.

education for women, and shared with Scott many common friends, such as Carlyle, Newman, Hare, Bunsen, and Maurice.<sup>84</sup>

Scott also continued contact with his London literary circle. Crabb Robinson, for instance, during this period, referred to Scott's eloquent eulogies of such poets as Homer, Dante and Shakespeare, and spoke of Scott's beautiful reading of Wordsworth.<sup>85</sup> Scott also managed to see a good deal of Thackeray during his early years in Manchester. We find Thackeray dining at Halliwell Lane on numerous occasions,<sup>86</sup> and, on at least one occasion, along with the Gaskells.<sup>87</sup> In the autumn of 1852 it appears that Thackeray stayed for some time with the Scotts at Halliwell Lane, and with Ann Scott's sister at Alderley.<sup>88</sup> Thackeray finished the proofs of his novel, Esmond, while in Manchester that autumn, and delighted Scott by immediately sending him a copy upon its publication in November.<sup>89</sup>

Another literary friend whom Scott attracted to Manchester was Fanny Kemble. 'I think,' wrote Fanny to a close friend, 'your wish that I might see more of Mr. Scott and his family is likely to be realised. To my great pleasure, I received a note from him the other day, telling me that there was a general desire in Manchester to have the 'Midsummer Night's Dream' given with Mendelssohn's music. He wrote of this to me, expressing his hope that it might be done, and that so I might be brought to them again; adding the kind and cordial words, "All here love you" - which expression touched and gratified me deeply; and I hope that the reading may take place, and that I shall have the privilege of a few days' more intercourse with that man.'<sup>90</sup> Fanny's reading of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' took place before a large and appreciative audience at the Concert Hall in

<sup>84</sup> See D.N.B. articles on Catherine and Susanna Winkworth.

<sup>85</sup> T. Sadler, Diary, Reminiscences, and Correspondence of Henry Crabb Robinson vol III (London, 1869), p.470.

<sup>86</sup> See, for example, G.N. Ray, The Letters and Private Papers of W.M. Thackeray vol III (London, 1946), pp.83, 96, 656.

<sup>87</sup> Chapple, p.202.

<sup>88</sup> Ray, p.85.

<sup>89</sup> Chapple, p.210.

<sup>90</sup> F.A. Kemble, Records of Later Life III, p.285.

Manchester, early in March 1853.<sup>91</sup> Scott's comment to Fanny after the performance was: 'It was good, from beginning to end; but you are Theseus.'<sup>92</sup> Although Scott was well enough to attend the Concert Hall, Fanny's time with him was, because of his poor health, much less than she had expected. 'I am sorry to say,' wrote Fanny from Scott's house, 'I find both Mr. and Mrs. Scott unwell, the former with one of those constitutional headaches from which he has suffered so much for many years. They incapacitate him for conversation or any mental exertion, and I am a great loser by it, as well as grieved for his illness.'<sup>93</sup>

Only a month before Fanny Kemble's visit to Manchester, Scott had delivered two public lectures, which, more clearly than any other work by Scott, express his understanding of poetry. The lectures took place at the Manchester Free Library, with which Scott had been closely associated since its beginning in 1852.<sup>94</sup> Scott made a vivid impression on at least one member of his audience, who years later described Scott's 'broad smooth brow, with his black hair falling over it, and his pale massive features.' Scott's lecture, he said, was 'extemporaneous, and delivered with great earnestness, and in tones of voice not easily forgotten.'<sup>95</sup>

Poetry, said Scott, while it will have many beneficial results, is pursued, more than any other field of intellectual activity, for its own intellectual enjoyment. If other studies are as ordinary and necessary food, poetry is like a feast to the soul. 'A feast,' said Scott, 'consists not only of dainties; it is a poor thing if only the palate is consulted. Look at the beauty of the fruits, and their grouping; the brilliancy of the silver and the crystals; and the rich colours of the wine; listen, too, for the music; and then say whether it has not been designed for all the senses and capacities of our nature, and to give a moment of their free enjoyment. Now, pass out of the region of the body to that of the spirit. Listen to those

<sup>91</sup>'Concert Hall - Mrs. Fanny Kemble', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 9 March 1853.

<sup>92</sup>Kemble, p.293.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid. p.291.

<sup>94</sup>J. Johnson, George MacDonald, p.30.

<sup>95</sup>(J. Finlayson?), Memoir of Rev. Alex. J. Scott, M.A. (1886), p.15.

high harpers, the poets of all ages; and ask if they had not the same end in providing for all the faculties of the soul and their enjoyment?'<sup>96</sup>

Scott contended that every human character has its moments of poetry. 'I believe with my whole soul,' said Scott, 'that poetry belongs to all men.'<sup>97</sup> In every age man has been conscious of states of feeling that have prompted him to musical speech, states of feeling which Scott called 'the dance of the mind.'<sup>98</sup> Poetry is in the soul of man, whether it finds poetic utterance or not. Consider the baby, for instance, lying on his back in the grass, revelling among the flowers. 'Look at his face, and what a smile is on it; in sympathy with the smiling sunshine of the sky, that is passing over all the earth around him. Presently you will hear a song from the child, that comes earlier than speech. He is a poet, before he begins to be capable of dialogue; he can say nothing yet, but he can sing something. There is a certain harmonious delight of all the faculties, which accordingly can express itself in no manner but in music, which is the germ of verse.'<sup>99</sup> Scott displayed, in these lectures, great sympathy with the Romantic understanding of poetry, and particularly with Wordsworth's definition of poetry, given in the Preface to Lyrical Ballads, as 'the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings.' Listen, said Scott, to the mother with the infant on her knee. 'She is humming a low song to herself, which has come out of her spontaneously, instinctively, and without her being able to control it; - as if she were an Aeolian harp, and those maternal emotions were the soft breathings of the breeze, sweeping over its strings. Every man has moments of poetry.'<sup>100</sup> Poetry is not to be defined by its external form, by reference to its peculiarities of expression, such as Latin hexameters and English heroic verse. There are writers of verse who are not genuine poets. 'If I could make you remember any poetical moments of your own experience; if I could remind one

<sup>96</sup> A.J. Scott, 'Two Lectures on Poetry and Fiction', The Monthly Literary and Scientific Lecturer vol 4 (Manchester, 1853), p.92.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid. p.93.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid. p.101.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid. p.92.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

how he felt on going back, after a long interval, to the home of his childhood - hearing the bells of his native village on a sabbath morning, and looking into the valley where lay "the gleam, the shadow, and the peace supreme"; if I could make you recall emotions in your life,' said Scott, 'our difficulty in defining poetry would be ended. I would say, that is what I mean.'<sup>101</sup> In these poetical moments one feeds upon a feast of the soul; the harmonious exercise of the spiritual faculties is joy for its own sake.

The poet is a man who gives utterance to these universal feelings. He both experiences the poetical moments with a special intensity, and is specially gifted at communicating them to the minds of others, so as to make their souls vibrate in accord with his. The poet is in sympathy with the whole mind of humanity, and in continuity with its past. He witnesses for the community and the brotherhood of all men, both past and present; he utters a catholic humanity. Burns, thought Scott, evidences, to a certain extent, this quality of the poet, for Burns utters the heart-music of a whole land. 'There is no rank or condition, no measure of education of Scotchman that distinguishes those who know Burns and love him, from those who know him not and do not care for him,' said Scott. 'He seized on the music of Scotland, and wedded it to verses which bring home to the hearts of Scotchmen all over the world such feelings as those of early companionship with worthy friends, of long partings, of joyful, tender greetings.'<sup>102</sup> But more than any other poets of the English language, Shakespeare and then some of the Romantics, such as Coleridge and Wordsworth, were able to enter into 'the general soul of humanity', with the conviction that 'the interior history is that for the sake of which the exterior has its interest and its value.'<sup>103</sup>

Scott understood poetry to be the harmonious exercise of all the faculties of the human soul. The imagination it is which synthesises the various faculties into a 'full and joyous chorus.'<sup>104</sup>

<sup>101</sup> Ibid. p.93.

<sup>102</sup> A.J. Scott, 'A Toast to Burns', The Manchester Times and Examiner, 29 January 1859.

<sup>103</sup> Scott, 'Two Lectures on Poetry and Fiction', p.115.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid. p.100. See also Scott's 'Inaugural Lecture at the Mechanics' Institution Exhibition', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 16 December 1856, where he expresses a Romantic understanding of the role of the imagination in poetry.

When the different faculties of the soul are harmonised, man naturally seeks to express himself in melodious utterances. And thus all the powers of a great soul like Goethe are harmoniously called forth, on certain occasions, like the many musicians in a great orchestra. The poet is not content merely with the utterance of the musician. For the expression of the full range of his thought, he seeks the music of speech. 'It must be speech that is capable of expressing the quintessence of the thought which has gone to feed the poetic mind; language, therefore, capable of transferring it, in all the odour of its freshness, to the mind of him to whom the poet wishes to communicate it.'<sup>105</sup> If poetry is the harmonious exercise of all the faculties of the human soul, then the highest poetry is 'the highest utterance of the highest minds.'<sup>106</sup> The most vigorous mind, with the widest range of activity, has the most to bring together and to contribute to a poetic utterance. A great poem, as a look at Dante's Divina Commedia, or any masterpiece, will confirm, is the fruit of a rich and profound life of varied activity.

Essentially the poetic utterance is 'a note in unison with the poetry of the universe itself.'<sup>107</sup> In the poetic mood, which may be awakened 'by the starry heavens, by the stormy sea, by the solitary valley among great mountains, by the manifold colouring where the mysterious light is disappearing in the west, by the flower, and by the musical roar of a great forest or a stream,' something has spoken to us. 'The harp that has been found melodious here, is one whose strings are the constituents of the created universe; and the finger that moves across them, what other is it than the finger of the Creator Himself?'<sup>108</sup> The poet, through the imagination, attempts to embody in his words the spiritual beauty of creation. In his poetical utterance he suggests 'that soul-loftiness which looks out from the works of nature.'<sup>109</sup> This, said Scott, is what Turner, the poet-painter, managed to do in his landscapes, and what Wordsworth

<sup>105</sup> Scott, 'Two Lectures on Poetry and Fiction', p.94.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid. p.95.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid. p.98.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> A.J. Scott, 'Inaugural Lecture at the Mechanics' Institution Exhibition', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 16 December 1856.

accomplished in his poetry. As in Wordsworth's poetry, nature, for Scott, is clothed with a religious significance. S. Prickett describes Coleridge's use of the imagination as stereoscopic, as 'bringing into a single focus two separate levels of experience, and seeing them as a coherent whole.'<sup>110</sup> Similarly, for Scott, through the imagination, the created order becomes a lens whereby we can bring into focus for an instant an aspect of the eternal. Surely, urged Scott, man ought not only to intellectually understand God's ways, but also to feel God in His creation, to recognise the soul of the first and greatest Poet, speaking to man in all the glory of creation. 'I ask no man that he should read the poets,' said Scott, 'but I do inculcate on every man, with all earnestness, that he should not neglect the germ of poetry that is within his own bosom. When you are with your children, when you are walking in the fields, when you are privileged to visit the exquisite scenery which is fortunately so near and so accessible to you here, when your eyes are on the Peak of Derbyshire, or the lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland, - do not refuse responsively to yield up yourselves at the voice from nature that bids you. I believe that, in proportion as each of us is inwardly harmonised, which is the true mental condition of poetry, we are likely to be harmonised mutually with each other.'<sup>111</sup>

d) The Scott-MacDonald relationship

A number of months after Scott's lectures on poetry George MacDonald arrived in Manchester. MacDonald, as we have seen, had come under Scott's influence while studying theology in London in the late 1840s. In 1850 he had been called to the Trinity Congregational Chapel in Arundel. It is evident that the relationship between Scott and MacDonald had continued during their few years of separation. Approaching his marriage to Louisa Powell in March 1851, MacDonald had expressed the hope to Louisa that Scott would marry them.<sup>112</sup> And in January 1852, in honour of Scott,

<sup>110</sup>S. Prickett, Romanticism and Religion (Cambridge, 1976), p. 19.

<sup>111</sup>Scott, 'Two Lectures on Poetry and Fiction', p.99.

<sup>112</sup>See Greville MacDonald, George MacDonald and his wife (London, 1924), pp.148-51. Scott, however, was unable to marry George MacDonald to Louisa Powell.



the first MacDonald child had been named Lilia Scott MacDonald.<sup>113</sup> The years in Arundel had not been easy for MacDonald. By certain members of his congregation he had been pursued for teaching 'heresy'. His emphasis on the universal love of God and his anti-sabbatarianism, both of which displayed Scott's influence, were considered heterodox. The first emphasis had been rendered even less acceptable by MacDonald's hope in universal salvation.<sup>114</sup> In the early summer of 1853 MacDonald had been forced to resign.

Hunted out of Arundel, and as isolated as Scott had been twenty years earlier, MacDonald headed north to join Scott in Manchester in the summer of 1853. Scott, wrote MacDonald's son, 'although offering no immediate encouragement or advice, attracted the penniless, discarded minister to the city of Fog and Freedom.'<sup>115</sup> Having spoken of Scott as 'a chief among leaders', whose spoken word 'was an uprush from living springs', Greville MacDonald said: 'It is small wonder that George MacDonald gravitated to Manchester in response to this compelling force.'<sup>116</sup> MacDonald was to find sympathy and uplifting from Scott and his wife. Having arrived in Manchester he recounted to Scott the circumstances of his ejection from Arundel. He also spoke to Scott of his lack of work, and indicated that, until appropriate employment was found either in teaching or preaching, he would offer tuition to students. 'Mr. Scott came close to me,' wrote MacDonald, 'to help and encourage me.'<sup>117</sup> A number of months later, early in 1854, Louisa and the children joined MacDonald in Manchester, and stayed for a brief time with the Scotts at Halliwell Lane before taking up lodgings of their own.<sup>118</sup> MacDonald must have had this period in mind, when, a few years later, he remarked upon 'the sympathy of Scott's manhood.'<sup>119</sup>

The relationship which developed between MacDonald and Scott

<sup>113</sup> Ibid. p.159.

<sup>114</sup> For the heresy hunt in Arundel, see Ibid. pp.177-87.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid. p.192.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid. pp.192-93.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid. p.194.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid. p.207.

<sup>119</sup> Testimonials to A.J. Scott (Edinburgh, 1856), p.28.

in Manchester was that of disciple and master. Scott appreciated MacDonald's genius, and brought the younger man into an intimate relationship with himself, and taught him.<sup>120</sup> 'He understood me,' wrote MacDonald, 'and gave me to understand him; and I think I did understand him to the measure of my inferior capacity.'<sup>121</sup> MacDonald was among the few in Manchester who sought to learn from Scott. One of Scott's occasional courses of public lectures in Manchester was attended by only three people - George MacDonald and J.A. Picton being two of the three.<sup>122</sup> During the Manchester years Scott became MacDonald's ideal and spiritual teacher.<sup>123</sup> Something of this is expressed in one of MacDonald's poems to Scott, written early in the relationship. In these verses, which were later prefaced to the 'Organ Songs', a collection of poems dedicated to Scott, MacDonald expressed how, in the midst of the confusion of the times, Scott's voice had been for him 'Truth's herald'. MacDonald pictures himself as an aeolian harp seeking to join the music of Scott, a mighty organ:

I walked all night: the darkness did not yield.  
 Around me fell a mist, a weary rain,  
 Enduring long. At length the dawn revealed

A temple's front, high-lifted from the plain.  
 Closed were the lofty doors that led within;  
 But by a wicket one might entrance gain.

'Twas awe and silence when I entered in;  
 The night, the weariness, the rain were lost  
 In hopeful spaces. First I heard a thin

Sweet sound of voices low, together tossed,  
 As if they sought some harmony to find  
 Which they knew once, but none of all that host

Could wile the far-fled music back to mind.  
 Loud voices, distance-low, wandered along  
 The pillared paths, and up the arches twined

With sister arches, rising, throng on throng,  
 Up to the roof's dim height. At broken times  
 The voices gathered to a burst of song,

<sup>120</sup>J. Johnson, George MacDonald, p.37.

<sup>121</sup>Greville MacDonald, p.359.

<sup>122</sup>W.G. Horder, 'George MacDonald: A Nineteenth Century Seer', Review of Reviews, October 1905, vol 32, p.359.

<sup>123</sup>See M. Gray, 'A brief Sketch of the Life of George MacDonald', The Bookman, November 1905, vol 29, pp.63-64.

But parted sudden, and were by single rimes  
 By single bells through Sabbath morning sent,  
 That have no thought of harmony or chimes,

Hopeful confusion! Who could be content  
 Looking and hearkening from the distant door?  
 I entered further. Solemnly it went -  
 Thy voice, Truth's herald, walking the untuned roar,  
 Calm and distinct, powerful and sweet and fine:  
 I loved and listened, listened and loved more.

May not the faint harp, tremulous, combine  
 Its ghostlike sounds with organ's mighty tone?  
 Let my poor song be taken in to thine.

Will not thy heart, with tempests of its own,  
 Yet hear aeolian sighs from thin chords blown?<sup>124</sup>

A letter from MacDonald to Scott in 1856 evidences more specifically the nature of this relationship. 'I speak from the position of a pupil,' wrote MacDonald, 'and that of one who, I flatter myself, is so in no ordinary degree of the relationship.' With reference to some of Scott's public addresses, MacDonald continued:

I have listened to you expounding deep Truth with an eloquence so real, being informed by the Truth, that my heart burned within me. Indeed, of all men whom I have heard, you only impress me as eloquent with that high kind of utterance which alone is truly valuable. But whether on these occasions, or when favoured with your conversation at your own table, or rendered more responsible still by being admitted to your study, I do not know whether I have been more humbled by my ignorance at your side, or exalted by finding that you sympathised with my deepest thoughts and highest aspirations. I have never brought a difficulty to you, metaphysical or practical, but I found the help I needed; and I should have been perplexed to decide which to wonder at the more, the clearness of your vision for the perception of a simple Truth, or the acuteness and accuracy of the analysis by which you conveyed your perceptions to others, had not the remarkable union of the two absorbed the wonder in itself. You seem to me to construct bridges of metaphysical argument, bound and cemented by logic, across chasms to distant heights which are first perceived only by the eye of the poet, and first visited only by the faith of the prophet.<sup>125</sup>

MacDonald spoke also of being inspired by the simplicity of Scott's

<sup>124</sup>G. MacDonald, The Poetical Works of George MacDonald I (London, 1911), pp.271-72.

<sup>125</sup>Testimonials to A.J. Scott (Edinburgh, 1856), p.27.

Christianity, and by the force of his character.<sup>126</sup> Most people who had contact with Scott, said one of his Manchester contemporaries, felt this 'bewitching influence and spell of Scott's personality. He won the esteem and regard of all sorts of people. All who knew him recognised the wonderful potency of his character.'<sup>127</sup> George MacDonald, on a number of separate occasions, and before a variety of friends and family, spoke of Alexander Scott as the greatest man he had ever known.<sup>128</sup> At the end of a lifetime of contact with some of the most eminent theologians and literary figures in 19th century Britain and America, MacDonald's opinion had not changed.<sup>129</sup> This high estimation of Scott, wrote a MacDonald friend, he maintained 'to the last day of his conscious life.'<sup>130</sup>

MacDonald's indebtedness to Scott extended into the field of art as well. Scott's constant appeal to the imagination,<sup>131</sup> made an impact on the young poet, who later spoke of the boldness of his master's imagination.<sup>132</sup> The high place given to imagination in Scott's philosophy of poetry and fiction can be seen to have played its part in the development of MacDonald's thought.<sup>133</sup> During one of MacDonald's stays at Scott's house, the latter spoke a great deal about art. 'I have some new thoughts about it from him,' wrote MacDonald to his wife. 'It was a divine day and I saw things as I had not seen them before.'<sup>134</sup> And shortly after this MacDonald wrote to Scott: 'Even in Art I owe the latest education of my ideas to you, in whom the right understanding of the Old is the root whence all New

<sup>126</sup> Ibid. p.28.

<sup>127</sup> Johnson, p.23.

<sup>128</sup> See Horder, pp.358-59; Johnson, pp.22,64; and G. MacDonald, George MacDonald and his wife, p.192.

<sup>129</sup> J. Hunter, 'Alexander Scott', The Expositor (8th series) vol 21, p.391.

<sup>130</sup> W. Robertson Nicoll, 'George MacDonald', The British Weekly, 21 September 1905, vol 38, p.550.

<sup>131</sup> F.W. MacDonald, As a Tale that is Told, p.95.

<sup>132</sup> Testimonials to A.J. Scott (Edinburgh, 1856), p.28.

<sup>133</sup> See, for instance, G. MacDonald, 'The Imagination', A Dish of Orts (London, 1905), pp.1-42.

<sup>134</sup> Greville MacDonald, George MacDonald and his wife, p.259.

developments proceed.'<sup>135</sup> Many years later MacDonald was to say that all his literary prosperity had come chiefly through the Scotts.<sup>136</sup>

MacDonald's circle of contacts was greatly widened through Scott.<sup>137</sup> He came to know many of his master's closest friends, including Erskine, Maurice, Kingsley, Thackeray, and Ruskin. MacDonald also probably came to know Lady Byron through Scott, 'with whom,' said Greville, 'she was intimate.'<sup>138</sup> Lady Byron, formerly the separated wife of the Romantic poet, Lord Byron, was described by one writer as a mainspring of the liberal theological movement in mid 19th-century Britain, particularly in her friendships with F.W. Robertson and George MacDonald.<sup>139</sup> MacDonald also met, through Scott, Aurelio Saffi, who, along with Mazzini, had been one of the triumvirs of the short-lived Roman Republic in 1849. Saffi, now a Professor of Italian at Oxford, resided with Scott during his Manchester lectures in the early winter of 1855, and met MacDonald at Scott's house. 'We soon formed a warm friendship for each other,' wrote MacDonald. 'Mr. Scott says to hear Saffi speak of anything mean or base would be almost a new sensation. He seems to speak from such a height above it.'<sup>140</sup>

It was in Manchester that MacDonald published his first literary work, Within and Without, a poetic tragedy of married love and misunderstanding. Scott was among the first to value the poem.<sup>141</sup> MacDonald had attempted throughout the work to point to the 'soul-loftiness' of creation, which, as we have seen, was for Scott the poet's highest calling. One passage in particular evidences this aspect of MacDonald's dramatic poem. The poet, speaking of the birth of Christ, wrote:

But when He came in poverty, and low,  
A real man to half-unreal men,  
A man whose human thoughts were all divine,

<sup>135</sup> Testimonials to A.J. Scott, p.28.

<sup>136</sup> Greville MacDonald, p.359.

<sup>137</sup> See, for instance, Ibid. p.320; Johnson, p.20; and D. Hudson, The Diary of Henry Crabb Robinson, p.300.

<sup>138</sup> Greville MacDonald, p.266.

<sup>139</sup> W. Robertson Nicoll, p.550.

<sup>140</sup> Greville MacDonald, p.254.

<sup>141</sup> Johnson, p.18.

The head and upturned face of human kind -  
 Then God shone forth from all the lowly earth,  
 And men began to read their maker there.  
 Now the Divine descends, pervading all.  
 Earth is no more a banishment from heaven;  
 But a lone field among the distant hills,  
 Well ploughed and sown, whence corn is gathered home.  
 Now, now we feel the holy mystery  
 That permeates all being: all is God's;  
 And my poor life is terribly sublime.<sup>142</sup>

Early in 1855 Longmans offered to publish Within and Without.

'Mr. Scott thinks me very fortunate,' wrote MacDonald to his wife.

'Carlyle's first offer for the French Revolution was that he should pay 20 pounds or something and have none of the profits.'<sup>143</sup> Shortly after the publication of the book in May 1855, Erskine commented upon it in a letter to a friend:

When I was at Scott's at Manchester, I found him reading a book by a certain MacDonald, ... and speaking well of it. It is a dramatic poem entitled Within and Without - I have read and liked it - if you fall in with it, I think you will find something to approve in it.<sup>144</sup>

Generally the book received an enthusiastic reception, and established MacDonald's reputation as a poet. Scott, wrote MacDonald in the summer of 1855, 'said he heard of my book from many quarters while in London, and that it has got into the best literary circle.'<sup>145</sup> Tennyson appreciated it and Lady Byron admired it. Saffi said to MacDonald at Scott's house that he considered Within and Without to be 'the best expression of the religious feelings of the age.'<sup>146</sup>

Although MacDonald had enjoyed success in publishing his first literary work, he found it difficult to make ends meet in Manchester. Shortly after his arrival he had unsuccessfully applied for the Owens

<sup>142</sup>G. MacDonald, 'Within the Without', The Poetical Works of George MacDonald I, p.75.

<sup>143</sup>Greville MacDonald, p.222.

<sup>144</sup>A letter from T. Erskine to S. Brown, the Scottish National Library, MS 1890 ff.151-52 (n.d.).

<sup>145</sup>Greville MacDonald, p.250.

<sup>146</sup>Ibid. p.254.

College librarianship.<sup>147</sup> The Scotts, however, 'proved the staunchest of friends in all my parents' troubles,' wrote Greville.<sup>148</sup> MacDonald described in a letter at this time Scott's readiness to involve himself in his financial straits. 'Mr. Scott called on Friday,' wrote MacDonald 'and before he left, told Louisa that, not thinking either of us very wordly wise, he must enquire into our circumstances etc., for though he was not rich himself he knew many who were, and who at a word from him, would be glad to render us assistance. He is indeed a true friend. Is it not a great thing to me to have the man whose intellect and wisdom I most respect in the world for my friend, he not being ashamed to acknowledge the relation?'<sup>149</sup> A number of months later the young poet wrote: 'Mr. Scott tells me a friend in Wales has sent me 20 pounds through him; and he says whenever I want money he can get it for me.'<sup>150</sup> Scott was also able to help MacDonald's younger brother, who had joined George in Manchester, by employing him as private tutor to his son, John.<sup>151</sup>

Scott, having been involved in the early development of higher education for women in London, was eager to see the same type of progress made in Manchester. 'I should be glad,' said Scott, a short time after MacDonald's arrival, 'I was almost going to say, proud, to see Manchester take the lead in that thorough and higher education of those of the sex who have all the advantages of leisure and the command of every kind of resource, which Manchester, to her honour, has already done in so many other departments of our social improvement.'<sup>152</sup> MacDonald responded to Scott's idea, and within a number of months had founded and was operating with others a Ladies' College in his own home on Camp Terrace.<sup>153</sup> There we find the

<sup>147</sup> Ibid. p.201.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid. p.193.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid. pp.249-50.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid. p.260.

<sup>151</sup> Johnson, p.20.

<sup>152</sup> A.J. Scott, 'The History of the Literature of the Middle Ages', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 5 April 1854.

<sup>153</sup> For a brief history of the first eight months of this college, see 'The Ladies' College, Manchester', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 2 July 1855.

young poet lecturing not only on literary subjects but also offering classes in chemistry and natural philosophy. Like his teacher, MacDonald always displayed a deep interest in a variety of subjects, believing as he did in the unity of all truth. 'If all the sciences be reducible at last to one,' wrote MacDonald to Scott, 'then surely he who knows most of all will be best fitted to impart each.'<sup>154</sup>

MacDonald also supported himself in Manchester by preaching. From very early on his desire was to form a congregation of his own, as free from denominational ties and traditional restrictions as Scott's had been in Woolwich. Shortly after arriving in Manchester, MacDonald explained his totally independent stance to his father:

As to the congregational meetings and my absence from them, perhaps if you saw a little beyond the scenes, you would care less for both. I will not go where I have not the slightest interest in going, and where my contempt would be excited to a degree very injurious to myself. Of course, when I disclaim all favour for their public assemblies, I do not deny individual goodness. I have no love for any sect of Christians as such - as little for Independents as any. One thing is good about them - which is continually being violated - that is the Independency. And independent I mean to be, in the real sense of the word. ... There is a numerous, daily increasing party to whom the charge of heterodoxy is as great a recommendation, in the hope of finding something genuine, as orthodoxy is to the other, in the hope of finding the traditions of the elders sustained and enforced. ... I do not at all expect to become minister of any existing Church, but I hope to gather a few around me soon - and the love I have from the few richly repays me for the abuse of some and the neglect of the many. ... Increase of Truth will always in greater or lesser degree look like error at first. ... I believe there is much more religion in the world than ever, but it is not so much in the churches, or religious communities in proportion, as it was at one time.<sup>155</sup>

Scott had great sympathy with MacDonald's stance, and 'supported him by every means in his power.'<sup>156</sup> It is not certain what Scott's church affiliation, or lack of it, had been, previous to MacDonald's time in Manchester. It appears, however, that he had done some independent preaching himself. On a Saturday in early 1853, Fanny Kemble, on her way to Manchester, had written: 'Tomorrow I

<sup>154</sup>Testimonials to A.J. Scott (Edinburgh, 1856), pp.27-28.

<sup>155</sup>Greville MacDonald, pp.197-98.

<sup>156</sup>Ibid. p.196.



shall, I hope, hear Mr. Scott read and comment again on the Bible.<sup>157</sup> Upon MacDonald's arrival however, Scott and a number of his students from Owens College began to support the unattached preacher, until, finally, in June 1854, a preaching room was rented for MacDonald in the heart of Manchester. 'Next Sunday evening I begin the realisation of a long cherished wish,' wrote MacDonald to his father, 'to have a place of my own to preach in where I should be unshackled in my teaching. This I now possess. May God be with me. No one can turn me out of this. It will be taken and the agreement signed in my name. If anyone does not like what I say, he can go away and welcome; but not all can turn me away. I call them together - not they me. A few friends contribute to the rent of the place, and a box will be at the door for contributions of free will for me. We will have no odious ungodly seat-rents and distinctions between poor and rich.'<sup>158</sup> In addition to Scott only a small band of intellectuals and personal friends ever attended these Sunday evening sessions.<sup>159</sup> One of MacDonald's regular hearers was Henry Septimus Sutton, something of a mystic, as well as being a social reformer. Sutton, a friend of Emerson's, was the director of The Manchester Examiner and Times reporting staff, a fact which partly accounts for the consistently favourable and generous coverage which Scott always received in that paper.

In August 1855 MacDonald was offered a pulpit in Manchester by an Independent congregation, where he was to be paid to preach freely. He accepted the offer, but, before a few months had passed, his health failed him, and MacDonald came close to death. At first Mrs. Scott and her sisters nursed him at his home, and read and sang to him for hours.<sup>160</sup> Eventually, however, MacDonald was removed to the Scott home, leaving Louisa and the children, including a new baby, with another friend. 'I think I am a little better today,' wrote MacDonald to his wife, early in 1856, from Halliwell Lane. 'I need

<sup>157</sup> Kemble, p.290.

<sup>158</sup> Greville MacDonald, p.213.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid. p.214. See also R.A. Reid, The Influence of the Writings of Erskine of Linlathen on Religious Thought in Scotland, p.288.

<sup>160</sup> Greville MacDonald, p.253.

hardly tell you I enjoy myself. They are all so kind,' he continued, and 'I never saw Mr. Scott so happy, so merry or so loving as last night.'<sup>161</sup> In the following month Louisa and the four MacDonald children also resided, for a brief time, with the Scotts at Halliwell Lane.<sup>162</sup> It was decided, for the sake of MacDonald's health, that he should spend some time in the dry air and sun of Algiers. It may have been through Scott, said Greville, that Lady Byron heard of MacDonald's illness and empty purse, and offered to pay his travel expenses to Algiers.<sup>163</sup>

Upon MacDonald's return from his lengthy stay abroad in 1857, medical advice was against a return to Manchester. The poet's chief difficulty in leaving Manchester was the thought of separation from Scott.<sup>164</sup> In May of that year, however, MacDonald was forced to part with his teacher, and move south to Hastings, where Lady Byron continued her generous support of the MacDonalds. In Hastings MacDonald became friendly with Lewis Carroll, and was soon strong enough to write again. In 1858 he sent a copy of Phantastes, a Faerie romance, to Scott, and expressed his hope that Scott would like it.<sup>165</sup> This imaginative work of wild fantasy, which affirms all that is true, natural, and spontaneous in life, won the keen appreciation of Scott.<sup>166</sup> In Phantastes the reader is led out of the common into a land where every flower, for instance, houses a fairy.<sup>167</sup> MacDonald writes of a rich realm of spirit, and points to the sanctity of all living things, and the divine purpose of human daily existence. He ends his fantasy with the hopeful affirmation that 'a great good is coming' to mankind. 'Good is always coming', wrote MacDonald, though we may temporarily call its shape evil.<sup>168</sup>

Scott offered his opinion of another MacDonald literary product from the Hastings period. MacDonald related Scott's impression to

<sup>161</sup>Ibid. p.259.

<sup>162</sup>Ibid. p.260.

<sup>163</sup>Ibid. p.266.

<sup>164</sup>Ibid. p.239.

<sup>165</sup>Ibid. p.297.

<sup>166</sup>Johnson, p.64.

<sup>167</sup>G. MacDonald, Phantastes (Michigan, 1978), pp.27-31.

<sup>168</sup>Ibid. p.182.

Lady Byron in the following letter:

Now about my drama. You will be amused to hear, as showing how differently different minds are impressed with the same thing, that where you apply the epithet flat, Mr. Scott applied the epithet of effervescent - saying that there was a fine effervescence about the conversation: that as conversation it was much superior to some successful plays which he knew; that in fact it had rather surprised him; but that the wit was too refined, and the intellect too much occupied with the edges of things for a play.<sup>169</sup>

In 1859 MacDonald left Hastings to take up Scott's old chair of English literature at Bedford College. This he occupied until a year after Scott's death.

In 1868 MacDonald dedicated one of his major literary works to Scott, in the words:

To the memory of the man who stands highest in the oratory of my memory, Alexander John Scott, I daring, presume to dedicate this book.<sup>170</sup>

MacDonald considered this work, Robert Falconer, to be his best novel.<sup>171</sup> It is the tale of a young boy's transition from the puritanism of Calvinistic Scotland to a much broader belief based upon the universal Fatherhood of God, with an accompanying conviction of the basic goodness of nature and art. An appreciation of this novel, and of most MacDonald novels, depends more on sympathy with the substance than on first impressions of the literary form. His tendency was to preach, much to the neglect of his literary genius, which is more powerfully evidenced in his lasting works of fantasy. But as MacDonald once said: 'I would not write novels if I could not preach in them.'<sup>172</sup> Through Robert Falconer and his other novels, MacDonald communicated to the many what Scott had taught the few. He repeatedly emphasised, in all his works, the humanity and Christlikeness of God. 'God lives and loves,' he wrote, 'like the most loving man or woman on earth, only infinitely more.'<sup>173</sup> 'We hae no richt to say we ken God save in the face

<sup>169</sup>Greville MacDonald, p.311.

<sup>170</sup>G. MacDonald, Robert Falconer (London, n.d.), p.1.

<sup>171</sup>Horder, p.362.

<sup>172</sup>Ibid. p.360.

<sup>173</sup>MacDonald, Robert Falconer, p.78.

o'Christ Jesus,' states MacDonald's character, Robert Falconer. 'Whatever's no like Christ is no like God.'<sup>174</sup> And again, in this and in other novels, the 'soul-loftiness' of nature is pointed at, to the extent that G.K. Chesterton called MacDonald the 'St. Francis of Aberdeen.'<sup>175</sup> MacDonald also stressed in this work dedicated to Scott the sacredness of all human relations, for the divine, he said, is in the human.<sup>176</sup> Every moment of life's history which brings soul in contact with soul, is 'sacred as a voice from behind the veil.'<sup>177</sup> MacDonald reflected Scott's dynamic understanding of the Church,<sup>178</sup> and his anti-Sabbatarianism,<sup>179</sup> and opposition to Westminster Confessionalism. The authors of the Confession MacDonald satirised by portraying as having 'sat upon the Scripture egg till they had hatched it in their own likeness.'<sup>180</sup> But above all MacDonald emphasised the loving Fatherhood of God. 'Love is the final atonement,' he said. Love is 'the heart of the divine theology.'<sup>181</sup> Even hell was for MacDonald only another form of the Fatherly love,<sup>182</sup> and he concluded Robert Falconer with an expression of his hope in an ultimate universal repentance.<sup>183</sup> The radical impression which Robert Falconer must have made on the religious mind of the 19th century is indicated by the fact that Norman Macleod, a friend of both Scott and MacDonald, and, in certain respects, a Scott successor in the reformation of the Scottish Kirk, refused to publish the novel in Good Words for fear of its controversial nature.<sup>184</sup>

Robert Falconer and MacDonald's other Scottish novels of the

<sup>174</sup>Ibid. p.354.

<sup>175</sup>Greville MacDonald, p.14.

<sup>176</sup>MacDonald, Robert Falconer, p.389.

<sup>177</sup>Ibid. p.333.

<sup>178</sup>Ibid. pp.389-90.

<sup>179</sup>For an extensive anti-sabbatarian reference see MacDonald's David Elginbrod (London, 1927), pp.301-2.

<sup>180</sup>G. MacDonald, Alec Forbes (London, 1867), p.121.

<sup>181</sup>Ibid. pp.122, 268.

<sup>182</sup>MacDonald, David Elginbrod, p.66.

<sup>183</sup>MacDonald, Robert Falconer, pp.447-48.

<sup>184</sup>Horder, p.362.

1860s had an immense influence on the religious thinking of that time.<sup>185</sup> Together with Tennyson and Browning, wrote one reviewer in 1905, MacDonald 'probably did more than all the professed theologians put together to prevent an eclipse of faith in the latter half of the 19th century. ...It would be impossible to say how many souls, distressed, troubled, perplexed by the Calvinism of thirty or forty years ago, found in George MacDonald a refuge from the storm.'<sup>186</sup> MacDonald had escaped from the harsh Westminster Calvinism so prevalent in the religion of Scotland, but, more significantly, he had escaped, as many did not, an unembittered Christian thinker, eager to communicate a living faith to his age. It was not left to MacDonald, wrote one MacDonald reader, 'to break for all of us the bonds of Calvinism. Such writers as Tyndall, Froude, and Renan had already done that; but they had also taken away our faith. Could George MacDonald restore it? Almost he did; and entirely he won our hearts. His lovely spirit captivated us, his grand optimism fascinated and delighted us. And we felt, with a rapture of gratitude, that he had dispelled the darkness of a superstition darker than the creeds of heathenism. Thenceforward Christianity was one thing, and the Calvinistic teaching of our childhood was another and an opposite thing.'<sup>187</sup> MacDonald had replaced, as had Scott before him, the central doctrine of God's Righteous Omnipotence with a belief in the loving Fatherhood of God, whose righteousness was understood in terms of his love. The establishment of this belief in the late 19th century, wrote a reviewer early in the 20th century, 'is due more to George MacDonald than any other writer.'<sup>188</sup>

Scott, a communicator to the few in his own day, lived on in the 19th century through the popular writings of his disciple, and it may even be said that many of Scott's ideas are today still being circulated through the republished works of MacDonald.<sup>189</sup> One of the chief factors in the MacDonald revival of the 20th century has been

<sup>185</sup> Ibid. p.359.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid. pp.357-8

<sup>187</sup> M. Gray, 'A Brief Sketch of the Life of George MacDonald', The Bookman vol 29, November 1905, p.66.

<sup>188</sup> Horder, p.360.

<sup>189</sup> Some of MacDonald's most recent republications are: At the Back of the North Wind (London, 1973); The Gifts of the Child Christ 2 vols (Michigan, 1977); The Golden Key (New York, 1978); The Light

the man who stood next, as it were, in the Scott-MacDonald line of descent. In 1946 one of the greatest popular theologians of the 20th century, C.S. Lewis, the Christian poet and apologist, wrote concerning MacDonald in the introduction of his George MacDonald Anthology: 'I have never concealed the fact that I regarded him as my master; indeed I fancy I have never written a book in which I did not quote from him.'<sup>190</sup> Lewis' discovery and reading of Phantastes, as a young man, converted, and even baptised, his imagination.<sup>191</sup> Lewis was later able to say of Scott's disciple: 'I know hardly any other writer who seems to be closer, or more continually close, to the Spirit of Christ Himself.'<sup>192</sup>

e) Scott's application for the Edinburgh Chair of Logic and Metaphysics, 1856, and his continued influence in Scotland

In 1856 the Chair of Logic and Metaphysics at Edinburgh University fell vacant by the death of one of Scotland's greatest metaphysicians, Sir William Hamilton. In the early summer of that year we find Scott with his old Scottish friends, Campbell and Erskine, at the latter's house in Charlotte Square, Edinburgh, planning Scott's candidature for the vacant professorship. 'The necessity for signing the Confession of Faith having been done away with,' wrote Campbell a few days later, Scott 'is eligible.'<sup>193</sup> Campbell, although eager for Scott's success, felt inadequately placed to help his friend:

I never felt more tempted to repine at the obscurity of my own position; believing that I know the reality of his religion beyond what any of its outcomings which can be presented to the electors in a tangible form express: to which outcomings, so far as they go, had I place in their thoughts as one to whom the interests of truth are far dearer than even his friend,

Princess (New York, 1978); Phantastes and Lilith (Michigan, 1978); The Portent (New York, 1979); The Princess and Curdie (Harmondsworth, 1976); The Princess and the Goblin (Harmondsworth, 1978); Even Robert Falconer and some of the other Scottish novels, such as David Elginbrod and Alec Forbes, have recently been republished in America, primarily in limited editions for universities.

<sup>190</sup> C.S. Lewis, George MacDonald, An Anthology (London, 1946), p.20.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid. p.21.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid. p.18.

<sup>193</sup> D. Campbell, Memorials of J.M. Campbell I, p.277.

my testimony would have been an important supplement; but as the case is it has not been worth the offering.<sup>194</sup>

Notwithstanding, Scott was to ask Campbell to write a testimonial in his favour.

Shortly after Scott's formal application for the Edinburgh Chair, approximately sixty of his Manchester students, both past and present, signed a letter expressing their deep obligation to Scott. The letter was formally delivered to Scott at his home in Halliwell Lane by a small student delegation. 'The learned principal,' wrote a Manchester Examiner and Times reporter, 'was evidently moved by so sudden and unexpected a manifestation of goodwill and esteem on the part of so many students whom he had long been accustomed to guide in those branches of knowledge which it is his high honour to excel in.'<sup>195</sup> The students stated that only reluctantly could they abandon their hope of Scott's continued residence in Manchester. In addition to expressing their obligation to Scott's intellect and eloquence, they referred 'to the deep and quiet earnestness of your character, - to your reverent regard to the Highest Sources of truth and motive - to your wide Catholicity, and strict impartiality to Students of every class and creed, - and to your uniform candour, patience, and courtesy.'<sup>196</sup>

Scott included this letter in his testimonials for the Edinburgh Chair. Other testimonials came from his Scottish and English friends, who again, with an impressive unanimity, testified to Scott's breadth of learning, originality of thought, and unsurpassed ability at extemporaneously communicating the profoundest of ideas. 'I could easily imagine,' wrote Erskine, 'that any man, who did not know and had never heard Mr. Scott, might, on reading one of these testimonials, taken by itself and separated from the others, pronounce it an exaggeration, and rather a eulogy than a testimonial; but it is impossible to conceive that so many men of different characters, opinions, and circumstances, should fall into the same estimate of

<sup>194</sup> Ibid. pp.277-78.

<sup>195</sup> 'Address to Mr. Principal Scott', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 17 June 1856.

<sup>196</sup> Testimonials to A.J. Scott (Edinburgh, 1856), p.29.

Mr. Scott, unless it were true. I believe that it is true.'<sup>197</sup> Maurice spoke of Scott's 'genuine scholastical learning, derived from original sources and not filtered through criticisms or epitomes. He has the earnest meditation of the thoughtful recluse,' said Maurice, and the most 'clear, manly, uninflated eloquence.'<sup>198</sup> Scott's old friend from the west of Scotland, Robert Story, described Scott's life as having been 'one continuous habit of profound thought, in the search after, or the contemplation of truth.'<sup>199</sup> Story proceeded to tell the electors that, if Scott was appointed, memories of 'the high philosophy and imposing eloquence of Dugald Stewart', the great Scottish philosopher of common sense, would be recalled.

Scott's most powerful recommendation came from Thomas Spencer Baynes, Hamilton's favourite pupil, warm champion, and for many years closest assistant.<sup>200</sup> 'Allow me to say at once,' wrote Baynes, 'that I know of no one in all respects so well qualified to succeed Sir William Hamilton as Mr. Scott.'<sup>201</sup> 'There is a moral element or atmosphere in Mr. Scott's teaching,' wrote Baynes, who later became the Professor of Logic, Metaphysics, and English at St. Andrews, 'the value of which cannot, I think, be overrated, - it is the supreme inward reverence for Truth which the whole method and manner of the speaker unconsciously reveals. Whatever the subject of exposition, no one can listen long to Mr. Scott without feeling that the love of truth is with him a master-passion, in which every consideration, every thought of self, or care for effect, is consumed. Pardon me for adding that I believe few have ever pursued it in so catholic a spirit, with such absolute fidelity, sure, pure and quenchless ardour.'<sup>202</sup> In conclusion Baynes stated that Scott's election to the vacant Chair would be 'a national good; and so far as I am personally concerned, should very thankfully resign in his favour any small claims on the attention of the Patrons I may think myself to

<sup>197</sup> Ibid. p.8.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid. p.11.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid. p.17.

<sup>200</sup> See D.N.B. article on Thomas Spencer Baynes.

<sup>201</sup> Testimonials to A.J. Scott, p.1.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid. p.2.



possess.<sup>203</sup> Baynes, who presently became for a number of years assistant editor of the Daily News, was to spend the last years of his St. Andrews professorship superintending, with the close help of William Robertson Smith, the 9th edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica.

Twenty-five years previous to Scott's application for the Edinburgh Chair, he had been unanimously deposed for heresy by the Church of Scotland's General Assembly. Since then he had been a Christian unattached to any existing denomination. Surely this was cause for concern among some of the electors. If Scott was appointed, would he not lead some of his students into heretical thought? Scott's referees went great lengths to show that their candidate was a man of deepest Christian conviction, whose influence on students would be of a very beneficial nature. 'It has often been thought,' wrote Erskine, 'that Metaphysical studies have a tendency to unsettle the minds of young men on the subject of Christianity; and doubtless such a result has followed the teaching of some Schools. Now I congratulate the Electors that no such risk would be run under Mr. Scott's teaching. I know no man of whom I could more confidently say, that genuine Christianity underlies and gives its character to all his philosophy.'<sup>204</sup> 'The great constraining influence under which Mr. Scott has applied his high talent to the study of the human mind,' wrote Campbell, 'has been love to God and love to man.'<sup>205</sup> George MacDonald also attempted to allay any fears among the electors by saying that he knew of 'no such powerful influence for the preservation of faith and reverence in young men till such time as those feelings shall rest on personal acquaintance with Truth, as the assurance that such a man as A.J. Scott believes and reveres.'<sup>206</sup> It may of course be questioned whether the names of Erskine, Campbell and MacDonald in 1856 could in fact assuage the fears of electors concerned about heterodoxy. More effective, no doubt, was the testimonial of Norman Macleod, increasingly a respected leader within the National Kirk. 'However much I admire Mr. Scott's rare talents and acquirements as a Teacher,' wrote Macleod, 'I admire

<sup>203</sup> Ibid. p.3.

<sup>204</sup> Ibid. p.7.

<sup>205</sup> Ibid. p.26.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid. p.28.

no less and revere still more his character as a Christian.'<sup>207</sup>  
 Macleod went on to say that he had never known a man who 'entertained more ardent wishes that all knowledge should lead to the highest and best of all - the knowledge of God in Christ.'<sup>208</sup>

Scott entered the contest for the vacant Chair rather late. 'There are,' wrote Erskine in the June of 1856, 'two candidates who were in the field before him, and who have gained so many supporters, that Scott's friends rather fear that his chance is not very great.'<sup>209</sup> The two other contestants were A.C. Fraser of the Free Church, and J.F. Ferrier, an Established Church candidate. Fraser, a former student of Hamilton's, had been, from 1846, the Professor of Logic and Metaphysics at New College, Edinburgh, and, since 1850, the editor of the North British Review. Ferrier, the nephew and son-in-law of John Wilson, and since 1845 the Professor of Moral Philosophy and Political Economy at St. Andrews, had been a close friend of Hamilton's, and, for a short period, his assistant in Edinburgh. Scott's late entry into the competition meant that many of his friends, who would otherwise have offered him public support, were previously committed to either Fraser or Ferrier.<sup>210</sup> Also the interest of the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution, on which Scott 'may most calculate,' wrote Campbell in June 1856, 'is divided.'<sup>211</sup> Although Scott was greatly admired by many of the leading members of the Philosophical Institution, and had received the honour of delivering the inaugural address for their 1853-54 session,<sup>212</sup> Ferrier also had lectured at the Institution, and was closely related to Wilson, who from 1847 until his death in 1854 had been the Institution's president. Another factor counting against Scott's success, although of less significance, was the fact that many of his friends felt ill-

<sup>207</sup> Ibid. p.31.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid.

<sup>209</sup> A letter from T. Erskine to Mrs. Schwabe, 14 June 1856. The Scottish National Library, MS 9747 ff.60-61.

<sup>210</sup> Testimonials to A.J. Scott (Edinburgh, 1856), Supplement, p.2.

<sup>211</sup> D. Campbell, Memorials of J.M. Campbell I, p.277.

<sup>212</sup> See Scott's 'Introductory Lecture at the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution', The Scotsman, 29 October 1853.

qualified to testify concerning the subjects of logic and metaphysics.<sup>213</sup> Thackeray, for instance, wrote to Scott in June 1856: 'It is not the will but the power that fails me in serving you in the Professorship matter - I know nothing about Metaphysics and how offer to speak to a man's qualifications upon such a subject? Examiners would laugh at the signature of Jeames Yellowplush to A.J. Scott's testimonials: and your cause would surely be harmed rather than benefitted. At any rate as a point of conscience I must hold my tongue, and I'm sure you will think none the worse of my friendly feeling because in this strait it can't aid you.'<sup>214</sup>

'If fitness for the duties of the office were the deciding point,' wrote Erskine concerning the forthcoming appointment, 'I should have no fear - believing as I do that Mr. Scott is the fittest man in the kingdom, - but other interests have their place - and the Electors are not personally qualified to estimate the respective Merits of the candidates.'<sup>215</sup> Whether Erskine was right or not, the Electors, consisting of the Magistrates and Town Council of Edinburgh, chose Fraser, the young professor from New College, to occupy Hamilton's Chair. 'Our University here narrowly missed getting Scott for Professor of Logic,' wrote Erskine to Carlyle, 'which I greatly lament both for his sake and ours. I believe the Free Kirk bears the sin of it.'<sup>216</sup>

Had Scott been successful in his bid for the Edinburgh professorship, his influence in Scotland would have been great. In spite of his failure to obtain the Chair, however, Scott's contribution to the development of Scottish theology in the latter half of the 19th century was not inconsiderable. Norman Macleod, perhaps the greatest mid 19th century reforming leader of the Scottish Kirk, may, in many respects, be considered a successor in the reformation begun by Scott and his friends earlier in the

<sup>213</sup>Testimonials to A.J. Scott (Edinburgh, 1856), Supplement, p.2.

<sup>214</sup>G.N. Ray, The Letters and Private Papers of W.M. Thackeray III, p.610.

<sup>215</sup>A letter from T. Erskine to Mrs. Schwabe, 14 June 1856. The Scottish National Library, MS 9747 ff.60-61.

<sup>216</sup>A letter from T. Erskine to T. Carlyle, 18 April 1857. The Scottish National Library MS 666 f.78.

century. Macleod probably met Scott at an early date through his good friend and cousin, John Macleod Campbell. By 1848 Macleod was able to write: 'Let me not forget to mention three men from whom I have received unspeakable good - Thomas Arnold, Alexander Scott, and dear John Campbell.'<sup>217</sup> In 1849 Macleod became editor of the Scottish journal, the Christian Instructor. In 1856, as minister of the Barony parish in Glasgow, and soon chaplain to Queen Victoria, Macleod wrote concerning Scott: 'I never read a line written by him, or heard an opinion or sentiment uttered by him, in public, or in the freest possible intercourse of private life, which did not tend to increase but never to lessen, the depth of those feelings which I have long cherished towards him.'<sup>218</sup> In 1860 Macleod pioneered Good Words, a monthly magazine devoted primarily to religious topics, which, under his editorship, enjoyed immense success. A few years later he said to his wife that when he came in close contact with men such as Scott, Campbell, Erskine and Maurice, he felt how he could 'enjoy heaven with them. Whether it is my defect or theirs I know not, but the narrow, exclusive, hard hyper-Calvinistic schools repel me, and make me nervously unhappy.'<sup>219</sup> And many years later Macleod recalled how he had once met Scott, Erskine, and Maurice, all together in Campbell's house:

Such men of culture, both of intellect and of spirit, such 'outbilt' holy, loving men, breathing an atmosphere of such lofty thought and deep devotion, I cannot hope again to meet together on this side the grave. Never have I seen beyond the influence of Christ such a product of character towards God and man as these men possessed.<sup>220</sup>

In what later became known as the 'Sabbath War', of 1865-66, Macleod, following Scott's 1831 distinction between the Jewish Sabbath and the Christian Lord's Day, openly asserted against the widespread sabbatarianism of the Scottish Kirk that the Sabbath had died with Christ, and belonged, not to the risen Lord, but to the

<sup>217</sup> D. Macleod, Memoir of Norman Macleod I (London, 1876), p.301.

<sup>218</sup> Testimonials to A.J. Scott (Edinburgh, 1856), p.31.

<sup>219</sup> D. Macleod, Memoir of Norman Macleod II, p.127.

<sup>220</sup> N. Macleod, 'John Macleod Campbell', Good Words for 1872 (London, 1872), p.359.

grave.<sup>221</sup> Unlike Scott, Macleod escaped with only an admonition from the Presbytery of Glasgow. The General Assembly of 1866 came and went without reference to Macleod's uttered anti-sabbatarianism. This was the first significant victory in the battle begun by Scott thirty-five years earlier against the legalistic sabbatarianism of the Scottish Kirk. It indicated a growing sympathy with the position taken up by Scott and Macleod. It was more, however, than a mere victory against Scottish sabbatarianism, for, as R.D. Brackenridge has demonstrated, Sabbatarian theology was largely based upon an unquestioned acceptance of the Westminster Confession of Faith, and its understanding of the Sabbath.<sup>222</sup> The Sabbath War of 1865-66, therefore, more importantly, created a formidable breach in the rampart of Scottish Westminster Confessionalism. Macleod clearly echoed Scott, his reforming predecessor, when he said in summarising his speech before the Glasgow Presbytery in 1865:

I admitted that I had taught against the Confession of Faith, that no doubt that was the fact, but asserted that either all had done the same or did not in every iota believe the Confession; and the question turned on whether I had so differed from the Confession as to necessitate deposition? I thus at the risk of my ecclesiastical life established the principle that all differences from the Confession ... did not involve deposition.<sup>223</sup>

In 1869, only three years after the Sabbath controversy, and not yet forty years since Scott's unanimous deposition, Norman Macleod was elected Moderator of the Church of Scotland's General Assembly.

Scott had considerable contact with other leading successors in this 19th-century Scottish reformation, which, by the end of the century, had made great steps towards the liberation of the National Kirk from its Confession-obsession, so clearly evidenced in Scott's case before the Assembly of 1831. Scott exercised some influence, the extent of which is uncertain, on both Robert Herbert Story and John Tulloch. At various times, Macleod, Story, and Tulloch, can be

<sup>221</sup> See R.D. Brackenridge, 'The Sabbath War of 1865-6', in SCHS vol 16, for Macleod's struggle against the stringent Sabbatarianism of 19th-century Scotland.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid. p.33.

<sup>223</sup> D. Macleod, Memoir of Norman Macleod II, p.203.

found under the same roof as Scott.<sup>224</sup> The relationship which existed between the younger generation of reformers and Scott, Erskine, and Campbell, explained Reid, 'was not that of an established school, but in their friendships there was more than a casual meeting either at Manchester or Linlathen.'<sup>225</sup> R.H. Story, the son of Scott's old friend from Roseneath, can be found, very early in his theological career, visiting Scott in Manchester, and meeting there MacDonald and Mrs. Gaskell.<sup>226</sup> Young Story, who also became involved in anti-sabbatarian discussions in Scotland,<sup>227</sup> later became the Professor of Church History at Glasgow University, and then, in succession to John Caird, principal. R.H. Story was also elected Moderator of the Church of Scotland's General Assembly late in the century. The details concerning Scott's relationship with John Tulloch are even more sparse than those dealing with Scott and young Story. Oliphant includes only one reference to the Scott-Tulloch relationship in her life of the latter.<sup>228</sup> Tulloch was without doubt, however, a successor in the reformation begun by Scott, Erskine and Campbell. As the professor of theology and principal at St. Mary's College, St. Andrews from 1854, Tulloch, through his use in lectures of Campbell's Nature of Atonement,<sup>229</sup> for instance, or his historical awareness and relativising of the Confession, made significant contributions to the coming change. 'The Confession of Faith,' said Tulloch in 1865, 'in order to be understood and estimated at its real value, must be studied both historically and philosophically. ...Creeds and Confessions are neither more nor less than the intellectual ideas of great and good men, assembled, for the most part, in synods and councils, all of which, as our Confession itself declares, "may err, and many have

<sup>224</sup> See R.A. Reid, The Influence of the Writings of Erskine of Linlathen on Religious Thought in Scotland, p.214.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid. p.189.

<sup>226</sup> Misses Story, Memoir of R.H. Story (Glasgow, 1909), pp.25-26.

<sup>227</sup> See D.N.B. article on R.H. Story.

<sup>228</sup> M. Oliphant, A Memoir of the Life of John Tulloch (Edinburgh, 1889), p.198. It should be noted, however, that Tulloch visited Manchester in 1859. See 'Principal Tulloch in Manchester', The Manchester Guardian, 23 July 1859.

<sup>229</sup> D. Campbell, Memorials of J.M. Campbell I, pp.294-95.

erred". They are stamped with the infirmities no less than with the nobleness of the men who made them. They are their best thoughts about Christian truth, as they saw it in their time: intrinsically they are nothing more: and,' concluded Tulloch in the spirit of Scott over thirty years earlier, 'any claim of infallibility is the worst of all kinds of Popery, that Popery which degrades the Christian reason, while it fails to nourish the Christian imagination.'<sup>230</sup> In 1878 Tulloch was elected Moderator of the National Kirk's General Assembly.

Although a major change was coming in Scottish theology, there were formidable pockets of staunch resistance. One need only look at some of Scott's student contemporaries, such as Robert Candlish, and James Begg, or at Dr. Scott's former assistant, William Cunningham, to see the degree of intransigence existing among the upholders of Westminster Confessionalism, well into the second half of the 19th century. Cunningham, as principal of New College, Edinburgh, often stated that on all important theological questions the argument 'was substantially anticipated and exhausted by the writers of the seventeenth century.'<sup>231</sup> Candlish, since Chalmers' death the leading spirit in the Free Church, who had bitterly attacked Scott's friend, Maurice, for his doctrine of God's universal Fatherhood, expressed in 1864 his high admiration for the 17th-century Westminster Assembly. 'I doubt if ever synod or council sat to which the Church catholic will ultimately acknowledge herself to be more, if so much, indebted. I believe that its doctrinal decisions, on all the questions fairly before it, will stand the test of time, and ultimately command the assent of universal Christendom. That is my firm conviction,' said Candlish. He further contended that an acceptance of all the doctrines contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith was 'the only safe anchorage in any and in every storm.'<sup>232</sup>

In spite of many vocal Candlishes and Cunninghams a new mood was developing in Scotland, even in the Free Church, a mood which finally eventuated in the Declaratory Acts of the late 19th and early

<sup>230</sup> Oliphant, pp.222-23.

<sup>231</sup> R. Rainy, Life of William Cunningham (London, 1871), p.503.

<sup>232</sup> R.S. Candlish, The Fatherhood of God (Edinburgh, 1865), p.289.

20th century, when the different branches of Scottish Presbyterianism softened their adherence to the Westminster Confession.<sup>233</sup> Even by 1877, William Hanna, the son-in-law of T. Chalmers, and one of the leaders of Free Church thought, expressed his belief that Scott would not now be ejected for his conscientious objection to the Confession.<sup>234</sup> In 1880 Scotland's counterpart to Essays and Reviews appeared under the title, Scotch Sermons, a collection of theological essays, whose editor claimed that it would 'show the direction in which thought is moving.'<sup>235</sup> As C.G. McCrie wrote in 1907:

The teaching of Erskine, Scott and Campbell, of Macleod and Tulloch has influenced recent theological literature and pulpit ministrations, although it may be difficult to estimate with exactness the nature and amount of the influence. If we take such a volume as that which appeared ... under the title of Scotch Sermons, it is obvious that there are some of the thirteen contributors to its contents who, if not disciples of the writers just named, are certainly followers at no great distance.<sup>236</sup>

f) Scott's lectures on the Middle Ages and the Renaissance

Although unsuccessful in his bid for the Edinburgh Chair, Scott continued periodically to return to Edinburgh to lecture at the Philosophical Institution, now presided over by Thomas Babington Macaulay.<sup>237</sup> In February 1857 Scott delivered in Edinburgh a course of lectures on the literature and philosophy of the Middle Ages.<sup>238</sup> Two years later this was followed by a course 'On the Revival of

<sup>233</sup> See A.C. Cheyne, 'The Westminster Standards: A Century of Re-Appraisal', SCHS vol 14, for an historical sketch of the 19th-century erosion of Scottish Westminster Calvinism.

<sup>234</sup> W. Hanna, Letters of T. Erskine I, p.140.

<sup>235</sup> See the preface to Scotch Sermons (London, 1880).

<sup>236</sup> C.G. McCrie, The Confessions of the Church of Scotland (Edinburgh, 1907), pp.117-18.

<sup>237</sup> See the reports of Scott's lectures in February 1857, January 1859, and December 1860, in The Edinburgh Philosophical Institution Reports, etc., 1846-1867, the Scottish National Library.

<sup>238</sup> Complete notes of these were taken and later published as, A.J. Scott, The Literature and Philosophy of the Middle Ages (Edinburgh, 1857).



Letters Anterior to the Reformation.'<sup>239</sup> Most of Scott's public lectures over the last years of his life dealt with the literature and philosophy of either the Middle Ages or the Renaissance. Susanna Winkworth described Scott as 'dwelling with special predilection on the history of the Middle Ages and the literature of Italy and Germany.'<sup>240</sup> The Middle Ages had been a favourite subject with Scott as early as the Woolwich period. His enthusiastic hearers on this subject had included the Duke and Duchess of Argyll, and the Broad Church preacher-theologian, Frederick William Robertson.<sup>241</sup> Scott's handling of his subject was almost always highly acclaimed, in the various newspaper reports covering the lectures, as fresh, original and profound. A writer for The Caledonian Mercury, however, entered a half-note of dissent when he described Scott's profound conceptions and reasonings on the Middle Ages as, in some instances, 'too abstruse and too imaginative to impart readily to the mind of the audience a thorough appreciation of what he meant to convey.'<sup>242</sup>

In 1853 Scott had organised a season of lectures on the Middle Ages at the Manchester Royal Institution.<sup>243</sup> Two years later he undertook to do the same on the period of the Renaissance.<sup>244</sup> Scott's courses on the Middle Ages and the Renaissance proved to be successful.<sup>245</sup> He had been dissatisfied with the fragmentary nature of lectures at such institutions. The historical development of an art or science

<sup>239</sup>, 'A.J. Scott on the Revival of Letters Anterior to the Reformation', The Edinburgh Evening Courant, 5, 8, 12, 15 January 1859. See also the report of Scott's 1860 lectures at the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution: 'A.J. Scott on the Reformation in its Philosophical and Social Tendencies and Results', The Edinburgh Evening Courant, 12, 15, 19, 22 December 1860.

<sup>240</sup> M.J. Shaen, Memorials of Two Sisters, p.44.

<sup>241</sup> See Testimonials to A.J. Scott (London 1850), p.11; and S.A. Brooke, Life and Letters of Frederick W. Robertson II (London, 1866), pp.327-28.

<sup>242</sup> See the report of Scott's first lecture on 'The History of the Middle Ages', The Caledonian Mercury, 13 December 1847.

<sup>243</sup> 'Manchester Royal Institution: Annual Meeting', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 5 April 1854.

<sup>244</sup> A.J. Scott, 'The History of Literature, Science, and Art from 1450 to 1603', The Popular Lecturer vol I (Manchester, 1855), p.208.

<sup>245</sup> 'Manchester Royal Institution: Annual Meeting' The Manchester Examiner and Times, 31 March 1855.

had not generally been pursued, and organisers and lecturers, ignoring historical method, had not bothered to relate the subjects to contemporaneous developments in other fields. 'Very little of true mental culture could be derived,' said Scott, 'from hundreds and thousands of lectures, even by men of ability, so miscellaneous and without orderly succession.'<sup>246</sup> In the scheme of lectures which Scott drew up for the Manchester Royal Institution, the history of science, art, and literature was naturally connected with the general history of the period's social and political life. 'The advantage of the historical method,' said Scott, 'is that it brings all these things together, and allows us to detect the living fibre connecting them.'<sup>247</sup> Throughout Scott's lectures on the Middle Ages and the Renaissance it is evident that he had consulted original documents. In the chronicles of the Middle Ages Scott noted a strong element of the miraculous and the supernatural. It is necessary, he said, to distinguish between what is historically reliable and that which is merely accretion. The miraculous, however, is to be seen as part of the history of the time, inasmuch as it is part of the history of the mind of the time. 'I do not know how men saw the world in which they lived,' said Scott, 'how they conceived the things around them, unless I can see through what a transforming medium they regarded the men of their own generation or of the generation before them.'<sup>248</sup>

Scott's fascination with the Middle Ages can partly be understood in terms of his general philosophy of history, upon which he had lectured in Woolwich. The past, Scott had contended, lives in the present. A correct understanding of the modern age involves a knowledge of its history. As a medieval historian Scott saw himself as preserving the continuity of the human race, as treasuring and sharing the inheritance of mankind received from the Middle Ages. The highest object of the study of any age, however, is to trace the presiding Spirit of history, and to seek the common

<sup>246</sup> A.J. Scott, 'The History of the Middle Ages', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 30 November 1853.

<sup>247</sup> Ibid.

<sup>248</sup> A.J. Scott, The Literature and Philosophy of the Middle Ages, p.62.

life of humanity vivifying the special details of that age. But Scott's special interest in the Middle Ages can largely be understood as a characteristic of the Romanticism which he shared with Sir Walter Scott, Coleridge and others. There was a longing to imaginatively re-enter the age of 'The Ancient Mariner' or 'The Last Minstrel'. Scott indicated that the increased interest in the Middle Ages had largely been nurtured by Goethe and especially by Sir Walter Scott. 'Perhaps no other writer of modern times,' said Scott, 'can be named, who has, in so great a degree, formed and directed the literary tendencies of the age. We, breathing as it were, the atmosphere of thought created by his writings, can scarcely conceive the revolutions which his brilliant poetical, and still more his prose fictions, effected in the public taste, flung forth as they were so rapidly, to be devoured by the readers of his own country and of Europe. The effects of which they were the moving causes are around us everywhere.'<sup>249</sup> While Scott shared the Romantic fascination with all that was medieval, he spoke against an excessive nostalgia for the past. 'The believers in the glories of this golden age,' said Scott, 'should remember that though manners change, men remain the same.'<sup>250</sup> Man must learn from the past and profit by all that was good in it, but, in the end of the day, 'the past must bow to its inevitable doom - the making way for the future.'<sup>251</sup>

Scott in his treatment of the Middle Ages was interested to trace the introduction of Christianity into the sphere of general civilisation, medieval culture becoming more and more Christian during that period. As the Roman Empire crumbled, ecclesiastical organisation increasingly took its place. Scott tended to emphasise the positive contributions to society at large, rather than the corruptions, of the medieval Church. What, he asks, would Europe have been without Christianity? What would it have been, for instance, 'if the great truth of the equal value of all in the sight of the Highest had not been taught by it?'<sup>252</sup> Who was it but the medieval

<sup>249</sup> A.J. Scott, 'The Feudal Ages', Kentish Mercury, 30 December, 1843.

<sup>250</sup> Ibid.

<sup>251</sup> Ibid.

<sup>252</sup> A.J. Scott, 'The Feudal Ages', Kentish Mercury, 13 January 1844.

monks who freed their serfs, thus giving an impulse to 'that great movement towards social equality in Europe, which yet progresses onward.'<sup>253</sup> And who would have preserved and increased knowledge, or advanced agricultural methods of labour, if it had not been for the monastic communities? It was also Christian monks who made the most significant contribution to medieval philosophy, said Scott, which later formed the foundation of 'the great edifice of modern European thought and literature.'<sup>254</sup>

Scott's favourite medieval philosopher was Anselm of Canterbury, who had been trained in a monastic school, of which he later became prior. In mid 19th-century Britain, Anselm was a relatively unknown 11th-century philosopher, a fact which indicates how recent was the revived interest in the Middle Ages.<sup>255</sup> Anselm's mystical bent, which was balanced by a developed logical faculty, attracted Scott. This 11th-century archbishop, said Scott, evidenced the contemplative mind of a John Scotus Erigena, without falling into the pantheistic extremes of some of the latter's followers. Scott described Erigena, a 9th-century Irish philosopher, as a man who 'felt himself always in the presence of the Supreme; he felt that that presence was to be discerned by an organ of the soul; he felt that it was to be discerned in all things, and that the true view under which any limited object before us was to be regarded, was but as a manifestation of the one infinite source of all.'<sup>256</sup> Scott contended that Anselm, more than Erigena, managed to hold together the mystical and the intellectual. The work of Anselm's which most impressed Scott was his Proslogion, 'mainly on account of that characteristic of the contemplative mind which I referred to,' said Scott, 'namely, the constant desire that the contemplation should be living, that it should be a real dealing with the spiritual object, and not a mere thinking about it in its

<sup>253</sup> Ibid.

<sup>254</sup> A.J. Scott, The Literature and Philosophy of the Middle Ages, pp.75-76.

<sup>255</sup> The reporter covering a Scott lecture in The Manchester Examiner, 5 October 1847, described Anselm as a relatively unknown 11th-century philosopher, who, at least for Scott's Manchester audience, had been resurrected by Scott.

<sup>256</sup> Scott, The Literature and Philosophy of the Middle Ages, p.86.

absence.<sup>257</sup> Anselm's Proslogion, like Augustine's Confessions, is throughout an address to God. It is, said Scott, 'a frank and open thinking before God in all its parts.'<sup>258</sup>

F. D. Maurice, who gave much of his life to the pursuit of philosophy,<sup>259</sup> dedicated to Scott in 1857 his work on Medieval Philosophy. Maurice set out to show in this book that all nature, all art, all individual existence, all human society, has a moral and metaphysical foundation:

The faith that there is this foundation, and that it should be sought for, and that it may be found, was strong in the medieval doctors. ... The names justice, right, truth, love, must, they thought, point to realities; to dwell in them, must be the eternal blessedness of man; to dwell in that which is contrary to them, his eternal curse. ...

Some lectures which you once gave - I only heard one of them - on Anselm, on Bernard, and on the 13th century, would, I am sure if they were worked out, do effectually what I have tried to do. Certain remarks which you made in them respecting Abelard, have helped me to correct a very imperfect and erroneous notion I had formed of his place in history. But I have profitted still more by some words you once dropped in conversation, on the subject of Dante. They seemed to me to throw a light upon the relation between the thoughts of our time and of his time - upon the relation between speculation and life, which might guide one through many of the labyrinths into which I have led my readers, and in which many will say I have lost myself. ...

Pray forgive this long dedication, as well as my presumption in offering you a book about a subject which you understand so much better than the writer of it. ... But I could not deny myself the blame of saying how much I owe to your kindness and wisdom.<sup>260</sup>

In addition to historically examining the growth of Christianity and the development of philosophy in the Middle Ages, Scott also considered the evolution of language and the birth of vernacular literature. The gradual formation of a language over many centuries fascinated Scott. Countless revolutions and mergings of different cultures had to take place before the language in which Shakespeare

<sup>257</sup> Ibid. p.89.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid. p.89.

<sup>259</sup> F. Maurice, The Life of F.D. Maurice I, p.185.

<sup>260</sup> F.D. Maurice's dedicatory letter to Scott in his Medieval Philosophy (London, 1857), pp.vi-vii.

wrote his dramas should exist. 'The history of the formation of language,' stated Scott, 'is the very flower of the history of man, as the application of language to the purposes of genius may be called its exquisite and beautiful fruit - the fruit that preserves the seeds of the life of past ages, for a new growth in the future.'<sup>261</sup>

In dealing with the early development of vernacular literature in Europe, Scott returned again and again to Dante, whom he regarded as 'one of the greatest, purest, loftiest, justest spirits that ever breathed.'<sup>262</sup> Scott was considered by some experts to be the profoundest modern student of Dante.<sup>263</sup> Scott's disciple, Baldwin Brown, later recalled that one of his master's lectures on Dante was the most wonderful discourse he had ever heard, 'a great work of art and yet so natural.'<sup>264</sup> Campbell similarly described the 'artistic beauty' of Scott's lectures on Dante.<sup>265</sup> Scott saw Dante as 'the compend of the middle age. How wonderfully,' said Scott, 'in that one small volume, is concentrated the past life of that period!' To know Dante thoroughly, continued Scott, involves a knowledge of the whole medieval period, 'not on its surface and in its external events merely, but in its vital impulses, spiritual, political, and intellectual.'<sup>266</sup> But Dante is more than a summary of the Middle Ages, for the age in which he lived, the 13th century, is one of transition from the medieval to the modern. 'Gazing on the evening horizon,' explained Scott, 'we see here the clear azure, there the orange glow of sunset, and though we cannot fix the point at which one lapses into the other, yet evidently there is a broad band which belongs wholly neither to the one nor to the other, and somewhere in which the transition is taking place.'<sup>267</sup> Dante is in the midst

<sup>261</sup> A.J. Scott, 'The History of the Literature of the Middle Ages', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 5 April 1854.

<sup>262</sup> A.J. Scott, 'The History of the Middle Ages', The Manchester Examiner, 23 October 1847.

<sup>263</sup> See 'A.J. Scott', The Spectator, 27 January 1866; and 'The Late Professor A.J. Scott', The Scotsman, 19 January 1866.

<sup>264</sup> J. Hunter, 'Alexander Scott', The Expositor (8th series) vol 21, p.454.

<sup>265</sup> D. Campbell, Memorials of J.M. Campbell II, p.139.

<sup>266</sup> Scott, The Literature and Philosophy of the Middle Ages, pp.71-2.

<sup>267</sup> A.J. Scott, 'The History of the Middle Ages', The Manchester Examiner, 12 October 1847.

of this transition looking before and after. He is the man of the age that is passing away just as truly as he is the man of the new age. 'What a strange dawn of modern Europe,' said Scott, 'is on the face of that man in the commencement of his own Purgatorio!'<sup>268</sup>

Dante received fully and richly the influence of the age to which he belonged, and at the same time was inspired by 'that germinative life which presses forward from the present into wonderful anticipations of the future.'<sup>269</sup> Dante, said Scott, stands at the head of modern literature.

In relation to Dante's greatest work, the Divina Commedia, Scott emphatically contended that the Inferno is not its most characteristic part. 'The search after peace, the search after freedom; these,' said Scott, 'are the subjects of the Divina Commedia.' The great poem 'came from his heart, from his life's blood! Freedom! Peace!'<sup>270</sup> Dante, in a world which offered him so much of pain, exile, scorn, and violence, sought a spiritual peace which transcended the outward circumstances of his life. Scott recounted a traditional story about Dante, perhaps apocryphal, in which the poet, having knocked at the door of the Lunigiano monastery late one night, was asked by the attendant what he sought. 'Pacem' was his reply. The main progressive interest of the Divina Commedia is this seeking for peace. Over and over again in the poem, Dante is described by himself or by his heaven-commissioned guide, in the different regions, as going through them cercando pace. A striking example of this habitual thought, said Scott, is Dante's description of the river Po, and of the particular spot in which the river by all its mouths pours itself into the Adriatic. Dante describes the river and its daughters as flowing on cercando pace. 'The Adriatic becomes to him for the moment,' explained Scott, 'an image of that eternity where alone that very fiery and sorely-tried nature could hope to find peace.'<sup>271</sup> Scott

<sup>268</sup> Scott, The Literature and Philosophy of the Middle Ages, p.69.

<sup>269</sup> Ibid. p.69.

<sup>270</sup> Scott, 'The History of the Middle Ages', The Manchester Examiner, 23 October 1847.

<sup>271</sup> Scott, The Literature and Philosophy of the Middle Ages, p.71.

considered Dante's great work to be on the outside 'a rough husk, covered even with venomous insects, but this,' said Scott, 'is a mere covering for the beautiful blossom and fruit within. Open the outer husk of the Inferno, and there is presented the fair flower of purgatory, bright with hope, and enclosing the fruit of Paradise.'<sup>272</sup> However much the spiritual symbolism of the poem might be connected with Dante's 13th-century Italian Catholicism, it is nevertheless pervaded by a universal significance. The Divina Commedia is 'a world-poem', said Scott, 'a book for all mankind.'<sup>273</sup>

Moving from Scott's treatment of the Dantean age of transition out of the Middle Ages into that of the Renaissance, especially the 16th century, we find that Scott's lectures on the latter, although less numerous, display an equal enthusiasm for his subject. The formative events of the 15th and early 16th century, said Scott, gave a 'special impulse to the general imagination.'<sup>274</sup> The invention of printing, the revival of letters, the discovery of America, and Luther's protest against the papacy, were stupendous events which came in rapid succession 'like the peals of a grand thunder storm.'<sup>275</sup> These events were immediately succeeded by a period full of rich manifestations of imaginative development. Scott confined himself to discussing four major manifestations of this burst of exuberant life. 'They constitute,' he said, 'four of the most remarkable phenomena in the whole history of the mind of man.'<sup>276</sup> The first was one of the great schools of modern Italian literature, including Ariosto and Tasso. The next, corresponding to the Italian school, was what Scott considered to be the greatest characteristic era of English poetry, with the names of Spenser, Shakespeare, and Jonson. These poets displayed a previously unparalleled width of range, a

<sup>272</sup> Scott, 'The History of the Middle Ages', The Manchester Examiner, 23 October 1847.

<sup>273</sup> A.J. Scott, 'The History of the Literature of the Middle Ages', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 18 March 1854.

<sup>274</sup> Scott, 'The History of Literature, Science, and Art, from 1450 to 1603', The Popular Lecturer I, p.209.

<sup>275</sup> A.J. Scott, 'The History of Literature from 1450 to 1603', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 24 October 1855.

<sup>276</sup> Scott, 'The History of Literature, Science, and Art, from 1450 to 1603', The Popular Lecturer I, p.211.



sense of connexion with remote times and remote people, which Scott saw as being a most important enlargement of the poetic mind. They concentrated on the inner life and mind of men 'so as to make men understand that catholic humanity, which could manifest itself under such various systems, in other nations and ages.'<sup>277</sup> Shakespeare especially was able to enter into 'the general soul of humanity,'<sup>278</sup> and was, in Scott's eyes, the poet not of any one country or age, but the poet of the world. The third manifestation in the 16th century of this general impulse towards a greater use of the imagination was the commencement of the great era of modern astronomy, beginning with Copernicus. And fourthly, Scott considered the grand age of Italian art, including Michelangelo, Raphael, Leonardo da Vinci, and Titian. The only suitable response to the appearance of such men together in history, said Scott, is 'a kind of reverent wonder.'<sup>279</sup>

g) Difficult years at Owens College, and Scott's resignation, 1857

If the first three years of Owens College showed a doubling of student numbers, the following three produced almost the exact reverse. By the 1856-57 academic year, although the total number of students, including evening and part-time theological students, had increased to 154, the number of ordinary students had dropped to a mere 33.<sup>280</sup> Although Scott's evening class in English literature numbered 58, his ordinary class in logic consisted of only two students. J. Thompson, later the historian of Owens College, described what it was like to be one of the two logic students:

The position was somewhat startling. Instead of being a unit in an audience of a hundred or more persons, with freedom to come and go as I liked, I became one of two students, bound by strict conditions, expected to read certain books and pass examinations. I shall never cease to be grateful for this, and though I could never divest myself of a sense of pain and humiliation that a great thinker and revered master should

<sup>277</sup> A.J. Scott, 'Two Lectures on Poetry and Fiction', The Monthly Literary and Scientific Lecturer vol 4, p.111.

<sup>278</sup> Ibid. p.115.

<sup>279</sup> Scott, 'The History of Literature, Science, and Art, from 1450 to 1603', The Popular Lecturer I, p.216.

<sup>280</sup> See the Owens College, Manchester, Annual Reports of the Principal (Manchester 1852-58).

have to give a course of well thought out lectures to two persons - one of them not too anxious to hear them - as if they had been delivered to hundreds of hearers, yet I felt the deeper reverence for him.<sup>281</sup>

Although Thompson seems to have been grateful enough for the select treatment received from Scott, the Owens College trustees became anxious about the small enrolment figures, and called a special meeting to discuss the matter. Scott had not become despondent about the small student numbers, for he had never expected an immediately high enrolment at a college of academic education in industrialised Manchester.<sup>282</sup> The demand for higher education, he insisted, had yet to be created in Manchester, and it was the duty of Owens College to furnish that demand. At the special meeting in 1856 Scott called on the trustees and the professors to persevere with the high standards which they had set and not to abandon hope.<sup>283</sup> He also recommended that a college tutor, a training school, a hall of residence, a more definite curriculum, and a proper entrance examination, be considered as means of increasing the number of regular students. All of these recommendations were eventually accepted in the history of Owens College. Scott's colleagues, however, were at this stage less determined and less hopeful than he. Professor Sandeman was the only one who came close to fully supporting Scott's high aims. Professor Greenwood argued that the unsectarian character of the foundation was an adverse factor, and also that the institution might have done better as a first-rate school than as an unsuccessful college. The other professors were prepared to either downgrade the College to school level, or merge it with the Manchester medical school and grant diplomas. That the trustees, at this stage and in subsequent years, decided to maintain the College's high standards was due, in no small measure, to the vision and determination of Scott.<sup>284</sup>

<sup>281</sup>J. Thompson, 'Recollections of the Old College', The Owens College Jubilee, p.41.

<sup>282</sup>See Scott's 1855-56 annual report in Owens College, Manchester, Annual Report of the Principal (Manchester, 1856), pp.iv-viii.

<sup>283</sup>For a summary of this meeting, see A.C. Magian, An Outline of the History of Owens College (Manchester, 1931), pp.13-14.

<sup>284</sup>Cf. W.A. Shaw, Manchester Old and New vol II (London, 1896), p.97.

There appear to have been a number of reasons for the decline in student enrolment at Owens College between 1854 and 1858. The Crimean War was mentioned as one of the general contributing factors.<sup>285</sup> The primary reason, however, set forth by Scott and his colleagues, was the insufficient preparation at school level in Manchester.<sup>286</sup> This, as we have already seen, Scott had early set out to counteract by the institution of evening classes for schoolmasters, and school visitations. He had also recommended the introduction of a college tutor and a training school. The solution of this problem, of course, was long term.

Another factor which did not help the College during these difficult years was Scott's lack of administrative ability. The Professor of Chemistry, although describing Scott as a man of remarkable power and influence, said that he was 'wanting in business habits, and did not understand how to raise up a university college in the Manchester of those early days.'<sup>287</sup> A friend of Scott's, and one of his most appreciative students, George Harwood, also spoke of Scott's inability to administer:

Like all men, he had the defects of his qualities; and these qualities themselves - to say nothing of their defects - were the very last to fit a man for any official position. One could imagine him the coadjutor - even the dominator - of Edward Irving (as Mrs. Oliphant obviously thinks he was too much), but no one could picture him controlling the business details of a complicated institution. A man who generally forgot his collar or tie, or both; and who, in a course of lectures on Elizabethan literature, spent most of his time over Beowulf, was obviously not cut out for the principalship of a college.<sup>288</sup>

Later historians of Owens College and Manchester University have exaggerated these references to Scott. In the hands of E. Fiddes, Scott becomes a 'dreamy idealist', whose 'kindly and unworldly

<sup>285</sup> Magian, p.14.

<sup>286</sup> E. Fiddes, Chapters in the History of Owens College and of Manchester University (Manchester, 1937), p.34.

<sup>287</sup> H.E. Roscoe, The Life and Experiences of Sir Henry Enfield Roscoe (London, 1906), p.104. Similarly see Professor W.C. Williamson's Reminiscences of a Yorkshire Naturalist (London, 1896), p.139.

<sup>288</sup> G. Harwood, 'A Few Reminiscences and Conclusions', The Owens College Jubilee, p.44.

character inspired a deep affection', but, whose 'insistent search for truth down to its finest shade', rendered him incapable of solving the practical problems of establishing a university college in Manchester.<sup>289</sup> A. C. Magian describes Scott as 'probably too earnestly religious' to be able to deal with the eminently practical merchants of Lancashire.<sup>290</sup> Exaggeration omitted, Scott does seem to have been the wrong man to deal with the practical concerns of Owens College. In addition to his lack of administrative ability, Scott's health, always delicate, became worse during his principalship, resulting in frequent absence from the College.<sup>291</sup> It is said that even his regular afternoon nap he would not allow to be interrupted by the visits of enquiring parents.<sup>292</sup>

In the spring of 1857 Scott's colleagues met together at the house of Professor Frankland to discuss the internal management of the College.<sup>293</sup> The science professors especially contended that access to Scott was difficult. The general conviction that there must be some change in the relations between the principal and the professors was resolved upon and forwarded to the trustees, requesting them to appoint a deputy principal, who would be required to be at the college at certain hours of the day, where he could be easily reached by professors needing to contact him.

The request of the Professors concerning the appointment of a deputy principal appears to have forced Scott to re-examine his role as principal, for, on 28 May 1857, he resigned. On 2 June Scott appeared before the trustees to read his letter of resignation:

I beg leave respectfully to resign into your hands the office of principal of Owens College, which, by your appointment, I have now held for more than six years. During that period I have had but too frequent occasion to experience your indulgence when the state of my health has interfered with my efficiency in a manner more painful to none than myself. For this and for much courtesy accept my best thanks. If I enter into no detail of motives for this step, you will I do

<sup>289</sup>Fiddes, p.33.

<sup>290</sup>Magian, p.18.

<sup>291</sup>J. Thompson, The Owens College, pp.188-89.

<sup>292</sup>Fiddes, p.34.

<sup>293</sup>For Professor W.C. Williamson's brief account of this meeting, see his Reminiscences of a Yorkshire Naturalist, pp.139-40.

not doubt cordially interpret my reserve. It is sufficient that I ought to hold office no longer, after I despair of discharging its functions in a manner satisfactory to my own conscience. I do not expressly include in this resignation the chairs of logic, moral and mental philosophy, and of comparative grammar, English language and literature, the duties of which I could undertake with undiminished confidence. But although I am desirous to hold these as long as it may be compatible, in your judgment, with the interests of the institution, I am perfectly aware that the arrangements required by my vacating the principalship might be rendered difficult by those chairs not being vacant also. In that case, I beg that so far as my consent can affect the question, they may be regarded as equally at your disposal with the office of principal.<sup>294</sup>

The trustees accepted the resignation and readily agreed to Scott's proposal that he should retain his chairs at Owens College.<sup>295</sup> The resolution passed at the next professorial meeting, however, is not easily made to harmonise with the earlier request of the professors concerning a deputy principal, and should probably be understood in part as a piece of politic disingenuousness by at least some of the professors. 'The professors desire,' stated the motion, 'to express their regret at learning that circumstances have arisen leading to the resignation of the office of principal by Mr. Scott - a resignation wholly unexpected on the part of the professors - and to place on record their strong sense of the kindly and courteous manner in which he has always co-operated with his colleagues.'<sup>296</sup>

Scott delivered his last public address as principal of Owens College on 3 July 1857, at the annual distribution of prizes. He used this occasion to counteract the prevalent despondency at falling student numbers, and to defend his philosophy of higher education for Owens College, a position which was increasingly coming under the attack of Manchester utilitarianism. The Lancashire merchants and industrialists, as we shall see, demanded a more practical training for their sons than a university education could afford. The supply of that practical demand, many argued, was the answer to the low enrolment figures at Owens College. Scott stated a number of fundamental principles upon which he thought any decision

<sup>294</sup>Thompson, The Owens College, pp.161-62.

<sup>295</sup>Ibid. pp.162-63.

<sup>296</sup>Ibid. pp.185-86.

concerning the future of the College must depend. 'Endowments,' he said, 'are legitimate only to confer public benefits not otherwise attainable, or, in other words, to supply that for which there is not a demand. From this it follows necessarily that much time will generally elapse before the boon is sufficiently valued to be embraced; and that to accept the trust of such an endowment is to undertake the duty of administering to the public a supply of that for which an adequate demand is only gradually to be created, and for which a remunerative demand is not to be looked for.'<sup>297</sup> Academic education, said Scott, as opposed to technical or professional training for which a demand already exists, is a fit subject for endowment. It is 'a grand public benefit to which England, Germany, and Scotland have owed much of their greatness, while no remunerative demand for it has ever existed in any country. ... Those who shall have courage, perseverance, and insight to secure to the manufacturing districts of Lancashire a university education at home will deserve honour ages hence. Owens College,' concluded Scott prophetically, 'is fitted to become the nucleus of a complete system for that purpose, and a quarter of a century would be but a moderate time for the trial of its value.'<sup>298</sup>

J. G. Greenwood, the professor of classics and history, was appointed to succeed Scott as principal on 14 July 1857. Although Greenwood lacked 'Scott's brilliance and originality,' wrote one of the College historians, he had administrative qualities which were 'more important for the success of the young College.'<sup>299</sup> Greenwood, who retained the principalship for over thirty years, was a friend and warm admirer of Scott. 'No one,' wrote a former Scott student, 'more justly appreciated Professor Scott's genius, or more cordially admired his virtues, than Principal Greenwood himself, with whom I have often and often talked on the subject.'<sup>300</sup> But Greenwood, as

<sup>297</sup> A.J. Scott, 'A Public Address at the Owens College Annual Distribution of Prizes', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 4 July 1857.

<sup>298</sup> Ibid.

<sup>299</sup> Fiddes, p.38.

<sup>300</sup> 'Principal Greenwood and Owens College', The Manchester Guardian, 10 December 1889.

we have seen, was prepared to downgrade the level of education at Owens College for the sake of increased enrolment. Within a month of Scott's resignation it was announced that the entrance examination would temporarily be discontinued.<sup>301</sup> In spite of this, student numbers dropped yet again during the first year of Greenwood's principalship. Scott, however, remained silent. He 'proved the largeness of his nature,' wrote Scott's former student, 'by his complete loyalty to the Principal who had - in a sense - displaced him.'<sup>302</sup>

The temporary suspension of entrance examinations was enough to satisfy neither the editor of The Manchester Guardian, nor the Manchester businessmen for whom he was speaking. They wanted not a university education but a practical training for their sons. Owens College, and particularly Scott's philosophy of higher education, which still held sway at the College in spite of the absence of entrance examinations, came under stiff criticism in a series of articles by the editor of The Manchester Guardian, approximately a year after Scott's resignation of the principalship.<sup>303</sup> 'The education offered at Owens is excellent of its kind,' wrote the editor. 'The Professors are remarkable for intellectual attainments', and there are 'sufficient funds to carry out the costliest scheme of education.' 'If only,' he exclaimed, 'there were scholars to avail themselves of its advantages!' Owens College is facing low enrolment because 'it is not meeting the wants of Manchester'; it is 'a mortifying failure.' The editor concluded his final article 'On the Failure of Owens College' by saying:

Even if it be true, as Mr. Scott says, that merchants ought to send their sons to Owens College for three years before they enter business, it is becoming evident they will not do so. We want Mr. Scott to take society as he finds it; and if he cannot have what he would, at least to do as much good as he can. Who knows but that, in A.D. 2000, the citizens of Manchester may be so refined as to be able to appreciate the advantages of a classical education? But, till that time

<sup>301</sup>Owens College, Manchester, Annual Report of the Principal, and Examination Papers, June 1857 (Manchester, 1857), p.vi.

<sup>302</sup>'Principal Greenwood and Owens College', The Manchester Guardian, 10 December 1889.

<sup>303</sup>See the three articles on 'The Failure of Owens College', The Manchester Guardian, 9, 15, 22 July 1858.

comes, let not Professor Scott stand haughtily aloof from men who want information, merely because they do not like what he chooses to give them.

Scott responded to the editor of The Manchester Guardian with two letters, in both of which he defended the higher education offered at Owens College.<sup>304</sup> In the second letter, Scott explained that John Owens' endowment was designated specifically for a university education in Manchester, and not for a practical or professional training:

I acknowledge that I look on a trust as a solemn thing. I will not suppose it possible that any man, after having undertaken this trust, considered himself entitled to look on Owens' bequest as a disposable fund to be applied to what purpose the trustee himself might think best. Had that bequest been left to found a Polytechnic school, should I, had I been a trustee, have been entitled to say 'a place of university education is much more important for Manchester, and to that end I will strive to have the fund appropriated?' For I do entirely believe that a place of university education is more important for Manchester. ... That the boon conferred by Mr. Owens was the supply of perhaps the greatest want of the population I am prepared, on fit occasion, to maintain, as I did at the opening of the College. If the attempt should ever be made otherwise to apply the fund, as perhaps it may be legally, certainly not morally, it is not the actual trustees, nor the professors of Owens College, who will chiefly be wronged - though greatly wronged they will be - but the public of Manchester and its neighbourhood.

Although they were attacked by The Manchester Guardian, the editor of The Manchester Examiner and Times came to the defence of Scott and his colleagues:

If an objection can be raised against the college at all, it is that such an institution is either in advance of our felt wants, or altogether unsuited to the economical conditions of Manchester life. Still, this is the fault of the community, not of the college. The worst that can be said of it is that it is too good for us. It is out of place here just as a missionary may be said to be out of his place on the coast of Africa. He offers the gospel, and the people want Sheffield blades. He essays to rouse within them a consciousness of spiritual wants, and they are bent upon elephants' tusks, palm oil, or a leash of slaves for the market. The Quay Street professors give us prelections on the highest things in earth and heaven; they tell us of the life of the scholar, and strive to allure us into the beatitudes of scientific thought. Little does Quay

<sup>304</sup> See A.J. Scott, 'Owens College: A letter to the Editor', The Manchester Guardian, 14, 22 July 1858.



Street wist of these business attractions. The crowd rolls along Deansgate heedless of the proximity of Plato and Aristotle. ... Notwithstanding the serious obstacles with which it has to contend, we do not despair of seeing the College some day achieve undisputed success.<sup>305</sup>

The anticipation of better times for Owens College expressed by the editor of The Manchester Examiner and Times, began to be realised within the next few years.<sup>306</sup> In the second session of Greenwood's principalship enrolment increased, after which the student body steadily grew in number, the College gradually assuming a place of importance. In 1880 it was to become the first constituent college of Victoria University, and in 1903 Owens College became the independent Victoria University of Manchester. At least two writers, who had lived through the difficult years of Owens College to see its prosperity, claimed that Scott had been a major factor in its ultimate success.<sup>307</sup> As the historian of Manchester University wrote one hundred years after the birth of Owens College:

Scott's doctrine of the dignity of knowledge was an invaluable basis on which to found the activities of Owens College. It is indeed the foundation stone of all university efforts.<sup>308</sup>

#### h) Scott and the Manchester Working Men's College

Scott, having relinquished the principalship of Owens College, was now free to give more of his time to a field which had long been of special interest to him, the education of the working classes. He had not been inactive in this field during the years of his principalship, having, for instance, raised money for the Manchester ragged schools,<sup>309</sup> and delivered public lectures to working class

<sup>305</sup> 'Is Owens College a Failure?' The Manchester Examiner and Times, 20 July 1858.

<sup>306</sup> See Owens College, Manchester, Annual Reports of the Principal (Manchester, 1859-60).

<sup>307</sup> See 'Principal Greenwood and Owens College', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 10 December 1889; and W.A. Shaw, Manchester Old and New vol II, p.97.

<sup>308</sup> H.B. Charlton, Portrait of a University, 1851-1951 (Manchester, 1951), p.57.

<sup>309</sup> See 'A.J. Scott on Education', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 8 March 1856.

audiences.<sup>310</sup> In November 1853 Scott had formally opened the Salford Mechanics' Institution,<sup>311</sup> and a few months later delivered the Institution's inaugural lecture.<sup>312</sup> On this occasion he reiterated his belief that education was designed to create a well-rounded manhood. His hearers, he said, were men who, 'with manly aspirations and in some respects with manliness of character and mind, are conscious that they have not a manly expansion of intellect, - that the inheritance of the ages, in knowledge, has not been duly imparted to them, - and that, whether by the fault of their own class, or of another class, or, what is far more likely, by the fault of all classes together, there does exist a want for them, which they are desirous to supply.'<sup>313</sup> In addition to his Manchester activities, Scott can be found agreeing to lecture in his home town on the west coast of Scotland. 'I am glad to be remembered in my native place,' wrote Scott to an organiser of the Greenock Mechanics' Institute, 'glad that it should have people like you still living in it, and specially glad that they should remember me. ... Mrs. Scott joins me in kind regards. She is as warm-hearted towards Greenock as any dweller in it.'<sup>314</sup>

It was probably through his involvement in working class education that Scott came to know one of the earliest advocates of mechanics' institutes, Leonard Horner, a geologist and educational reformer, and the younger brother of the late Francis Horner, a leading whig politician. Leonard Horner counted among his lifelong friends Lord Brougham, who, early in the century, had been involved

<sup>310</sup> See, for instance, A.J. Scott, 'On the Relation between General History and the History of Literature', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 24 December 1852; and 'On Intellectual Amusements', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 21 February 1855.

<sup>311</sup> A.J. Scott, 'Address on Education at the Opening of the Salford Mechanics' Institution', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 16 November 1853.

<sup>312</sup> A.J. Scott, 'Self-Education: the opening lecture at the Salford Mechanics' Institution', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 18 January 1854. See also Scott's 'Inaugural Lecture at the Mechanics' Institution Exhibition', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 16 December 1856.

<sup>313</sup> Scott, 'Self-Education', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 18 January 1854.

<sup>314</sup> A.J. Scott, Letters to A.P. Paton, 8 May 1858 and 13 December, The Scottish National Library, MS 3217 ff.72, 254.

in the beginnings of adult education for the working classes. In 1821 Horner had founded the School of Arts in Edinburgh for the instruction of mechanics, and had later become involved in the foundation of the Edinburgh Academy and London University. During Scott's Manchester period Horner was one of the chief inspectors under the Factories Act. Early in his relationship with Horner, Scott unwittingly committed a social blunder, for which he apologises in the following letter. The letter provides a rare glimpse into the Scott household:

My Dear Sir,

May I hope that you will listen to the explanation of a most unconscious piece of rudeness. Till after you were gone I did not even know who were its objects.

When you called today Mrs. Scott was very much occupied, had given general directions not to admit visitors, on account of the state of the house, and I was waiting for her to dinner, which was actually on the table. When your card was brought in, she sent it to me, desiring the servant to explain the circumstances, and to request me to receive you. The servant explained nothing, but brought in some cards at which I did not even look, saying simply 'We are at dinner.' Without a word more, the maid went out, and I learned afterwards who had been dismissed, and how.

Pray forgive us, and believe we would not have behaved to any one so rudely as we seem to have done, and that Mrs. Horner, yourself and your daughters are among the very last people we should have thought of beginning upon. I now learn that you are about to leave Manchester. On your return I hope we shall have an early opportunity of hearing that our apology is accepted, from yourselves. I remain, Dear Sir, with best regards to Mrs. Horner and Miss Horners.

Yours most sincerely,

A.J. Scott.<sup>315</sup>

The Horners appear to have understood the mistake, and can soon be found dining again at the Scotts' along with the Gaskells.<sup>316</sup>

Scott had continued contact, during his Manchester period, with Maurice and the other founders and proponents of Christian Socialism.<sup>317</sup> In early 1854 the idea of a College for working men

<sup>315</sup> A.J. Scott, A letter to L. Horner, 14 October 1851, The Scottish National Library, MS 2214 f.200.

<sup>316</sup> Chapple, p.226.

<sup>317</sup> See, for instance, Chapple, pp.240, 254, 257.

was first discussed among the Christian Socialists.<sup>318</sup> The College was to be essentially Christian in character, although not sectarian. It was to offer an academic education to working men, teaching the principles of the physical, intellectual and spiritual dimensions of God's created order. At a meeting at Maurice's house on 20 June 1854, Scott, Ludlow, Maurice, and a few others, including Thomas Hughes and Henry Solly, arrived at a final decision concerning the establishment of the Working Men's College.<sup>319</sup> The College, situated in Great Ormond Street, London, successfully opened on 31 October 1854 with an enrolment of 120 students. Scott spoke highly of the Working Men's College in London, and particularly of its attempts to overcome class distinction. 'There you will see,' said Scott, 'Frederick Denison Maurice, who has recently shown the depth of his learning and his thought in the history of the philosophy of the ancient and modern world; there you will see Charles Kingsley, one of the most popular and fashionable writers of fiction; there you will see John Ruskin, our most influential and eloquent writer on subjects of art - these men you will see as the working and laborious teachers of working men, and mingling with them not on a footing of condescension on the one hand, and of an expected servility on the other, but on both sides as brother man with brother man.'<sup>320</sup>

A little over three years after the beginning of the Working Men's College in London, Scott and some local friends founded a similar institution in Manchester.<sup>321</sup> On 11 January 1858 Scott delivered the inaugural lecture of the Manchester Working Men's College in the Mechanics' Institution on David Street.<sup>322</sup> He delivered his brief address standing on one of the tables in the large reading room.<sup>323</sup>

<sup>318</sup>T. Christensen, in his Origin and History of Christian Socialism, pp.337-351, gives a history of the establishment of the first Working Men's College in London.

<sup>319</sup>See H. Solly, These Eighty Years II, pp.93-94, for a brief description of the founding meeting of the Working Men's College in June 1854.

<sup>320</sup>A.J. Scott, 'Working Man's College', The Popular Lecturer III (Manchester, 1858), p.66.

<sup>321</sup>See Thompson, p.232; and Fiddes, p.36.

<sup>322</sup>'Manchester Working Men's College - Inaugural Address by A.J. Scott', The Manchester Weekly Times, 16 January 1858.

<sup>323</sup>(J. Finlayson?), Memoir of Rev. Alex. J. Scott, M.A. (1886), p.15.

'It is impossible to give a full idea of the personal influence of Scott,' wrote one of his hearers on this occasion. 'There was a tinge of melancholy and withal a sense of humour, a dignified reserve and yet a tone of enthusiasm, a mental vigour and grasp and yet a brooding dreaminess, which made him one of the most inspiring teachers, and, I should say, to those who knew him more intimately, one of the most lovable of men.'<sup>324</sup>

Scott, in this inaugural lecture and in other addresses to working men, emphasised, as he had done in his philosophy of higher education, that true education, as opposed to the inculcation of information, is primarily designed to awaken and cultivate the soul and the mind for their own sake, for the sheer delight in developing the faculties which God has given mankind. 'I want to give myself a chance of complete development,' said Scott. 'I want an education that will make me more whole and entire, and exercise more harmoniously the faculties which God has bestowed upon me.'<sup>325</sup> Education, of course, as he had always admitted, is also desirable for other, and more practical, reasons. The diffusion of knowledge among the labouring classes would result in better clothing and food for those classes. 'These are things to be longed for,' said Scott, 'and, if the increase of knowledge among those classes will conduce to these ends, if it will remove the horrors and disgust which our sanitary commissioners report to us, then by all means let us thank God for the increase of knowledge, if it were upon no higher account.'<sup>326</sup> The increase in education among working men would also be one of the most effectual means of securing the education of working class children. 'Educated working men will care for the education of their children,' said Scott. 'The man who knows the pleasures and powers of knowledge must be totally without the feelings of a father if he does not desire more of those pleasures and powers for those that come after him.'<sup>327</sup> The education of working men would necessarily modify the

<sup>324</sup> Ibid. p.16.

<sup>325</sup> A.J. Scott, 'Self-Education: the opening lecture at the Salford Mechanics' Institution', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 18 January 1854.

<sup>326</sup> Ibid.

<sup>327</sup> A.J. Scott, 'Working Man's College', The Popular Lecturer III, p.70.

social conditions and relations of the whole country. As Scott had contended in Woolwich, the extension of education was 'preparing the most harmless, the most beneficial, and the most stupendous of revolutions.'<sup>328</sup> There would eventuate a greater understanding between the classes and an extension of the franchise.<sup>329</sup> Somehow or other, said Scott, either through working men's colleges or other educational channels, every man must seek to cultivate and develop his own individual humanity, so as to make his particular contribution to 'the great council of the nation':

This means, technically, the parliament of England; but it is coming to mean, really, the nation itself. Men talk and hold meetings in the country, and suggest a reform; they plead for it in the newspapers; perhaps they form an alliance all over the country; and, at last, when this great council of the nation has made its opinion plain, the small council of the nation, the parliament, echoes that opinion with a political fiat. This is becoming more and more the process, because of many things, - because of political changes, because of printing, because of mechanics' institutions, because of a thousand agencies that draw the different classes of society into closer union, if only such as railways and omnibuses. How important it is for us, then, to observe that as any man is thought to require a certain preparation of mind to fit him for the small council, the parliament, so every man requires a preparation to discharge his duties in this vast council of the nation! Everyone who can make his voice heard, should be prepared to give a wise and deliberate judgment, one that will be listened to because it ought to be listened to.<sup>330</sup>

The Manchester Working Men's College was staffed largely by professors from Owens College, although Scott's friend, William Gaskell, lectured in English language and literature. During the first term of the College's life, from January until March 1858, Scott took the political philosophy classes on Friday evenings.<sup>331</sup> Although none of Scott's political philosophy lectures remain, one of his working men's addresses from a few years earlier, on Christian statesmanship, had been published. In this lecture Scott had

<sup>328</sup> A.J. Scott, 'Address to the Greenwich Society's Festival'. The Woolwich Gazette, 12 June 1841.

<sup>329</sup> Scott, 'Working Man's College', The Popular Lecturer III, pp.70-72.

<sup>330</sup> Scott, 'Self-Education', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 18 January 1854.

<sup>331</sup> Thompson, p.233.

explained that 'the Christian statesman is not merely the Christian acting as a statesman, but is he who has a Christian conception of statesmanship itself; whose ideal of his duty in that function is formed and determined by his faith of Christianity.'<sup>332</sup> The light which Christianity casts upon the responsibility of statesmanship is that it, like all duty, is a duty to God. This duty, said Scott, is that of 'redeemed men called upon to love God as having first loved them, and called upon to love their fellow-men even as God had loved them.'<sup>333</sup> Without this Christian sense of duty to God and man there are no political rights. Scott had taken up the principle developed by Aquinas, and followed by Knox, that a political right presupposes a duty. 'All rights are duties,' stated Scott. 'They are so completely coincident and commensurate, that whenever it shall be made manifest before God and man that the sense of that duty is cast aside, the right itself exists no longer.'<sup>334</sup> Scott wished to universalise this principle. It is, he said, as applicable to Henry VIII as to the enfranchised individual of 19th-century Britain. Because of the extension of the suffrage and the increased power of public opinion, the rights and the duties of political power are extended among the people of Britain. It is only the Christian sense of duty to God and man, said Scott, which will prevent people from using this power as if it were their own, to do with as they wish. Scott concluded his lecture by expressing sharp disagreement with a contemporary distinguished scholar, who had contended that the most permanently effective form of government would be like the autocracy of the Roman Caesars. Scott felt alarmed that such things were even being said. 'We dare not abandon our rights,' said Scott. 'We will cling to them, remembering that to cling to our rights is to cling to our duties; to choose to have larger rights is to choose to have larger duties; to view our political rights like christian men is to view them as christian responsibilities, every one.'<sup>335</sup>

Scott opened the second session of the College with another inaugural lecture on his understanding of college education for

<sup>332</sup> A.J. Scott, Christian Statesmen (Manchester, 1856), p.4.

<sup>333</sup> Ibid. p.4.

<sup>334</sup> Ibid. pp.14-15.

<sup>335</sup> Ibid. pp.21-22.

working men.<sup>336</sup> During this session Scott lectured in logic. 'The lectures were a revelation to me,' wrote one of Scott's working men hearers. 'I was fascinated by the dignified, thoughtful aspect, the deep penetrating voice, the simple earnestness, and the beautiful diction of the Professor. I first learned from him the charm and delight of abstract thinking.'<sup>337</sup> This same student recalled a presentation to Scott on the last evening of the session:

The students after much anxious consultation amongst themselves, had arranged to present him with a gold pencil case bearing an appropriate inscription. The lecture over, the little present was tendered by the leader of the class, and the professor accepted it with great feeling, referring to the interest he had always taken in bringing higher education within the reach of working men.<sup>338</sup>

In 1861 it was decided to unite the Working Men's College with the Owens College evening classes. Scott's educational concerns were thus combined. The union more than doubled the number of evening students at Owens, bringing the total up to 235.<sup>339</sup> As his appreciative worker-student later recalled, Scott continued to lecture in logic:

When the students at the Working Men's College were invited to join the evening classes at the Owens College, I joined Professor Scott's evening Logic class. It was remarkable that several lectures of that course were occupied by the Professor with the definition of the term 'logic'. And indeed the whole series seemed preliminary excepting the last two or three. To those students, however, who followed the Professor with diligence, the result was far more valuable than the mastery of mere logical formulas. The aim of the Professor was to make his students think. He insisted that the chief value of the study of logic was as a mental gymnastic. In listening to the Professor you felt that the lecture was the outcome of vigorous original thought. It was not an idle retailing of text books which makes the lectures of many teachers a weary spell of dry technicalities. I remember in particular the lecture in which the Professor gave some account of Boole's system of logical formulas, - the spirit and enthusiasm which he threw into the lecture made it one of the most brilliant addresses we had ever heard. On the whole, of all the men I ever met, Scott gave me the

<sup>336</sup>For a brief sketch of Scott's lecture see Thompson, p.235.

<sup>337</sup>(J. Finlayson?), Memoir of Rev. Alex J. Scott, M.A., p.15.

<sup>338</sup>Ibid. p.15.

<sup>339</sup>Thompson, p.226.



most vivid impression of the power of genius. With him, philosophy was a living vital energy. I should say it was impossible to cram for his examinations. To take copious notes and read up the text books would not avail. The student must follow the Professor's reasoning, and afterwards reason the matter out for himself. That such should be the effect of the lectures was, I believe, the design of the Professor.<sup>340</sup>

i) Scott's last years

Life at Owens College, as we have seen, had taken an upward turn after 1858. General enrolment was rising, attendance at Scott's day and evening classes was on the increase, and his Wednesday afternoon sessions on religion in relation to the life of the scholar continued to be well attended.<sup>341</sup> Notwithstanding Scott had become less than satisfied with his situation in Manchester, and was restless for change, as the following letter to Carlyle indicates:

Halliwell Lane,  
Manchester, August 2 1859.

Dear Carlyle,

You, and others of my friends have, I dare say, looked on my endeavours to escape from a position which I was eagerly seeking ten years ago, as probably indicative of some unsteadiness of mind. I think I could shew you on a fit occasion that I am not in the position which I sought, and which I reasonably expected to occupy. However, you are aware that, as I have said, I wished to be otherwise occupied than in offering Comparative Grammar and Moral Philosophy to devout young believers of the Manchester School.

I am led to write to you now from a prospect of deliverance unexpectedly opening up. But I am to speak of it rather as it may in some measure concern yourself, than as it affects me.

Smith and Elder are about to start a magazine. Nothing can less concern you, you say. But hear me out. Their design is rather to make it the organ of individual writers of high standing than merely an amusing miscellany, or the organ of a party or school. They obviate one objection to periodical writing by publishing the name of the author with his paper, as the rule at least, and leaving the responsibility for opinion with him, and not with the journal; and another by giving a preference to papers forming parts of such a whole as may afterwards constitute a continuous volume.

Their pay will be unusually high; while in transacting with

<sup>340</sup> (J. Finlayson?), Memoir of Rev. Alex. J. Scott, M.A., pp.15-16.

<sup>341</sup> See Owens College, Manchester, Annual Reports (Manchester, 1859-60), and Calendars of Owens College (Manchester, 1861-65).

you, for instance, there would be no restriction to their ordinary scale. The price, in these exceptional cases, would be fixed with the author as for a book.

I need not say how great an acquisition your name would be for them. May you not, from time to time have papers for which this would be a fit and unexceptionable channel?

My concern in the matter I mention in confidence. I have been requested to accept the Editorship. I have given no decisive answer till I could make some enquiries, one of the most important of which relates to probable or possible contributors. Today the offer was made to me, and you are the first person to whom I write with this view. It would weigh much in favour of my undertaking the work could you take part in it, or even entertain the proposal as not inadmissible. It would thus be not only a kindness, but a personal advantage to me. The important consideration is that they must go on for three years at least. To this they are under pledges, both of faith, and of large money engagements. They wish to begin in January. Ruskin, Thackeray, Mrs. Gaskell will write for them: Tennyson probably.

We shall be glad to hear of Mrs. Carlyle's re-establishment. Mrs. Scott joins me in best regards to both.

Yours, Dear Carlyle,  
Ever truly,  
A.J. Scott<sup>342</sup>

George Smith, the able and imaginative Victorian publisher, had, early in 1859, conceived the idea of a new magazine, designed to give the public both the contents of a general review and the entertainment of first-class fiction, at the unheard of price of one shilling per copy. Existing magazines were few, and when not highly priced were narrow in literary range. 'We secured the most brilliant contributors from every quarter,' wrote Smith. 'Our terms were lavish almost to the point of recklessness. No pains and no cost were spared to make the new magazine the best periodical yet known in English literature.'<sup>343</sup> Scott, however, declined the offer of editorship. Whether it was because Carlyle chose not to contribute, or because the brother of Scott's late friend, Daniel Macmillan, was about to begin a similar magazine with Maurice, Ludlow, Hughes and other friends as contributing writers, is uncertain.<sup>344</sup> Smith, having failed to obtain Scott,

<sup>342</sup>A.J. Scott, Letter to T. Carlyle, 2 August 1859, The Scottish National Library, MS 1767, f.221.

<sup>343</sup>'Our Birth and Parentage', Cornhill Magazine, vol 10 n.s., January 1901, p.6.

<sup>344</sup>See brief histories of The Cornhill Magazine and Macmillan's Magazine in W.E. Houghton's The Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals vol I, pp.321, 554.

managed to persuade Thackeray to become the editor as well as the main writer, and, in January 1860, The Cornhill Magazine, as it was named, met with outstanding success, selling over 100,000 copies in its first month.

Although Scott had chosen not to leave Owens College, his sphere of influence during these years was not confined to Manchester. He continued, for instance, to exert a great deal of influence on the theological development of one of his earliest disciples, James Baldwin Brown, who, since 1841, had sought every opportunity of sitting at Scott's feet.<sup>345</sup> During one of Brown's many visits to Halliwell Lane, from his Claylands Congregational Chapel in London, his health totally failed him, and he was forced to slowly recuperate at Scott's house. It was during this period of convalescence that Brown crystallised the thoughts which he was to express in his first major theological publication, The Divine Life in Man.<sup>346</sup> In 1859 Brown dedicated this collection of theological essays to Scott as 'the wisest teacher of the truth, as the truth is in Jesus, whom I have ever known.'<sup>347</sup> Brown developed in this work Scott's early emphasis on the universal Fatherhood of God as shown in the humanity of Christ. He attempted to hold together the love and the justice of God, or, more correctly, to see God's justice in terms of His love, to understand punishment in terms of a father's love for his child. In these essays Brown set out to trace the way in which the Universal Father nurtures the divine life in man, the way in which the Father leads humanity into a participation in the divine nature. Upon publication the book raised a storm of controversy in nonconformist circles,<sup>348</sup> one of Brown's fiercest assailants being R. Vaughan, editor of the British Quarterly and president of the Lancashire Independent College, many of whose students were, to Vaughan's chagrin, regularly attending Scott's Wednesday afternoon lectures on religion. The main criticism directed at Scott's disciple was that his one-eyed

<sup>345</sup> See Testimonials to A.J. Scott (Edinburgh, 1856), p.20.

<sup>346</sup> E.B. Brown, In Memoriam: James Baldwin Brown (London, 1884), p.14.

<sup>347</sup> J.B. Brown, The Divine Life in Man (London, 1859), p.v.

<sup>348</sup> For a brief account of the controversy see the preface to the second edition of J.B. Brown's The Divine Life in Man (London, 1860), p.viii-xi.

focus on the Fatherhood of God inadequately represented God's righteousness. Brown responded to his critics, in the second edition a year later, by unequivocally reaffirming his conviction that Jesus had intended mankind 'to regard the Father as the essential name of God in His relation to our souls - as that out of which His rule and His judgment spring.'<sup>349</sup>

Another nonconformist minister whose theological development Scott powerfully affected over these years was Henry Solly of Lancaster. Solly's sister had long known Scott through her friendship with Margaret, Scott's 'gifted sister', and Solly had, for a number of years, been friendly with Scott's nephew, the homoeopathic physician, Dr. Claude Buchanan Ker.<sup>350</sup> It was not however until 1854, at the founding meeting of the London Working Men's College, that Solly met Scott.<sup>351</sup> Over the next number of years the friendship grew. Early in 1861 we find Solly staying at Halliwell Lane for a few days, and meeting there James Baldwin Brown. Solly enthusiastically compared his time with Scott and Brown on this occasion to that of 'an assembly of the saints in Paradise - the contrast being so marvellous between the spiritual isolation, the "sturm und drang", the worry and strife of ordinary existence, and the spiritual atmosphere which the presence of men I honoured and loved so dearly, and looked up to so thankfully, diffused around them.' Brown was only passing through Manchester, said Solly, 'but the company and conversation, for the next two or three days, of Mr. Scott and his amiable and kindly, sympathetic wife, were full of refreshing consolation and spiritual enlightenment. The conversation I then enjoyed with Mr. Scott was specially memorable to me, because I could put before him all the difficulties and phases of religious thought through which I had been passing, and received from him not only most valuable comments thereon, but much helpful sympathy. Among other points on which he threw a brilliant light was the cardinal difference between the Arian conception of Christ as a creature of God, and that of the Nicene Cap.

<sup>349</sup> Ibid. p.ix.

<sup>350</sup> H. Solly, These Eighty Years II, pp.47, 63. It should also be noted that Scott and his wife were believers in homoeopathic medicine. See Ibid. p.47.

<sup>351</sup> Ibid. pp.93-94.

Fathers.' Scott emphasised, said Solly, Christ's 'oneness with God in nature and essence, in love and filial obedience, in will and in spirit.'<sup>352</sup>

Solly went on to explain that the outcome of his time at Halliwell Lane was the publication of a work on the atonement.<sup>353</sup> In 1861 Solly dedicated to Scott his Doctrine of Atonement by the Son of God:

To one through whom the wise receive increase of wisdom, and the teachers are taught; by whom lonely seekers after truth are encouraged; and those who labour, however humbly, in an earnest yet catholic spirit, for its diffusion are welcomed and upheld, to Alexander John Scott ... this essay is inscribed, with sincere respect and regard, by his obliged friend, The Author.<sup>354</sup>

Solly also included in this publication a prefatory letter, addressed to Scott, in which he expressed his respect for the conscientious position of independence which Scott had taken up in relation to the Church at large. 'You left that section of it in which you had been reared, and the ministry to which you were consecrated, remaining to this day in comparative isolation and ministerial inaction, because there were principles which you valued more highly than church-fellowship or clerical usefulness, while no one, I believe, desires both more ardently than yourself.' While Solly respected Scott's principle of freedom from all external authority in matters related to belief, he contended that the Independents of whom he was one, had always attempted to stand for religious liberty. 'I cannot help thinking,' continued Solly, 'that, had it been so fortunate as to have numbered you among its children, you would not now be isolated and unable to occupy a Christian pulpit. I know it has for a season been misled into a course which appears to me one of, at least, partial unfaithfulness to its great hereditary principles and trusts, by allowing a doctrinal name (which is a creed) to be fixed upon it. But, I cannot doubt it is sound at heart, and will, ere long, recover its true position - one in which it can offer to men like yourself a

<sup>352</sup> Ibid. p.184.

<sup>353</sup> Ibid. p.184.

<sup>354</sup> H. Solly, The Doctrine of Atonement by The Son of God (London, 1861), p.iii.

fitting sphere and legitimate home.'<sup>355</sup> Having made his bid for Independency, Solly proceeded to say something about his dedication of this work to Scott:

One feels ashamed to be offering you printed publications, nay, to be publishing at all, while a fatal fastidiousness and too lofty ideal prevents you from doing so, whence, unhappily, instead of sowing continents with your thoughts, you can but stock a few fields here and there. Society may too late discover its loss in this respect. But, in the meantime, such silences seem to require or permit the babble of lesser minds, and you must take the consequence.<sup>356</sup>

Before summarising Solly's treatment of the doctrine of atonement it should be noted that, although Solly expressed no indebtedness to McLeod Campbell, the latter's Nature of Atonement had appeared five years earlier, and evidenced many similarities of treatment. Campbell's work had been published in 1856 through Scott's friend, Daniel Macmillan. Having met with Campbell before publication, Macmillan described him to F. J. A. Hort as a man whose 'deep quiet joy and love shines from his face, but more strongly from his round open eye. His manner has the ease of a finished courtier and thorough man of the world; but you have spoken a dozen words before you see that it is far deeper. He is nothing like so strong a man as his friend Alexander Scott, but has the same love for a clear footing on mother earth, though his eye and heart dwell in that which the earth does not yield.'<sup>357</sup> The central focus in Campbell's Nature of the Atonement, as was the case in Brown's work and in Solly's, was the universal Fatherhood of God. The atonement, said Campbell, originates and ends in the fatherliness of God.<sup>358</sup> It is the truth of God's fatherliness, revealed in the humanity of Christ, that reconciles man to God. 'That the Son reconciles us to the Father by revealing the Father,' said Campbell, 'is not only a way of salvation full of Glory to God, but is, in truth, the only possible way.'<sup>359</sup> Forgiveness precedes the atonement provided by God, stressed Campbell, and, therefore,

<sup>355</sup> Ibid. pp.v-vi.

<sup>356</sup> Ibid. p.xi.

<sup>357</sup> T. Hughes, Memoir of Daniel Macmillan, p.276.

<sup>358</sup> J.M. Campbell, The Nature of the Atonement (London, 1869), p.338.

<sup>359</sup> Ibid. p.342.

'the atonement must be the form of the manifestation of the forgiving love of God, not its cause.'<sup>360</sup> Man's only appropriate response to the atonement is to return to the Father in a spirit of sonship. 'Sonship and fatherliness are mutually related in an eternal relation,' said Campbell. 'The Father as the Father, can only receive His offspring to Himself as coming to Him in the spirit of sonship; - neither otherwise than as coming in the spirit of sonship can they in spirit and truth draw near to Him.'<sup>361</sup>

Solly's Doctrine of Atonement does not compare to Campbell's Nature of the Atonement in masterly treatment of the relation between incarnation and atonement, but Solly surpasses Campbell in lucidity of expression. Solly clearly reproduces many of the early emphases of the Scott-Campbell circle, and develops some of the theological implications of a doctrine of unlimited atonement. This work and Brown's Divine Life in Man indicate that, although Scott was formally occupied with literary and philosophical subjects in his last years, he was still communicating and expanding upon the theology of God's universal love for which he had been deposed from the Church of Scotland ministry thirty years earlier. Solly emphasised, as had Scott and Campbell, that Christ 'came to redeem us to God, not to protect us from Him.'<sup>362</sup> How had men come to believe that the Father was satisfied by the sufferings of His innocent son? Only the reconciliation of His prodigal children satisfies the loving Father, stressed Solly. It is the atonement of man's mind and will with the mind and will of Christ that is acceptable to God. Scott's early Spirit emphasis reappeared in Solly's treatment of the doctrine of atonement. The Spirit, he said, is the means of the atonement, for it is the Spirit who develops in man an identity of will with the Father's will, and nurtures within us the divine spirit of self-sacrifice.<sup>363</sup> 'Sacrifice was at once the ground of divine revelation and the object of it,' said Solly. 'The spirit of self-sacrifice in the Father and the Son was the ground or reason of that manifestation

<sup>360</sup> Ibid. p.18.

<sup>361</sup> Ibid. p.190.

<sup>362</sup> Solly, The Doctrine of Atonement, p.226.

<sup>363</sup> Ibid. pp.99-100.

of the Son of God on earth, and to awaken, direct, and perfect that spirit in man was the divine purpose for which he was revealed.'<sup>364</sup> This understanding of God as self-sacrificial Love is Solly's particular emphasis throughout his entire work on the atonement. 'Sacrifice,' he said, 'is the bond of union, the means of union between God and His holy Son, between the Creator and all created spirits, between these spirits themselves; that which alone makes union possible, which is the ground of all religion, all national and family life, of all genuine ecclesiastical and civil institutions, of all individual life and development, - nay, the foundation even of the very being and character of God, the source of all love, holiness, beauty, power, and peace.'<sup>365</sup> It is the self-sacrificial love of God in the atonement which dispels the false images of God and draws men to Him in love.<sup>366</sup>

Solly's Doctrine of Atonement (1861) and Brown's Divine Life in Man (1859) indicate that Scott was in fact doing much more than merely 'offering Comparative Grammar and Moral Philosophy to devout young believers of the Manchester School.' There also appear to have been many Manchester students equally indebted to Scott, and as ready as Solly and Brown to express their gratitude. In 1860 a large number of Scott students, both past and present, presented to Owens College a bust of their teacher. On 17 November a special meeting for the presentation was held in the large hall of Owens College, filled with Scott students, colleagues and friends from all over the country.<sup>367</sup> One Scottish friend later recalled that there was a genuine unaffectedness about the meeting: 'It was quite out of the usual loud way, and the gathering seemed to be all of one mind and to be moved by one spirit.'<sup>368</sup> After the many student eulogies of admiration and affection, Scott replied in a spirit of modesty and

<sup>364</sup> Ibid. p.128.

<sup>365</sup> Ibid. p.227.

<sup>366</sup> Ibid. pp.229-231.

<sup>367</sup> The fullest account of this meeting is given in The Scott Testimonial (Manchester, 1860). For briefer reports see 'Owens College, Presentation of the Bust of Professor Scott', The Manchester Guardian, 19 November 1860; and 'Presentation of Professor Scott's Bust to Owens College', The Manchester Weekly Times, 24 November 1860.

<sup>368</sup> Macallum, Recollections of Professor A.J. Scott, p.30.



humour. Being well known for his powers of speech, Scott amused his hearers by referring to the bust as his 'dumb representative'. He also stated that there were other professors at Owens more deserving of the honour he had that day received, but that the students had simply seized a lucky opportunity. 'They had not had the good fortune to have any defunct men amongst us,' said Scott. 'These are the proper people to erect statues to, and present busts of to the institution. But you must understand that I am not here in the character of a live professor, as you may suppose, but in the character of a defunct principal. No luckier opportunity could possibly occur. Without their feelings being in any degree saddened, they could rush forward and erect some sort of monument to the first man who appeared to fall in the service.'<sup>369</sup> In reference to the work of art by H. S. Leifchild, Scott stated that he liked to think of his name being associated with that of the sculptor. For many years, said Scott, he had been a friend of Leifchild's, and, to a certain extent, a partner in his labours of art. Leifchild, he said, who excelled in so many artistic fields,<sup>370</sup> was not a man who sought his livelihood by art, but, rather, in art. The bust, which was commented upon as being 'a capital likeness' to Scott,<sup>371</sup> was set alongside the Dalton bust in the College library, 'science on the one hand,' said Greenwood, 'and literature on the other.'<sup>372</sup>

Praise, however, was not all Scott received during his final years. In 1860 Margaret Oliphant, a popular novelist, began a biographical work on Edward Irving, one of Scott's earliest and closest friends. Scott offered to furnish her with the fullest information, including the loan of personal papers, and was even prepared to submit to her a written account of his relationship with Irving. Oliphant took no notice of Scott's offer.<sup>373</sup> She proceeded, as was noted earlier, to portray Scott as Irving's Mephistopheles. Scott, wrote Oliphant in her Life of Irving, which appeared in May

<sup>369</sup>The Scott Testimonial, p.10.

<sup>370</sup>See D.N.B. article on H.S. Leifchild. Leifchild was a brother-in-law of Scott's disciple, James Baldwin Brown.

<sup>371</sup>H. Brierley, Memories of Quay Street and of Owens College, p.9.

<sup>372</sup>The Scott Testimonial, p.16.

<sup>373</sup>See J. Finlayson, 'Professor A.J. Scott', The Owens College Magazine vol 13, pp.106-107; and Thompson, p.170.

1862, is 'a man whose powerful, wilful, and fastidious mind has produced upon all other capable minds an impression of force and ability which no practical result has yet adequately carried out.'<sup>374</sup> In describing the Scott-Irving relationship, she typically spoke of Scott's 'questioning, unsatisfied, always fastidious philosophic soul, which seems to delight in undermining the ground on which the other great intelligence holds a precarious standing, and lessening one by one the objects of possible faith.'<sup>375</sup> At another point she described Scott as Irving's 'dangerous but beloved henchman'.<sup>376</sup> Throughout the entire work Scott received this type of distorted treatment at the hands of Oliphant.

Upon reading Oliphant's Life of Irving in May 1862 Scott was shocked and deeply hurt. Shortly after the publication Maurice wrote to Ludlow: 'I have not yet read it. But the part about Scott has apparently pained his friends and himself beyond expression.'<sup>377</sup> On 26 May Scott wrote to the editor of The Daily News:

My friends have been taken by surprise by the representation of me in the second volume of Mrs. Oliphant's first attempt at a true narrative. To them it must seem signally unsuccessful. To them I need no explanation. The general public, and you, sir, will I trust think me entitled to be heard in my defence. ... I am known to some persons, though utterly unknown to the practised describer of character who has so elaborately and effectively described mine. ... Those who know me discern in me many faults; but I ask them without a doubt of the answer - Are my faults of a nature to render this tale in any degree credible?<sup>378</sup>

Scott proceeded, in this and a subsequent letter, to refute Oliphant's interpretation of his relationship with Irving, and his role in the charismatic events and heresy trials of thirty years earlier. Mrs. Oliphant, said Scott, is a writer 'who knows me not at all, who has declined the trouble of making some slight acquaintance with the facts, and takes authority from the gossip of those least informed, because

<sup>374</sup> M. Oliphant, The Life of Edward Irving (1st edition) II (London, 1862), p.28.

<sup>375</sup> Ibid. p.29.

<sup>376</sup> Ibid. p.168.

<sup>377</sup> F. Maurice, The Life of F.D. Maurice II, p.403.

<sup>378</sup> A.J. Scott, 'Professor Scott and Mrs. Oliphant's Life of Edward Irving: A Letter to the Editor', The Daily News, 26 May 1862.

the most prejudiced.'<sup>379</sup> While Scott was not without a certain esteem for Oliphant as a novelist, he, in conclusion, criticised her for 'being a novelist while undertaking to write biography.'<sup>380</sup> Oliphant immediately replied with a letter to The Daily News, in which she claimed not to have insulted Scott, 'nor given him any just cause to say so, were I fifty novelists.'<sup>381</sup>

It was after Oliphant's claim of complete immunity from any misrepresentation that Scott's friends joined the controversy. On 3 June Campbell's letter appeared in The Daily News:

It is impossible for any one who does not know something of the high place which Mr. Scott has in the minds and hearts of those who know him best, to conceive the surprise and pain which the portrait of him in Mrs. Oliphant's pages has caused to us all. Certainly anyone accepting that portrait as a true one would not only not know him to be what we know him, but would conceive of him as the very opposite of what he is.

Mr. Irving, Mr. Erskine, Mr. Scott, and myself, were united by the bond of our common faith in the love of God to man revealed in the atonement. It is painful that in a Life of Mr. Irving, in which this is fully recognised, and with favour as to three of us, the fourth should not have been included with us in the narrative as he was in our mutual feeling. More especially is this painful, as the one most unaccountably dealt with so differently from the rest not only stood highest in our thoughts, considering him intellectually, but was also felt by us to be deeply under the power of that love of truth and devoted faithfulness to conviction which we all sought to cherish.<sup>382</sup>

Erskine and Baldwin Brown wrote in a similar vein.<sup>383</sup> Maurice contended that Oliphant had marred her Life of Irving, 'not by harmless or, at least, pardonable affectations, but by a great perversity of sound judgment.'<sup>384</sup> Oliphant's statements of fact, he said, are in utter discord with her inferences:

<sup>379</sup> Ibid.

<sup>380</sup> A.J. Scott, 'Professor Scott and Mrs. Oliphant's Life of Edward Irving: A Letter to the Editor', The Daily News, 3 June 1862.

<sup>381</sup> M. Oliphant, 'A Letter to the Editor', The Daily News, 30 May, 1862.

<sup>382</sup> J.M. Campbell, 'A Letter to the Editor', The Daily News, 3 June 1862.

<sup>383</sup> See T. Erskine and J.B. Brown's letters to the editor, The Daily News, 7, 12 June 1862.

<sup>384</sup> F.D. Maurice, 'The Life of Edward Irving: A Letter to the Editor', The Spectator, 21 June 1862.

She has told us nothing of Professor Scott which is dishonourable to him, nothing which is not most honourable. She makes us understand that he was led by his study of the Scriptures to think that the manifestations of the Spirit of God were not limited to the first age of the Church; that, having this conviction, he for a time supposed that a certain person, Mary Campbell, had exhibited some of these gifts; that he saw cause to alter his opinion; that he had manliness to confess the alteration, though it could only expose him to the reproaches of his friends without recommending him to their opponents. I find also from her narrative that his friends and he for a while imagined that the Gospel which they preached might be reconciled with the formularies of the Kirk; that Mr. Scott became convinced that they were incompatible, that he therefore declined the Ordination which he had sought for. These are the facts - the only facts which Mrs. Oliphant records about Professor Scott. If I did not know him, I should gather from them that he was a more than ordinary truth-loving self-sacrificing man. Knowing him well, I am glad that these qualities which I have discovered in all the points of his conduct that have fallen under my observation should be proved to have characterised him in his earlier years, with the details of which I am not acquainted.

Mrs. Oliphant's narrative shows me that he must have borne very much more for the sake of honesty than I had been aware of. That what I call devotion to truth she should call 'fastidiousness'; that that epithet should appear to her a very clever and adequate description of a person for whose wisdom and faith she confesses that Mr. Irving felt the profoundest respect, this is a cause to me of very great regret, not on Mr. Scott's account, but on her own. I must regard it as a sign of mental obliquity which, if I had not read her biography, I should have said would have unfitted her to treat such a character as Irving's with the least fairness or reverence. I am rejoiced that she has been able in some degree to appreciate that character, but I am certain that she would understand it much better, and would also understand much better what kind of influences were likely to affect injuriously a man so essentially truthful as he was, if she had not fallen into a mistake which ultimately will cause her more pain than it has caused Mr. Scott. 385

Not only Scott's friends took up the cudgels on his behalf. Many reviewers also came to Scott's defence, and, in the main, followed Maurice's line of argument. 'Personally, we do not know Mr. Scott, and have no interest to defend him,' wrote one reviewer of Oliphant's book. 'But it is impossible to read the various allusions to him without feeling that, from the beginning, she means to use him as an Iago to her Othello, although she gives no facts in proof of her

statements, or none in which her hero is not equally implicated.'<sup>386</sup>  
 A writer for The National Review stated: 'As far as we know, there is no other man from whom Mrs. Oliphant could have gained information so reliable, or counsel so wholesome, as from Mr. Scott.' He is 'just the kind of witness that a faithful biographer would prize above all others. For this man was in the very heart of the ecclesiastical excitements of which Mrs. Oliphant writes, and was no spectator, but a very active presence.' What are we to think of a biographer of Irving who, instead of availing herself of Scott's testimony, goes out of her way to misrepresent his actions? 'Mrs. Oliphant writes as if Irving's body could not rest in the grave unless a distorted image of Thomas Chalmers were suspended on one side of his tomb, and a caricature of Alexander Scott on the other; or as if she could find no pedestal for his monument but the injured reputations of two of his ablest friends!'<sup>387</sup> And in regard to Oliphant's contention that Scott's powerful mind had not yet given rise to any practical results, this same reviewer asked:

Did she know, or did she not know, that all implicated in the noble uprising against the grim Calvinism of the North looked on Mr. Scott as the dominating intellect of the confederation? Did she know, or did she not know, that by all 'capable minds' he is held in very high regard as a man singularly reverent, eminently truth-loving, very largely tolerant, and one who instead of 'seeking to lessen the possible objects of faith', whatever those words may mean, is specially noted for his lucid and masterly expositions of the abiding foundations on which all true belief ultimately rests? Did she know, or did she not know, that instead of coveting a fantastic isolation from his brethren, there are few men so thankful as he in recognising how strong, how much deeper than any conventional ones are the bonds which united him with his fellows? Ignorant of these various matters or knowing them, Mrs. Oliphant was equally forbidden, and, as we must think, by a very authoritative tribunal, to write as she has done of this able and good man, who is pursuing only a too conspicuous, yet an altogether honourable and not unfruitful, course.<sup>388</sup>

<sup>386</sup> 'Edward Irving', The North British Review vol 37 (Edinburgh, 1862), p.125. For similar defences of Scott see, 'Edward Irving's Life', The Spectator, 7 June 1862; and J.W. Taylor, 'Review of Oliphant's Life of Irving', The United Presbyterian Magazine vol 6 (Edinburgh), 1862.

<sup>387</sup> 'Thomas Chalmers, A.J. Scott, and Edward Irving', The National Review vol 15 (London, 1862), p.355.

<sup>388</sup> Ibid. p.359.

Under this barrage of criticism Oliphant reconsidered her treatment of Scott and prefaced the second edition of her Life of Irving with the following remarks:

I am glad to have the opportunity afforded by a Second Edition of this book to correct some inadvertent errors, and to withdraw some words which, if not inadvertent, were at least spoken without any intention of giving pain or inflicting injury. I was not conscious that I had said anything of Professor Scott of Manchester, which might not be said of a public man without offence or wrong; but as it appears that many competent judges think otherwise, I take the earliest opportunity of withdrawing every expression of my own opinion of his character from these pages. His own friends who know him, and whose words are of much more weight than mine, have, I am sure, more than indemnified him by their championship for any momentary wound which I can have given him; and as one of them, the Rev. F. D. Maurice, has declared that the facts of the history are all in Mr. Scott's favour, and that only my own inferences are to blame, I am glad to be able to withdraw these inferences altogether, frankly admitting, what however I did not see when I wrote them first, that they are unnecessary to the narrative. I am sorry to have wounded Mr. Scott's feelings. I do not think so highly of my own opinion as to believe that I can possibly have done him any further injury.<sup>389</sup>

From whom Oliphant had derived the picture of Scott presented in her first edition is uncertain. The only other writer who ever supported Oliphant's interpretation was D. Brown, formerly Scott's successor as Irving's assistant in 1830, and in 1862 Professor of Apologetics and New Testament at the Free Church College, Aberdeen. Twenty-five years later, in a paper on Edward Irving, Brown not only applauded Oliphant's treatment of Scott, but spoke of Scott's 'eventual departure from Christianity.'<sup>390</sup> Oliphant may well have been in touch with Brown during the writing of her book. A possible derivation of Oliphant's repeated use of the word 'fastidious' to describe Scott might have been a phrase used by Henry Solly in his prefatory letter to The Doctrine of Atonement, published a year before Oliphant's Life of Irving. Solly had spoken of Scott's 'fatal fastidiousness and too

<sup>389</sup> M. Oliphant, The Life of Edward Irving (2nd edition) vol 1 (London, 1862), pp.vii-viii.

<sup>390</sup> D. Brown, 'Personal Reminiscences of Edward Irving', The Expositor (3rd series) vol 6 (London, 1887), pp.219-20.

lofty ideal' which prevented him from publishing.<sup>391</sup> Whatever the sources of Oliphant's distorted image it was essentially quashed by the vindication of Scott by his friends.

Scott continued, during his final years, regular contact with these friends who had so ably defended him from Oliphant's misrepresentation. Repeated messages of love and friendship were exchanged,<sup>392</sup> and as Erskine later wrote to Campbell: 'He reckoned you and me his chief friends.'<sup>393</sup> Substantial theological agreement between the friends continued. 'I am glad to think that Mr. Scott and you enter into my feeling of the great difference that there is between regarding life as a state of education and regarding it as a state of trial,' wrote Erskine to Mrs. Scott. 'If we take the latter view, however much we may endeavour to escape it, we cannot help looking on God as a Judge chiefly. According to the first view, His desire to bring us into sympathy with Himself becomes at once the comfort and the strength of our spirits.'<sup>394</sup> Although Erskine often regretted his physical separation from Scott, desiring a more direct communion with him,<sup>395</sup> Scott can occasionally be found at Linlathen. In 1860, for instance, he visited Erskine along with Carlyle. One of Erskine's servants described Scott as 'a big man, full-bearded, heavy-browed' and profuse in utterance.<sup>396</sup> Scott and Erskine, he later recalled, were continually theologising, although Scott, in the servant's opinion, was not as deferential to Erskine as he should have been. 'Mr. Carlyle,' continued the servant, 'never spoke a word about religion. When they talked about it at table, he sat silent, resting his head on his hands, his elbows on the table, attentive, missing nothing, listening to and looking at one after the other.'<sup>397</sup> Scott visited Linlathen on other occasions; and it was probably there

<sup>391</sup>Solly, The Doctrine of Atonement, p.xi.

<sup>392</sup>See, for instance, Hanna, Letters of Erskine II, pp.137, 150.

<sup>393</sup>Ibid. p.181.

<sup>394</sup>Ibid. p.148.

<sup>395</sup>Ibid. p.138.

<sup>396</sup>D.A. Wilson, Carlyle to Threescore-and-Ten (London, 1929), p.398.

<sup>397</sup>Ibid. pp.398-99.

in the summer of 1861 that Scott and Benjamin Jowett first met. Jowett, the regius professor of Greek at Oxford, and the recent contributor of the controversial essay on the 'Interpretation of Scripture' to Essays and Reviews, described Scott as 'a most excellent talker, one of the very few persons who satisfies you in conversation. He is,' said Jowett, 'what the poor call a very fine man, of handsome presence and full of thoughts and words.'<sup>398</sup>

Although Scott's friendships, especially with Campbell and Erskine, continued unbroken, and his powers of speech were unabated, there increasingly developed in Scott a reticence, even with his closest friends. Campbell, in later lamenting that he had not made himself sufficiently acquainted with Scott's views on German thought, concluded his remarks by saying: 'But latterly he was very reticent even to me.'<sup>399</sup> Erskine similarly commented upon Scott's reserve in later years, but believed it was due not to a change of feeling, but to a difficulty in his nature.<sup>400</sup> 'When I first knew him,' wrote Erskine, 'he was very open and communicative, but he had then less to communicate, and what he had was less complicated, less dependent for its intelligibility on the understanding of many other things related to it.'<sup>401</sup> Upon Scott's death a writer in The Spectator attempted to account, somewhat eulogistically, for the silence which especially characterised his later years. Scott, he said, 'was, beyond almost any other thinker of our time, a catholic.'<sup>402</sup> His interest was universal in range, and he had mastered an enormous number of subjects. In spite of his width of sympathy and deep sense of the many sidedness of truth, Scott's stream of thought had not grown shallow as it broadened, for he had coupled with his breadth of thought a depth of conviction:

Knowing nothing of him but his width of sympathy, you would have thought feeling so widespread must be shallow. Knowing

<sup>398</sup> E. Abbot, The Life and Letters of Benjamin Jowett (London, 1897), pp.353-54.

<sup>399</sup> D. Campbell, Memorials of J.M. Campbell II, p.158.

<sup>400</sup> Hanna, Letters of Erskine II, p.183.

<sup>401</sup> Ibid. p.186.

<sup>402</sup> 'The Late Professor Scott', The Spectator, 3 February 1866, p.127.



nothing of him but his intense conviction, you would have been prepared to make allowance for a very narrow channel for so strong a current. Knowing both, you would find it easier to understand why such a man was so silent.

For is not just this state, this sense of the absolute tempered by this appreciation of the relative, that in which utterance is most difficult to a thinker? The man whose point of view is rigid, who can only see clearly in one direction, does not find it difficult to express the thoughts which are defined by their narrow channel; he has something to pour out, he is not troubled by any anxious estimate of the vessels which are to receive it. On the other hand the mere critic, the merely relative thinker, has plenty to say, and says it easily. He does not speak under a sense of responsibility. He has no constant, silencing reference to the absolute, to throw a shadow across the delicate subtleties of his analysis. ... That one of the causes which partially closed to Mr. Scott the channel by which thought is now most naturally communicated was this combination of a vivid sense of the truth, and a delicate perception of all that could be said against it, is what most who knew him intimately will hardly doubt. 'When a man feels that he cannot express his meaning without a speech of a quarter of an hour long, he is very naturally silent,' he said once, in defending a person who was supposed not to contribute his fair share to social intercourse, and unconsciously he was defending himself from the reproach into which unsatisfied wish is so apt to develop itself. This sense of an almost oppressive burden of thought - at least a burden oppressive upon language - was to him more than once a silencing influence. 'I should want space to answer that question,' he replied another time, to a person who was pressing him for his views on the deepest subjects that can occupy the human mind. It was not space of time he meant; other barriers were contemplated by him in that withdrawal. Those words have often recurred to the present writer, as eminently characteristic of the man, as recalling the largeness of thought that was conspicuous in him, and the perhaps inevitable result - that language often seemed too narrow for his thought, and it remained unspoken.<sup>403</sup>

Scott's close friend, Fanny Kemble, offered a slightly different, although not incompatible, explanation concerning Scott's lack of published material. 'It is the despair of his wife, sisters, friends, and admirers that so few of his good words have been preserved,' wrote Fanny. 'He has suffered from ill health, particularly difficulties in the head; and though his gift of extemporaneous speech is remarkable, he cannot compose for printing without labour of the brain which is injurious to him.'<sup>404</sup> Although Scott was reluctant or unable to

<sup>403</sup> Ibid. p.128.

<sup>404</sup> F. Kemble, Records of Later Life III, pp.285-86.

write, he finally agreed, in response to the appeals of many friends, to gather together in one volume some of his scattered but already published works.<sup>405</sup> Professorial duties, however, and frequent failures of health, delayed publication for a few years, and the preface which Scott had hoped to write never appeared. Scott's Discourses, a collection of six essays, was eventually published posthumously by Macmillan in 1866, with a preface by Julia Wedgwood, the niece of Charles Darwin.<sup>406</sup>

Although Scott managed to publish very little in his lifetime, he was friendly with some of the most prolific writers of the age. One of Scott's literary celebrity friends was John Ruskin, who, at this stage, was virtually the art-dictator of Britain. During Scott's last years Ruskin was on intimate terms with the Scott family, and stayed with them when occasionally lecturing in Manchester.<sup>407</sup> The Scott-Ruskin relationship itself appears to have been one primarily of artistic interest.<sup>408</sup> Scott, as we have already seen, was a keen appreciator of Ruskin's Modern Painters. Ruskin counted himself among those who loved Scott,<sup>409</sup> and was moved by Scott's affection for him,<sup>410</sup> but his appreciation of Scott's theology was always less than wholehearted. 'I have looked at this beautiful sermon of Mr. Scott's,' Ruskin later wrote to Mrs. Scott. 'I like the idea of death's being to show us we are not our own - but I feel it only as poetry and why should the poor animals die to show us that? But it is very beautiful and in some ways helpful to me: the memory of him and thoughts of

<sup>405</sup> For a brief account of this see the Preface to Scott's Discourses (London, 1866), pp.v-vi.

<sup>406</sup> A favourable review of Scott's Discourses appeared in The Manchester Guardian, 5 June 1866.

<sup>407</sup> J.H. Whitehouse, The Solitary Warrior (London, 1929) consists largely of correspondence between Ruskin and the Scott family, dating from 1855 onwards. Whitehouse incorrectly assumes that the Scott-Ruskin relationship did not begin until that date. The two men had, as we have already seen, met in London. See M.A. De Morgan, Threescore Years and Ten, pp.227-28.

<sup>408</sup> See, for instance, the letter from Ruskin to Scott in Whitehouse, p.60.

<sup>409</sup> G. MacDonald, George MacDonald and his Wife, p.334.

<sup>410</sup> Whitehouse, p.69.

you - are so always to me.'<sup>411</sup>

Most of Ruskin's correspondence with the Scott family was, in fact, not with Scott, but, rather, with Scott's daughter and wife. Susan Scott was, for part of this time, attending Winnington Hall, a girl's school near Manchester which concentrated on the teaching of art. Ruskin often made reference to Susan's own art work and always took a special interest in Scott's daughter. 'Your letter made me very happy this morning,' wrote Ruskin to Susan. 'There is no one among all my girlfriends whom I should have liked so much for my 12th princess: both for your own sake - and because you are your father's child.'<sup>412</sup> Not only did Susan correspond with Ruskin, but some of her 'saucy' schoolmates wrote to him as well. In response to these 'saucy letters' Ruskin wrote to Susan:

What would Papa say, I wonder, if he were to see some of the saucy letters of the other three! I suppose they were all as prim and quiet as they ought to be when you had them in his presence there. But your sauciness is in never writing to me when I ask you to!

I am so glad that Papa is better, but I am sure it would be dangerous for both of us to go over those courts in this weather. There are places which if I could go over with Mr. Scott, I would go over in any weather, but the most beautiful modern building in the world (which these Manchester courts are) I fancy, is yet in the present state of all human interest and imaginations, utterly without real architectural interest: it is and can be nothing more than a well delivered and sweet echo, and I can't stand in a December day to hear echoes. ... No, let me have quiet breakfast with you and get away home to Winnington in the afternoon.<sup>413</sup>

Susan's relationship with Ruskin remained intimate even after Scott's death. In the summer of 1869, when Susan was staying in Ruskin's house while he was abroad, with all his treasures of art at her disposal, he expressed to her in a number of letters his vision of a new society. Ruskin wished all those who believed in him 'to form a Society, no matter how small at first, which shall vow itself to simple life in what is called poverty, that it may clothe and cleanse,

<sup>411</sup>Ibid. p.91.

<sup>412</sup>Ibid. p.59.

<sup>413</sup>Ibid. pp.62-63.

and teach habits of honour and justice, to as many as will receive its laws among the existing poor.'<sup>414</sup> One of the results of this vision expressed to Susan was Ruskin's Fors Clavigera, a monthly letter to the working classes in Britain, in which he enthusiastically advocated a moral and social reform in his attempt to found an English Utopia.

Ruskin also had a great respect and liking for Scott's wife, whose help he later enlisted in communicating his vision to the working classes in Fors Clavigera.<sup>415</sup> His letters to Mrs. Scott were always warm and affectionate. 'That you should never have seen the garden,' Ruskin once wrote to her, 'nor it seen you!'<sup>416</sup> On another occasion he wrote:

I was made so very glad by your lovely letter about the flowers - so was Downes, my gardener - I have been wanting to come to see you - but we can't get about in this heat - the horse and me both helpless.

But I was so stupid not to have sent you flowers before - I do hope you will tell me of any you would like particularly. Downes is sure to be able to get them - He fell romantically at once in love with your Arran maid.<sup>417</sup>

An unexpected, but fortunate, outcome of Scott's relationship with Ruskin was his discovery of a long-lost relative, the painter-illustrator, Frederic James Shields. Frederic's father, John Shields, was a distant cousin of Scott's, who on his deathbed, early in 1851, had written to Scott, enlisting the latter's interest in his eighteen year old son, soon to be left without a guardian.<sup>418</sup> The letter, which arrived just as Scott was moving from London to Manchester, was lost, and with it all means of contacting young Frederic. Upon his father's death, Frederic struggled for years as a commercial lithographer. In 1861, however, he made the acquaintance of Ruskin, after which time circumstances began to improve for the young artist. Early in December 1864, when Ruskin was staying at Halliwell Lane while delivering a course of lectures in Manchester, Shields, who was now living in the Manchester area, attempted to visit Ruskin in order to get the latter's

<sup>414</sup> Ibid. pp.114-23.

<sup>415</sup> Ibid. pp.145-46.

<sup>416</sup> Ibid. p.108.

<sup>417</sup> Ibid. p.104.

<sup>418</sup> See E. Mills, The Life and Letters of Frederic Shields (London, 1912), p.14.

opinion on certain drawings previously submitted to Ruskin by some fellow artists. Shields later described what happened when he arrived at Scott's house:

I was at Professor Scott's house early, and was told by the servant that Mr. Ruskin had left by an earlier train than he originally proposed. I, who had hoped to hear some expression of opinion about my friends' works, was turning away, when I heard a sweet female voice from the stair landing enquire if some one had called for Mr. Ruskin, and I was asked in to stand before a presence that won fullest confidence at a glance. I told my errand.

'The drawings are here; Mr. Ruskin has been delighted with them. Are you one of the artists?' 'No.' 'Then what is your name?' I gave it. The lady started, and with a strange light in her eyes said, 'What was your father's name?' 'John Shields.' With loving impulse she drew me near to her, and kissed my brow, while the tears started to her eyes as she told me how, when my father's letter had reached them, they were in the throes of removal from London, and how, over and over again, she had hunted persistently for it, lost in the confusion, without success. How they had grieved sorely, as they conceived how pained my dear father must have been at his cousin's apparent disregard - and then last, she exulted that I was found, on whom to pour out the long pent kindness. 'And now I must go and tell my husband.' I was left, I who had no relative in broad England, a lonely, unattached being, astonished under this strange uncovering. And then, wrapped in a grey Scotch plaid for warmth, for he was already failing in health, there entered the room alone he whom I was so anxiously expecting. The portrait that I afterwards drew of that noble head is the best witness of how he impressed me. He clasped my hands in silence, looking piercingly through me, and then asked me to sit down and tell him of my father's illness and death, and my own life since. As I recounted all - my sister's death, my father's, my mother's, my two younger brothers', and my own stern struggles with nakedness and starvation, he broke in with strong emotion: 'I cannot bear to hear it; tell me no more.' 419

For the last year of Scott's life, Shields was a constant visitor at Halliwell Lane, and, in October 1865, drew a portrait of Scott. 420

Scott's health had begun to seriously fail him early in 1864.

419 Ibid. pp.93-94.

420 Ibid. p.107. Shield's portrait of Scott has not been located. An early portrait of Scott was included in J. Hair's Regent Square, p.86, and a late Scott photograph in The Owens College Jubilee (Manchester, 1901), p.56.

In April of that year he had been forced to convalesce in Brecon.<sup>421</sup> Scott struggled through most of the 1864-65 academic session, but, by the end of the year, was again in broken health.<sup>422</sup> In a letter to the Scotts, dated June 1865, Ruskin offered to cover the expenses of a trip to Switzerland, in the hope of improving Scott's health:

I do not know any more sorrowful feeling than that of knowing that a friend is in anxiety and suffering which one does not feel right enough of affection to touch. ... You must not let Mrs. Rich deprive me of the deeper sense of your regard for me which I can only get by being allowed to be of service also to my dear friends - you will find, once fairly on your journey, that the greater difference is made in comfort by little extra expenses here and there - by a better or lower suite of rooms, - a room with a good view - a little drive instead of a walk - and such like - let me entreat you to be freely happy; to enjoy your journey in entire untroubled peace - and just let me know at any time, or from time to time - what I may pay in to your bankers to make this entirely easy, and harmless not only to Johnnie - but so as not in any way to interfere with any home plan or comfort. I am proud enough to think you both see far enough into me to know that you may be happy in doing this - and that it will make me more peacefully - nothing could make me more affectionately,

Yours,

J. Ruskin.<sup>423</sup>

In the summer of 1865, Scott and his family travelled up the Rhone to Les Plans near Bex, while Ruskin and George MacDonald toured nearby in the Bernese Oberland.<sup>424</sup> Upon Scott's return to Manchester he was still too unwell to resume his duties at the college, and was granted a leave of absence.<sup>425</sup>

Late autumn 1865 Scott again headed for Switzerland, to spend the winter at Veytaux on the northern shore of Lake Geneva, again hoping to regain his strength. With him were Susan, Mrs. Scott, and

<sup>421</sup>Hanna, Letters of Erskine II, p.148.

<sup>422</sup>'Owens College - Annual Distribution of Prizes', The Manchester Guardian, 24 June 1865.

<sup>423</sup>Whitehouse, pp.69-70. It should be noted that, upon Scott's resignation of the principalship in 1857, his income had dropped from 550 pounds to 350 pounds. See J.P. Aston, An Account of the Foundation and Establishment of the Owens College, p.6.

<sup>424</sup>G. MacDonald, George MacDonald and his wife, p.347.

<sup>425</sup>'Owens College - Opening of Session', The Manchester Guardian, 3 October 1865.

her two sisters.<sup>426</sup> 'I am happy to think of my dear friend in that beautiful country, which contains so much that is fitted to tranquillise the heart,' wrote Erskine to Mrs. Scott.<sup>427</sup> But Scott did not improve. 'It was too late,' wrote Hunter. 'His frame was worn out, his great brain exhausted.'<sup>428</sup> On the 12th January 1866, while his wife was writing a letter to their good friend Fanny Kemble, who was soon to have joined them in Switzerland, Scott, at the age of sixty, died.<sup>429</sup> He was buried in a simple grave in the cemetery at Clarens. The stone bears the inscription:

In memory of A. J. Scott, M.A., who died at Veytaux, January 12th, 1866. 'If any man will do the will, he shall know the doctrine.' (John 7:17) 'Thou wilt show me the path of life, in thy presence is fulness of joy.' (Psalm 16:11)<sup>430</sup>

Always a partner in Scott's theological development, Ann Scott, at her husband's funeral, evidenced a conviction in the living presence of God immanent in creation equal to that of Scott's. When the words, 'I am the resurrection and the life', were uttered at the side of Scott's grave, she interpreted as a message of hope the burst of sunlight which, at that moment, broke through the clouds of Clarens.<sup>431</sup>

Expressions of deep bereavement and affection for Scott were uttered by many throughout Britain.<sup>432</sup> George MacDonald, probably Scott's closest follower, responded to his teacher's death with a

<sup>426</sup>Hanna, Letters of Erskine II, p.182

<sup>427</sup>Ibid. p.179.

<sup>428</sup>J. Hunter, 'Alexander Scott', The Expositor (8th series) vol 21, p.460.

<sup>429</sup>Kemble, p.284.

<sup>430</sup>Hunter, p.387.

<sup>431</sup>See J. Johnson, George MacDonald, p.32; and D. Campbell, Memorials of J.M. Campbell II, p.125.

<sup>432</sup>See J. Ruskin's letters to Susan and Mrs. Scott, in Whitehouse's The Solitary Warrior, pp.87-88; Campbell's letters to his niece and to Scott's sister-in-law, in D. Campbell's Memorials of J.M. Campbell II, pp.124, 125, 178; Erskine's letters to Campbell and Mrs. Scott, in Hanna's Letters of Erskine II, pp.181-83; Erskine's letter to Bishop Ewing, in A. Ewing's Present-Day Papers (3rd series) (London, 1875), p.26; memorial resolutions passed by the trustees and professors of Owens College, in Thompson's The Owens College, pp.190-91; and memorial articles written in the following newspapers: The Scotsman, 19 January 1866; The Manchester Guardian, 20 January 1866; and The Spectator, 27 January, 3 February 1866.

depth of feeling coupled with a hopefulness unsurpassed. Early in February he wrote to Ann Scott, still residing in Switzerland:

He who has left us was the best and greatest of our time. Those who knew him best will say so most heartily. But we have no more lost him than the disciples lost their Lord when he went away that he might come closer to them than ever. ... How glad and quiet he must be now the struggle is over! My heart clings to him. How I could have served and waited on him, had that been in my power or his need! Who knows but he may help us all now in ways that we cannot understand. But the best is, we are all going to him. The one God be with him and us.<sup>433</sup>

j) Scott's successors

Shortly after Scott's death, Campbell wrote to Bishop Ewing concerning his late friend: 'How mysteriously God seemed to be at the same time increasing his light and withholding from placing it on a candlestick.'<sup>434</sup> In spite of the truth of Campbell's statement, the Scott succession throughout the rest of the 19th century, and into the early 20th century, was not inconsiderable and can be traced. Erskine, Campbell, Maurice, and Macleod all acknowledged Scott's influence upon their thought. These men outlived Scott and continued, and to a certain extent even amplified, his influence upon 19th century theological development. Henry Solly was another man in whom Scott continued to live. Although now a relatively unknown historical character, Solly was a leading nonconformist minister-theologian, something of whose significance in 19th-century theology is indicated by his coining of the phrase, 'the Christlikeness of God.'<sup>435</sup> Scott's immense influence on George MacDonald, probably his closest disciple, has already been examined, and the poet-preacher may clearly be said to have carried the Scott succession into the 20th century. Baldwin Brown, Scott's other leading disciple, had, in 1856, testified that there were many Congregational ministers who regarded Scott as 'one of the greatest Teachers living.'<sup>436</sup> These men survived Scott and transmitted his message to a new generation. In 1905 one of these

<sup>433</sup>G. MacDonald, George MacDonald and his wife, p.359.

<sup>434</sup>D. Campbell, Memorials of J.M. Campbell II, p.119.

<sup>435</sup>L.S. Hunter, John Hunter (London, 1922), p.158.

<sup>436</sup>Testimonials to A.J. Scott (Edinburgh, 1856), p.22



Scott successors wrote: 'A. J. Scott is one of the forgotten prophets of the last century. The world does not know how much it owes to him.'<sup>437</sup> Scott, he said, brought men back to 'the naturalness, the simplicity, the healthfulness of Christ.'<sup>438</sup> In 1916 another Congregationalist standing in this succession described Scott as 'one of the great moral and religious teachers of the last century, the teacher of some of our best teachers, the inspirer of the men who did most to frame the best theology of their time. ... If power is to be measured by its penetrating and permanent effect on the churches and the lives of those who came under its influence, then we must give him a place among those whom Carlyle calls "the aristocracy of the wisest."<sup>439</sup>

Scott's influence on those who succeeded him was almost entirely personal. The Scott succession was not based upon the few published writings penned by Scott, but, rather, upon personal contact and involvement with him. 'Nothing that is in print of his is worthy of the full complement of his genius in action,' wrote a Scott admirer in The Scotsman shortly after his death.<sup>440</sup> His thoughts, said another, were communicated from his 'heart and brain direct to his hearers without being committed first to paper.'<sup>441</sup> And as Baldwin Brown had once said to Scott: 'You, more than most men living, have written your records not in books, but on the fleshly tables of the hearts of your pupils and friends.'<sup>442</sup> Upon his death many Scott friends regretted that more of his thought had not been committed to writing.<sup>443</sup> In 1867 some of Scott's followers contemplated recapturing their master's thought in a written publication. At this stage, and even earlier, however, there was, and had been, determined opposition to

<sup>437</sup>W. Garrett Horder, 'George MacDonald: A Nineteenth Century Seer, Review of Reviews, October 1905, vol 32, p.359.

<sup>438</sup>Ibid. p.360.

<sup>439</sup>J. Hunter, 'Alexander Scott,' The Expositor (8th series) vol 21, pp.388-89. Cf. J. Johnson, p.23.

<sup>440</sup>'The Late Professor Scott', The Scotsman, 19 January 1866. See also 'The Late Professor Scott', The Spectator, 3 February 1866, p.127.

<sup>441</sup>Horder, p.359.

<sup>442</sup>Testimonials to A.J. Scott (Edinburgh, 1856), p.20. See also F.W. MacDonald, As a Tale that is Told, pp.94-95.

<sup>443</sup>See, for instance, Hanna Letters of Erskine II, pp.192, 385.

such a course of action. In 1866 one friend, while offering a profuse eulogy to Scott in The Spectator, urged, at the same time, that the silence which characterised Scott's life was now the fittest reverence to his memory:

It would be a natural impulse in those who knew how great he was, and how little the world knows of him, to try and reproduce their own impression of him, and give an objective form to the memories that impregnate all their spiritual life. Would it be a wise impulse? The gain that has been so much to them could not be reproduced to others; it was not of a nature to bear this transference. We cannot kindle souls at second hand. ... That he could have made his name familiar in men's ears if he had wished it, there can be little doubt. Let those who honoured him honour his decision in this matter.<sup>444</sup>

In April 1867 when the possibility of a publication was being considered, Campbell wrote to Ann Scott:

I am anxious that you should not be coming under any mental burdens which you can avoid of the kind which the book of which you spoke is to you. You may be prepared to hear many echoes of your beloved's voice which will not be to you true echoes, and you cannot but feel pain in hearing them. But I believe your proper course is quiet patience. Leave it all in God's hands. His own most touching reticence is guidance here. We cannot feel that he himself would have interfered, or have attempted to control the workings of minds, who, whatever they might owe him, might exercise their freedom in a way that he might regret. But however this would have been, no one can now do what he might have done had he felt called to do it.<sup>445</sup>

The contemplated publication never appeared.

Having lamented Scott's lack of written material Fanny Kemble had, many years earlier, proceeded to say: 'He is daily teaching a body of young men; and to such of them as are able to receive his teaching, he will bequeath some measure of his spirit.'<sup>446</sup> Scott did endow a number of his Manchester students with a 'measure of his spirit'. The four students, whose indebtedness to Scott has already been considered, G. Harwood, J. A. Picton, F. W. MacDonald, and D. W. Simon, are, without doubt, only representative of a larger number of students who went on to communicate many of Scott's emphases to

<sup>444</sup>, 'The Late Professor Scott', The Spectator, 3 February 1866, p.128.

<sup>445</sup>D. Campbell, Memorials of J.M. Campbell II, p.180.

<sup>446</sup>Kemble, p.286.

late 19th and early 20th century Britain.<sup>447</sup> George Harwood and James Allanson Picton became involved in politics as well as theology, and wrote widely on both subjects. Picton, a liberal minister and theologian, and later a radical politician, was often suspected of heterodoxy in Congregational circles. He evidenced, and expanded upon, Scott's sacramental approach to creation, in his Mystery of Matter. Picton's use of the term 'Christian Pantheism', however, led him into extremes which his teacher would not have sanctioned.<sup>448</sup> In The Religion of Jesus: Its Modern Difficulties and its Original Simplicity, Picton manifested Scott's Christocentricity in his attempt to hold together the advanced methods of biblical criticism with a warmth and simplicity of religious feeling.<sup>449</sup> Frederic William MacDonald and David Worthington Simon remained in the more purely ecclesiastical and theological professions than did Harwood and Picton, and both men received positions of great influence in their respective denominations. MacDonald, for a number of years editor of the London Quarterly Review, became the Professor of Theology at Handsworth College in 1881, and in 1899 President of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference. Simon became, at different stages in his life, the Principal of three of the major Independent theological colleges in Scotland and England,<sup>450</sup> and, although somewhat suspect for the openness of his theology and that of his students, who became known in Congregational Churches as 'Simon's men', he effected major changes in nonconformist theology.<sup>451</sup> Simon, who in 1907, was prepared to say that he owed his intellectual self to Scott,<sup>452</sup> had evidenced

<sup>447</sup> A look at The Scott Testimonial (Manchester, 1860), The Owens College Jubilee (Manchester, 1901), and Testimonials to A.J. Scott (Edinburgh, 1856), pp.29-30, will justify such a claim.

<sup>448</sup> See J.A. Picton, The Mystery of Matter (London, 1878).

<sup>449</sup> See J.A. Picton, The Religion of Jesus: Its Modern Difficulties and its Original Simplicity (London, 1893).

<sup>450</sup> See article on D.W. Simon in Who was Who? (1897-1915).

<sup>451</sup> A recent study by D.A. Johnson, 'The End of "Evidences": A Study in Nonconformist Theological Transition', in The Journal of the United Reformed Church History Society, vol 2, No. 3, April 1979, pp.62-72, indicates the important role played by D.W. Simon in the development of 19th-century Congregational theology.

<sup>452</sup> See D.W. Simon, The Making of a Preacher (London, 1907), p.12; and F.J. Powicke, David Worthington Simon (London, 1912), pp.18-19.

his earlier teacher's influence throughout his theological career. Simon's emphasis was consistently Christocentric, and he developed his doctrine of redemption in terms of the principle of love. In his Reconciliation by Incarnation Simon argued, as had Scott and Campbell, that the Atonement cannot rightly be understood apart from the Incarnation.<sup>453</sup> As the head of various theological institutions Simon always attempted to expose his students to the claims of biblical and historical criticism, and to nurture a Christian faith responsive to the needs of his day.<sup>454</sup>

Another leading Congregational thinker, and more of a successor to Scott than was Simon, although he did not formally study under Scott, was James Baldwin Brown. Brown, as has been seen, was probably Scott's earliest and closest disciple in the strictly theological and ecclesiastical sphere, for George MacDonald, although closest to Scott, had largely concentrated his energies in the field of literature. It is interesting to note that Brown's decision, early in his ministerial career, to remain within the formal structures of his Church was due, in no small part, to Scott, who, on the basis of his own experience, urged Brown to consider the pain of isolation and the loss of influence which separation from an existing denomination involved.<sup>455</sup> Brown continued a Congregational minister for the rest of his life, without thereby sacrificing the type of catholicity which characterised Scott.<sup>456</sup> Throughout Brown's entire ministry he repeatedly described himself as a student of Scott, and spoke of his teacher as the man to whom he was most indebted.<sup>457</sup> In 1862 Brown, in his defence of Scott against Oliphant's misrepresentation of him, stated: 'I hope that I am seeking light wherever I can find it, but I freely confess that I find none so full of the light of truth as this teacher. My own testimony on this point is a small matter, but I know how many, whose names would justly carry weight, would affirm the same.'<sup>458</sup>

<sup>453</sup> See D.W. Simon, Reconciliation by Incarnation (Edinburgh, 1898).

<sup>454</sup> See D.A. Johnson, pp.65-66.

<sup>455</sup> E.B. Brown, In Memoriam: James Baldwin Brown, pp.16-17.

<sup>456</sup> See J. Hunter, 'Baldwin Brown', The Expositor (8th series) vol 21, p.309.

<sup>457</sup> See Ibid. pp.304-5; and E.B. Brown, p.6.

<sup>458</sup> J.B. Brown, 'Professor Scott and Mrs. Oliphant's Life of Edward Irving', The Daily News, 12 June 1862.

Many years later, Brown, while preaching in his own church in Brixton Road, London, turned 'to the memorial window to Professor Scott,' explained Mrs. Brown, 'and proclaimed the debt he owed to his departed leader and friend.'<sup>459</sup> Upon Brown's death in 1884 a writer in The Spectator described him as 'saturated with the Maurician type of faith'. In reply a correspondent to The Nonconformist and Independent wrote concerning Brown and Maurice:

I knew both men intimately. They have often met in my house on equal terms, and each gave to the other as much as he received. They were each ready to confess at any time their common obligation to a less-known teacher than themselves, the late Mr. A. J. Scott.<sup>460</sup>

Brown, like Scott, pursued a broad and comprehensive theology. He resisted any attempt at narrowing the boundaries of Christian orthodoxy, and sought within the Congregational ministry a liberty of conscience, especially on the doctrine of eternal punishment.<sup>461</sup> Truth was to be sought wherever it might be found, whether in literature, science, or philosophy, and related to the truth of Christ.<sup>462</sup> The authority of a Christian minister depended entirely on the truth of his message and not upon any external ordination. He was to be freshly inspired by the Spirit of truth itself.<sup>463</sup> 'When you looked into the substance of his beliefs,' a Congregational minister later stated concerning Brown, 'or the direction of his studies, or the relative importance which he gave to certain leading principles, you saw the influence of Mr. Scott.'<sup>464</sup> Brown was primarily influenced by Scott's Incarnational emphasis, 'the great central truth', said Brown.<sup>465</sup> Mrs. Brown later described her husband's indebtedness to Scott:

<sup>459</sup>E.B. Brown, p.6.

<sup>460</sup>'J. Baldwin Brown', Supplement to the Nonconformist and Independent, 3 July 1884.

<sup>461</sup>See E.B. Brown, pp.73-74; and J. Hunter, 'Baldwin Brown', The Expositor (8th series) vol 21, pp.318-19.

<sup>462</sup>See Hunter, p.308.

<sup>463</sup>See Ibid. p.307.

<sup>464</sup>J.C. Harrison, 'J.B. Brown', Supplement to the Nonconformist and Independent, 3 July 1884.

<sup>465</sup>Testimonials to A.J. Scott (Edinburgh, 1856), p.21.

His own faith had been firmly fixed from early years on the broad basis of a Christian philosophy expounded by A. J. Scott (for which he had been prepared by the study of Coleridge). ... The Incarnation of the Son of God, and His atoning sacrifice, at once revealing the Father, and manifesting the Ideal of Humanity, to be realised in every individual man by the work of the indwelling Spirit, was the central truth of the Gospel to him, as it was to his great teacher, of whom a deep thinker once said that his view of it 'made Unitarianism impossible'. Yet Mr. Scott was constantly stigmatised as a Unitarian; and if such is the discernment of religious critics, we cannot wonder that his friend was accused of 'Pantheism', 'Rationalism', and a 'Negative Theology'.<sup>466</sup>

A theology based upon the Incarnation led Brown, as it had led Scott's other great disciple, George MacDonald, to concentrate in his preaching and writing on the universal Fatherhood of God as revealed in the humanity of Christ. This, as we have already seen, had been Brown's focus in his Divine Life in Man dedicated to Scott in 1859. In 1866 Brown dedicated to Scott another theological work based upon the central doctrine of Incarnation. 'My aim has been,' wrote Brown in the preface, 'to study the closest relations, and the most sacred duties of life, in the light of Him whose Incarnation reveals the principle of their closeness and sacredness.'<sup>467</sup> Brown offered The Home Life: in the Light of its Divine Idea to the memory of Scott in the following words:

To the memory of the beloved and honoured teacher, A. J. Scott, M.A., whose whole life was a witness to the truth which I have here endeavoured to set forth, and who fell asleep while these pages were passing through the press, I inscribe them, with that reverent love which is only made immortal by death.<sup>468</sup>

Brown was suspected, for many years, as a 'dangerous teacher', but gradually attracted a wide following of younger ministers, both

<sup>466</sup> E.B. Brown, pp.31-32.

<sup>467</sup> J.B. Brown, The Home Life: in the light of its Divine Idea (London, 1866), p.viii.

<sup>468</sup> Ibid. p.v. At the front of this publication, on p.ii. Smith and Elder the publishers advertised that they would soon be publishing Some Words on the Life and Work of the Late A.J. Scott, M.A.: Being the Substance of an Address to the Congregation of Claylands Chapel by J.B. Brown. This work appears not to have been published.

within and without Congregational circles.<sup>469</sup> Brown numbered among his committed followers P. T. Forsyth, one of the leading Congregational theologians of late 19th and early 20th century Britain. Forsyth described Brown as the greatest Independent since the 17th century.<sup>470</sup> He had 'a power over us,' said Forsyth. 'No man among us in this generation possessed the same power of inspiration.'<sup>471</sup> Forsyth was primarily indebted to Brown, as Brown had been to Scott, for his Incarnational emphasis. He was also attracted to Brown's use of the imagination in theology. This 'softened the edge of dogma, and kept it to its true place,' said Forsyth. 'For us it gave him a halo. And it gave him a horror of mere rationalism, and preserved him from the baldness that so easily besets us.'<sup>472</sup> Although suspected by the 'orthodox' for many years, Brown's election to the chair of the Congregational Union of England and Wales in 1878 indicated a growing acceptance within Congregationalism of the theology of Scott's circle.

Brown's closest disciple was John Hunter,<sup>473</sup> later described as 'the Frederick William Robertson of the Dissenters.'<sup>474</sup> Brown can be said to have passed on the Scott succession to Hunter, who always spoke of his teacher's teacher in the highest terms, and whose theology, as we shall see, strongly evidenced a Scott descent. 'If it be the unpardonable sin,' said Hunter in 1916, 'as Carlyle tells us it is, not to know a great man when he appears, then the generation to which Alexander John Scott belonged was guilty.'<sup>475</sup> Hunter manifested the Christocentric emphasis of Brown and Scott. Early in the 20th century, Hunter, in a joint attempt with other Scottish theologians to reform Scottish theology from its Westminster Confessionalism, pointed hopefully to the increasingly central place

<sup>469</sup> See E.B. Brown, p.129; J. Hunter, p.314; and L.S. Hunter, p.29.

<sup>470</sup> For Forsyth's impression of Brown, see E.B. Brown, pp.133-42.

<sup>471</sup> Ibid. p.133.

<sup>472</sup> Ibid. pp.136-37.

<sup>473</sup> L.S. Hunter, John Hunter, p.74.

<sup>474</sup> 'The Late Dr. John Hunter', The British Weekly, 20 September, 1917.

<sup>475</sup> Hunter, 'Alexander Scott', The Expositor (8th series) vol 21, p.387.

given to Christ in the faith of the Scottish Church at large:

It has rediscovered the secret of Jesus - the large and mighty trust in God as eternal and invincible goodness which He quickened in the consciousness of mankind. The reaffirmation of the universal Fatherhood of God in modern days has led to a renaissance of faith which is slowly reforming the theology of Christendom. We see God in Christ and know God by Christ as never before, and this Divine knowledge is making all things new. There is surely hope in the common assertion that the teaching of the Churches is everywhere now tending to become Christocentric. This can only mean, nothing more and nothing less, than that Christ Himself, His mind and spirit, must be the final authority by which the question of the creed will have to be decided; that the coming Christianity will be on the lines of the personal message of Jesus Christ - the proper norm of a truly Christian theology.<sup>476</sup>

Hunter's final authority being the 'mind and spirit' of Christ, rather than the infallible Scriptures or the almost infallible creed, he did not fear the growth of science or the application of historical and literary criticism to theology. 'We must,' he said, 'adjust our religious to our scientific beliefs. We cannot keep them separate. All that we truly know and believe must be capable of being brought into some real unity.'<sup>477</sup> The openness of Hunter's pursuit of truth freed him from dogmatism. To affirm dogmatically the historical verity of the Scriptures, he said, is impossible. Dogmatism on such a matter 'creates the unbelief it deplures, and the generic characteristic of dogmatism is just the introducing of a spurious certainty into matters which by their own nature must be uncertain. There cannot be too much genuine believing, but it is not the quantity so much as the quality of the believing for which we ought to care,' continued Hunter. The Church 'ought only to affirm things which are capable of spiritual verification, which appeal directly to the heart of the faith, and require no other witness than that of the inner light.'<sup>478</sup> Hunter's broad comprehensiveness did not dilute the evangelical nature of his Christianity.<sup>479</sup> Scott, he said, has shown us 'how wide the area is in which we may live and at the same

<sup>476</sup>J. Hunter in Creed Revision in Scotland (Glasgow, 1907), p.155.

<sup>477</sup>Ibid. p.152.

<sup>478</sup>Ibid. pp.153-54.

<sup>479</sup>See D.A. Johnson, p.69.



time retain and cherish our faith in the Gospel of the Son of God.'<sup>480</sup> Hunter's perspective of openness led him, as it had led Scott, to a much broader understanding of revelation. Scott, said Hunter, was 'a Christian to the core, but his Christianity was truly a wide and catholic Christianity; not a system or a plan of salvation, but a satisfaction for the deepest needs of the inner nature of man.' Scott, he continued, saw 'that God has never left Himself without a witness in any land or time, that there is a divine education of mankind in Greek as well as in Hebrew Schools and a Divine purpose in the history of every nation.'<sup>481</sup>

Hunter's employment of the historical method led him to distinguish truth from human formulations of truth. Creeds, under the light of historical relativity, became for him the imperfect and shifting embodiments of truth. And his Christ-centred theology rendered unacceptable, as it had done for Scott, the Westminster Confession's picture of a world under the wrath and curse of God:

Are the two great Presbyterian Churches of our country prepared to hang up their heavy armour on the wall and go forth to meet the coming time in the irresistible simplicity of Christ, by which alone religion can prevail? Are they prepared to go behind the Westminster divines, the reformers and fathers, and to read and interpret the Gospels with an open and candid mind, keeping steadily in view how almost every verse is overlaid with the dogmatic deposits of ages, and that therefore only by the most determined effort will they find 'the truth as it is in Jesus'? The call for the revision of the Confession requires for its full satisfaction a new creed, and that creed the creed of Christ. It will not be met by any tinkering at the old creed, nor even by a formula of subscription as liberal as this - 'I accept the Confession as my Confession of faith so far as it is in accordance with the mind of Christ.' ... It is also of no use to say that the creed is signed for 'substance of doctrine' when the substance of doctrine is the very question at issue. A Confession which does not contain 'the core of the Gospel' and 'not one declaration of the infinite love of God to men', cannot possibly continue to be the Confession of a living Christian Church at the beginning of the 20th century of the era of Christ. ... A new theology - no hasty, unripe, unmelded product - has been slowly growing in our midst these many years. Prophets, thinkers, and saints like Edward Irving, Thomas Erskine, Macleod Campbell, A. J. Scott, Alexander Ewing, Robert Lee, Norman Macleod, John Tulloch, Principal

<sup>480</sup> Hunter, 'Alexander Scott', The Expositor (8th series) vol 21 pp.460-61.

<sup>481</sup> Ibid. p.462.

Caird, Robertson Smith, A. B. Bruce, have contributed to its development, and their influence keeps it thoroughly and profoundly Christian.<sup>482</sup>

The fact that Hunter stood in the Scott succession was not entirely due to Baldwin Brown. Hunter had studied theology at Spring Hill College, Birmingham, under Scott's former student, D. W. Simon, and was in fact considered one of 'Simon's men.'<sup>483</sup> Early in his ministry he became an intimate friend of George MacDonald, and regularly invited the poet-preacher to lecture and preach to his Glasgow congregation.<sup>484</sup> Hunter spent most of his ministry at the Trinity Congregational Church in Glasgow, where he exerted a widespread influence on the students and faculty of Glasgow University. Principal Story described him as, after John Caird, 'the students' preacher.'<sup>485</sup> In 1893 Glasgow University conferred on Hunter the degree of D.D., and in the following year he was elected President of the University's Theological Society, the first minister not of the Church of Scotland to be so elected. In 1908 Hunter erected in his Congregational Church in Glasgow two memorial windows to Scott and other 19th-century Scottish theological reformers, such as Irving, Erskine, Campbell, Macleod, and MacDonald. 'I have had a very strong desire for a number of years to do some thing to commemorate the men who did most for the widening of religious thought in Scotland during the 19th century,' wrote Hunter in 1908. 'It is a pity that all these men should not have a memorial. It is fitting also that it should be in Trinity Church. There is no other church broad enough to have it.'<sup>486</sup> In addition to erecting memorial windows to these men Hunter also occasionally lectured to his congregation on Scott and other religious leaders of the 19th century.<sup>487</sup> During Hunter's Glasgow ministry he

<sup>482</sup>Hunter in Creed Revision in Scotland, pp.159-61.

<sup>483</sup>L.S. Hunter, John Hunter, pp.16-17.

<sup>484</sup>See Ibid. p.87; and 'The Late Dr. John Hunter', The British Weekly, 20 September 1917.

<sup>485</sup>L.S. Hunter, pp.94-95.

<sup>486</sup>Ibid. pp.231-32.

<sup>487</sup>Ibid. p.190. Hunter also gathered together a collection of Scott's scattered publications which his son, Bishop L.S. Hunter, later handed over to the John Rylands Library in Manchester. See the letter from L.S. Hunter to the Librarian, 17 April 1965, The John Rylands Library, Deansgate, Manchester.

usually spent his summer holidays in Switzerland, where he was fond of visiting, and taking others to, Scott's grave at Clarens.<sup>488</sup> In 1913 Hunter retired to Hampstead, where he enjoyed as a neighbour his lifelong friend, P. T. Forsyth.<sup>489</sup> One of Hunter's last public lectures was, the year before his death, delivered on Scott.<sup>490</sup>

Hunter's 1916 lecture, published in The Expositor in 1921, has been the last formal recognition of Scott in the 20th century. 'Scott,' Robertson Nicoll had written in 1905, 'lives upon the testimony of those who knew him.'<sup>491</sup> With the death of Scott's personal disciples, and of those who, like Hunter, caught an inspiring glimpse of the living man through his followers, the Scott succession may be said to have ended. But Scott, throughout his entire life, had found followers in the Scottish, Congregational, and Anglican Churches, and in literary, philosophical, and educational circles throughout the country. Explicit reference to Scott may have ended in 1921, but the succession of some of his deepest convictions continued until they found a permanent, and often central, place in the Church of the 20th century. Scott had not, as Henry Solly said, sown continents with his thoughts, but the few fields which he had stocked here and there bore considerable fruit.

<sup>488</sup>L.S. Hunter, pp.103, 266.

<sup>489</sup>Ibid. p.282.

<sup>490</sup>Ibid.

<sup>491</sup>W. Robertson Nicoll, 'George MacDonald', The British Weekly, 21 September 1905, vol 38, p.550.

## A Summary of Scott's Theology

Some 'crave that a sort of Scott system may survive him,' wrote Caroline Fox in 1849. 'But we must take the men whom God sends us, and be thankful, without cutting and squaring them like awkward tailors as we are.'<sup>1</sup> Scott, like the poet-theologian to whom he was indebted, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and the poet-preacher who was his closest disciple, George MacDonald, was not a systematic theologian. It is not here intended to 'cut and square' Scott into a system, but rather to point to central emphases which emerge in his life and thought.

### 1) The Principle of Conscience

Scott believed that there is a God-given faculty in man which enables him to determine what is of God. Scott's understanding of this capacity, which he called the 'spiritual conscience' or more often just the 'conscience', closely resembled the concept of spiritual consciousness developed by Schleiermacher, Coleridge and Erskine, and to the latter two he was definitely indebted. Scott's concept of spiritual conscience began to appear in his writings in 1830 and thenceforward occupied a central place in his thought. The conscience, distinct from man's understanding, is a universal faculty in man, capable of receiving the eternal voice which calls man to unite with God and presents to him a character which it commands man to be. 'Man may know,' asserted Scott, 'when that is presented to him, from which he dare not be out of communion, under penalty of being out of communion with God.'<sup>2</sup> There is a harmony between what is spiritually true and the conscience of man as God has constituted it. Spiritual truth has the same relation to the conscience that light has to the eye, or air to the lungs. This spiritual eye in man is not infallible, but humanity is bound to make the most of it. 'We cannot do without it,' said Scott. 'There is a region - and the highest of all regions of our inquiry and of our practical demeanour in this world - in which, if we have not this guidance, we have none. For it is no answer to say -

<sup>1</sup>C. Fox, Memories of Old Friends (London, 1882), p.254.

<sup>2</sup>A.J. Scott, 'On Schism', Lecture I, The Pulpit, vol 41  
28 May 1842, p.510.

"We have God, we have the Bible, we have the Church." I say not one of these is to be read, otherwise than by the spiritual faculty within us.'<sup>3</sup> The conscience has an absolute and boundless right over man. It is a false liberalism which forgets that, over this God-given faculty, we have no rights whatsoever. 'We are not to believe any thing because we like,' said Scott. 'We are to believe because we are bound to believe.'<sup>4</sup>

Scott, at a very early stage, began to consider himself as standing under his conscience and bound to act accordingly. Erskine described him as a man 'who felt that his conscience did not belong to him, but that he belonged to his conscience.'<sup>5</sup> The high place given by Scott to the conscience prompted him in 1827 to reconsider a ministerial profession that involved submission to the Kirk's 'subordinate standard', and within a few years led him to refuse to sign the Confession as the statement of his own faith. He later described himself as having acted, in the heresy trials of 1830-31, 'under a mere necessity of conscience.'<sup>6</sup> Throughout his entire life as a spiritual teacher Scott claimed no external authority over his listeners but appealed only to the authority of truth in the spiritual conscience of man. Scott was also led to criticise the Catholic Apostolic and Anglo-Catholic disregard for the spiritual conscience. Any attempt to place the Church, its sacraments, or the ecclesiastically ordained between God and an individual's spiritual faculty Scott regarded as 'idolatrous'. Scott's educational pursuits were also consistent with his principle of conscience. University College, London, The Ladies' College, Bedford Square, and Owens College, Manchester, were the only places of higher education in Britain totally free from religious tests, and thus the only places of higher education appropriate for this man of conscience.

<sup>3</sup>Scott, 'On Schism', Lecture II, The Pulpit, vol 41, 9 June 1842, p.544.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid. p.552.

<sup>5</sup>T. Erskine, 'Professor Scott and Mrs. Oliphant's Life of Edward Irving: A Letter to the Editor', The Daily News, 7 June 1862.

<sup>6</sup>A.J. Scott, 'Professor Scott and Mrs. Oliphant's Life of Edward Irving: A Letter to the Editor', The Daily News, 26 May 1862.

## 2) The Principle of Incarnation

The primary revelation of God to be discerned by the spiritual conscience in man is God's manifestation of Himself in the humanity of Christ. In one of Scott's earliest sermons on the west coast of Scotland he emphasised, in opposition to the reigning Westminster Calvinist notion of God as a predestinating Sovereign whose righteousness was satisfied by the penal substitution of his Son for the elect, that Christ's humanity is the place where God is truly revealed. Christ was 'shewing God in all his actions,' wrote Scott in 1830. 'God he is in every act - man in every act.'<sup>7</sup> The Father is not known apart from the man Christ Jesus. 'The humanity of Christ is that which translates the ineffable language of the Most High into man's native tongue,' contended Scott in another publication of the same year.<sup>8</sup> The Incarnate Christ is the central and crowning revelation of God. 'In the humanity of Christ, in human thoughts, human feelings, human joys and sorrows, God looks out and articulates Himself to us with a distinctness and a home impression beyond what any other form of manifestation can possess; and seeing Him we emphatically see the Father.'<sup>9</sup> Another aspect, and a more controversial one, of the doctrine of Incarnation, Christ's human nature, although pioneered in the extreme by Irving, was first defended before the London Presbytery by Scott in 1830. Christ's human perfection was due not to a nature other than ours, he said, but rather to the constant indwelling of the Holy Spirit. 'He is just as emphatically man as he is emphatically God,' Scott argued against the Docetic tendency of his age. 'He excels us, not in that He is less truly Man than we, but that He is Man in very truth.'<sup>10</sup> Scott's Incarnation emphasis characterised his life's theology and was transmitted to his closest followers.

## 3) The Principle of Love

Scott's central belief that God had revealed Himself in the

<sup>7</sup> A.J. Scott, Hints for Meditation on Acquaintance with God, p.8.

<sup>8</sup> A.J. Scott, On the Divine Will, p.16.

<sup>9</sup> A.J. Scott, 'Introductory Discourse on Revelation', Lectures on the Epistle to the Romans, p.15.

<sup>10</sup> Scott, Lectures on the Epistle to the Romans, pp.76-77.

humanity of Christ carried with it many theological implications, the most important of which was a belief in the universal love of God. Against the Westminster Calvinism of his father, his theological instructors, the vast majority of his university contemporaries, and the bulk of the National Kirk, which limited the love of God to the elect only, Scott, in his earliest preaching, contended that Christ's unlimited love for man is the very image of his Father's love for all humanity. 'How is God disposed towards us?' asked Scott in 1830. 'He that hath seen Jesus hath seen the Father.'<sup>11</sup> No one believing Christ to be the revelation of God can doubt that the Father loves all men and wills their salvation. It was primarily due to Scott's conviction, which he shared with Erskine and Campbell, that God's universal love is at the heart of Christian theology, that he refused to sign the Westminster Confession of Faith in 1830. The Confession, asserted Scott, does not express 'the essence, the vital principle of Christianity.' It does not proclaim that 'the grace manifested in the Gospel is a grace to all men.'<sup>12</sup> The Confession's contention that atonement is limited to the elect was for Scott 'the negation of the Gospel.'<sup>13</sup> The 1831 General Assembly's unanimous decision to depose Scott from the Church of Scotland ministry was primarily based upon a rejection of Scott's conviction that the love of God is for all men. A central place having been given to this 'vital principle of Christianity' early in Scott's theological development, it reappeared throughout his entire life, and was most noticeably continued in the thought of his disciples, MacDonald and Brown.

There were a number of corollaries to Scott's Incarnation emphasis and his belief in the universal love of God. One was his doctrine of 'confidence in God', or as Campbell had termed it, 'assurance of faith'. Instead of a spiritual posture of subjective self-examination, fostered by Westminster Calvinism's doctrine of election, Scott encouraged an objective confidence in the loving

<sup>11</sup> Scott, Hints for Meditation on Acquaintance with God, p.10.

<sup>12</sup> 'The Scots Presbytery, London', The Greenock Advertiser, 22 October 1830.

<sup>13</sup> A.J. Scott, 'A Letter to the Editor', The Daily News, 26 May 1862.

moral character of God as revealed in the humanity of Christ. In light of Christ's brotherhood with humanity, the Father is towards mankind generally what He is to the man Christ Jesus. Humanity is called upon to rest confidently in the loving Fatherhood of God, and to respond in spirit and in deed as children of the Father, loving God and man as He had loved them. Scott was also led to criticise the Kirk's prevalent sabbatarianism. Having replaced the omnipotent righteousness of the Confession's God with the human love of the God-man, a legalistic observance of the sabbath, designed to satisfy the divine righteousness, was unacceptable to this young advocate of God's loving Fatherhood. Scott's belief in the universal Fatherhood of God and in Christ's brotherhood with humanity also led him to adopt a far nobler understanding of man than that contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith. The understanding of man as 'wholly defiled' and 'utterly indisposed' to all good Scott replaced with a conception of man as 'a fit viceroy of the world,'<sup>14</sup> made capable of freely choosing and loving God.

The nobler conceptions of man and the growing humanitarianism of his day Scott considered to be true fruits of the spirit of Christianity. It was the Christian teaching of the equal value of all men in the sight of God which gave the major impulse 'to that great movement towards social equality in Europe.'<sup>15</sup> The dignity of a human existence which lies at the root of the idea of modern democracy was the product of a Christian belief in God's universal love. Whoever believed this, said Scott, 'put a worth upon the soul of man, which was never before dreamed of by the noblest mind.'<sup>16</sup> Throughout his entire life Scott evidenced a respect for the lower classes, always appealing to their noblest and highest attributes. Wherever the responsible sharing of power is possible, said Scott, it is, according to the spirit of Christianity, desirable. He tried to nurture the social conscience of Christians, and as one of the

<sup>14</sup> Scott, On the Divine Will, p.11.

<sup>15</sup> A.J. Scott, 'The Feudal Ages', Kentish Mercury, 13 January 1844.

<sup>16</sup> A.J. Scott, 'Social Systems of the Present Day, Compared with Christianity', The Woolwich Gazette, 5 December 1840.



founders of Christian Socialism attempted to understand and shape the socio-political situation of 19th-century Britain in terms of the principles of Christ's Kingdom, the central principle being that of love. In Politics for the People the Christian Socialists stood for a human fraternity based upon God's universal Fatherhood. Scott believed that the possessors of political power, whether great or small, were called upon 'to love their fellow-men even as God had loved them.'<sup>17</sup> Only upon this highest of principles can the selfish abuse of power be prevented. Selfishness Scott saw as existing plentifully on both sides of the social divide. But God, he said, 'stands neuter in the strife of human selfishness.'<sup>18</sup> God is on the side only of those who live by the principle of self-sacrificial love. The Chartists Scott criticised for attempting merely to counterbalance the selfishness of one class with that of another, and the wealthier classes he accused of self-interestedly resisting all social change. Christianity, he said, 'expands the man beyond the mere brute propensity to self-Conservation, by the force of love to man, grounded on a love unlimited, the love of God.'<sup>19</sup>

The principle of love also motivated Scott's educational pursuits. All men and women, without exception, should have an equal opportunity of education. And thus Scott worked for the education of neglected groups in society, for women, for Woolwich dockyard labourers, for Manchester and London workers, and for religious dissenters. Scott hoped that a universal system of education would improve the working class socio-political situation and overcome the barriers of class distinction, but more than that he hoped that through education people would become something higher and better than what they are. Scott's philosophy of education envisaged the nurturing of moral beauty, or love, in addition to intellectual capacity; a true system of education would create in students a spirit of self-sacrifice. Most important of all, a universal system of education was to be pursued because of the God-relatedness of all

<sup>17</sup>A.J. Scott, Christian Statesmen (Manchester, 1856), p.4.

<sup>18</sup>A.J. Scott, The Social Systems of the Present Day, Compared with Christianity (London, 1841), p.346.

<sup>19</sup>Scott, 'Social Systems of the Present Day', The Woolwich Gazette, 2 January 1841.

knowledge. All are to be educated, for to understand the laws of God's reality in any of its departments is to come to a greater knowledge of the Creator.

#### 4) The Principle of God's Immanence

Scott's Incarnation-focus, in addition to leading him to a belief in god's universal love, led him to affirm God's immanence in humanity. 'The Incarnation, if it mean anything at all,' said Scott in 1838, 'is a coming closer to man, a bringing the Divinity and humanity nearer to one another, a making the divine not to be present, beside the human merely, but in the human; a making the human to be divine by being entirely penetrated with the light of God. Such is it in the person of Christ Jesus, the Lord, and as the foundation of a new series of God's dealings with mankind, we should expect that the principle manifested in his person should be characteristic of the whole dispensation.'<sup>20</sup> The Spirit of God works in the spirit of man by entering into union with humanity. 'What is most human becomes the most divine: what is most divine, the most human.'<sup>21</sup> God has come into 'the dearest nearness' with all that concerns humanity. The Infinite is 'consubstantiated with the human.'<sup>22</sup> This, said Scott, is the value of the bodies of men, the looks of human countenances, the tones of human voices:

I believe, that all these ultimately are so many means, through which God is expressing himself to man, and man may express himself to God. I believe, that the man who wishes for symbols and for characters, in which a correspondence with heaven may be carried on, need nowhere and at no time be at any loss.<sup>23</sup>

God is immanent, said Scott, not only in humanity but in the whole created order. The aim of the entire universe is to reveal God, to communicate the Father's spirit to man's spirit. God wears an expressive look in creation for the soul of man to see and feel. Nature has an infinite depth; there is in it the divine Presence

<sup>20</sup>Scott, Lectures on the Epistle to the Romans, p.27.

<sup>21</sup>A.J. Scott, Two Discourses (Cambridge, 1848), p.33.

<sup>22</sup>Scott, 'Social Systems of the Present Day', The Woolwich Gazette, 2 January 1841.

<sup>23</sup>Scott, 'On Schism', Lecture I, p.511.

communicating itself to man. Humanity, said Scott, 'holds manifold communion with a mind uttering itself in all surrounding nature.'<sup>24</sup> In the stormy sea, in the manifold colouring of the mysterious light disappearing in the west, or in the musical roar of a great forest, God is speaking to us. 'The harp that has been found melodious here, is one whose strings are the constituents of the created universe; and the finger that moves across them, what other is it than the finger of the Creator Himself?'<sup>25</sup>

Scott's belief in God's immanence powerfully influenced his approach to science, philosophy and literature. To learn the laws governing any aspect of reality is to become acquainted with the ideas of the Creator Himself. Scott's conviction that a knowledge of the Almighty is implanted in the created universe clearly coloured his approach to scientific discovery, each discovery being a witness to God's mind. In philosophy he was attracted to the contemplative minds of men like Erigena and Anselm who discerned in all things the presence of the Supreme. The ultimate object of historical study for Scott was to trace in all history the presence of the immanent presiding Spirit, who in no land or time has been without a witness. And the truest literature, he believed, points to 'the greatness that lies beneath common life.'<sup>26</sup> The great poet, said Scott, is the one who through his poetical utterance suggests 'that soul-loftiness which looks out from the works of nature.'<sup>27</sup>

##### 5) The Principle of Life

Scott's life and thought was characterised by a desire for that which is living and dynamic. This characteristic was nurtured in him at the earliest stage by his father's theological emphasis on the Spirit, and by the living, heartfelt quality of his family's faith. Scott's own Spirit emphasis began to appear in the middle

<sup>24</sup> Scott, 'Introductory Discourse on Revelation', Lectures on the Epistle to the Romans, p.3.

<sup>25</sup> A.J. Scott, 'Two Lectures on Poetry and Fiction', The Monthly Literary and Scientific Lecturer vol 4 (Manchester, 1853), p.98.

<sup>26</sup> A.J. Scott, Suggestions on Female Education (London, 1849), p.32.

<sup>27</sup> A.J. Scott, 'Inaugural Lecture at the Mechanics' Institution Exhibition', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 16 December 1856.

1820s, and in his first publication in 1829 Scott concentrated on the experiential and Spirit-inspired nature of Luther's religion. This, he said, rather than Luther's emphasis on Scripture, was the 'energetic' reforming principle: 'One living man with the Spirit dwelling in him and speaking by him, who exercises faith and prayer for his fellow-men, is more to a country than thousands of Bibles.'<sup>28</sup> The 1829 publication set the tone for Scott's theology of life. It was the thirst for the dynamic that attracted him to the vitality of the early Church, one element of that life being its charismatic gifts. The charismata of the early Church, thought Scott, signified the life of the body; they demonstrated the living presence of the God who had incarnated Himself in the Church's humanity, and thus the charismata were to be sought by the modern Church. The pentecostalist events of the early 1830s, however, Scott rejected, not believing these particular manifestations to be signs of the divine life within. In spite of his disagreement with the charismatics, Scott continued to preach a theology of the Spirit, focussing now exclusively on what had always been central, the life-giving Spirit of God.

The principle of life also characterised Scott's doctrine of ordination. Only a real and living spiritual authority in men was Scott prepared to recognise as a true ordination of God. This dynamic ordination of the Spirit bears no necessary relation to the external ordinance of the Church. An ecclesiastical institution, argued Scott before the General Assembly of 1831, cannot, by the laying on of hands, effect a real spiritual authority in men. The Spirit alone it is that ordains; the Church is merely to recognise the living ordination of God. Scott's early doctrine of ordination was analogous to his general understanding of the Church and its sacraments. Only where the life of God has incarnated itself in the lives of men and women does the body of Christ exist. It is the spiritual life among them, and not a God-chosen external system of ordinances, which organises the members into one living body. And thus Scott in his disagreement with Irving was led to contend that life organises rather than organisation producing life.

<sup>28</sup> A.J. Scott, 'Answer to the Question, What was the Reformation?' The Morning Watch vol 1 (London, 1829), p.635.

Similarly Scott maintained against Maurice that it is only those who evidence in their lives the life of God's Spirit, and not the ecclesiastically baptised, who could be said to be living members of the Body, indwelt by Christ's Spirit. Against the Anglo-Catholics in particular, Scott asserted that it is not an external apostolic succession, or the preservation of long-standing outward structures and ordinances, that will preserve the continuation of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, but a continuous dependence upon its only principle of life, the Spirit of God. The Church's living succession from age to age will continue only 'by the vigour of the essential principles of her life, dropping off forms no longer useful, as the oak has done the leaves of last summer. The live oak abides the same by its vitality, while it changes form and dimensions by growth: the mass of squared timber has lost its power of assimilation, its command of resources; death enables it to remain unchanged in form till death brings decay that changes form and substance. What is dead is changed from without; what lives changes from within.'<sup>29</sup> Just as Scott had criticised High Church theologians for identifying the ecclesiastically ordained priest with the Spirit ordained individual, he accused them of confusing the Church ordained kingdom with Christ's kingdom. The forces which truly belong to Christ's kingdom, said Scott, are not those christened by the Church but rather those 'impregnated and actuated by the vital spirit of God.'<sup>30</sup>

The principle of life penetrated nearly every facet of Scott's thought. History was for him 'a living thing.'<sup>31</sup> The historian was involved in a search for 'the common life of humanity vivifying the special details and circumstances of a time.'<sup>32</sup> The historical method allowed one 'to detect the living fibre' connecting the

<sup>29</sup>A.J. Scott, The First Principle of Church Government (London, 1845), p.50.

<sup>30</sup>Scott, 'Social Systems of the Present Day', The Woolwich Gazette, 19 December 1840.

<sup>31</sup>P. Macallum, Recollections of Professor A.J. Scott (Greenock, 1878), p.5.

<sup>32</sup>A.J. Scott, 'On the Study of History', The Woolwich Gazette 27 February 1841.

events of the past.<sup>33</sup> In scientific study Scott contended that the pure principles of science were prolific; they were living roots capable of producing the flower and fruit of applied science. And the teacher of any subject was to communicate not merely the facts but the fresh life and spirit of his study. His knowledge was to be 'a garden of living plants, putting forth fruits in their seasons, changing their aspects as they grow.'<sup>34</sup> Poetry was for Scott a Wordsworthian 'spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling.' In music he was attracted to Chopin, the improvisatory composer-pianist, and in theology to Anselm's living contemplation before God, 'a real dealing with the spiritual object not a mere thinking about it in its absence.'<sup>35</sup> 'That man, that book that has some life of God to show,' said Scott, 'has some light to show too. He who has not, has none.'<sup>36</sup>

The principle of life also evidenced itself, to a marked degree, in Scott's own being. He was once described as 'catching his freshness from archangel's wing.'<sup>37</sup> 'There was an exuberance of living, instant thought' in the man. 'His words partook somewhat of the fine confusion of immediate, formative life.'<sup>38</sup> His influence was nearly always personal, writing his records not in books, said Baldwin Brown, but in the lives of his friends and disciples. He was a man who spoke immediately and extemporaneously to other men. 'There is always much more conveyed out of one mind into another, when it is the utterance of the real living speech,' said Scott, 'the confession of the thoughts, as they arise in the mind of him who speaks.'<sup>39</sup>

<sup>33</sup>A.J. Scott, 'The History of the Middle Ages', The Manchester Examiner and Times, 30 November 1853.

<sup>34</sup>A.J. Scott, 'Lecture on University Education', British Eloquence of the Nineteenth Century (London, 1855), p.233.

<sup>35</sup>A.J. Scott, The Literature and Philosophy of the Middle Ages (Edinburgh, 1857), p.89.

<sup>36</sup>Scott, 'On Schism', Lecture I, p.512.

<sup>37</sup>G. Harwood in 'A Few Reminiscences and Conclusions', Owens College Jubilee (Manchester, 1901), p.44, applied to Scott Keats' saying about Wordsworth.

<sup>38</sup>'The Late Professor A.J. Scott', The Scotsman, 19 January 1866.

<sup>39</sup>Scott, Social Systems of the Present Day, p.376.

6) The Principle of Unity

Scott believed that 'the human mind in its researches into truth, was led, from its very constitution, to look for unity of purpose throughout all creation.'<sup>40</sup> Scott's search for unity in and between every field of reality was one of the most distinguishing aspects of his thought. The search for unity is the true method of discovery and advance in all knowledge. 'To understand,' he said, 'is to find a unity.'<sup>41</sup> This method urges us to look for unity in diverse appearance, and 'calls into exercise the power of systematising, of comprehending multifarious particulars in an orderly organic whole.'<sup>42</sup> Scott feared that scientists too often become overly analytical, forgetting that all the parts combine to form a living whole. If, however, scientists continued the search for unity, which characterised much of the best scientific research of his day, Scott believed that eventually there would be discovered a unity pervading all the physical sciences. And if men consistently sought unity in all fields they would be led to seek the living source of all unity, 'the highest unity which man could discover, - the unity of the mind of the Author.'<sup>43</sup>

Scott, throughout most of his life, moved from theology to poetry to philosophy to science to socio-political thought, back and forth again and again, but 'he never lost sight of the relation of each department to the great whole.'<sup>44</sup> In none of these was Christianity excluded, for God was to him 'the Being on which all being rests, the Intelligence according to which all things have their law,' and 'the illumination by which each thing is beheld.'<sup>45</sup> 'I know not,' he said, 'with what religion has nothing to do.'<sup>46</sup> Scott was especially concerned, at a time when science was threatening

<sup>40</sup> A.J. Scott, 'A Lecture on Unity', The Woolwich Gazette, 25 July 1840.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Scott, Suggestions on Female Education, p.47.

<sup>43</sup> Scott, 'A Lecture on Unity', The Woolwich Gazette, 25 July 1840.

<sup>44</sup> Hanna, Letters of Erskine II, p.186.

<sup>45</sup> Scott, Two Discourses, p.36.

<sup>46</sup> Scott, Social Systems of the Present Day, p.336.

many religious minds, to hold together religious and scientific knowledge. 'If there is one God,' he said in his Woolwich lectures on the harmony of science and religion, 'there can be but one source of truth.'<sup>47</sup> There is no incompatibility between true religion and true science. Scott was particularly critical of the Anglo-Catholic disregard for the physical sciences, and always encouraged his hearers to ally themselves with all truth. 'Be assured,' he said, 'there is a harmony in all truth, a mutual dependence. All its lines converge. There is a point, in which meeting, they lean one upon another; and he who will try to do without any of them will find that the rest must suffer.'<sup>48</sup>

Scott sought a living unity within the individual man. 'The highest type of mind,' he said, 'is that which, like Wordsworth's cloud, "moveth altogether if it move at all."<sup>49</sup> There is also to be harmony between 'the intellect and the affections, 'the heart in the head, the head in the heart - the equipoise of the soul.'<sup>50</sup> Poetry he saw as one of man's highest pursuits because it was the harmonious exercise of all the spiritual faculties. In his thoughts on education, uttered in London and Manchester, Scott emphasised the harmonious exercise of man's God-given faculties. Education is designed to make a person more whole and entire, nurturing a unity between the spiritual and the material, the imagination and the intellect, the mind and the affections. Furthermore we are to harmonise our minds and lives with the truth of God's world. To be of the Kingdom of Truth, he said, is to be, in one's life and thoughts, consistent with the reality of things.

The principle of unity also extended into Scott's understanding of man's social relationships. He believed that Christ had revealed the true principles of social unity. Only the spiritual principles of Christ's Kingdom were capable of overcoming the greatest obstruction to a united society, man's individual and corporate

<sup>47</sup> A.J. Scott, 'Lectures on the Harmony of Natural and Revealed Truth', The Woolwich Gazette, 12 September 1840.

<sup>48</sup> Scott, Social Systems of the Present Day, p.376.

<sup>49</sup> Scott, Suggestions on Female Education, p.64.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid. p.62.



selfishness. On the basis of this conviction, Scott, with the other Christian Socialists, was led, at a time when 'cooperation' carried dark and revolutionary connotations, to advocate a system of cooperation as opposed to competition. He believed that the spiritual principles of Christianity incarnated in society were producing 'a gradual dawning of that day, when the kingdoms of this world should become the Kingdoms of our God and his Christ.'<sup>51</sup>

Scott also desired, from a very early stage, the unity of the Church. He criticised the majority of Dissenters and Evangelicals for not even desiring unity, and, while he applauded the Anglo-Catholic desire for unity, felt that a unity based upon an external ecclesiasticism was not a real oneness. Christian unity, he said, is at its centre spiritual, for it is, in the first place, a unity with God. The unity of the Christian Church, like Christ's oneness with the Father, is 'the most inward of all unity; the most spiritual of all unity; the unity that works outwardly into all the various manifestations of the visible creation; the unity, that is not a unity at the branches at all, but a unity only at the root; the unity of the Godhead itself!'<sup>52</sup> The Church's unity is not achieved by bringing people under the same roof, by making them repeat the same creed, or by making them recognise the same external government. Rather, the real unity of the body of Christ is constituted by the Spirit, just as the unity of the natural body is constituted by the principle of life. It is a real unity because there is a common life pervading the whole mass. The vital Spirit of Christ organises men into one living body. It is, said Scott, a 'unity by life.'<sup>53</sup>

Even greater than the unity of the Church or of society is the unity of humanity. If others 'will be Roman Catholics or Anglo-Catholics,' said Scott, 'be you Human Catholics.'<sup>54</sup> This emphasis was directly related to Scott's theology of universal atonement and man's universal brotherhood in Christ. At another level, however,

<sup>51</sup> Scott, 'Social Systems of the Present Day', The Woolwich Gazette, 5 December 1840.

<sup>52</sup> Scott, Social Systems of the Present Day, p.369.

<sup>53</sup> Scott, 'On Schism' Lecture II, p.549.

<sup>54</sup> Scott, Social Systems of the Present Day, p.375.

Scott sought to develop the unity of humanity through the extension of education. A nation's provision for academic study is its provision for commerce with past ages and remote peoples, 'whose imports are so essential to all the uses of life, and make a nation truly a member of the great community of mankind; without which, indeed, it is stranded and islanded in time, and shut up to a narrowness of resources.'<sup>55</sup> The study of history nurtures a oneness with humanity of the past. The historian preserves the continuity of the human race, saving an age from being and feeling as if none had preceded it. Literary study brings us into communion with some of the loftiest minds of humanity, both past and present. The true poet, said Scott, is a man who evidences this desire for the unity of humanity. Shakespeare, Coleridge and Wordsworth, were among English poets the most capable of entering into 'the general soul of humanity.'<sup>56</sup> They witnessed for the community and the brotherhood of all men, both past and present, and uttered a catholic humanity.

The highest of all unities for Scott was the unity of man with God. The desire for this unity penetrated his entire theology as well as his educational, literary, philosophical, and socio-political pursuits. The man divorced from God, he said, is 'out of harmony with the universal and ruling system of things. In this way he is out of harmony with all that remains under that presiding system.'<sup>57</sup> Redemption, therefore, is the overcoming of all disunity in God's reality. 'The sum of the whole matter is this,' said Scott, 'that thus to unite the spiritual being, the existence of God, with the earthy or temporal being is the highest work for man to do from year to year, from month to month, from hour to hour - to combine earth and heaven, time and eternity, is the highest work that man can do.'<sup>58</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Scott, 'Lecture on University Education', British Eloquence of the Nineteenth Century, p.225.

<sup>56</sup> Scott, 'Two Lectures on Poetry and Fiction', The Monthly Literary and Scientific Lecturer vol 4, p.115.

<sup>57</sup> Scott, 'On Schism' Lecture I, p.505.

<sup>58</sup> Scott, 'Lectures on the Harmony of Natural and Revealed Truth', The Woolwich Gazette, 12 September 1840.

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