

High or Low? Writing the Irish Reformation in the Early Nineteenth Century

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Abstract

The Irish Reformation is a contentious issue, not just between Catholic and Protestant, but also within the Protestant churches, as competing Presbyterian and Anglican claims are made over the history of the Irish reformation. This chapter looks at the way in which James Seaton Reid (1798–1851), laid claim to the Reformation for Irish Dissent in his *History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland*. It then examines the rival Anglican histories by two High Churchmen: Richard Mant (1775–1848), Bishop of Down and Connor; and Charles Elrington (1787–1850), the Regius Professor of Divinity in Trinity College, Dublin. It is clear that, in each case, theological and denominational conviction decisively shaped their history writing. Equally, however, significant advances were made by all three scholars in unearthing important new primary sources, and in identifying key points of controversy and debate which still represent a challenge to ecclesiastical historians, of whatever denomination or none, today.

Key words: Irish history; Reformation; nineteenth century; Presbyterian; Church of Ireland; High Church; historiography

The Reformation was in many ways an embarrassment for Irish Protestant historians. What was portrayed by other reformed churches in triumphal terms – as the shining light of the Protestant gospel sweeping aside anti-Christian darkness – simply did not fit the facts. Catholic opponents focused upon three obvious advantages: the direct line of succession that they could claim from St Patrick; the deep loyalty of Irish Christians to the papacy; and God’s providential judgement – the inescapable fact that, in simple mathematical terms, there were vastly more Catholics than Protestants. Protestant historians responded as best they could. They constructed a pre-Reformation narrative which, by emphasizing the non-Roman, Celtic purity of the early Irish church, sought to negate the first two Catholic advantages. A ‘Protestant’ Celtic church was portrayed as giving way in the later middle ages to papally inspired decay, providing a suitably corrupt institution on which the reformers could get to work. James Ussher provided the *ur-text* here, with his *Discourse on the religion anciently professed by the Irish*, that set out to show, in the words of the title of the 1739 edition, that the religion professed by the ancient Irish was ‘the same in substance with that which is now established by public authority in Ireland’.¹

But the story broke down at the Reformation. Where Luther could joke that he and Melanchthon had simply sat and drunk beer as the gospel carried all before it, Irish Protestants saw no such easy or miraculous transformation – providence did not seem to be working. There was, as a result, no Irish equivalent to Foxe’s *Acts and monuments*, tracing the story of the gospel from the early church down to the

inevitable success of the Reformation and beyond. The events of the Reformation were, it is true, included in the standard seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Irish histories by Richard Cox and Thomas Leland, but this Reformation was mainly about acts of state and their lack of effect.² Interest in ecclesiastical history was instead focused resolutely upon refighting Ussher's battle over ownership of the more glorious Celtic period.³ As late as 1834, a reviewer in *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine* could lament that the Protestant church in Ireland 'has hitherto been without a historian', leaving a 'chasm in the ecclesiastical history of the Empire'.⁴

The problem of the Reformation did not, however, go away. Indeed, as the nineteenth century progressed, it loomed increasingly large in historical and contemporary discussions and controversies. This was partly a result of the broader ecclesio-political situation in which Protestants found themselves. As Catholics pushed for, and secured, emancipation from the penal laws, they turned their attention to the anomalous position of the established church, and its claims to be the Church 'of Ireland', holding by right of succession the cathedrals and parish churches, despite the fact that they provided no pastoral care for the vast majority of the Irish population. As the Whigs in England responded to the Catholic case, the privileged position of the Church of Ireland came under increasing pressure. The Irish Church Temporalities Act of 1833 was but the first of a series of measures that attempted to remedy the mismatch between claims and reality, by slimming down the episcopate, removing the right to tithes, and finally, in 1870, disestablishing the Church. Given that the Reformation was the primary legal and historical justification for these claims, it is unsurprising that the nineteenth century saw a new interest in its history, beginning with detailed accounts of the Presbyterian and established churches in 1833 and 1840, and culminating at the time of disestablishment with an extensive controversy between Catholics and Protestants over the episcopal succession in the sixteenth century.⁵

The Reformation also gained a new contemporary currency as a result of the efforts of to resuscitate it. Refusing to accept that the Reformation had failed, Archbishop William Magee, in his famous 1822 charge to the clergy of Dublin, launched what came to be called the new or second Reformation. Magee criticized the Catholics as 'possessing a church, without what *we* can properly call a religion, and also condemned the Presbyterians as 'possessing a religion, without what *we* can properly call a church'. He then tried to reclaim for his church the moral high ground: the Church of Ireland must defend its claim to the 'apostolic origin and succession of the Christian ministry' by going out and evangelizing and proclaiming the truth of the gospel to the whole Irish population.⁶

Unsurprisingly, the second Reformation inaugurated a new era of sectarian bitterness between Protestants and Catholics, and this has generally been the focus of historical examination.⁷ But, as far as Protestant historiography was concerned, Magee's highlighting of internal, intra-Protestant differences was much more significant. In Ireland as elsewhere, each Protestant church or sect, or even specific groups within particular churches, had their way of telling the story of the Reformation so that it legitimized their own ecclesiological and theological

preferences. For Presbyterians, the Reformation was about restoring the church to its early non-hierarchical simplicity, with a system of discipline founded on the Bible (as interpreted by Calvin) and evangelical ministers zealously tending to their flocks, supported but unmolested by the civil power. For the Church of Ireland, on the other hand, the Reformation confirmed the commitment to episcopal government and the essential link between church and state. But even within the established church there were markedly differing emphases when it came to the study of the Reformation. Those members with High Church inclinations laid particular stress upon the way in which the succession of bishops had been preserved, allowing the church to trace its ministry back to its apostolic origins, and praised the Thirty-Nine Articles for their judicious doctrinal placing of Anglicanism and the Church of Ireland between the Scylla of Catholic Rome and the Charybdis of Presbyterian Geneva. But those of a more evangelical bent were less concerned with the apostolic succession and more interested in the theological issues which both separated them from the Church of Rome and joined them to the wider Protestant community in Ireland. Naturally, each group sought to stake its claim to 'ownership' of the Reformation by engaging in detailed historical research which, equally naturally, demonstrated that the early Irish reformers' theology and ecclesiology were identical to their own.

The first to respond to this challenge was a Presbyterian historian, James Seaton Reid. Born in Lurgan in 1798, Reid was educated at Glasgow University, gaining his MA in 1816 before returning to serve as a minister in Ulster. There he rose to prominence both as a leading figure in the church, serving as Moderator of the General Synod, and as a historian, publishing a preliminary sketch in 1828 and then in 1834 the first of three volumes on the history of the Presbyterian church in Ireland.⁸ He ended his life as Professor of Ecclesiastical and Civil History in the University of Glasgow (1841–51).⁹ Reid's work had two key strengths. The first, its scholarly precision and rootedness in the primary sources, has ensured its continuing popularity with historians. Reid was thorough in locating and in, many cases, editing and publishing essential manuscript records, using his time as a minister in Ulster to amass local documents, and travelling to archives and libraries in Ireland, Scotland and England to widen his search.¹⁰ The second, the Whig narrative that he built on this sure foundation, ensured its contemporary popularity. Across his three volumes Reid told a compelling story of how the Presbyterians in Ulster had played a key role over the centuries in opposing the threats to religious freedom and civil liberty posed by prelacy and popery, and had helped sustain the special position of Protestantism in northern Ireland.¹¹

Reid's first volume was largely dedicated to the origins of Irish Presbyterianism. But it had a strange structure. He did not start by tracing the roots of Irish Presbyterianism to their obvious source – the arrival of the Scottish army in Ireland in 1642 and the establishment of the first formal presbytery in Ulster. This event was not reached until page 371. Rather, Chapter 1 began with the accession of James I and the arrival of Scottish clergy after 1609, as part of the Ulster plantation.¹² And he further prefaced this first chapter with a 'Preliminary sketch of the

progress of the reformed religion in Ireland during the sixteenth century' that helped to create the impression that Presbyterianism had grown naturally out of the sixteenth-century Reformation, indeed, out of the early Celtic church itself.¹³

Reid's view of the sixteenth-century Reformation was not flattering: on the one hand the people of Ireland were sunk in superstitious ignorance, in thrall to a corrupt and exploitative papacy; on the other hand, the weakness of the Dublin government, and the lack of evangelical zeal on the part of its untrained ministers ensured that the Reformation made little real progress.¹⁴ As far as Reid was concerned, church, state and papacy were almost equally culpable in ensuring that by the end of Elizabeth's reign 'the grossest darkness continued to cover the land'.¹⁵ It was not until the reign of James I that a truly evangelical Protestant church began to develop, capable of preaching the Protestant gospel, thanks to the training of clergy at Trinity College and the willingness of the authorities to accept immigrant clergy to serve in the Church of Ireland. This latter policy was greatly aided by the fact that 'the distinction between conformists and non-conformists, which had already been carried to so great an extent in England, was at this period happily unknown in Ireland'.¹⁶ No other measure, Reid judged, 'would have ever brought the Protestant church to any degree of stability in Ireland'.¹⁷ It ensured that Trinity could attract Presbyterian fellows from Scotland and puritan leaders from Cambridge who could train the first generation of Protestant clergy.¹⁸

The other development which transformed the Protestant church was, of course, the plantation in Ulster, with which Reid begins his next, 'first' chapter, the formal start of the 'History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland'. Reid praises the vision of James in making the dissemination of the reformed faith one of the aims of the plantation and in ensuring the Ulster church was adequately endowed.¹⁹ As a result of these steps the Irish church was finally staffed by Protestant prelates, and was able to hold its first convocation and agree a comprehensive confession – the Irish Articles of 1615. These were seen by Reid as a distinctive product of this new church, formally tolerating, in a way which the Church of England did not, the views of puritans and Calvinists.²⁰ Reid pointed to a number of inclusions – the predestinarian Lambeth Articles, the identification of the pope as Antichrist, the condemnation of the doctrine of absolution – and omissions – reference to Lent, consecration of bishops, and a method of enforcing adherence to the articles – which helped define and confirm the Calvinist outlook of the Church of Ireland. Consequently, many committed Nonconformist clergy from England and Scotland felt that they could happily settle in Ireland, especially in the new plantation in Ulster.²¹ Amongst these were a number of mainly Scots ministers who helped to create a religious revival around Six Mile Water in Antrim, which Reid, with justification, portrays as the first example of popular evangelical Protestantism in Ireland.²²

These clergy were seen by Reid as 'the founders of the Presbyterian church' in Ulster.²³ But, as he details their life and labours, it becomes apparent that they all served under Scottish and English bishops within the Church of Ireland: Presbyterianism in Ireland, in other words, was initially encompassed within the

established church.²⁴ The contrast with the Church of England was obvious – there Presbyterians had been driven out by the star chamber prosecutions of 1590 and the disciplinary canons of 1604, and had had to wait in obscurity until they made a new bid for power after 1640.²⁵ The pattern was notably illustrated by the career of Walter Travers. One of the leaders of the English Presbyterian movement, and the *bête noire* of Archbishop Whitgift who had expelled him from Cambridge University, Travers could flee to Ireland after 1590 and serve as Provost of the newly founded Trinity College before returning to England in 1598: but there he found no further employment, and died in 1635 after a long retirement.²⁶ There are two different ways of interpreting this rather startling difference between the two kingdoms. It can be seen as a pragmatic solution to the pressing problem of securing preaching ministers for impoverished and newly settled parishes; alternatively (or in addition), it can be viewed as a more principled compromise between episcopacy and Presbyterianism – a kind of Protestant broad church which was the distinctive contribution of the early Church of Ireland to the ecclesiology of these islands, later summarized by Archbishop Ussher in his posthumously published *The reduction of episcopacy unto the form of synodical government*.²⁷

This tolerance also extended to those clergy who fled to Ireland from Scotland. Reid gave a detailed account of how Robert Blair, the leader of the Scottish clergy in Ulster, came to serve within the Church of Ireland. Unhappy at the imposition of episcopacy in Scotland he sought greater freedom in the new plantation. According to Blair's own account of his dealings with Bishop Echlin of Down and Connor, the latter, when faced with the conflict between Blair's desire to serve in the established church and his reluctance to be ordained by a bishop, sidestepped the issue by agreeing to join with other Presbyterian clergy in laying their hands on Blair in 1623. As far as Echlin was concerned he had personally, as a bishop, ordained Blair; as Blair saw it, he had been ordained by Echlin acting simply as one of a number of presbyters.²⁸ Blair's second encounter with episcopacy four years later was, again according to his own version, similarly accommodating. He met with Archbishop Ussher twice, first with other Ulster nobles and clergy when Blair had been put off by the use of the Prayer Book. Ussher, seeing his unease, had suggested that he come to his residence in Drogheda for a private conversation. At the second encounter, they conversed amicably, according to Blair, agreeing on matters doctrinal and agreeing to differ on ceremonies. Ussher had told Blair that, whilst he did not wish to move against the Presbyterian clergy in the Church of Ireland, there were others who would – an approach which earned the Primate a glowing encomium from Reid as a model of episcopalian gentleness.²⁹

Whether viewed as a product of pragmatism and laziness on the part of the established church, or as the result of a more principled compromise between episcopacy and Presbyterianism, this Ulster experiment was cut short by the arrival in 1633 of the new Lord Deputy, Thomas Wentworth, who, with the help of his chief ecclesiastical adviser, John Bramhall, Bishop of Derry, set about imposing English standards of conformity. Reid saw this as a turning point in the Church of Ireland, when 'learned and tolerant' ministers were replaced by 'violent' men 'of Arminian

and intolerant principles'.³⁰ He recorded in detail the replacement of the Irish by the Thirty-Nine English articles and the writing of new and stricter disciplinary canons in the 1634 Convocation, which were followed by the expulsion of the Presbyterian clergy from the Church of Ireland ministry.³¹ He also traced a similar cleansing of Trinity College, as Laud and Wentworth replaced the 'leaven of puritanism' with their preferred leaders, including the 'violent Arminian', William Chappell, who succeeded Robert Ussher as provost in 1634.³² Reid's preliminary account of the 'reformed church' thus completed, he then switches to the creation of a separate Presbyterian church in Ireland, which began with the arrival of the Scottish army in Ulster in 1642.

There was a certain unresolved tension in the way that Reid interpreted the origins of Irish Presbyterianism. In the preliminary material, he traces the Irish roots of a reformed church, back even to Celtic times, and shows how the post-Reformation Church of Ireland had initially been broader and more inclusive than its English sister. As a result, the Presbyterian and Anglican churches in Ulster grew up together, not separating until Wentworth sundered them in the mid-1630s. This could easily have been interpreted as the birth of Irish dissent, as a minority of Nonconformists were forced out of the established church, just as in England. But Reid was unwilling to settle for this: he wished to emphasize not the Irish but the Scottish roots of Irish Presbyterianism so that the Irish church could claim a similar established status to its Scottish mother, hence his hostile reaction to those who applied the term dissenters to his fellow religionists as if they were a breakaway minority. This might, he conceded, be true for the scattered post-1642 Presbyterian congregations in the south of the country. 'But in the north, where our number is considerably over half a million, there is little or no resemblance': in Ulster they had established a proper system of Presbyterian governance, modelled on the Scottish church, and their status was recognized by the government with its grant of the *regium donum*.³³ Reid, in short, wanted to have it both ways: clear Irish roots, but with the benefits of the parallel with Presbyterianism in Scotland.³⁴

Reid also painted a picture of the early Irish Reformation which emphasized Irish Protestant unity, and contrasted this unfavourably with what had happened in England. Protestant solidarity in the face of the overwhelming nature of the Catholic threat not only made pragmatic sense, it had a powerful emotional appeal across all Protestant denominations, including the Church of Ireland.³⁵ *The Christian Examiner*, founded in 1825 by two leading Church of Ireland evangelicals, Caesar Otway and Joseph Singer, contained in its early issues a number of historical sketches. These included an account of Ussher's career which emphasized his anti-Catholic credentials, and treatments of the Reformation that stressed the advantages of Irish Protestant unity.³⁶ With regard to the latter, *The Christian Examiner* noted that relations between established church and dissenters in Ireland were good, with none of the deep-seated hostility which persistent persecution had caused in England.³⁷ Writing well before Reid, it pointed to the way the Ulster Scots settlers and their clergy had been incorporated into the Church of Ireland in

the early seventeenth century through the Irish Articles of 1615, and regretted their deprivation by Wentworth and Bramhall.³⁸

Reid's work received a positive reception in England and Scotland. The history 'deserves very high praise', according to *The Gentleman's Magazine*.³⁹ The *Monthly Review* called him 'a historian of no mean order', whose 'researches have been extensive and careful, his statements in relation to facts are to be praised for their fairness, and his narrative is everywhere not merely plain, interesting, but (excepting where polemics and the merits of religious tenets are discussed,) convincing'.⁴⁰ More pertinent from our point of view, however, was the response Reid evoked in the Church of Ireland. *The Christian Examiner*, in a lengthy and positive review, found common ground with Reid's demonstration of the barbarous and disastrous impact of popery. While the reviewer doubted whether the world would ever see an impartial account of Irish history, Reid's work represented an important step forward: 'we know of no History of Ireland that exhibits so much research – so much industry, combined with good temper and sound Christian views, as the volume before us'.⁴¹ Reid provided not only Irish Presbyterians, but also the overwhelmingly evangelical Church of Ireland with an account of its origins which fitted its self-image as a bulwark of reformed Protestantism. Given the evangelical reluctance to engage with historical scholarship, he was filling an important gap.⁴² But, while an evangelical reader could identify with Reid's portrait of the early seventeenth-century church as broadly based and inclusive, those with a higher conception of the church found it far less acceptable. And, in Ireland as in England, it was the Tractarians who generally showed the most interest in church history. Hence the task of responding to Reid's challenge by writing a similar history of the Church of Ireland was taken up by two of its leading High Churchmen, Richard Mant and Charles Elrington.⁴³

High Churchmanship in Ireland was a strange beast: there had always been a minority of Protestants whose ecclesiology differed from their instinctively Low Church colleagues. John Jebb, bishop of Limerick from 1822 to 1833, and his friend, the Irish civil servant and theologian, Alexander Knox (1757–1831), were important figures in pre-Tractarian High Church tradition in England as well as Ireland. Ireland served as an important catalyst for the launch of the Oxford Movement – Newman and his friends were much exercised in 1833 by the plans to reduce the number of Irish bishoprics. And, as Peter Nockles has shown, there were close ties between the Tractarians and Irish clergy. Charles Elrington (1787–1850), the High Church son of a High Church bishop, who served for twenty years as Regius Professor of Divinity in Trinity College, Dublin, welcomed the *Tracts* for 'bringing forward many invaluable principles of our church, which had almost fallen into oblivion'.⁴⁴ Another distinguished Irish scholar, W.G. Todd, engaged in a sympathetic correspondence with Newman, and clearly shared many of his concerns and principles.⁴⁵ But the strong Irish Protestant hostility towards the Catholic church meant that few Irish sympathizers were tempted to follow Newman and others in their movement towards Rome. Thus Richard Mant, the English-born Bishop of Down and Connor, where he served as bishop from 1823 until his death in 1848,

even though he publicly dissociated himself from the Oxford Movement, was nevertheless regularly denounced and abused by Irish evangelicals as a Tractarian.⁴⁶

The intensity of the Irish Protestant relationship to history meant that clergy such as Elrington and Mant differed from their English counterparts in the way they viewed the past. English Tractarians were unhappy at the way in which Irish High Churchmen were willing to embrace state interference in the church, anti-Catholicism, or the Williamite succession, all seen as existential necessities within the Church of Ireland.⁴⁷ Nor was the Oxford Movement's re-evaluation of the Reformation – which in the (albeit somewhat extreme) case of Hurrell Froude, led to the rejection of the Reformation as a 'limb badly set' and the Reformers as little better than Nonconformists – something which would naturally endear them to their Irish sympathizers.⁴⁸

Indeed, one of the distinguishing features of High Churchmen in Ireland was their interest in Irish Reformation and church history.⁴⁹ Mant and Elrington led the way, with the former publishing in 1840 a lengthy two-volume (almost 1700 pages) account of the Church of Ireland's development from the Reformation to the Act of Union.⁵⁰ Like Reid, he used considerable scholarly and detective skills to piece together the scant printed sources with a number of manuscript discoveries and construct a chronological account. An unkind reviewer accused him of constructing 'an abridged and continued edition of the history of the Irish bishops by Ware and Harris', and it is certainly true that Mant relied heavily upon the annotated copy of Harris's edition of Ware's *Bishops* which he had found in Trinity College Dublin library, and that his narrative was not as coherent as Reid's.⁵¹ Nevertheless, as a first attempt it was, and remains, impressive. To Mant's biographer (in the *Dictionary of National Biography*), that redoubtable Nonconformist historian Alexander Gordon, the *History*, though at times it smacked of a 'Protestant pamphlet', could not have had 'a more judicious narrator'; Gordon's twentieth-century successor judged that the work 'still stands, more than a hundred and fifty years later, as a useful, if biased, account'.⁵²

It is of course, in that pamphleteering bias that our interest largely lies. Mant shared Reid's conviction that the Protestant church was derived from the pure Celtic church, before it declined into papal corruption. But his emphases were strikingly different. Mant sought to show how an independent 'National Church' of Ireland and its 'primitive and apostolical' form of episcopal government was descended from the Patrician bishops.⁵³ Both before and after the Reformation he stressed the role of the English state and sovereigns in furthering reform.⁵⁴ Naturally, he also took a starkly different view of the Ulster Scots clergy and their relationship to the Church of Ireland. One aspect of the plantation was, he said, 'deeply to be lamented' – the arrival of ministers who, following Calvin and Knox, preferred a 'studied affectation of a bare ... abstract and frigid simplicity in the service of God' to the apostolical form of church government by bishops and the liturgical mode of worship both of which had been transmitted from earliest Christianity.⁵⁵

For Mant, the Irish Reformation had, from the beginning, followed the English,

and he traced how the early Irish Reformation legislation had echoed that passed by Henry's English Reformation Parliament. The 1615 Irish Articles were therefore viewed as an aberration, a short-lived attempt to ingraft the doctrines of Calvin and the Lambeth Articles on to the profession of faith of the Irish Anglican church.⁵⁶ He criticized the Articles for their sabbatarianism, their identification of the papacy with Antichrist, and above all, their adoption of strict Calvinist predestinarianism.⁵⁷ James Ussher's involvement in drafting them he saw as a youthful folly, the result of him being

not yet weaned from the consequences which prevailed for some time after the Reformation, of studying divinity in the systems of modern divines, instead of learning the doctrines of true Christianity, and the real sense of Scripture ... by having recourse to the guidance of the primitive Church and the writings of the early fathers.⁵⁸

Unsurprisingly, Mant welcomed the replacement of the Irish by the Thirty-Nine Articles in 1634:

But by the blessing of Providence this evil was not permitted to be of long continuance: being obliterated in the succeeding reign by a recurrence of the 'Apostles' doctrine' concerning God's will in man's salvation, as avowed in the professions of the early Christians and perpetuated in the Articles of the Church of England.⁵⁹

Confirmation of the Church of Ireland's adherence to that other badge of Anglicanism, the prescribed liturgy, came in 1647 when, following the surrender of Dublin to the parliamentary commissioners, an order was issued to replace the Book of Common Prayer with the Directory. Dismissing the Directory as that 'meagre and latitudinarian code of instructions to the puritanical clergy', Mant related how the Dublin clergy sought to remain loyal to the Prayer Book, refusing to 'be weaned from the liturgy of the Church of England'.⁶⁰

The Church of England Quarterly Review gave a lengthy summary of Mant's book, praising him for having 'given the country a work which it had too long wanted'.⁶¹ Irish Protestants were not slow to apply the lessons they drew out of Mant's history to contemporary events. The Tory, High Church *Dublin University Magazine*, in a lengthy review, welcomed the book as 'a clear and elaborate digest of all that it is desirable to know upon that subject', and, pointing to the endurance of the Church of Ireland in the face of its sufferings since the Reformation – Catholic hostility, poverty, official indifference, lay depredation – sought to reassure fellow Protestants that they could survive similar contemporary threats.⁶² More generally, Mant offered the instinctively Tory Irish Protestants a narrative of close alliance with England and the Church of England with which they could easily identify.⁶³ To Presbyterians, though, his work was anathema. As the editor of Reid's *History* gently put it, 'Dr Mant was a bigot of the purest water'.⁶⁴

In 1847 Charles Elrington finally made his contribution to the history of the Church of Ireland with his 324-page life of James Ussher, the first volume of his collected works of Ussher. As with Mant and Reid, those other two monuments

of nineteenth-century Irish Protestant historiography, Elrington's major achievement was to collect and weave together the voluminous and scattered sources and create the first properly researched life of the primate. The challenge was considerable: it was the first of what turned out to be a 17-volume edition of Ussher's works – a considerable undertaking, covering both printed and manuscript sources. Nor was it just Ussher's scholarly outputs with which he had to deal: the primate played a significant part not just in Irish, but also in English political and ecclesiastical history during a particularly tumultuous period, requiring Elrington to engage in a much broader contextualization of the Primate's life and works.

But Ussher was important for another reason – his malleability. Ussher was a figure whose support and authority was sought by all ecclesiastical parties and traditions. This was partly because of his immense scholarly reputation; but it was also a product of his personal indirectness, and his scholarly style, which could at times be allusive and elusive, allowing a certain ambiguity to develop about his precise views. Pinning him down was therefore a significant challenge for Elrington, and one which, given the Primate's significant part in its progress, was of considerable importance in identifying the character and thrust of the Irish Reformation.⁶⁵

Elrington did not shirk the challenge. He soon signalled that he was parting company with those who saw Ussher as a puritan fellow-traveller. As early as the second page, he rejected an account by the Primate's biographer, Nicholas Bernard, of Ussher's conversion at the age of ten, as 'a mere attempt to support the doctrines of Calvin by a remarkable example'. He went on to indicate his own doctrinal preferences by insisting that Ussher was 'one of those happy individuals' who had daily grown in the grace conferred on him by baptism, making later conversion irrelevant.⁶⁶ If there was a shaping adolescent religious experience, Elrington insisted that it was that of receiving holy communion for the first time.⁶⁷ Unsurprisingly he responded in hostile manner to the appointment of Walter Travers as Provost of Trinity – 'perhaps the most improper man in England for the place', and was similarly dismissive of his successor, Henry Alvey, because of his 'puritanical principles'. As far as Elrington was concerned, Trinity was a 'refuge for puritans, who would not have been tolerated in any similar position in England'. He accepted that this 'must have materially contributed to influence the early theological opinions of Ussher', and marvelled that 'any germ of affection for the doctrine of the Church of England could have survived in so corrupted an atmosphere'. But, echoing Mant's explanation for Ussher's association with the Irish Articles, he suggested that the older Ussher threw off such dangerous early influences.⁶⁸

The hold of Calvinism over the Irish Reformation was confirmed for Elrington by the decision of the Church of Ireland to draw up its own confession rather than using the Thirty-Nine Articles.⁶⁹ The Irish Articles were, he thought, 'most injurious to the progress of true religion' because they differentiated the Church of Ireland from the Church of England.⁷⁰ He differed from Peter Heylyn, the seventeenth-century Laudian controversialist, who simply bracketed Ussher and the Irish Articles together as irredeemably Calvinist. Elrington accepted that

the Irish Articles had been ‘framed with a strong desire to conciliate the non-conformists’, and were in conformity with Ussher’s opinions ‘at that period of his life’, but sought to play down their importance and limit Ussher’s guilt by association. Thus he suggested that the Articles were not quite as radical as had been argued, attributed their passing to others of a more Calvinist inclination, and doubted whether they were ever properly sanctioned.⁷¹

Elrington’s hostility to puritanism was complemented by his defence of the actions of Charles, Laud, Bramhall and Wentworth in the 1630s, who were seen as bringing the errant Irish church back into conformity with the Anglican Church of England. Sensitive to the Irish suspicion of Tractarianism and other High Church tendencies, he went out of his way to defend them from charges that they favoured popery, and stressed their close links to Ussher.⁷² He thus rejected Reid’s account of Wentworth and Laud’s reform of Trinity College as being inspired by a desire to weed out puritanism, and put in place Arminian leaders. Laud was simply trying to bring order to an unruly institution, replacing an ineffective provost, and rewriting the existing statutes to tighten up discipline, all with the approval of Ussher.⁷³ Reid’s claims that Ussher was sympathetically tolerant of the Presbyterians serving in Ulster dioceses was likewise rejected. For Elrington, Blair’s claims about his cordial relationship with Ussher were ‘notoriously false’, since the Primate would never have tolerated laxness in the use of the Prayer Book; instead Elrington claimed that that Ussher was in fact behind the efforts to remove the Presbyterians from the Church of Ireland.⁷⁴ His description of the 1634 Convocation and the imposition of the Thirty-Nine Articles and the new canons minimizes the disagreements between Wentworth and Ussher, and downplays the differences between the Irish canons and the English canons of 1604.⁷⁵ A similar pattern is found in the account of Ussher’s role in the early 1640s, when he was sucked in to the arguments between king and parliament: here Elrington stressed the Primate’s closeness to the former and distance from the latter. In particular, he tried to detach Ussher from the *Reduction*, which he saw as essentially Presbyterian, by pointing out that it was only published after his death, and may have been subject to ‘some pruning’ from the ‘antiepiscopal prepossessions of Dr Bernard’.⁷⁶

For both Reid and Elrington, then, Ussher was a kind of litmus test for the Irish Reformation – a way of assessing whether it was Calvinist, broadly based and willing to include Nonconformists, or essentially ‘Anglican’, modelled on the Church of England and hostile to Presbyterian claims. In short, was it low or high? Elrington, as we have seen, distanced Ussher from the more ‘puritan’ manifestations of the Church of Ireland, and he concluded his biography with a final overview of the Primate’s theology, returning to the key issue of predestination and resuscitating claims that the mature Ussher had rejected his earlier Calvinism.⁷⁷ Ussher, in other words, like the Church of Ireland under Bramhall and Wentworth, had moved beyond youthful extremism and embraced the *via media* of the Church of England.

Elrington’s treatment of Ussher and the Irish Reformation was thus diametrically opposed to that offered by Reid. He makes it quite plain that he has little truck

with Reid's attempt to claim Ussher for a Calvinist Church of Ireland, criticizing him on several occasions for his ignorance, and claiming that he 'suits his narrative to the interests of his party'.⁷⁸ Reid responded publicly in a series of letters to the *Banner of Ulster*, a Belfast Presbyterian journal, which he then collected and published as a book early in 1849.⁷⁹ Elrington replied later in the same year.⁸⁰ Reid began by regretting the Primate's life had been written by someone who differed from Ussher theologically, and went on to seek to drive a wedge between Ussher and Elrington. Ussher he defended as a godly Calvinist, tolerant of nonconformity; Elrington he portrayed as an anti-Presbyterian, whose 'bigoted and sectarian views' were not shared by 'a considerable body of opinion in the Church of Ireland'.⁸¹ In particular, he identified Elrington with the Tractarians, claiming that he was so obsessed with episcopacy that he could not concede that a church without bishops was a rightful church, and went on to link Elrington to Mant, a 'narrow-minded Irish divine full of the ideal virtues of apostolical succession'.⁸²

Some of Reid's points missed their mark. His claim that Elrington deliberately refused to refer to his book by the correct title – replacing the *History of the Presbyterian Church* with *History of the Presbyterians* – because he would not accept that the Presbyterians could properly be called a church, was easily refuted by Elrington with the acknowledgement that it was a simple error, with no ulterior intention.⁸³ Elrington was happy to acknowledge that, though he valued the apostolic succession, 'yet I do not feel myself justified in saying that without a bishop there is no church, that Presbyterian ordination is not valid'.⁸⁴ Reid's suggestion that Elrington had plagiarized parts of his *Life* from the *History of the Presbyterian Church* was petty and also convincingly dismissed by him.⁸⁵ The centrepiece of Reid's claims, though, revolved around Ussher's theological stance and his attitude to the Presbyterians within the Church of Ireland. The importance of this issue was obvious: it underpinned Reid's vision of Irish Protestants as essentially united, and undermined Elrington's determination to annex the Church of Ireland to the Anglican Church of England as a bulwark against both Roman Catholicism and Presbyterianism.

Reid began with Elrington's treatment of Wentworth and Laud's policy towards Trinity College. Apparently tangential, Reid saw this as a microcosm of their broader approach to the Irish church, expelling puritans and replacing them with Arminians. Elrington, as we have seen, had insisted that Wentworth and Laud were driven solely by the desire to impose order and discipline: what few changes there were in the statutes were directed to this end. Reid accepted that the College was in need of stricter governance, but argued that this went hand in hand with an ideological desire to purge the statutes and staff of puritanism.⁸⁶ Elrington can claim some support from recent historiography – his interpretation of Laud's policy with regard to Trinity anticipates that advanced by Kevin Sharpe about Laud's dealings as Chancellor with Oxford.⁸⁷ But Sharpe's claims in relation to Oxford, and Elrington's with regard to Trinity, though defensible, are also debatable. Close examinations of the Trinity statutes suggests that, *pace* Elrington, there were a large number of significant changes which reflected the concerns of those

whom most historians would label the English Arminians. And it is incontrovertible that Chappell was, theologically, an Arminian.⁸⁸

Elrington and Reid also anticipated later scholarly discussions in their treatment of the Irish Articles. Both accepted that the confession was strongly influenced by Calvinism: where they parted company was over the extent of that influence. Elrington, foreshadowing R.B. Knox's argument in his 1967 biography of Ussher, suggested that the Articles were not as much opposed to the English articles as was claimed.⁸⁹ Reid argued that they represented a thoroughgoing puritan revision of the Thirty-Nine Articles. Both had a case, which they made with scholarly skill. At the same time, their choice of arguments was clearly shaped by their particular ecclesiological and theological preferences. Take the issue of ordination. The Irish confession omitted the English article 36, *Of consecration of bishops and ministers*. Reid saw this as meaning that the validity of ordination by presbyters was implied. Elrington rightly denied that such an implication could be drawn, pointing out that Reid had misquoted the English article in order to strengthen his case. But Elrington's refusal to accept that the later addition of article 36 to the English articles had been aimed against puritans (with the implication that its omission in Ireland marked a desire to accommodate them) is misplaced. Reid's conclusion seems closer to the mark: the omission of the English article suggested that, while the leaders of the Church of Ireland 'adhered to episcopal government and to the three orders in the ministry, they did not unchurch all the other reformed national churches of Europe which did not concur in these views.'⁹⁰

The interplay between scholarship, principle and personal preference was most evident when it came to Reid's and Elrington's treatment of Ussher's relations with Blair and Presbyterian ministers within the Church of Ireland. Elrington's refusal to accept the veracity of Blair's account of his two meetings with Ussher sprang from his High Church inability to accept that the Primate of the Irish church would – could, even – ever tolerate liturgical laxity; whilst Reid's belief that Ussher was a tolerant fellow traveller reflected his belief that Presbyterians and Church of Ireland shared a common Calvinist heritage. Their subsequent debate over this issue was, again, conducted with considerable historical skill, and centred on two issues: Ussher's role in the expulsion of the Presbyterian ministers, and his degree of tolerance of liturgical laxity. With regard to the former, the issue is still not entirely closed, as historians continue to debate Ussher's degree of involvement, though Elrington's claim that Ussher actively supported their expulsion is difficult to defend.⁹¹ In the case of liturgical flexibility, this is also still a matter for debate, though again it is Reid's reading of the key source – the differing accounts given by Ussher's chaplain, Nicholas Bernard, of the Primate's approach to liturgical conformity – that is more nuanced and convincing.⁹²

The debate in the first half of the nineteenth century over the Irish Reformation was an important one, for a number of reasons. Most obviously, it led to a more careful investigation of the early history of the Church of Ireland, with essential primary sources being discovered, edited and interpreted. In the text, footnotes, appendices of Reid, Mant and Elrington, much of the basic groundwork for later

early-modern Reformation history was laid. They were the founders of modern historical scholarship of the Church of Ireland. The debate also had a broader theoretical importance, as a demonstration of the pliability of religious history, the way in which, when a particular denomination or tradition is studied from the inside, the account offered is, whatever the close attention paid to the primary sources, still decisively shaped by the presumptions and preferences of the writer. In the case of each of our three authors, a clear ecclesiological perspective can be identified, and its influence traced through their work. As one reviewer neatly summed it up in his discussion of Mant's *History*: 'its venerable author's principles are too well known to need any account of the ecclesiastical views upon which its materials are disposed'.⁹³ The sense of *parti pris* comes over most strongly in the exchange between Reid and Elrington. Reid sought to identify both Elrington and Mant as subscribing to the 'obnoxious ... Tractarian heresy' – a baleful influence on the Church of England, which Romanized its practices, rewrote its history and alienated it from its natural Protestant allies.⁹⁴ Elrington, in response, elegantly sidestepped the Tractarian label, and denied the Reid's more extreme claims, yet accepted that his presumptions were High Church.⁹⁵

The result was two very different perspectives on the Irish Reformation. The first emphasized its High Church Anglican credentials, its apostolic succession from the Patrician bishops, and stressed its closeness to the state and its conformity to the Church of England, downplaying some brief aberrations along the way. The second argued that there was in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries a broad Protestant consensus, as the Church of Ireland refrained from persecuting Nonconformists and produced a clearly reformed confession of faith, which created a broad alliance of Protestants united against the popish threat. Only with the arrival of Wentworth and Bramhall in 1633 was this overturned, Presbyterians expelled from the Church of Ireland, and the church manoeuvred into closer alignment with England. But in the longer term, especially after disestablishment, it was the inclusive Low Church anti-Catholic tradition which triumphed in the Church of Ireland.

This narrative turn, with its capacity to reshape, recreate and even invent history, is a particular feature of Protestantism with its fissiparous instincts and competing ecclesiologies. Seminal figures such as James Ussher and Richard Hooker were accordingly shaped and reshaped to suit the tenor of the time. It is no coincidence that it was the Oxford Movement, in the person of John Keble's 1836 edition of Hooker's works that did so much to turn him into a model High Church Anglican, just at the same time as Elrington was reconstructing Ussher's reputation in a similar manner in Ireland.⁹⁶ The nineteenth century was a period when conflicts over churchmanship threatened to pull apart the Protestant community. The Reformation provided them with ample material to fight their battles.

That said, the works of Reid, Mant and Elrington should not therefore be dismissed wholly as *parti pris*. Though their assumptions do on occasions obscure their judgement, they nevertheless get to the heart of important historical issues, demonstrating an impressive mastery of the intricacies of the cases they are arguing.

Sometimes their conclusions can indeed be challenged on the basis of more compelling evidence which has subsequently come to light. Often, though, their disagreements are ones of interpretation, and reflect, often uncannily, debates between more modern scholars. They were, in short, responsible for setting the agenda for much of modern Irish Reformation historiography.

Notes

- 1 First printed in 1622 and 1623, it is best known from its second edition, published in London in 1631; it was reprinted in 1687, 1739 and 1815, and again in 1830 as vol. iv of Ussher's works – James Ussher, *The whole works of... James Ussher ... with a life of the author and account of his writings*, ed. C.R. Elrington (Dublin, 1847) [hereafter UW]; see John McCafferty, 'St Patrick for the Church of Ireland: James Ussher's Discourse', *Bullán*, iii (1998), 87–102; Alan Ford, *James Ussher: Theology, History, and Politics in Early-modern Ireland and England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), ch. 5.
- 2 Richard Cox, *Hibernia Anglicana* (London, 1689), sig., h[1v]–l[1r]; Thomas Leland, *The History of Ireland from the Invasion of Henry II* (London, 1773), based his first chapter on the *Discourse*.
- 3 Clare O'Halloran, *Golden Ages and Barbarous Nations: Antiquarian Debate and Cultural Politics in Ireland, c.1750–1800* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2004); J.R. Hill, 'Popery and Protestantism, Civil and Religious Liberty – the Disputed Lessons of Irish History 1690–1812', *Past & Present*, cxviii (1988), 96–129.
- 4 *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine* (Apr., 1834), 210; the reviewer is quoting from J.S. Reid, *History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland* (Edinburgh, 1834), i, p. v.
- 5 Alan Ford, "'Standing one's Ground": Religion, Polemic and Irish History since the Reformation', in Alan Ford, James McGuire and Kenneth Milne (eds), *As by Law Established. The Church of Ireland since the Reformation* (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 1995), 8; J.R. Hill, 'The Church of Ireland and Perceptions of Irish Church History c.1790–1869', in Terence Dooley (ed.), *Ireland's Polemical Past: Views of Irish History in Honour of R.V. Comerford* (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2010), 9–31; for Fergal Grannell, 'Early Irish ecclesiastical studies', in Michael Hurley (ed.), *Irish Anglicanism 1869–1969* (Dublin: Allen Figgis, 1970), 40, the period 1833 to 1933 was characterized by 'an extraordinary outburst of literary and scholarly activity' by Irish Anglicans.
- 6 William Magee, *A charge delivered at his primary visitation, in St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, Thursday, the 7th of October, 1822* (London, 1822), 25.
- 7 S.J. Brown, *The National Churches of England, Ireland, and Scotland 1801–1846* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Irene Whelan, *The Bible War in Ireland: The 'Second Reformation' and the Polarization of Protestant-Catholic Relations, 1800–1840* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2005); Desmond Bowen, *The Protestant Crusade in Ireland, 1800–70: a Study of Protestant-Catholic Relations between the Act of Union and Disestablishment* (Montreal: Gill & Macmillan, 1978).
- 8 J.S. Reid, *The history of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland* (Belfast, 1828); J.S. Reid, *History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland; comprising the civil history of the province*

- of Ulster, from the accession of James the first: with a preliminary sketch of the progress of the reformed religion in Ireland during the sixteenth century, and an appendix consisting of original papers (Edinburgh, 1834–53); the three volumes were published in 1834, 1837 and 1853, with the final volume being completed after Reid's death by another Presbyterian historian, W.D. Killen: the work will be cited in the 1867 Belfast edition.
- 9 Robert Allen, *James Seaton Reid: a Centenary Biography* (Belfast: William Mullan, 1951); Finlay Holmes, 'Reid, James Seaton', *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, ed. James McGuire and James Quinn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009) (hereafter DIB): <http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a7617>.
 - 10 Reid, *History*, i, p. viii; *ibid.*, ii, p. iii; Allen, *James Seaton Reid*, 38; W.D. Killen, *History of congregations of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and biographical notices of eminent Presbyterian ministers and laymen* (Belfast, 1886), 1. For his continuing relevance see, for instance, A.R. Holmes, *The Shaping of Ulster Presbyterian Belief and Practice, 1770–1840* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 8.
 - 11 A.R. Holmes, 'Presbyterian Religion, Historiography, and Ulster Scots Identity, c.1800 to 1914', *Historical Journal*, liii (2009), 625f.
 - 12 Reid, *History*, i, 73.
 - 13 *Ibid.*, 1–72; c.f. his reference to the 'scriptural character' of the early Celtic bishops, 'each having charge of only one parish', and 'the presbyterial order of the Culdees and their singular piety and zeal' (2).
 - 14 Reid, *History*, i, 1–42.
 - 15 Reid, *History*, i, 71.
 - 16 Reid, *History*, i, 57f.
 - 17 Reid, *History*, i, 58.
 - 18 Reid, *History*, i, 59.
 - 19 Reid, *History*, i, 75, 82.
 - 20 Reid, *History*, i, 93–6.
 - 21 Reid, *History*, i, 96.
 - 22 Reid, *History*, i, 106; as an evangelical Presbyterian, Reid would naturally be sympathetic to such revivals: Holmes, 'Presbyterian religion', 625; for the revival, see W.D. Bailie, *The Six Mile Water revival of 1625* (Newcastle: Mourne Observer Press, 1976); M.J. Westerkamp, *The Triumph of the Laity: Scots-Irish piety and the Great Awakening 1625–1760* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).
 - 23 Reid, *History*, i, 98.
 - 24 Reid, *History*, i, 96–105.
 - 25 Patrick Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (London: Methuen, 1967); Polly Ha, *English Presbyterianism, 1590–1640* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010).
 - 26 S.J. Knox, *Walter Travers; Paragon of Elizabethan Puritanism* (London: Methuen, 1962); Alan Ford, 'Travers, Walter (1548?–1635)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (hereafter DNB) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).
 - 27 The latter is the option naturally favoured by Presbyterian historians – most notably by A.F.S. Pearson who coined the term 'prescopalianism' to describe the distinctive polity: A.F.S. Pearson, *Puritan and Presbyterian Settlements in Ireland, 1560–1660* (1948), typescript in the library of The Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland, Belfast.

- Ussher first outlined his reduction in 1641; it was published after his death by his chaplain, Nicholas Bernard: James Ussher, *The reduction of episcopacy unto the form of synodical government received in the ancient church* (London, 1656); for discussion of Ussher's proposal, see Ford, *Ussher*, 240–51.
- 28 Reid, *History*, i, 102f.
 - 29 Reid, *History*, i, 136f.
 - 30 Reid, *History*, i, 158.
 - 31 Reid, *History*, i, 160–95.
 - 32 Reid, *History*, i, 158–60.
 - 33 Quoted in Allen, *James Seaton Reid*, 39.
 - 34 For more recent treatments of the origins of modern Irish Presbyterianism, see: Alan Ford, 'The Origins of Irish Dissent', in Kevin Herlihy (ed.), *The Religion of Irish dissent 1650–1800* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1996), 9–30; Robert Armstrong, 'Ireland's Puritan Revolution? The Emergence of Ulster Presbyterianism Reconsidered', *English Historical Review*, cxxi (2006), 1048–74.
 - 35 Bowen, *Protestant Crusade*, 62; Jennifer Ridden, 'The Forgotten History of the Protestant Crusade: religious liberalism in Ireland', *Journal of Religious History*, xxxi (2007), 79.
 - 36 *The Christian Examiner and Church of Ireland Magazine*, ii (Feb. 1826), 10f.
 - 37 *Christian Examiner*, 82.
 - 38 *Christian Examiner*, 83f.
 - 39 *Gentleman's Magazine* (Dec. 1837), 597; for other reviews see *Journal of Sacred Literature*, vi, 12 (July 1854), 490; *British Critic, and Quarterly Theological Review*, xxiii, 45 (Jan. 1838), 149; *The Athenaeum*, 331 (1 Mar. 1834), 158–60; *The Athenaeum*, 511 (12 Aug. 1837), 577; *Eclectic Review*, xvi (Dec. 1836), 516–25.
 - 40 *Monthly Review*, iii, 2 (Oct. 1837), 221.
 - 41 *The Christian Examiner*, iii, 35 (Sept. 1834), 612.
 - 42 D.W. Bebbington, 'The Evangelical Discovery of History', in P.D. Clark and Charlotte Methuen (eds), *The Church on its Past*, Studies in Church History, xlix (Woodbridge 2013), 330–2.
 - 43 Diarmaid MacCullough, 'Changing Historical Perspectives on the English Reformation: the Last Fifty Years', in Clark and Methuen (eds), *The Church on its Past*, 283–5.
 - 44 C.R. Elrington, *Apostolical Succession* (Dublin, 1839), p. vi, quoted in Peter Nockles, 'Church or Protestant Sect? The Church of Ireland, High Churchmanship, and the Oxford Movement, 1822–1869', *Historical Journal*, xli (1998), 469.
 - 45 Nockles, 'Church or Protestant sect?', 473–5.
 - 46 Richard Mant, *The Laws of the Church: the Churchman's Guard against Romanism and Puritanism* (Dublin, 1842); Nockles, 'Church or Protestant Sect?', 483f., 489.
 - 47 Nockles, 'Church or Protestant sect?', 463, 472f.
 - 48 Quoted in Peter Nockles, *The Oxford Movement in Context: Anglican High Churchmanship 1760–1857* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 124.
 - 49 Henry Cotton, George Miller, J.H. Todd, William Reeves and Evelyn Shirley were all both distinguished historians and High Churchmen.
 - 50 Richard Mant, *History of the Church of Ireland: from the Reformation to the Revolution:*

- with a preliminary survey, from the Papal usurpation, in the twelfth century, to its legal abolition in the sixteenth* (London, 1840); Richard Mant, *History of the Church of Ireland: from the Revolution to the union of the churches of England and Ireland, January 1, 1801: with a catalogue of the archbishops and bishops, continued to November, 1840: and a notice of the alterations made in the hierarchy by the Act of 3 and 4 William IV., Chap. 37* (London, 1840).
- 51 'Irish church history', *Irish Quarterly Review*, ii, 5 (Mar. 1852), 19.
- 52 Alexander Gordon, 'Mant, Richard (1776–1848)', rev. Karl S. Bottigheimer, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004): <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/18001>.
- 53 Mant, *Reformation to Revolution*, 366.
- 54 Mant, *Reformation to Revolution*, 14f., 168–71, 183.
- 55 Mant, *Reformation to Revolution*, 365f.
- 56 Mant, *Reformation to Revolution*, 382f.
- 57 Mant, *Reformation to Revolution*, 385–7.
- 58 Mant, *Reformation to Revolution*, 384.
- 59 Mant, *Reformation to Revolution*, 416f.
- 60 Mant, *Reformation to Revolution*, 585–8.
- 61 Viii (Apr. 1840), 440–64.
- 62 *Dublin University Magazine*, xv, 87 (Mar 1840), 243; *The Orthodox Presbyterian Theological Review, and Missionary Recorder*, xxv (Jan. 1840), 191, claimed that the review was by Samuel O'Sullivan.
- 63 J.A.F. Spence, 'The Philosophy of Irish Toryism, 1833–52: a Study Of reactions to Liberal Reformism in Ireland in the Generation between the Reform Act and the Famine, with especial Reference to Expressions of National Feeling among the Protestant Ascendancy' (University of London, Birkbeck College Ph.D. thesis, 1991), 160f.
- 64 W.D. Killen, *The ecclesiastical history of Ireland: from the earliest period to the present times* (London, 1875), ii, 474.
- 65 R.B. Knox, *James Ussher Archbishop of Armagh* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1967); W.M. Abbott, 'James Ussher and "Ussherian" Episcopacy, 1640–1656: the Primate and his Reduction manuscript', *Albion*, xxii (1990), 237–59; Ford, *Ussher*; Alan Ford, "'Making Dead Men Speak": Manipulating the Memory of James Usher', in Mark Williams and Stephen Forrest (eds), *Constructing the Past: Writing Irish History, 1600–1800* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2010); Alan Ford, 'Past but still Present: Edmund Borlase, Richard Parr and the Reshaping of Irish History for English Audiences in the 1680s', in Brian MacCuarta (ed.), *Reshaping Ireland 1550–1700: Colonization and its Consequences* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2011), 281–99.
- 66 UW, i, 2.
- 67 UW, i, 7.
- 68 UW, i, 15–17.
- 69 UW, i, 43.
- 70 UW, i, 47.
- 71 UW, i, 44–9, 61.
- 72 UW, i, 92, 108, 113, 153.

- 73 UW, i, 155f., 191–8.
- 74 UW, i, 146–8.
- 75 UW, i, 165–87.
- 76 UW, i, 207–10.
- 77 UW, i, 290–5; Elrington was referring here to the claim made after Ussher’s death by the High Churchman, Thomas Pierce, that late in his life the Primate had accepted that God gave grace to repent to all, and that only those who rejected it of their own free will were not saved: see the discussion in Ford, *Ussher*, 282f. and in Ford, ‘Making dead men speak’, 64f.; for a subtle and thorough account of this issue, see R.M. Snoddy, ‘Quicunque vult: the Act and Object of Saving Faith in the Thought of James Ussher’ (University of Middlesex PhD thesis, 2011), 68–76.
- 78 UW, i, 104, 46, 155f, 186.
- 79 J.S. Reid, *Seven letters to the Rev C.R. Elrington* (Glasgow, 1849).
- 80 C.R. Elrington, *An answer to Dr Reid’s animadversions* (Dublin, 1849).
- 81 Reid, *Seven Letters*, 30.
- 82 Reid, *Seven Letters*, 51–9.
- 83 Elrington, *Answer*, 7; Reid grudgingly accepted this: Reid, *Seven Letters*, 51–6.
- 84 Elrington, *Answer*, 8f..
- 85 Elrington, *Answer*, 11–14.
- 86 UW, 155f.; Reid, *Seven Letters*, 21–8.
- 87 Kevin Sharpe, ‘Archbishop Laud and the University of Oxford’, in *History and Imagination: Essays in Honour of H.R. Trevor-Roper*, ed. Hugh Lloyd-Jones, Valerie Pearl and Blair Worden (London: Duckworth, 1981), 156–62.
- 88 Elrington’s challenge to Reid (Elrington, *Answer*, 16), ‘to produce one single change from the statutes of Bishop Bedell, which could be construed by the most decided Calvinist into a measure for the establishment of Arminianism’, does not stand up to a detailed comparison of the two sets of statutes: Alan Ford, ‘“That bugbear Arminianism”: Archbishop Laud and Trinity College, Dublin’, in C.F. Brady and Jane Ohlmeyer (eds), *British Interventions in Early Modern Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 147–60.
- 89 Elrington, *Answer*, 25; R.B. Knox, ‘The Ecclesiastical Policy of James Ussher, Archbishop of Armagh’ (London University PhD dissertation, 1956), 69; R.B. Knox, *James Ussher Archbishop of Armagh* (Cardiff, 1967).
- 90 Elrington, *Answer*, 25f.; Reid, *Seven Letters*, 41–3; Ford, *Ussher*, 90; E.J. Bicknell, *A Theological Introduction to the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England*, 2nd edn (London: Longmans, Green, 1947), 405.
- 91 John McCafferty, *The Reconstruction of the Church of Ireland: Bishop Bramhall and the Laudian reforms, 1633–1641* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), reviewed by Alan Ford in *Journal of British Studies*, xlviii (2009), 208–10; Ford, *Ussher*, 166–73.
- 92 Elrington, *Answer*, 30–6; Reid, *Seven Letters*, 67–72; Ford, ‘Making Dead men Speak’, 49–72; Terry Clavin, ‘Nicholas Bernard’, *Dictionary of Irish Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009): <http://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a0627>.

- 93 *British Critic and Quarterly Theological Review*, xxvii (Apr. 1840), 473.
- 94 Reid, *Seven Letters*, 41, 58; for further references to Elrington's Tractarianism, see *ibid.*, 45f, 49, 52, 54.
- 95 Elrington, *Answer*, 8, 26.
- 96 Michael Brydon, *The Evolving Reputation of Richard Hooker: an Examination of Responses, 1600–1714* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Diarmaid MacCulloch, 'Richard Hooker's Reputation', *English Historical Review*, cxvii (2002), 773–812; Ford, *Ussher*, 1–8.

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