

The Fight for the Reformed Faith

The Decline of Reformation Calvinism in 19th Century Scotland

QUESTION: Who wrote these following four extracts (actually preached them as well)?

1)

“Our Lord Jesus Christ is the *official* Saviour, not of the elect only, but of the world of mankind indefinitely.... Any of them all may come to Him as Saviour without money or price, and be saved by Him as their own Saviour appointed to that office by the Father.... If it were not so that Christ is the Saviour of the world He could not warrantably be offered with His salvation to the world indefinitely, but to the elect only. If He were not commissioned to the office of Saviour of all men, it would be no more appropriate to call all men to trust Him as Saviour any more than He could be offered lawfully to fallen angels.... No one could be held guilty for not turning to Christ for salvation, unless there is a sense in which God has appointed Him to be a Saviour of that guilty one.... That [Titus 3:4] speaks of a love of the species mankind. God’s love for humanity has appeared in two eminent instances: First, in securing, by an irresistible decree, the salvation of some of them, and second, in providing a Saviour for the whole of the kind.... He sent His Son from heaven with full instructions and ample powers to save you, if you will believe. And is not this love? ... Know with certainty that if any of you perish—and if you go on in your sins ye shall perish—you shall not perish for want of a Saviour.... You would not trust Him as Saviour, even though He had His Father’s commission to be Saviour of the world—and your Saviour”.

2)

If .. the deed of *gift* or *grant* is to every man. This necessarily supposeth Christ crucified to be the ordinance of God for salvation, to which lost mankind is allowed access.... Therefore he [Edward

Fisher] says not, 'Tell every man Christ died for him,' but, Tell every man, 'Christ *is dead for him*,' that is, for him to come to and believe on; a Saviour is provided for him; there is a crucified Christ for him, the ordinance of heaven for salvation for lost man, in the use-making of which he may be saved"

3)

"... Christ invites sinners with an enlarged heart. Joy enlarges it. His heart is open to you, his arms are stretched wide. You often see him with sorrow and anger in his face, and this works with you that you will not come. Behold him smiling and inviting you now to himself, sending love looks to lost sinners, from a joyful heart within! Infer, 2nd. May I say, the Mediator's joy is not complete, till you come and take a share? ... Would you do Christ a pleasure? then come to him . Would you content and ease his heart? Then come....."

4)

" These are they that 'labour' and are 'heavy laden.' . . Who are meant by these? I cannot agree with those that restrain these expressions to those that are sensible of their sins and misery ... but I think it includes all that are out of Christ ... And what are the invitations of the gospel, but Christ putting out his hands to sinking souls, sinking with their own weight.... Consider the parallel text, Isaiah 55:1. "Ho every one that thirsteth," where by the thirsty is not so much understood as those that are thirsting after Christ, as those that are thirsting after happiness and satisfaction ... Christ in the gospel comes into the world as to an hospital of sin-sick souls, ready to administer a cure to those that will come to him for it.... It is the work of faith to give up the soul to Christ, that he may save it ... How he complains of these that will not come, John 5 :40, 'And ye will not come to me that ye might have life.' He speaks as one that has been working in vain."

The reader could be forgiven if, like the editor, he had thought that those extracts had come from the mouth of Billy Graham. Or of John Wesley. Or for that matter, from Arminius himself. Indeed, one finds in extracts 3 and 4 sentiments that would fit into the mouths of most modern Arminian evangelists that do the rounds of the modern "campaigns".

But no, these extracts are from the sermons of a man who, over the last 250 years, has been traditionally regarded as a pillar of Calvinist Orthodoxy. He was

indeed, none other than that eminent Scots Presbyterian, Thomas Boston, famous founder and leader of the "Marrow-men", who followed Edward Fisher's theology, published under the title of "The Marrow of Modern Divinity."¹

In an age of theological and political turmoil, Boston had stumbled over Fisher's book, which was in fact a somewhat obscure fringe publication left over from the Puritan era in England. Boston read it, was convinced by it, and eventually the work was republished with Boston's editorial notes. This is not the place to go into the detailed intricacies which eventually brought about the formation of the Associate Presbytery in 1733 as a division from the Established Church of Scotland, but this schism was indeed the de facto setting up of a denomination which one could call the "Marrow Denomination." Marrowism was their theology, and invested all their preaching, and as the new denomination grew around this teaching, it initially tried to justify it alongside a strong profession of Westminster Calvinistic Orthodoxy. Eventually, however, the stresses inherent in such a situation told, and within little more than a generation the Associate Presbytery, or Associate Synod, as it became known, began to manifest a distinct Amyraldian tendency, and this despite the fact that Boston had originally written incisive polemics against this "New Methodism" from France. The truth is that "Marrowism" carried the Amyraldian virus, and the reader will, if he looks back at the extracts heading this article, note that like Amyraut, the Marrowmen were making the fundamental mistake of rooting election in the Atonement, instead of rooting the Atonement in election. The very original words of Fisher himself, taken up and endorsed by Boston, viz.: ... "say(s) not, 'Tell every man Christ died for him,' but, Tell every man, 'Christ is dead for him,'" are intrinsically an articulation of a double reference theory of the Atonement, which is at the very heart of the Amyraldian scheme. This feature was not lost on later generations of "Marrow-men", the logic of their doctrine propelling them indubitably into the arms of the French heresy.

The rise and progress of the Scots Marrowism and its deleterious effects on Scots Orthodoxy right across the Scots denominations has been chronicled by Iain Hamilton.² Suffice it to say here that by the early 19th Century Marrowism had transmuted into a virulent form of Amyraldianism in the descendent churches of the 'Boston' group, and its influence early began to have deleterious effects on the newly emergent Free Kirk from 1843 onwards. In fact it has to be said that the Free

¹ The extracts are taken consecutively from the following sources in Boston's Works, viz., Extract 1: Sermon: "Christ the Saviour of the World", republ. in *"The Love of God"* by John MacArthur. Extract 2 is taken from Boston's notes on Fisher's *"Marrow of Modern Divinity"*. Extracts 3 and 4 are taken from Boston's sermon "Come unto Me, All ye that Labour" republ. by the Chapel Library in Pensacola, Florida. For these references, and that for Thomas Chalmers (ref. footnote 3 following) I am indebted to the researches of Mr. Marc Carpenter, as published in *"Outside the Camp"* for May & Aug. 1997.

² Iain Hamilton: *The Erosion of Calvinist Orthodoxy, Seceders and Subscription in Scottish Presbyterianism* (Edinburgh: Rutherford House 1990).

Kirk right from the beginning carried the virus in it right in the person of its formidable leader, Thomas Chalmers. Under the entry “Chalmers, Thomas (1780-1847)”, the *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark 1993) can provide us with a word portrait of an enigma. Whilst being “well-nigh idolized” by many, and being Scotland’s most prominent Churchman of his times, Chalmers nevertheless “could be domineering, politically inept, perhaps unscrupulous and even mendacious...” Certainly his position vis a vis the orthodoxy of his denomination’s Confessional Standards is open to serious question. An extract from one of his sermons exposes this, for instance:

“But we cannot say that there is any exercise of fury in God at the time of giving the invitation. There is the most visible and direct contrary. There is a longing desire after you. There is a wish to save you from that day in which the fury of a rejected Saviour will be spread abroad over all who have despised Him.... There is a kindness—a desire for peace and friendship—a longing earnestness to make up the quarrel which now subsists between the Lawgiver in heaven and His yet impenitent and unreconciled creatures.... God has purposes of kindness towards every one of you; and as one of His ministers I can now say to you all—that there is no fury in God. Now when the spiritual husbandman is trying to soften your hearts, He is warranted to make a full use of the argument of my text that there is no fury in God.... He would rather that you turn, and to live.... He would rather that this enemy of His ... should take hold of God’s strength, that he may make peace with Him.... And so in Scripture everywhere do we see Him pleading and protesting with you that He does not want to signalize Himself upon the ruin of any, but would rather that they should turn and be saved. .. *God is willing to save you: are you willing to be saved?* ... It is not your destruction but your salvation that God wants to put forth His strength in.”³

Amyraldianism, and its first cousin, Arminianism, were lurking in the courts of the Free Kirk right from its inception. It was not long after the formation of the Free Kirk in 1843 that one of its stalwart ministers, the Rev. Jonathan Rankin Anderson pulled out of the new denomination with his congregation, on the grounds that the Free Kirk tolerated Arminianism.⁴ And out in the denomination that had descend-

³ —Thomas Chalmers (1780-1847), from the sermon, *Fury Not In God*. This is distributed in tract form by Chapel Library, a very large professedly Reformed ministry of Mt. Zion Bible Church in Pensacola, Florida. It also appears in John MacArthur, Jr.’s new HypoCalvinist book, *The Love of God*.

⁴ Anderson, an able man, is virtually an unknown today. He is not listed in the new *Dictionary of Scottish Church History* (Edinburgh: T and T Clark 1993) though three other John Andersons are listed therein. I am unable to verify the date of Anderson’s secession, but it was c.a. 1850-1860, I believe.

ed from the Marrow-men, (by now known as the United Presbyterian Church, hereinafter the UPC), after several unsuccessful heresy trials, the denomination was eclipsed by Amyraldianism. By 1860, this denomination had plenty of friends in the Free Kirk who worked ardently for unification of the two denominations. In 1863 the Free Kirk General Assembly passed a resolution which set up a steering committee to effectuate the amalgamation. However, men like Begg and Kennedy stood up and sounded the alarm. They could see hosts of heterodox ministers flooding in to the Free Kirk if such a measure went through, and indeed some of the steering committee were virtually flat out in surrender to the Amyraldians. A long battle ensued, during which time the Free Kirk Amyraldianised faction grew, and, determined on linking with the UPC, had, by 1866, forced through massive compromises on the usage of organs and hymns in the Free Kirk, in imitation of their Amyraldian cousins in the UPC and in direct contradiction to the Regulative Principle. At this time Arminianism was emerging open and bold in more and more Free Kirk pulpits, and even defended in her Church courts.⁵ For a while the orthodox party managed to hold the line, there being enough support due to fears of the UPC's dogma concerning the "Double Reference Theory of the Atonement". This is of course not only Amyraldianism, but as the reader can see, if he cares to check back to the extracts from Boston given at the head of this article, it is inherently the principle of the Marrow as well. "The supporters of this (double reference) view", says the Free Presbyterian historian, "assert that Jesus Christ not only died for the elect but in a certain sense for all men", and this double reference theory was a "serious obstacle that stood in the way of the union" of the two denominations.⁶

In the thick of the theological and ecclesiological battles for the Reformed Faith at this time, Kennedy and Begg were without doubt the "North Pole and the South Pole of Free Kirk Orthodoxy, and while they lived it stood."⁷ Tragically, and amazingly, two of the Free Kirk's most famous Disruption Worthies, Candlish and Buchanan stood for the Union with the Amyraldian UPC. It appears that Candlish underwent a massive metamorphosis of opinion doctrinally, leaving behind his former professed Calvinistic orthodoxy. Looking back on this, the Free Presbyterian historian says:

"The tremendous change in the views of Dr. Candlish is one of the saddest aspects of the whole affair. Those who were most keenly aware of the change were his own contemporaries...."⁸

⁵ Cf. p.35 of: *The History of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland 1893-1970*, where the opening chapters give a succinct outline of the history of the Free Kirk from 1843 onwards, with a view to establishing the reasons for the Free Presbyterian secession in 1893.

⁶ *Ibid.* page 9. And see also, *One Hundred Years of Witness*, (Glasgow: Free Presbyterian Publications), page 17 where the FP historian rightly categorizes the "double reference" theory of the Atonement "as a half-way house to Arminianism."

⁷ Cf. **Maurice Roberts**: Article: *Dr. John Kennedy : A Memorial Sketch*, in the *Banner of Truth* for Aug-Sept. 1984.

⁸ Cf. *One Hundred Years of Witness* (Glasgow, FP Publications 1993) pp.17-18.

So great was this change in Candlish, that one of his orthodox contemporaries, obviously feeling betrayed, could write of the whole matter in the magazine *The Watchword* for Nov. 1867 in these terms:

“There is something deeply painful and humiliating in the present, as contrasted with the former, position of Dr. Candlish. His change of mind is so great, sweeping, and we may say, unprecedented, that one is almost forced to think that he is determined to make the second part of his life a complete answer to the first.”⁹

And as “Dr. Candlish was the leading man in the Free Church Assembly, the effect on the Church was catastrophic.”¹⁰

But one wonders if Candlish had changed, or just emerged from under what was a pseudo-Calvinistic camouflage. It had gradually become safe to do so, in the Free Kirk. The truth came out when a certain Rev. N.L. Walker wrote the biography of Dr. Buchanan, Candlish’s supporter. Walker could reveal that from the beginning in 1843 there were really two parties in the Free Kirk, one, (which Walker favoured) he denominated the “generously evangelical”, and to this party Candlish and Buchanan belonged.¹¹ As to Dr. Buchanan, Walker puts his position succinctly thus:

“(he was) a Modern Evangelical Churchman - a Churchman to the core but an Evangelical -of the most pronounced cast, but one whose mind was open to the best influences of his age.”¹²

The last sentence of the above quote raises one’s eyebrows, knowing what was considered in the theological world of those days as being “the best influences of his age”.

Significantly, Walker refers to the “other party” in the Free Kirk of those days as

⁹ *100 Years of Witness* p18 quoting from: **The Watchword**, Edinburgh 1st Nov. 1867 page 244.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* p.18.

¹¹ It is evident that Chalmers himself is to be categorized with the same “generously evangelical” group. That he carried the virus into the Free Kirk at its inception in 1843 is evident from as early as 13th July 1843, when Chalmers, speaking at a meeting to commemorate the bi-centenary of the Westminster Confession, could use the occasion to urge co-operation between the Free Kirk and the denominations around them, with a view to incorporation and unity, and this notwithstanding any serious doctrinal differences over the Reformed Faith. Some of Chalmers’ statements, according to the assessment given in *100 Years of Witness*, p.16, “would do credit to modern ecumenists,....” and “How any man who professed to stand, in May of 1843, for the whole position of the Church of the Reformation in Scotland, could hold such sentiments, is quite beyond the comprehension of those who hold that such a stand involved not only doctrine and worship, but also government.” Coming as they do, from a worthy and reliable Scots Presbyterian source, these comments are eye-opening, to say the least.

¹² *100 Years of Witness*, page 18 citing N.L. Walker, *Robert Buchanan, D.D.*, (London, 1877). The reader should note that the Dr. Buchanan spoken of here is NOT the James Buchanan, author of “*The Doctrine of Justification*” (republ. BOT 1961), who was an “old school Calvinist”.

the "ecclesiastico-traditional" group. Of these, Kennedy and Begg were the most prominent, and the Free Presbyterian historian pertinently says of this party that "they were certainly not so open to the influences of the age, just because they were open to the influence of the Word of God above all things."¹³ N.L. Walker wrote of this orthodox party that:

"One can feel no surprise, that against a drift so distinctly liberal as the union movement, the instincts of hard conservatism rebelled."¹⁴

But for the ten years 1863-1873, this "hard conservatism" held by a large minority in the Free Kirk doggedly stone-walled the proposals for union with the Amyraldian UPC. The Free Presbyterian historian reveals that:

"Truth, conscience, and consistency were clearly on the side of Dr. Begg and his followers...." they "deplored exceedingly the baneful effects of the union controversy...." ".....they realized that the (Free Kirk) had been under a delusion regarding the faithfulness of a large number of her office-bearers to the Confession of Faith and the Bible."¹⁵

1873 was the culminating crunch-point in this battle. In that year the Free Kirk nearly split, such that Dr. Begg and his followers took legal advice in the matter. As a result the conservative group called a special meeting in Edinburgh in May of that year, prior to the General Assembly, "with the intention, if Dr. Rainy's (union) party should pass the resolution to proceed to unite with the UPC, of separating from them and holding a General Assembly of the Free Kirk in accordance with her original creed and constitution." Evidently this move put a fright into the union party, and they called a halt on union proceedings "at the last moment".¹⁶

Thus then, the affairs as at the late Spring of 1873. In the years leading up to this "passage at arms" Dr. John Kennedy of Dingwall had clearly summed up the situation. He had seen the dangerous tendencies of the UPC theologians, and their "elasticated" adherence to the Westminster Standards. Vital to Kennedy was the whole issue of the matter of the Gospel, of "Man's Relations to God", and thus it was in 1869, as the union controversy was approaching white heat, he published his telling little book of that title.¹⁷ Therein, he mercilessly exposes and demolishes the error

¹³ *Ibid.* p.18,

¹⁴ *Ibid.* p. 18 citing N.L.Walker: *Robert Buchanan, D.D.*, London 1877 and p.448.

¹⁵ Cf. *History of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland 1893-1970*, p.11. The FP historian perceptively notes too how "learned and able men (referring to the likes of Candlish, Buchanan, and Rainy) when they allow themselves to be guided by sentiments instead of reason and conscience based upon God's Word, land themselves in confusion and absurdities....."

¹⁶ *Ibid.* pp. 11-12. More detail is given in **Hamilton, Op. Cit.** in footnote 2 above, and pages 85-110. One appreciates from there the stalwart fight put up by the magazine "**The Watchword**" and its supporters.

¹⁷ Reprinted as a paperback, with index, by the James Begg Society, 1996. This reprint is completely

of a “double reference” in the Atonement, and the mollifications such dogma impose on the content and style of Gospel preaching. In this Kennedy clearly refutes the notion of what is called today the “Free Offer”, in which, as per the Amyraldians, modern Calvinists insist that God wants all men to be saved, and that in some sense, Christ “is dead” for all men. Kennedy not only exposed this in the UPC, he exposed it as actively making inroads into the Free Kirk as well. Of course, Chalmers was an Amyraldian, and hence the Free Kirk was compromised on this, and other salient issues, right from the start, unbeknown to the vast bulk of its orthodox constituents at the time.

As the year 1873 rolled over, it seemed that the Orthodox party had clinched the victory. And indeed they had, temporarily, so far as the issue of union with the UPC was concerned. But the deviant theology was still lurking under the surface, its tenets and its supporters were scattered right through the Scottish churches, like powder kegs waiting for a lighted match.

And thus it was, as the autumn of 1873 rolled into the winter of 1873-74, something happened which hit Scotland sideways. A former Chicago shoe salesman, now working as an evangelist, had been active south of the border for some months on this, his second visit to England. Theologically untrained, but certainly gifted with the gab, if nothing else, Dwight Lyman Moody had a new angle on Gospel preaching. He was evangelical in the broad sense, and had a sufficient enough veneer of quasi-Calvinism to pull the wool over even Spurgeon’s eyes. And certainly this was enough to get him free passage through the custom posts of Scottish orthodoxy, as they existed then. His effects on England, and his theology, were soon picked up by the “generously evangelical” wing of the Free Kirk, and of course, by the Amyraldian phalanx of the UPC.

To understand Moody it is necessary to understand the age in which he lived, and the American cultural milieu from which he sprung. The mid-1800’s and later were the years when the Agrarian and Industrial Revolutions were reaching new heights, industry was making breath-taking developments, a new middle-class was arising and prosperity seemed within the grasp of anyone with sufficient acumen and determination to rise up and take it. Punctuating all this was the new theory of evolution, and all its applications to history, ethics, theology, biblical studies, and social development. Mankind in the West, and in America sans pareil, was rising up, and instead of being dominated by the forces of nature, was now dominating nature. Sail gave way to steam on the oceans, windmills and waterwheels gave way to steam engines, horses were giving way before traction engines and railways, and new projects of water distribution and sewage engineering were changing the face

Footnote 17 contin. from previous page.....sold out, unless some bookshops somewhere have a few left in stock. A large excerpt from it, dealing specifically with matters of the Atonement, was printed in **BRJ** Nos. 9 and 10 in 1995.

of public health. A new and happy confidence in self and in humanity in general was making its mark throughout the whole spectrum of human activity, and it was not limited to matters of the material world.

It is understandable that in such a matrix of rising human dominance over the forces of nature, theology should be affected by the "spirit of the age". In Germany, theologians more and more subordinated the Bible to themselves, instead of subordinating themselves to the Bible, a theological development which paralleled the change from sail to steam at sea. Man and his thoughts were considered to be the Supreme Judge as to whether certain words had come from God or not. Thus, just as the engineers were subordinating nature to human dominance, the theologians set about doing the same to God. Rising in Germany, through the evangelical schools of their churches, in the shape of the evangelical Schliermacher, and continued through the train of modern "thinkers" like Ritschl, Feurbach, and Harnack, a new theology began to spread, like a plague, right across the world.

But this "spirit of the age", this "Zeitgeist", did not stop at the doors of orthodox Christian churches. Before such a plague even knocked at their doors, there were quislings waiting within, ready to draw the bolts and welcome the alien across the threshold. Amyraldianism, and Arminianism, had done their work. For fundamental to both of these deviations, is a subordination of God to the human spirit. And with the rise of humanistic dominance in the Zeitgeist of those times, these two deviations found "hot-house" conditions that encouraged phenomenal growth.

Moody was the catalyst which set this revolution going in Scotland. His methods and his theology were machine-fitted to suit the situation. With his previous experience as a salesman, he was evidently gifted with a persuasive manner of approach that could smooth-talk people into buying what he had to sell. With his Arminian background in the USA, permeated with the methods and theology of that arch-Pelagian, Charles Grandison Finney, he turned evangelism into a mass market machine to produce mass market results. Finney, of course, had stood New Testament Theology on its head. Whereas the Lord speaks of those who are born again in terms of the Holy Ghost being like "the wind" which "bloweth where it listeth, and none telleth whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth", Finney speaks of this sacred work in terms of it being harnessed, effectively subjugated, and directed, by man. Like mankind was, gloriously and innovatively, imposing its will over nature in so many spheres, Finney had man imposing his will on the Holy Ghost. In Finney's theology, the wind blew, not where it listeth, but where Finney listeth. And evangelism, revival, success in producing converts, were all just a matter of man fulfilling the right conditions, following the right techniques. "You can have revival whenever you want it" was his assertion. This naked Pelagianism, believe it or not, was yet swallowed hook, line and sinker, by thousands of America's Calvinist cler-

gy back in the first half of the 19th Century. Before long, it jumped the Atlantic, and the British churches got primed with the same blaspheming nonsense.

Convinced Finney and other Free-will-mongers were “men of God” because they brought “revival” in their train, Calvinists everywhere tended to be open to the same influences, and thus one sees and understands the slide of the Scottish UPC into Amyraldianism, a theology which tends to blend Calvinism with Arminianism, and justifies the exegetical abhorrions it throws out under the catch-all, “paradox”.

Dwight Lyman Moody was no slouch when it came to organisation, fulfilling all the right conditions, and hence propagating masses of “converts”. With his methods he could turn out converts like, in later times, Henry Ford was to turn out Model T’s. His salesman’s experience must have given him enormous insight into the way human beings “tick” when they are confronted with something new which you wish to sell them. Only one thing, when you modify the mode of evangelism in this way, you have to modify the gospel that goes with it, or you just won’t get the results at all. For the Holy Ghost works, in normal Biblical Evangelism, in His own time, according to God’s own Sovereign pleasure. As St. Paul could say, in **1 Co 3:6**: “I have planted, Apollos watered; but **God gave the increase.**” The analogy here to natural sowing and planting is obvious, as is the implication that the harvest is utterly and entirely under the control of God and none else. Obvious too is the fact that instant results are unlikely, but that a period of germination and gestation is in the picture, a feature that is brought out again by the Lord’s teaching concerning “being born again”. But if you organise mass production methods of producing converts, you need to be able to ensure instant “results” that can be seen in the here and now. Otherwise your campaign is seen as failing in its aim. In short, men who organise such big crusades cannot wait on the Holy Ghost, they have to force the system, as it were, to churn out the results they are expecting. Indeed, their methodology presupposes that the Holy Ghost is effectively at their disposal. Thus the Biblical Gospel is quietly laid aside, and a cut-down modification is substituted which will do the trick. Intrinsic to such preaching is the removal of the “offence of the cross”, and the “gospel” is put over like a sales pitch.....this is what you always really wanted.....this is the only true satisfaction in life.....God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life.....and so on.

But of course, though with a modified gospel you get the mass results, like Model T Fords the results sooner or later wear out, break down, rot, and go for scrap. For the terrifying fact about evangelism is this, that its results have to last for ever. Five, ten, twenty years and more is just not good enough. A convert to Christianity must last for ever. And as part of this “lasting”, the convert must undergo a corrosive testing against the vicissitudes of this evil world on a scale that is indubitably fatal to all but the convert who is “made in Heaven”.

Most Calvinists today have probably never bothered to read a biography of Moody. As a result there is little comprehension among them as to the scale of Moody's "success". Truth is, he somewhat outshines even the likes of Whitefield, Wesley, and Spurgeon. In his day, he carried much more "clout" than Billy Graham has done in our times. It is no wonder that the "generous evangelicals" in the Scots churches noticed his activities in England. The crowds he drew were phenomenal, right across the realm.¹⁸

Scotland's "generous evangelicals" made sure Moody made his way North over the border. The scenes which followed must have been breath-taking, all the way from Glasgow right up to Wick. Thousands upon thousands and tens of thousands turned out to the meetings, Scots Presbyterian clergy in their hundreds swirled head-long into the movement, and in no time, orthodox Biblical Calvinism was marginalized, consigned by the masses to the limbo of obsolescence, and indeed, irrelevance. It is instructive to take a closer look at the unfolding events.

Significantly, it was none other than the quasi-modernist, Alexander Whyte of Free St. George's in Edinburgh who opened up his church for Moody's initial meetings in that city. A description of this and the subsequent escalation of events is found in the biography of Moody written by his son. He tells us:

"For a time there was some difficulty in fixing on a suitable place. The Rev. Alexander Whyte, of Free St. George's, offered his church for the prayer meeting, but finally, on account of its central situation, the Free Church Assembly Hall was selected. The attendance soon reached a thousand, and often exceeded that number. The first half of the hour was employed in singing part of a psalm or hymn, reading briefly the requests for prayer, and praying, followed by a few remarks by Mr. Moody on some passage.....During the second half of the meeting anyone could speak or pray or call for a hymn".¹⁹

The narrative goes on to tell us how:

The Rev. Andrew Thomson, pastor of the Broughton Place United Presbyterian Church, thus expressed himself:

"There is nothing novel in the doctrine Mr. Moody proclaims. It is the old Gospel — old, and yet always fresh and young, as the liv-

¹⁸ Cf. *The Life of D.L. Moody*, by his son, chapters concerning Moody's second visit to Britain. This 500 page + volume is available on **CD-ROM** on the "**Ages Digital Library**" Version 5 (Mac. and Windows). The volume is as revealing as it is amazing. Over a period of some eight months in the London area it was calculated that Moody preached to TWO MILLION people in various huge meetings, some of which were all-ticket affairs due to the crowds who were trying to get to hear him. He was at that time evidently coming over with a bigger 'clout' in London than even Spurgeon.
¹⁹ *Ibid.* **CD-ROM** and book pp. 157-158.

ing fountain or the morning sun — in which the substitution of Christ is placed in the center and presented with admirable distinctness and decision. It is spoken with most impressive directness, not as by a man half convinced and who seems always to feel that a skeptic is looking over his shoulder, but with a certainty of the truth of what he says, as if, **like our own Andrew Fuller**, ‘he could venture his eternity on it’;” ²⁰ (Emph.Ed.)

The emboldened sentence in the above quote is revealing. It suggests that the UPC and general “generous evangelical” conception of what constituted the “old gospel” (as Bonar presumed to call it when responding to Kennedy) was something that ran in the same pack as Andrew Fuller. And that was no “old gospel”! It was a squeaky new one! But we read on, and who should we find emerging next in the younger Moody’s narratives, but Professor William Garden Blaikie. A big name in Free Kirk circles, when compiling his renowned Cunningham Lectures on “The Preachers of Scotland” some years afterwards, he could find space to mention Moody the American, but would pass by without mention Scotland’s own finest preacher, Dr. John Kennedy of Dingwall, and the august Dr. James Begg, as if they never existed. But Prof. Blaikie was up to his eyes in the Moody affair. And he was full of enthusiasm for the “new gospel” and the new methods....

“Never, probably,” said Professor Blaikie, “was Scotland so stirred; never was there so much expectation.”²¹

And as to something of the style of the meetings? Let the younger Moody appraise us too in this respect:

“Mr. Moody entered the hall at eight o’clock accompanied by many ministers and laymen. The congregation had already been waiting for them an hour. After singing and prayer, he announced that the order for the evening would be: ‘**The utmost irregularity.** In fact, anything that is worship will be in order; and when I am speaking, if anyone has an illustration to give, or would like to sing a hymn or offer prayer, let him do so.’ This singular invitation was at once accepted and acted upon by many speakers, **and gave constant variety to the meeting, so that the interest never flagged.** Mr. Sankey and the Fisk Jubilee Singers sang hymns frequently. Soon after eleven o’clock Bible study ceased, and the remainder of the session was given to prayer”.²² (Emph. Ed.)

²⁰ Ibid. p.158.

²¹ Ibid. p.160.

²² Ibid. p.165. Note similar characteristics adumbrated above for ref. footnote 19.

Gathering momentum rapidly, the movement began to take Scotland by storm. After an enormous foray into Glasgow.....

"The final meeting was held in the Botanical Gardens on the following Sunday. Mr. Sankey found his way into the building and began the service with six or seven thousand, who were crushed together there, but so great was the crowd outside, estimated at twenty or thirty thousand people, that Mr. Moody himself could not get inside. Standing on the coachman's box of the carriage in which he was driven, he asked the members of the choir to sing. They found a place for themselves on the roof of a low shed near the building, and after they had sung Mr. Moody preached for an hour on **"Immediate Salvation."**²³ (Emph. Ed.)

Again, in Edinburgh in the Spring of 1874.....

"Thursday, May 24th, being the Queen's birthday and a general holiday in Edinburgh, a farewell meeting was held on the grassy slopes between Arthur's Seat and Salisbury Craig above Holyrood. Here Mr. Moody preached to an audience of twenty thousand, and the scenes witnessed in Glasgow the previous Sunday were repeated."²⁴

The tempest passed northwards then, and.....

"At Aberdeen no building could accommodate the audience, and on Sabbath afternoon, June 14th, the meeting was on the links in the natural amphitheatre of the Broadhill, where a platform had been erected for choir and speakers. Some ten thousand people were around the platform long before the hour of the meeting, and when Mr. Moody spoke on "The Wages of Sin is Death," it is estimated that from twenty to twenty two thousand people heard his words." "Montrose, Brechin, Forfar, Huntley (where more than fifteen thousand people were gathered in the open-air service), Inverness, Arbroath, Tain, Nairn, Elgin, Forres, Grantown, Keith, Rothesay, and Campbelltown were some of the places visited during the summer."²⁵

Under this tidal onslaught Kennedy and Begg fought back bravely, but tragically, their voices were drowned in the roar and the rush of the moment. It was Amyraldo-Arminianism's hour of triumph in Scotland.

To be continued (DV).....

²³ Ibid. p. 170.

²⁴ Ibid. p. 171.

²⁵ Ibid. p. 172.