

# The American Church and the Formation of the Anglican Communion, 1823-1853

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## I

In John Dryden's poem *The Hind and the Panther*, there is a passage that ridicules the Church of England for her friendless isolation in Christendom:

“Thus, like a creature of a double kind,  
In her own labyrinth she lives confined;  
To foreign lands no sound of her is come,  
Humbly content to be despised at home.”

But a century and a half later, we find John Henry Newman quoting those same lines, and asserting:

“That day of rebuke is passed. That which is fruitful lives; the English Church, the desolate one, has children . . . This is our own special rejoicing in our American relations; we see our own faces reflected back to us in them, and we know that we live. We have proof that the Church, of which we are, is not the mere creation of the State, but has an independent life, with a kind of her own, and fruit after her own kind. Men do not gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles; the stream does not rise higher than the spring; if her daughter can *be*, though the State does not protect, the mother too could bear to be deserted by it ... The American Church is our pride as well as our consolation.”<sup>1</sup>

The special role of the American Church in the evolution of modern Anglicanism has not been fully recognized, largely because the history of the Anglican Communion has not yet been written. We have many accounts of the geographical expansion of the Church of England and her daughter Churches, but no study of the birth and development of the Anglican Communion as such. In these lectures I hope to investigate one aspect of the story, particularly as it concerns the influence of the American Episcopal Church at a crucial stage.

As we understand it today, the word “Anglican” refers to that fellowship of autonomous Churches in communion with the ancient See of Canterbury—a fellowship transcending race, nationality, and language, and finding its unity in the faith and order set forth in the Book of Common Prayer. Its members are organized geographically on a national basis, but are not national Churches in the sense that they anywhere comprise the majority of the population, and except in England enjoy any special status. It takes its place in Christendom as a reformed Catholicism, whose provinces like those of the early Church are bound together by no centralized government, but by the mutual recognition

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<sup>1</sup> J. H. Newman, “The American Church,” in *British Critic*, xxvi, pp. 283-4.

of a common faith and practice.

In the eighteenth century, when our story begins, the word “Anglican” still had the quite different meaning it had carried from the time of the English Reformation. It described a single Church, identified with the national life, traditions, and institutions of the English people. By ideal and by law, it was virtually identical with the English nation—an ecclesiastical body co-extensive with the subjects of the English Crown, the English commonwealth in its spiritual aspect. This concept was more than we mean today by a State Church or Establishment, one among several religious bodies singled out for special recognition and official privileges. The Church of England was the English nation organized ecclesiastically. It might be possible and even desirable for it to be in communion with other national Churches, but Anglicanism was not exportable; it was not yet conceivable apart from English nationality.

Between the old and the new idea of Anglicanism there is a great gulf, and it is remarkable that the transition from one to the other was made in the space of two generations. It was the American Revolution which made the older conception an anachronism. Suddenly “English” and “Anglican” were no longer correlative terms; the Church of England contemplated a dubious offspring incapable of any relation whatever with the English Crown and State. The final organization in 1789 of the Protestant Episcopal Church marked the birth of the Anglican Communion, although the implications, as we shall see, were by no means perceived in England for many years to come.

The founding fathers of our American Church faced a situation for which there was no existing rationale or precedent, and despite great stress and strain their adaptation of the Anglican tradition to the circumstances of the new republic was an achievement quite as remarkable in its own way as the work of their contemporaries, the Makers of the National Constitution. They proved themselves sensitive both to the values of their spiritual inheritance and to the ethos and institutions of the new America. Borrowing heavily from current political ideas, they created a church system preserving the essential pattern of Anglicanism, but bearing the marks of a considerable re-orientation. Since we shall be examining the influence of the American Church as exercised later on, we may recall some of these innovations:

(1) Provision for the election of bishops by both clerical and lay representatives, and the limiting and defining of the powers of the episcopate by a written constitution.

(2) The establishment of a graduated system of representative and synodical government, which on the national level differed from Convocation in having ultimate authority, and in giving the lower house equality with the upper.

(3) The establishment of the right of the laity to an equal share in legislation and administration on every level.

(4) The abandonment of the ancient provincial system with its principle of subordination, and the placing of all dioceses on a basis of absolute equality.

(5) The change to a system of voluntary financial support by the laity, as opposed to the system of endowments which in England made the clergy independent of lay support.

Here, then, was an Americanized Anglicanism, destined to be a second center of influence within the emergent Anglican Communion. At first it was a dormant influence, due to a suspension of all communication between the daughter and mother Churches for a generation. It seemed almost as if the conferring of episcopal orders on White, Provoost, and Madison had been in the nature of a parting gift; when Bishop White declared to Archbishop Moore that “the American Church would be sensible of the kindness now shown,” the primate’s reply had a valedictory tone—“that he bore a great affection for our Church; and that he should always be glad to hear of her prosperity.”<sup>2</sup>

For the next thirty years I can discover virtually no friendly intercourse between church leaders on the two sides of the Atlantic,<sup>3</sup> a fact not as surprising as it seems at first sight. As is well known, the Episcopal Church in many areas rapidly sank into a state of apathy and discouragement, its scantily attended triennial Conventions being almost the only sign of activity above the local level. The contemporary Church of England retained its placid eighteenth century outlook and its absorption in the routine life of a privileged Establishment, content to leave all initiative to the State. Furthermore, political relations between the two countries were strained and precarious, ranging from mutual dislike and suspicion to open warfare at the end of the Napoleonic era. But even so, it is startling to find the Presiding Bishop of the American Church writing as late as 1822: “It would afford me pleasure to give to Mr. W[heaton] Letters of personal Introduction, if there were any whom I could properly address. I know not a Correspondent remaining in England.”<sup>4</sup>

In the 1820s this breach compounded of remoteness and indifference began to be healed; but before we consider events in that decade, it will be useful to recall how the Church of England at this stage was accustomed to deal with the phenomenon of an expanding Anglicanism. There were, it is true, two centers of missionary zeal within the National Church—the Evangelicals who supported the Church Missionary Society, and the very active group of High Churchmen led by Joshua Watson and Henry Handley Norris who were revitalizing the S.P.G. and the S.P.C.K. But these were minority groups, and the average churchman tended to agree with the Rev. Sydney Smith that it was madness “deliberately, piously and conscientiously to expose our Eastern Empire to destruction for the sake of converting half-a-dozen Brahmins;” that missionaries were “little detachments of maniacs;” and that “the wise and rational part of the Christian ministry find enough to do at home.”<sup>5</sup> Officially, the idea of colonial bishops had been accepted since the consecration of Charles Inglis for Nova Scotia in 1787, but the legal machinery involved was a heavy drag on progress. The setting-up of each bishopric overseas required a special act of Parliament and the issuance of Letters Patent by the King, who in his own right conferred jurisdiction as “Supreme Head on earth of the Church of England within our Dominions.”

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<sup>2</sup> W. H. Stowe, *The Life and Letters of Bishop William White* (New York, 1937), 246.

<sup>3</sup> Correspondence began in 1816 between Bishop Griswold and the Rev. Josiah Pratt, Secretary of the C.M.S., on the subject of missionary work (cf. J. S. Stone, *Memoir of the Life of the Rt. Dev. Alexander Viets Griswold*, Northampton, 1854, pp. 236-248), and in 1818 between Bishop Hobart and the Rev. Henry Handley Norris, vicar of Hackney, on church affairs (cf. J. McVickar, *The Early and Professional Years of Bishop Hobart*, Oxford, 1838, pp.461ff.)

<sup>4</sup> W. H. Stowe, *op. cit.*, 269.

<sup>5</sup> *The Works of the Rev. Sydney Smith*, (London, 1854), I, 244, 252.

It is not surprising, therefore, that by 1823 only two more bishoprics had been created—Quebec in 1793 and Calcutta in 1814. For many years to come, the consecration of colonial bishops was a hole-in-corner affair, performed in strictest privacy in Lambeth Palace Chapel. The practice reflected an uneasy feeling that there was something dubious and not quite respectable in making bishops who were not Lord Bishops and spiritual peers of the Kingdom. This sense of incompatibility was even stronger as regarded the American Church; in fact, the Church of England did not consider itself to be in full communion with our Church. The Parliamentary Act of 1786 which made possible the consecration of Bishops White, Provoost, and Madison expressly disallowed the right of any persons deriving Orders from these prelates to “exercise their office within His Majesty’s dominions.”<sup>6</sup> Accordingly, American bishops and presbyters who were soon to be visiting England in numbers were treated officially as laymen, admitted to the Sacraments, but debarred from any clerical function. They felt their situation as a keen humiliation; when Bishop Hobart visited Italy in 1825 he remarked caustically that “the Pope was more tolerant than the English Church, since though forbidden to preach in England he could do so in Rome.”<sup>7</sup>

A final illustration of the difficult birth-pangs of the Anglican Communion is the almost forgotten episode involving Bishop Luscombe.

In the early nineteenth century large numbers of British subjects were living on the Continent, not less than 35,000 in France alone. Numerous Church of England congregations had been formed, but their clergy were unlicensed and without supervision, discipline was lax, and Confirmation never administered. In 1821 efforts came to a head to provide for these Anglicans a bishop who would be suffragan to the Bishop of London; the proposal soon met the kind of impasse familiar in colonial days to American Churchmen. There was much correspondence and agitation, but the Home and Foreign Secretaries, Peel and Canning, concluded that to send an English bishop to the Continent would be politically inadvisable, and would be sure to stir up a hornet’s nest of jealousy and suspicion. Archbishop Manners Sutton and Bishop Howley of London, fearful in any case that the project “might lead to great inconvenience,” could do nothing without government approval.

Once again, recourse was had to the Scottish bishops, who after consideration judged the case “infinitely more delicate than that of Dr. Seabury.” But in the end, despite “the very chilling effect” of a letter from Mr. Secretary Peel, and the “very cold” letters of the English prelates, Primus Gleig and his fellow bishops on March 20, 1825, consecrated the candidate in question, Dr. Michael Luscombe, as a bishop “sent by us, representing the Scotch Episcopal Church, to the Continent of Europe.” He was solemnly enjoined “not to disturb the peace of any Christian society ... in whatever country he may

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<sup>6</sup> The text of the Act is given in W. S. Perry. *The History of the American Episcopal Church* (Boston, 1885), II, 71-72.

<sup>7</sup> M. Dix, *A History of the Parish of Trinity Church* (New York, 1905), III, 373. When Edward Waylen, an Englishman who had been ordained to the diaconate in the American Church, returned home in 1838, he was notified by both the Bishop of London and the Archbishop of Canterbury that they were unable to accept his letter dimissory from Bishop Griswold or in any circumstances to advance him to the priesthood. Bishop Blomfield admitted regretfully that “the unity of the Church is thereby sadly broken.” Cf. E. Waylen, *Ecclesiastical Reminiscences of the United States* (N.Y., 1846), pp.477ff.

chance to sojourn, but to confine his ministrations to British subjects, and such other Christians as may profess to be of a Protestant Episcopal Church.” Thus, for the second time, the tiny Scottish Church accepted a responsibility for the welfare of Anglicans outside her borders, while the Established Church of England found herself powerless to act.<sup>8</sup>

It was upon this Church, “snug and smug among the hedgerows,” as Scott Holland once wrote, “tied up in Elizabethan red tape, and smothered under the convention of Establishment,” that the fact of American Anglicanism now began to make an impression. Curiously, interest was first awakened by a work which made little impression on the Church in America—*Sermons on the Public Means of Grace and the Fasts and Festivals of the Church*, by Bishop Theodore Dehon of South Carolina. Published in England in two volumes in 1822, and going rapidly into three editions, the sermons achieved for their author posthumous fame as a preacher unequalled by any American Episcopalian until the time of Phillips Brooks. An American traveller in 1823 heard them praised by almost every clergyman he met; he recorded with pride:

“The popularity of the late Bishop Dehon in this country is unbounded. A gentleman assured me, that no sermons have been so much *preached* as his; partly on account of their own intrinsic excellence; and partly, from their being the production of an American bishop, and therefore supposed to be but little known in England. The latter, however, is a mistake. They are better known, and have been more universally read, than almost any sermons of the present age.”<sup>9</sup>

Of wider significance, however, was the arrival in England in 1823 of Bishops Hobart and Chase, the former for reasons of health and the latter to raise funds for his projected seminary on the Ohio frontier. It would be hard to think of two American prelates of the day more likely to catch the imagination of English churchmen than those two colorful antagonists. Hobart had already been in correspondence with the Rev. Henry Handley Norris of Hackney, London, and through him made friends with that prominent circle of High Churchmen known as the “Hackney Phalanx.” Bishop Chase eventually won the support of a number of wealthy and pious Evangelicals, and in the role of pioneer missionary in the American wilderness captivated his English hearers.

Both bishops were formidable personalities, and viewed in collision, they produced a memorable effect. Hobart’s vigorous campaign to discredit Chase’s mission and to assert the exclusive rights of the General Seminary as the Church’s one official institution became a *cause célèbre* in the church journals. The ecclesiastical world was enlivened by a hot interchange of articles, pamphlets, and open letters in which neither opponent yielded to the other in righteous indignation. Controversies may not be edifying, but they are often educational. As one of Chase’s supporters wrote to him:

“About thirty years ago Bishop Horsley confessed that after he was an English

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<sup>8</sup> W.R.W. Stephens, *The Life and Letters of Walter Farquhar Hook* (London, 1881), 52ff.; J. M. Neale, *The Life and Times of Patrick Torry, Bishop of St. Andrews* (London, 1856), 118ff.

<sup>9</sup> N. S. Wheaton, *A Journal of a Residence during Several Months in London in the Years 1823 and 1824* (Hartford, 1830), 118-9. For other references to Bishop Dehon’s popularity in England, cf. *ibid.*, 54-5, 68, 159; T. Bowdler, *Memoir of the Life of John Bowdler* (London, 1824), 271; W.R.W. Stephens, *op. cit.*, 74; *British Critic*, XV, 311.

bishop he was in ignorance that there were bishops in Scotland. Much greater, till last year, was the ignorance of an American episcopacy; ... of that, thousands, who only wanted to know of its existence to feel its importance, were ignorant till the stir made for Ohio.”<sup>10</sup>

In still another way, Bishop Hobart’s long stay in England clarified ideas about the American Church. His championship of High Church principles was offset by a belligerent pride in American institutions, and those who were drawn to him by the one had also to come to terms with the other. No one who learned of the Episcopal Church through Hobart would be likely to visualize it as a pale and expurgated version of the Establishment. “He prided himself,” wrote Dr. Hook, “and went out of his way to show it, on being a Republican; and the mixture of Republican with High Church principles perplexed not a few among those who approached him, and who confounded the Church with the Establishment.”<sup>11</sup>

An example of his unabashed zeal is his interview with the Primate, the urbane Dr. Manners Sutton. In the course of a sermon preached long after, Dr. McVickar, his biographer, tells us:

“While such evils [of Establishment] were still latent there, Bishop Hobart had alike the sagacity to perceive and the frankness to urge them upon the Primate of all England, as also the necessity of making timely provision against what has now actually occurred—I mean the worldly judgment of a political council affecting to overrule an article of the Church’s creed—our Bishop respectfully unfolding to him, at the same time, our American forms of Church legislation.”<sup>12</sup>

Not content with this frankness in conversation, the Bishop, as soon as he returned home, preached a sermon enlarging on “the deleterious effects” of the union of Church and State in the mother country, assuring his auditors of “the great superiority of your own Church in many particulars of human arrangement.” To compound his tactlessness, he dedicated the published sermon to his English friend Joshua Watson, confiding, he declared, in the latter’s candor and liberality not to “censure an American for the frank, but, I trust, decorous avowal which he makes of his preference for the institutions of his own country.”<sup>13</sup> It is not surprising that the liberality of church circles in England proved unequal to the test, and that a minor uproar ensued. But Bishop Hobart’s friends stood loyal, and writing to defend him against the charge of treachery and false friendship, Hugh James Rose reminded the angry critics that the Bishop “openly and unreservedly expressed, while in England, precisely the same opinions on our policy in church and state, which he has expressed in his sermon,” and that he had a perfect right to his view that episcopacy “subsists more purely and in the more entire exercise of all its

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<sup>10</sup> P. Chase, *Bishop Chase’s Reminiscences: An Autobiography* (Boston, 1848), I, 436. Chase was much pained to learn that the Archbishop of York assumed that the Bishop of Ohio was subject to the archiepiscopal jurisdiction of the Bishop of New York. Cf. *ibid*, I, 344-5.

<sup>11</sup> W.R.W. Stephens, *op. cit.*, 72.

<sup>12</sup> John McVickar, *The Christian Jubilee: a Sermon Preached in Trinity Church, New York, July 16, 1851*, (New York, 1851), 14-15. The reference of the phrase “the worldly judgment of a political council” is to the Gorham Judgment delivered by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council on March 8, 1850.

<sup>13</sup> J. H. Hobart, *The United States Compared with Some European Countries, Particularly England* (New York, 1826), pp. iii, 31, 33.

legitimate powers in America than in England.”<sup>14</sup> The storm soon blew over, but a point had been made that was not forgotten.

The 1830s in England were a period of the shaking of foundations. The Reform Bill of 1832 proved to be not the end but the beginning of social and political change. With newly awakened interest, progressive thinkers of all kinds looked to the democratic ways of America for inspiration and guidance.<sup>15</sup> The Establishment too felt the rising pressure for change, and what Gibbon had called “the fat slumbers of the Church” were rudely disturbed. Under the leadership of Lord Liverpool and Sir Robert Peel, Parliament undertook the slow but drastic reform of the almost medieval administrative structure, while the Tractarians furiously challenged the State’s presumption, and campaigned to recall the whole Church to a knowledge of her true being and function. In ecclesiastical as well as political circles, there was curiosity about the American experiment, and a new openness to Transatlantic influence.

This influence became operative in several ways. In the first place, a steady stream of American clerics followed in the footsteps of Hobart and Chase, everywhere strengthening the bonds of personal friendship between churchmen in the two countries and spreading knowledge of the daughter Church. Bishops McIlvaine, Ives, Hopkins, Doane, and Meade, and such leading presbyters as Samuel Jarvis, James Milner, John McVickar, Professor Ogilby, Stephen Tyng, Benjamin Haight, William Augustus Muhlenberg, J. B. Kerfoot, and Arthur Cleveland Coxe all spent lengthy periods in England in the 30s and early 40s. Dr. Tyng, in 1842, described the experience common to them all:

“The deepest interest is felt there in the concerns of our Church . . . Repeatedly was I urged, in various meetings, to give an account of its condition and history, and prospects: more than once was I urged to prepare for the press some Tracts which would furnish the information which I there gave, and which was always eagerly and thankfully received. The late visits of several of our bishops and clergy have been the instrument of much increasing this general feeling of interest and respect.”

To his astonishment he found the Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr. Howley) “thoroughly and correctly informed of the state and circumstances of our Church—indeed, I was surprised, in considering his age, station, and occupations, at the knowledge he had of many minute and subordinate matters among us.”<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> *Christian Remembrancer*, VIII (1826), 544, 547. In a letter to Hobart, Henry Handley Norris passed off the incident in this way: “I admire the Sermon as an excellent stroke of Policy. You could not more effectually have conveyed the sensation to your whole Diocese, and indeed through the States, that the twenty-horse power, whose energies had been for two years suspended, was at work again, and I have no doubt, have called the attention of your whole communion to yourself with all the enthusiasm of popularity.” M. Dix, op. cit., IV, 15.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. G. D. Liliibrige, *Beacon of Freedom: The Impact of American Democracy upon Great Britain, 1830-1870* (Philadelphia, 1955) and F. Thistlethwaite, *The Anglo-American Connection in the Early Nineteenth Century* (Philadelphia, 1959).

<sup>16</sup> S. H. Tyng, *Recollections of England* (London, 1847), 3-4, 81. Dr. Tyng adds: “I found myself walking in the light of the excellent men who had gone before me, and often were the names of Meade and Doane,

Secondly, a number of substantial works on American Church life became available to the English public. In 1837 John McVickar's biography of Hobart was published at Oxford in a handsome edition carrying a lengthy historical preface by the famous Vicar of Leeds, Walter Farquhar Hook. The reason for Hook's patronage is significant; sometime before he had written to his father: "Few people, I flatter myself, in England are better acquainted than I am with the history of the Apostolic Church in America ... I am more particularly interested in the subject, as it will cause Episcopacy to be better understood in England by the generality of persons."<sup>17</sup> In 1839 there appeared *America and the American Church* by the Rev. Henry Caswall, a book which still has great value for its graphic account of Episcopalian church ways before the impact of the Oxford Movement. Caswall was an Englishman who had spent ten years as a teacher and parish priest in various parts of the United States; when he returned to his homeland in 1842 he became an unceasing propagandist for closer relations between the two Churches. A reviewer in the *British Magazine* underscored the timeliness of his book in these words: "Every work is useful which brings before the public the condition of the Church in the United States, and thus enables men to contemplate the Church as distinguished from the Establishment."<sup>18</sup> Five years later, Samuel Wilberforce, shortly to become Bishop of Oxford, brought out his excellent *History of the Protestant Episcopal Church in America*, the first attempt of its kind on either side of the Atlantic. "Full of interest is it," he informed his readers, "to watch the up-growth of such a body amongst institutions so unlike our own."<sup>19</sup> Finally, in 1846 Edward Waylen, who like Caswall had served in the daughter Church, published his *Ecclesiastical Reminiscences of the United States*, believing, he declared, that the success of the earlier books "affords evidence of a growing interest among British Christians in whatever relates to the cause of catholicity in America," and "appears fully to warrant another contribution to the same subject."<sup>20</sup>

If we add to these volumes the frequent articles on American Church affairs now appearing in ecclesiastical magazines,<sup>21</sup> there is ample evidence that as tension increased in the relations of Church and State, interest centered more and more on the non-established daughter Church. "I very much wish," wrote the editor of the *British Magazine*, Hugh James Rose, to Bishop Doane in 1836, "that I could find some young man among you who would undertake—say twice a year—to send me a *précis* of what has taken place most interesting in your Church. If it extended to six or eight pages, it would not be too much."<sup>22</sup> Especially among the Tractarians was there vigilant attention, although they grieved at the Latitudinarian taint in the American Prayer Book, and noted signs of laxity in doctrine and practice. Certainly the divinity of our Transatlantic brethren (and father; even) is somewhat crude; Hook wrote to Newman in 1836, and

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and McIlvaine and Hopkins, and Milner and May, and many others, mentioned to me with the highest respect and as of persons whose good report had always been attendant upon them." *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>17</sup> W.R.W. Stephens, *op. cit.*, 73.

<sup>18</sup> *British Magazine*, XVI, 194.

<sup>19</sup> S. Wilberforce, *op. cit.*, 2.

<sup>20</sup> E. Waylen, *op. cit.*, p. ix.

<sup>21</sup> Some of the more important articles on the American Church may be found in the *British Critic*, XIV (1833), 375ff.; XV (1834), 280ff.; XX (1836), 261ff.; XXI (1837), 391ff.; XXII (1837), 439ff.; XXVI (1839), 281ff.; *British Magazine* IV (1833), 597ff.; VI (1835), 195; *Christian Remembrancer*, N.S. VI (1843), 677ff.; XXIII (1852), 329ff.; *Guardian*, Aug. 11, 1852, 535ff.

<sup>22</sup> J. W. Burgon, *Twelve Good Men* (New York, 1891), 123.



proceeded to enlist his Oxford friends in the restorative project of sending a complete set of the Fathers to the General Theological Seminary.<sup>23</sup>

Both Pusey and Newman were disheartened when the Presiding Bishop, Alexander Griswold, formally admitted a visiting Nestorian bishop, Mar Yohanna, to communion in Boston in 1842. It seemed to them a blow to Anglican catholicity hardly less damaging than the affair of the Jerusalem bishopric. But both were correspondingly cheered by Bishop Onderdonk's ordination of Arthur Carey despite bitter Evangelical opposition. Pusey held great hopes that the revival of monasticism would begin in America, writing to Bishop Doane, "I looked to your part of the Church for some first instance of it ... You are freer."<sup>24</sup> In 1843 Pusey was already reaching toward some concept of the Anglican Communion. "Have your Bishops any communication with our Colonial Bishops?" he inquired of Doane. "They are nearer to you than to us, and it seems to belong to the oneness of the Church, that they should be in some sort of intercourse with you."<sup>25</sup> Earlier, in Tract 20, Newman in figurative language had implied something similar: "Thus, in every quarter of the world, from North America to New South Wales, a Zoar has been provided for those who would fain escape Sodom, and yet dread to be without shelter."<sup>26</sup> He argued with Rose on the urgent necessity of establishing formal intercommunion with the American Church, and at the height of his influence as the Tractarian leader, spoke with eloquence on the significance of that Church for his vision of Anglicanism:

"Let the American Church take her place; she is freer than we are; she has but to

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<sup>23</sup> W.R.W. Stephens, op. cit., 138-9. A more detailed account of Hook's project will be found in J. B. Langstaff, *The Enterprising Life: John McVickar, 1787-1868* (New York, 1961), 330ff. Stephens describes Newman's earlier plan as follows: "The opinions and the tone of some of the American clergy and Bishops who had recently visited England seemed to them [Hook, Newman, and Pusey] far from satisfactory. On the subject of Baptismal Regeneration, especially, there seemed reason to fear that the American Church might split into two sections . . . Mr. Newman thought it would be highly desirable that two or three able and learned men of sound views should go over to New York and make it their headquarters for several years, for the purpose of propagating Catholic truth; but it seemed impossible to find men who combined ability, leisure, and means to undertake the work." Op. cit., 138-9.

<sup>24</sup> Reference to Tractarian interest in the affairs of the American Church will be found in W. C. Doane, *A Memoir of the Life of George Washington Doane* (New York, 1860), 259-260; Correspondence of Newman with Keble London, 1917), 194-5, 253; A. Mozley, *Correspondence of John Henry Newman* (London, 1890), ii, 358; H. P. Liddon, *Life of Edward Bouverie Pusey* (London, 1893-97), ii, 445. For an account of Bishop Griswold's dealing with Mar Yohannan, cf. J. S. Stone, op. cit., 434ff., and J. H. Hopkins, Jr., *The Life of the late Rt. Rev. John Henry Hopkins* (New York, 1873) 216-7. On the Carey Case, Archbishop Richard Whateley of Dublin wrote to John McVickar: "I have always held free inter-communion with the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States, and have allowed many of its ministers to officiate here. Whether I can remain on the same footing may depend on the issue of the case in question." J. B. Langstaff, op. cit., 354-5.

<sup>25</sup> W. C. Doane, op. cit., 260. Cf. Bishop Selwyn's letter to Doane, July 22, 1841: "To one who is about to go to the part of the globe which is most distant of all from his own country, it must be a ground of thankfulness and comfort, to think that by whichever course his thoughts wander to his native land, they rest upon successive halting places of Episcopacy, in each of which he knows that he may find at all times a brother and a friend. When we shall have encircled the globe with our circle of episcopacy, though we may have but little intercourse either in person or by letter with our brethren in Christ, we may still strengthen ourselves with that inward feeling of communion, by which we are united in one body under our Divine Head." Ibid, 264.

<sup>26</sup> Tracts for the Times (London, 1838), I, Tract 20, "the Visible Church," p. 4.

will, and she can do. Let her . . . react upon us, according to the light and power given her . . . Let her be, as it were, our shadow before us; the prophecy and the omen, the mysterious token and the anticipated fulfilment of those Catholic principles which lie within us more or less latent, waiting for the destined hour of their development.”<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> J. H. Newman, “The American Church,” in *British Critic*, XXVI, 340.

## II

So far, we have considered the ways in which church leadership in England became alive to the American Church and susceptible to its influence. It remains for us to see how that same influence quickened the idea of the Anglican Communion, and encouraged the development of its characteristic institutions and bonds of unity.

It was at the General Convention of 1838 that the House of Bishops took the initial step to regularize relations between the several Anglican Churches. Bishop McIlvaine asked that a committee be appointed to report on measures for “obtaining the requisite securities, in reference to the passing of Clergymen to and from countries in which are Protestant Episcopal Churches, for the purpose of settlement.” A committee of three bishops reported that in such cases “a regular and formal dimissory letter was absolutely essential to the proper discipline of the Church.” The House then authorized what is almost certainly the first formal communication from one Anglican Church to all its sister Churches—the Presiding Bishop was requested

“to enter into correspondence with the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Archbishop of Armagh, as Primate of all Ireland, the Primus of the Episcopal Church in Scotland, the Bishops of the Protestant Churches in the West India Islands, and in the colonies of Canada and Nova Scotia, for the purpose of arranging ... a general concurrence in the above regulations.”<sup>28</sup>

At the next Convention, the Committee was able to report that Bishop Griswold’s letters to the prelates named had been answered “in a spirit of truly Christian love, and in such terms as to indicate the readiest mind to cooperate with this Church in the maintenance of Catholic unity.” Since, however, no bishop in British dominions might lawfully or canonically receive into his diocese a clergyman ordained in America, the canon then enacted by General Convention could only regulate the reception of foreign clergy into the American Church. Nevertheless, as Griswold’s biographer notes, “the subject of establishing terms of intercommunion” had been broached, “opening the way for regular and truly Christian intercourse between the respective Churches represented.”<sup>29</sup>

This overture by the House of Bishops may well have played some part in the decision of Archbishop Howley, with the encouragement of Bishop Blomfield of London, to introduce into Parliament a bill to allow clergymen of the American and Scottish Churches to officiate on occasion in the Church of England. “It had long been a cause of regret to the more Catholic minds in the English Church,” says Blomfield’s biographer, “and of not unjust complaint to the Reformed Episcopal Churches of Scotland and America, that intercommunion between the former and the latter was wholly impracticable.”<sup>30</sup> In 1838 first Bishop Hopkins of Vermont and then Bishop Russell of

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<sup>28</sup> Journal of the General Convention of 1838 (New York, 1838), 93-95.

<sup>29</sup> J. S. Stone, op.cit., 419; Journal of the General Convention of 1841 (New York, 1841), 107-9; *British Magazine*, XVIII (1840), 343-4.

<sup>30</sup> G. E. Biber, *Bishop Blomfield and His Times* (London, 1857), 293-4.

Glasgow had visited England and made representations to the Archbishop on this delicate subject. The politicians were amenable, the Duke of Wellington himself spoke an approving word . . . and the thing was done!<sup>31</sup> The terms of this new liberty were not, in truth, over-generous; the bishop of any diocese in England and Ireland might license a clergyman of either of the two Churches to perform divine service and to preach “for any one day or any two days, and no more,” the day and place to be specified in the permission granted.<sup>32</sup> But at least formal recognition of the principle of intercommunion was clearly established.

One of the warmest friends of the American Church, Dr. Hook of Leeds, was eager for an opportunity to give effect to the new privilege, and in the spring of 1841 he invited Bishop Doane of New Jersey to preach the sermon at the consecration of his magnificent new parish church. The Bishop accepted with enthusiasm, and armed with resolutions of his Convention warmly approving his mission “to recognize the restoration of the ancient Catholic intercourse of Churches,” hastened to England. His visit was the occasion of much celebration. He was feted by the Archbishop, the Bishop of London, and many other dignitaries; his exuberant speeches were widely reported in the press; and the whole Church was made aware of the new bond of intercommunion. To quote the Bishop’s own words:

“All my highest purposes in coming have been more than realized . . . the Catholic relation of the two Churches has been freely recognized not only, but triumphantly asserted . . . The gathering at Leeds, the venerable Archbishop and Metropolitan of York, the Bishops of three several branches of the Church, three hundred surpliced presbyters from every quarter of the kingdom, the living mass that filled that solemn temple; these, and the blessing from the Lord, which rested, as I trust, on that occasion, unexampled since the early days of Catholic intercourse, were, and were felt to be, the appropriate crown of this perfect intercommunion between the Mother and the Daughter.”<sup>33</sup>

His cup was indeed filled to overflowing when he received from the poet William Wordsworth the gift of three sonnets on the American Church, together with the prayer, “May the religious union established between our Churches continue from age to age; and spread, till every corner of the world be a partaker of its benefits.”<sup>34</sup>

From this same period there dates a curious document from the American side, which other historians may find less baffling than I do. In 1843 Bishops Brownell of Connecticut and Onderdonk of New York addressed a formal communication to the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Primus of Scotland. “Recent events in our reformed branch of the Catholic Church,” they began, “have made us feel, venerable and beloved Brethren, that the principles of the English Reformation, so far as they were left incomplete at the death of Edward VI, of pious memory, should now be carried out for the greater benefit of the Churches under our jurisdiction. We refer to the code of ecclesiastical law drawn up by the venerable martyrs Cranmer and Ridley, and ready to

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<sup>31</sup> J. H. Hopkins, Jr., op. cit., 193; J. M. Neale, op. cit., 183-7.

<sup>32</sup> The text of the Act is printed in *British Magazine*, XVIII, 339-41.

<sup>33</sup> W. C. Doane, op. cit., 305, 308.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid*, 299.

be acted upon by Convocation and Parliament, when the death of Edward VI brought into power the popish faction and defeated the pious design.” They were anxious to obtain a copy of this document, known to historians as the *Reformatio Legum*, and implied that it might well serve as a basis for revising all Anglican canon law. “Uniformity in these matters appears to us very desirable; and although situated as the Church of England now is, it may be impossible to revive a work of such magnitude, we cannot but hope that the time is not far distant when the restoration of the powers of the English Convocation may render it practicable.” In the meantime, they at least hoped for the “advice and concurrence” of the English and Scottish prelates, that their own labors might be “conducive to the furtherance of pure and primitive Christianity.”<sup>35</sup> What are we to make of this proposal? One can only assume that a High Churchman like Brownell and a full-fledged Tractarian like Benjamin Onderdonk were innocent of the contents of the *Reformatio Legum*, which Professor Neale has termed “that corpus of radical canons,” so “hateful” to Queen Elizabeth I and so dear to the Protestant extremists of her reign.<sup>36</sup> If Bishop Meade and Bishop McIlvaine had composed and signed the document, there would be no puzzle for the historian. As it is, “the voice is Jacob’s voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau.”

Even if the Church of England was still powerless to enact legislation at this time, she was nevertheless capable of bringing about a revolution of far-reaching consequence in her missionary policy. It began with a public letter addressed to the Archbishop of Canterbury by Bishop Blomfield in 1840, urging that

“whereas [in the work of erecting colonial churches] we formerly began by sending out a few individual missionaries, to occupy detached and independent fields of labor . . . and then, after an interval of many years, placing them under the guidance and control of Bishops; we should now . . . take care to let every new colony enjoy that blessing from the very first. Let every band of settlers which goes forth from Christian England, with authority to occupy a distinct territory, and to form a separate community, take with it not only its civil rulers and functionaries, but its Bishop and clergy.”<sup>37</sup>

These words will have a familiar echo to all who have studied our American Church history, and for good reason! “There cannot be the slightest doubt as to where this idea originated,” writes Dr. Hans Cnatingius; in his illuminating book, *Bishops and Societies: a Study of Anglican Colonial and Missionary Expansion*,<sup>38</sup> he goes on to describe the turning point in our own missionary history, the great General Convention of 1835, when the whole Church was constituted as the Missionary Society, and the office of “Missionary Bishop” created. Then it was that Bishop Doane in his famous sermon at Kemper’s consecration defined the new office—“a Bishop sent forth by the Church, not sought for of the Church—going before, to organize the Church, not waiting till the Church has partially been organized—a leader not a follower.”

When in 1837 Samuel Wilberforce was examining materials for his history of the

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<sup>35</sup> J. M. Neale, op. cit., 200-202.

<sup>36</sup> J. E. Neale, *Elizabeth I and her Parliaments, 1559-1581* (New York, 1953), 63, 194.

<sup>37</sup> Bishop Blomfield’s letter is printed in the *British Magazine*, XVII. 682ff.

<sup>38</sup> London, 1952. The discussion is on pp. 198-203.

Episcopal Church, his imagination was fired by the story of this Convention. He wrote at length to Newman about the new idea of missionary bishops; he preached the annual S.P.G. anniversary sermon on the subject in the fall, arousing much discussion; and he communicated his enthusiasm to Bishop Blomfield. Doane had demanded in his sermon, “Upon what principle can we neglect, or on what grounds can we refuse—since from their feebleness and poverty they cannot have a Bishop of their own—to send them, at our own cost and charge, and in the Saviour’s name, a Missionary Bishop?\_ Blomfield’s answer was to create the Colonial Bishops Fund. An inaugural meeting presided over by the Archbishop and addressed by Blomfield, Gladstone, and others, was held in April, 1841. Large sums were subscribed by the great missionary societies and by many individuals, and the four archbishops and twenty-five bishops of the United Church of England and Ireland backed the appeal with a manifesto, designating the first six colonial dioceses to receive funds. With the £230,000 eventually raised it was possible to organize thirty new dioceses between 1841 and 1871, an average of one new missionary diocese a year!

A symbol of the change of outlook was the great service in Westminster Abbey in 1847, when for the first time colonial bishops were consecrated in public, Bishop Blomfield preaching the sermon to an immense congregation. It was also Blomfield, strong in his new conviction that the Church itself ought to be the missionary body, who persuaded the C.M.S. to surrender some measure of its independence and join with the S.P.G. in operating under “the superintendence and control” of the episcopate. At the same time, Parliament was induced to pass an act enabling the Archbishops, without royal license or mandate, and without exacting oath of allegiance or of canonical obedience, to consecrate as bishops in lands outside British territory either British subjects or foreign citizens.<sup>39</sup>

We may well agree with Dr. Cnattingius that “the period 1840-50 was thus of epoch-making importance in the evolution of Anglicanism into a World Church.” For our particular interest, his further conclusion is highly significant—“the programme adopted by the American daughter Church undoubtedly helped inspire both the movement of the 1840s in general, and the idea of sending out missionary bishops in particular.”<sup>40</sup>

American influence was now at its height among English churchmen, and playing a part in other movements of reform. One editor remarked rather sourly, “We have observed in some quarters among ourselves, a desire to praise everything belonging to the American Church, as though it must be immeasurably superior to our own, from the simple fact of not being an Establishment.”<sup>41</sup> In the late 1840s agitation began to revive

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<sup>39</sup> The text is printed in the *British Magazine*, XX, 460-61. It is surprising to realize that, excluding the United States, no Anglican consecration took place outside the British Isles before the year 1855, when Francis Thomas M'Dougall was consecrated by Bishop Wilson of Calcutta to the see of Labuan and Sarawak. Cf. H. Lowther Clarke, *Constitutional Church Government* (London, 1924), p. 44, note.

<sup>40</sup> H. Cnattingius, *op. cit.*, 203, 204.

<sup>41</sup> *Christian Remembrancer*, N.S. VI (1843), 679. Another area of church reform in which American influence played some part was that of ministerial training. Bishop Wilberforce, who founded Cuddesdon College in 1854, was familiar with the character and general program of the General Seminary in New York; cf. his *History of the Protestant Episcopal Church in America* (London, 1844), 360-62. Cf. also, H. Raikes, *Remarks on Clerical Education* (London, 1831), which describes the program of the American Church as “more vigorous and complete,” and gives the scheme of study and discipline at the General

the powers of Convocation, and the proponents appealed constantly to the example of the Episcopal Church. In a weighty article the *Christian Remembrancer* declared:

“There is no part of the American Church system which must, at the present time, engage that attention of ourselves with the same interest as its Synodical action. If we have given episcopacy to a sister church, we shall receive good interest for our help if we ... gain from her some help towards re-establishing among ourselves that necessary element of church government, signified by the term Synod.”

The writer goes on to say that “the active power and Catholic stamp” of the activities of General Convention “afford an irresistible argument in aid of those who are struggling in England for the same privilege.”<sup>42</sup>

It was an argument much used, and the distinctive features of the American system were hotly debated. In the House of Lords Bishop Blomfield strongly defended the right of the laity to deliberate in Synod on matters of external government and administration, but appealed on another score to the example of the Episcopal Church of America, in which “questions of faith and doctrine may be discussed by the representative body . . . but no decision can be come to without first allowing a veto to the Bishops.”<sup>43</sup> The proper role of the laity aroused disagreement. Dr. Hook declared himself “an advocate for the introduction of laymen,” but thought “the proportion too great in the American Convention.”<sup>44</sup> Dr. Pusey announced flatly that “the ‘Constitution’ of the American Church is based neither on warrant of Holy Scripture, nor of the Church, down to itself . . . it introduced a new principle.”<sup>45</sup> However, Mr. Gladstone in his widely read open letter, *On the Function of Laymen in the Church*, argued at length that even in

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Seminary. The American innovation most hotly debated was the “voluntary system” of financial support; cf. *British Magazine*, V, passim.

<sup>42</sup> *Christian Remembrancer*, N.S. XXIII (1852), 350-51. The year before, Henry Caswall had written: “The present condition of the American Church is a subject of the deepest interest to those who desire the restoration of efficient Synodical Action to the Church of England.” *A Brief Account of the Method of Synodical Action in the American Church: A Paper presented to the Provisional Committee of the Synodal Consultative Meeting at Derby* (London, 1851) p. 3. In 1824 a visit from Bishop Hobart had occasioned agitation for lay representation in the synod of the Scottish Church. Cf. J. M. Neale. op.cit., 112ff.

<sup>43</sup> G. E. Biber, op. cit., 392-3.

<sup>44</sup> W.R.W. Stephens, op. cit., 178. Hook drew this conclusion from his study of the American General Convention: “It is a curious fact that when the attention of the laity is called to such matters, the laity always become higher Churchmen than the clergy, the latter generally, I suppose, feeling a fear lest they should appear to advance their personal claims when defending the rights of their order ... It is a curious fact that, when it was lately proposed in America that the pulpits of the Church should be opened to all sectarians holding the doctrine of the Trinity, the clergy yielded, but the laity resolutely resisted the shameful proposition.” *Ibid*, 178.

<sup>45</sup> H. P. Liddon, op. cit., III, 349. Pusey later developed his criticism of the American Church at length; cf. his *The Councils of the Church Chiefly as to Their Constitution* (Oxford, 1857), pp. 24-27: “It must be said plainly, that the precedent set in [the Church] in the United States is radically wrong, and in fact, is so far, the adoption of a principle belonging to bodies who reject the Apostolic succession and the whole principle of a deposit of faith, and of a commission, transmitted from the Apostles and part of the mind of Christ. Yet, in so saying, I do not mean (God forbid!) that she has thereby forfeited her claim to be a part of the Church. She has abandoned a bulwark of the faith, a function of the office inherited by her Bishops, not the faith itself nor the Apostolic Succession . . . The admission of laymen to a co-ordinate voice in the Councils on the faith, is not an heretical act. Yet, it is an innovation upon that rule which the inspired Apostles left with the Church ... It is plain, then, that in the future history of the Church, either we must be the instrument of God in upholding their faith, or they, if we enter closer relations with them, will lower ours.”

a country where “insubordination, ignorance, pride of purse, heat of temper, worldly minds, self-love and egoism in all their shapes” abounded, a mixed synod had yet been “the means at once of checking dissension and disorder, and developing life and vigor in America.”<sup>46</sup> Put in this pleasing way, it made a forceful argument. Even the conservative Archbishop John Bird Sumner was not unaffected by Transatlantic influence; acknowledging resolutions of the South African clergy for the revival of Convocation, he wrote: “I, for my part, cannot separate the Church from the Laity belonging to it; and I should be sorry to see any Synod erected with governing power composed of the ministers of the Church alone.”<sup>47</sup> It is interesting that when Convocation was at last allowed to deliberate in 1855, one of its first acts was to propose a reform of its own constitution; but that motion the Crown would not accept.

When in 1852 Henry Caswall produced a revised edition of his book, *America and the American Church*, he remarked, “In the event of the Colonial Churches acquiring Synodical powers, we may be certain that the experience acquired in America will be a subject of their careful examination.”<sup>48</sup> The movement for ecclesiastical self-government was now well under way in the English-speaking colonies, spurred on by disestablishment and by the advice of Mr. Gladstone, when Secretary of State for the Colonies, “to organize on that basis of voluntary consensual compact which was the basis on which the Church of Christ rested from the first.” In 1850 a conference of the six Australian bishops in Sydney decided that the Church in their colony must act for itself; in 1851 a conference of Canadian bishops in Quebec advocated synodical government; in the same year Bishop Gray of Capetown announced his intention of forming “a Synod or Convention in whose deliberations both Clergy and Laity may take their respective parts;”<sup>49</sup> in 1853 Bishop Selwyn of New Zealand proposed a constitution which was assented to by a large meeting of clergy and laity.

It would require an exhaustive study to assess the weight of American influence in these and other proceedings, but there are clear indications that it was usually present. We know that Bishop Hopkins of Vermont was requested to advise the Canadian bishops when they organized their synodical system, and was warmly thanked for his aid by the Bishops of Quebec, Montreal, and Toronto.<sup>50</sup> And in 1853 a Canadian delegation visited the General Convention, its declared object being “to take a leaf from the open book of

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<sup>46</sup> W. E. Gladstone, *On the Function of Laymen in the Church* (London, 1852), 22. This pamphlet was ostensibly addressed to the situation in the Scottish Episcopal Church, but aroused much discussion in England. Gladstone’s view may be contrasted with Pusey’s: “The Episcopal Church in the United States has given a distinct place and vote to the lay order in its Ecclesiastical Assemblies. No doubt that Church is far from presenting to us anything like a perfect system; but the whole weight of testimony . . . is in favour of this lay representation, as being not the cause but the corrective of passion and disorder, as adding greatly to what may be called the ballast of the Church, while it is likewise found to be an incalculable and an indispensable source of expansive strength.” The pamphlet gives a long and interesting interpretation of the American Church’s history.

<sup>47</sup> C. Gray, *Life of Robert Gray, Bishop of Capetown* (London, 1876), I, 313.

<sup>48</sup> H. Caswall, *op. cit.*, p. vi. He adds: “Of the 106 Bishops of our Reformed Church, forty alone are established in the English sense of the word. Forty-one are entirely dissociated from all State connexion, and the remaining twenty-five are involved in the perplexities of that transitional system which prevails in the Colonies.” *Ibid.* 390.

<sup>49</sup> C. Gray, *op. cit.*, I, 350.

<sup>50</sup> J. H. Hopkins, Jr., *op. cit.*, 294.



American experience in synodical action to guide them, as they were just beginning to follow in the same career.”<sup>51</sup> In New Zealand, the first draft of the constitution eventually adopted was drawn up by the governor, Sir George Grey. The historian of that Church tells us that it was clearly of American origin, even using the un-English term “Convention” for the proposed legislative body, which conformed closely to the American pattern.<sup>52</sup> For Bishop Gray in South Africa, Murray Hoffman’s *Treatise on the Law of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States* (published in 1850) served as a standard text in his long struggle to achieve self-government for his province.<sup>53</sup> Most revealing is the account of a clergy meeting in Sydney, Australia, in the summer of 1852, published in the *Guardian*. One speaker remarked: “Much has been said of the practice of the Church in America, and her canons and constitutions have been held up as the model, by many speakers, after which the Church in this diocese is to be conformed.” Another asked, “Will it not be well to wait until we have procured and digested the contents of Hoffman’s treatise, if we are so determinedly bent upon taking the American Church for our model?”<sup>54</sup> If these are no more than straws in the wind, they all seem to point in one direction.

The initial stage in the formation of the Anglican Communion reached its climax in the years 1852-53. In the summer of 1852, the S.P.G. was concluding the celebration of its third Jubilee, and the Archbishop of Canterbury invited the American episcopate to send a delegation “to manifest the essential unity of the sister Churches of America and England.” So unprecedented an invitation was regarded as momentous. An effort was made to convoke the House of Bishops, but when this proved impracticable, about half the prelates assembled in New York and designated Bishop De Lancey of Western New York and Bishop McCoskry of Michigan as their representatives. Accompanied by the Secretary of the House of Bishops, Dr. Wainwright, the delegation proceeded to England. Bishop De Lancey later published a most detailed account of “the Mission to the Jubilee;”<sup>55</sup> but it would be tedious to report the great services, the innumerable banquets and after-dinner speeches, the public meetings all over England that the delegates attended. One fact stands out; for the first time representation from all Churches in communion with Canterbury was such that the lengthy celebration was analogous to a Pan-Anglican Congress. In speaking of the concluding service Dr. Wainwright summed up the general impression: “There was in Westminster Abbey a glorious exemplification of Catholic principle. There were Bishops of England, of Scotland, of the English colonies, and of America; and, for the first time, the Reformed Church realized in some degree Catholicity of representation, as well as Catholicity of mission.”<sup>56</sup> To the Rev. Henry Caswall a long cherished dream of Anglican unity seemed gloriously fulfilled. I cannot forbear to quote his description of the Abbey service:

“The multitude, hitherto pent up, swept like a torrent into the venerable building.

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<sup>51</sup> H. Caswall, *The Western World Revisited* (Oxford, 1854), 168-9.

<sup>52</sup> H. T. Purchas, *The English Church in New Zealand* (Christchurch, 1914), 156-7. Cf. also H. W. Tucker, *Memoir of the Life and Episcopate of George Augustus Selwyn* (New York, 1879), ii, 90, 108.

<sup>53</sup> C. Gray, op. cit., I, 481ff.

<sup>54</sup> *Guardian*, September 1, 1852, pp. 580-581.

<sup>55</sup> *The Mission of the Jubilee: Bishop De Lancey’s Report to the Convention of the Diocese of Western New York* (Utica, 1852).

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid*, 52.

In a few seconds I was established in a seat within the choir . . . and around me, north, south, east and west, I observed thousands pressing in. But the clock strikes ten. A burst of music peals on high through the vaulted arches, announcing that the Bishops are approaching . . . What a procession! Such a procession as the Anglican Church has never before witnessed. Jerusalem and Michigan; Bombay and Sodor and Man; Madras and Western New York; Ripon and St. Asaph; Edinburgh and Gloucester; Oxford and Argyll; Salisbury and Glasgow and Moray and Ross; his Grace of Canterbury closing the line of apostolic brotherhood. The assembled thousands rise up in token of respect . . . While that procession of Bishops advances towards the *sacrarium*, let us inwardly pray for them, and for the 108 Bishops of the Anglican Communion, whom they may be considered to represent.”<sup>57</sup>

If the General Convention of 1835 is famous as the “Missionary Convention,” that of 1853 is distinguished by its concern for inter-Anglican relations. One reason, no doubt, was the presence of a reciprocal delegation from the S.P.G., commissioned by the Archbishop of Canterbury “to strengthen and improve . . . the intimate relations which already happily exist between the Mother and Daughter Churches, and which are the proper fruit of their essential spiritual unity.”<sup>58</sup> The delegation was made up of Bishop Spencer of Madras, Archdeacon Sinclair of Middlesex, the Rev. Ernest Hawkins, Secretary of the S.P.G., and our old friend Henry Caswall. A deputation from the Canadian Church was also present, headed by the Bishop of Fredericton.

We have time for only a brief review of actions taken by the Convention which bear on our subject, but they clearly reflect the new-interest in Anglican solidarity. (1) A Joint Commission was appointed to consider “such measures as may tend to increase the friendly and catholic relations between the Churches of England with her dependencies, and the Protestant Episcopal Church in these United States.”<sup>59</sup> (2) The House of Bishops requested the Presiding Bishop to raise again with the Archbishop of Canterbury the matter of what provisions could be agreed on by the two Churches “regulating the transfer of Clergymen from one Church to another.”<sup>60</sup> (3) Presented with a request from the English Convocation Society for support in the current campaign for synodical revival, the House of Bishops carefully laid down a principle destined to be basic to Anglican fellowship—“that it would not become the General Convention of this Church to interfere in any way in matters pertaining to the internal administration of any Sister Church.”<sup>61</sup> (4) The Convention appointed a committee to correspond with the Archbishop of Canterbury about the jurisdictional conflict which had arisen in China between Bishop Boone and the English Bishop of Victoria. This committee was later to point out to the Primate the importance of any solution reached, which might well become a precedent for future cases of overlapping jurisdiction.<sup>62</sup> (5) Finally, it was resolved to send copies of

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<sup>57</sup> H. Caswall, *The Jubilee: or What I Saw and Heard in London on the 15th and 16th of June, 1852* (London, 1852), 6-8.

<sup>58</sup> H. Caswall, *Western World*, p. ix.

<sup>59</sup> Journal of the General Convention of 1853, 44, 140, 228.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid, 234.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid, 164-5.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid, 122, 205, 301; Journal of the General Convention of 1856, 337. Cf. W. Carus, *Memorials of the Rt. Rev. Charles Pettit McIlvaine* (New York, 1882), 154.

the Convention Journal in the future “to each of the Bishops of the United Church of England and Ireland, of the Scottish Episcopal Church, and of the Colonial Dioceses.”<sup>63</sup>

Meanwhile, in conference with the English deputation, the Board of Missions suggested that English and American Bishops join in setting forth to the Patriarchs and Bishops of the Eastern Church “the doctrine, discipline, and usages of the Sister Churches of England and America, and informing them of the extent and influence of those Churches.” Closer cooperation between the Missionary Societies of the two Churches was urged—in particular, that due notice be given before any new mission was established or any missionary bishop consecrated.<sup>64</sup> During the course of the Convention, the two visiting bishops participated in the consecration of the Bishops of North and South Carolina; just five months before, an American bishop had for the first time taken part in an English consecration.<sup>65</sup>

There are two developments, in particular, which underline the significance of the years 1852-53. Up to this date, no commonly accepted term existed to describe the aggregate of Churches deriving from the Church of England. All kinds of circumlocutions were used—“the Protestant Episcopal Churches of Great Britain and America;” “the Communion of mutual good offices which ought to subsist between kindred branches of the Church of Christ,” “the unity subsisting between the different branches of the Reformed Catholic Church,” “that substantial unity which exists in the Reformed Episcopal Church throughout the world.” The awkwardness of these and similar variations is explained by the fact that the ecclesiastical reality behind them was for so long vague and undefined. It is probably not a coincidence that the first examples I can discover of the use of the term “Anglican Communion” occur in writings and addresses connected with the S.P.G. Jubilee and the General Convention of 1853.<sup>66</sup> At this point the new consciousness of solidarity and intercommunion demanded some clear and convenient designation; the name “Anglican Communion” met the need, and quickly won common acceptance.

Secondly, the summoning of the Lambeth Conference was clearly foreshadowed by proposals voiced at this time. The first suggestion came from Bishop Hopkins of Vermont, who, responding early in 1851 to an invitation to the S.P.G. Jubilee, wrote to Archbishop Sumner:

“I fervently hope that the time may come when we shall meet in the good old fashion of Synodical action. How natural and reasonable would it seem to be if in a time of controversy and division there should be a Council of all the Bishops in

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<sup>63</sup> Journal of the General Convention of 1853, 123.

<sup>64</sup> H. Caswall, *Western World*, 322, 324.

<sup>65</sup> On May 5, 1853, Bishop McIlvaine of Ohio had assisted in the consecration of John Jackson to be Bishop of Lincoln. Cf. W. Carus, *op. cit.*, 155. Bishop Hobart had been present at the consecration of the first Bishops of Barbados and Jamaica in Lambeth Chapel in 1824, but was not allowed to participate. Cf. M. Dix, *op. cit.*, III, 352-3.

<sup>66</sup> The examples may be found in John McVickar, *op. cit.*, 7; H. Caswall, *The Jubilee*, 8; in a sermon preached by Bishop Spencer of Madras at the General Convention, September 28, 1853, quoted in H. Caswall, *Western World*, 42; and in a resolution proposed at that Convention by the Rev. Richard S. Mason of North Carolina, *ibid*, 105. W. E. Gladstone, writing in December, 1851, speaks of “Churches of the Anglican origin or communion”; cf. W. E. Gladstone, *op. cit.*, 36. The manner of phrasing suggests that the term was not yet a familiar one.

communion with your Grace ... It is my own firm belief that such a measure would be productive of immense advantage, and would exercise a moral influence beyond that of any secular legislation.”<sup>67</sup>

At the Jubilee itself, an S.P.G. meeting presided over by the primate heard a plea from Bishop Whittingham of Maryland that there should be

“arrangement between the Churches (1) for an assemblage of the whole Episcopate, either absolutely or representatively, in council, for organization as one branch of the Church Catholic; (2) for further organization, a representative assemblage, in order to such revision of the ‘ancient’ and English Canons, as might fit them for recognition as a body of general Canon Law by the whole of the Churches of the two Communion.”<sup>68</sup>

Later on, in an address at Leeds, Bishop De Lancey echoed the proposal for an Anglican Council.<sup>69</sup> Discussion was evoked when Hopkins’ original letter was reprinted in the *Guardian*, and when his idea of an Anglican synod was considered at length by Henry Caswall in the revised edition of *America and the American Church*.<sup>70</sup> It is a sign of the growing interest that at the General Convention of 1853 the matter was taken up in the House of Deputies, and a resolution to consider “joint conciliar action of the Church and all the Churches of the Anglican Communion” debated at length.<sup>71</sup> It was the first stirring of the idea that came to fruition in the Lambeth Conference of 1867.

During the thirty years covered in these lectures, 1823-1853, the idea of the Anglican Communion was born and reached maturity, becoming the potent factor in Anglican self-awareness that it has been ever since. It is no exaggeration to say that the American Church played a major role in this development. The very existence among a people no longer English of a Church committed to the faith and order of the Church of England made inevitable a reconsideration of the meaning of Anglicanism, though the implications were not really pondered by English churchmen until the renewal of contact between the two Churches in the 1820s. But the role of the Americans was not merely passive. As a small minority body in the New World, the Episcopal Church was naturally eager to cultivate its links with the stronger and more imposing Church of Britain and its Empire. It took the initiative in opening formal communication with the Church of England and its colonial branches; it pressed the need for full intercommunion and for a regularizing of the exchange of ministers; it sought for cooperation and for avoidance of overlapping jurisdiction in missionary areas. It inaugurated a new emphasis on episcopal leadership in Anglican expansion, inspiring a revolutionary change in the missionary policy of the Mother Church. The proved effectiveness of its synodical government gave encouragement to English churchmen in their struggle to revive Convocation, and the

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<sup>67</sup> J. H. Hopkins, Jr., op. cit., 392, note.

<sup>68</sup> W. H. De Lancey, *The Mission to the Jubilee*, 52.

<sup>69</sup> *Guardian*, September 8, 1852, p. 597.

<sup>70</sup> The discussion by Caswall is quoted in full in the *Christian Remembrancer*, N.S. XXIII (1852), 359ff. Cf. also the *Guardian*, June 5, 1852, p. 378. Hopkins’ letter was printed in the *Guardian*, August 6, 1851, p. 558.

<sup>71</sup> H. Caswall, *Western World*, 105ff. The debate is summarized in Caswall, but is not recorded in the official Journal of the House. For other references to the general discussion of an Anglican synod, cf. J. H. Hopkins, Jr., op. cit., 392-3, and C. F. Sweet, *A Champion of the Cross* (New York, 1894), 147-9.

young Churches in the dominions studied the American system as a model when in the 1850s they faced the problem of disestablishment. The story of American influence on the emerging pattern of the Anglican Communion reaches a fitting climax when its most characteristic organ, the Lambeth Conference, was first envisaged by American bishops under the stimulus of the S.P.G. Jubilee.

Today, when the Episcopal Church is called to assume even greater responsibilities in our world-wide fellowship, American churchmen may well remember with satisfaction their Church's contribution to the formation of the Anglican Communion, and echo the poet laureate's words to Bishop Doane over a century ago: "May the religious union established between our Churches continue from age to age; and spread, till every corner of the world be a partaker of its benefits."