

THE IMPACT OF TRACTARIANISM ON THE MARITIMES

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IN 1832 John Keble wrote the Reverend Hubert Cornish, one time Fellow of Exeter College, Oxford, and collaborator with John Medley in translating the homilies of St. Chrysostom, as follows: “Will you join me in buying some land in New Brunswick, or somewhere, that we may have a place to fly to in case of the worst? I am seriously thinking of it. I don’t mean so much a place to fly to as a place where one might find bread and cheese if we could not pick it up here, for it seems to me as if one ought to be among the last to leave the wreck.”

This enigmatic statement makes an appropriate introit to our inquiry into “The impact of Tractarianism on the Maritimes,” for it brings together John Keble—whose sermon on the “National Apostasy” in St. Mary’s Church, Oxford, the next year provides the reference point for the anniversary we are marking with this event—and who is himself one of the leadership triumvirate with Newman and Pusey of the Oxford Movement—and the issue of Catholicism versus Erastianism which brought Tractarianism into existence—and New Brunswick, which is where the Catholic Revival first flowered in the Maritime Provinces.

The “wreck” I understand to mean the Church of England cast ashore on the rocks of Erastianism out of the ocean of Catholicism, which John Keble understood to be its natural element. You will recall that it was a proposal that Parliament suppress ten Irish bishoprics which brought forth from Keble the accusation of “national apostasy.” How dare the State lay hands on the Church in this fashion, as if the Church were merely a department of government? The United Church of England and Ireland, Keble insisted, was not the creature of the State, but the ancient Catholic Church of the British Islands, her bishops successors of the Holy Apostles in unbroken line. It did not matter that suppression of the bishoprics was a matter of common sense, due to the failure of the Irish parishioners to accept the English Reformation, and their consequent attachment to the Church of Rome. It was the principle that was important.

Needless to say, John Keble did not abandon the “wreck” for bread and cheese, in New Brunswick or anywhere else; indeed, he stayed to refloat the “wreck” on Catholic seas, and she has sailed them ever since. In spite of storms, and men lost overboard, and shoals, and rocks, and tides, and even attacks by pirates, she is still afloat—if not always dead on course, and sometimes perhaps becalmed.

But why New Brunswick as a place of resort for John Keble? We do not regard New Brunswick, even today, as a paradise, even for Anglo-Catholics. But there were, in 1832, certain facts about New Brunswick which might commend it to John Keble. First of all, it was a new colony, and it was still taking shape, a shape that was open to influence. Secondly, it had been founded by Loyalists, and Keble was a loyalist, of a sort. But perhaps the most significant factor to John Keble was the leadership of the Church in New Brunswick in 1832 of Archdeacon George Coster, whom his daughter later described as “the first to introduce anything like strict adherence to the rule of the Prayer Book with reference to more frequent celebration of the Holy Communion, the offertory, holy days, and services in the week.” Indeed, when John Keble preached his famous sermon the following year

George Coster was in the midst of delivering a series of lectures to divinity students on “the peculiar position of the Church, and her positive dogmatic teaching.”

All this must remind us of a truth we are apt to forget: that Tractarianism came out of the Church. It has been said that Pusey learned the Real Presence at his mother’s knee. It was later, when the first successors of the Tractarians began to put into liturgical practice what was implied in the Tractarians’ theology of the Church, that it seemed as if they were bringing into the Church of England things foreign to it. But the early Tractarians did not see their job as one of making the Church of England Catholic; what they had to do was to persuade the Church of England that it was Catholic even as it was, at least in terms of its origins, doctrines and official formularies, if not altogether in its then current attitudes, customs and practices.

All this is admirably illustrated in the ministry of the first Bishop of Fredericton, John Medley. In assessing the impact of Tractarianism in the Maritimes Provinces, no figure looms larger than that of John Medley. A native of London, who was groomed for Holy Orders by his mother from the age of six (when he began Latin), he went up to Oxford (Wadham College) in 1823. He was ordained to a title in Exeter Diocese, where he remained until 1845, when he was consecrated first bishop of the new Diocese of Fredericton by the Archbishop of Canterbury at Lambeth. On May 13 a farewell party was held for him in Exeter, and we note that the occasion was ornamented by gifts collected for the new cathedral which was already his first priority, even before he had set foot in his diocese.

At this time a Tractarian bishop was a rarity, even in the colonies. We may be sure that Medley’s friends in the movement (he was particularly intimate with Keble, whose last year as a Fellow of Oriel had overlapped Medley’s first at Wadham) were anxious to see how Fredericton would develop under his direction. Basic to the Tractarians’ convictions about the Catholicity of the Church of England was a high doctrine of episcopacy, in which they saw the office of bishop as derived from the Apostles. Unfortunately for them, the contemporary holders of the episcopal office in England were more conscious of the fact that they had been made bishops by crown appointment, and more often than not they disappointed the Tractarians as they looked to them in the hope that they would support their dream of Catholic renewal in the Church of England. It is ironical that six months after John Medley’s consecration John Henry Newman concluded from episcopal reactions to Tract 90 that the idea of the Church of England as Catholic was chimerical, and joined the Church of Rome. This, and the other defections which accompanied it, made the task of Catholic renewal infinitely more difficult, even in faraway New Brunswick, and even under the leadership of a Tractarian bishop. It was much too early for anyone to see (to quote David Edwards in *The Church Times*, March 31, 1983) that Newman’s “influence had spread to a wider stage. It became the focus of massive changes in the Roman system. We can now see that his real work was done as an Anglican apostle to Rome, an apostle urging development.”

What did John Medley find in his new diocese? Not much to his liking. Congregations failed to join in responses, making the Church service a dialogue between minister and clerk; in country churches dogs tended to disrupt services by snarling and barking; Church music consisted of Tate and Brady’s metrical psalms, and little else. The pro-cathedral in Fredericton, which also served as the parish church, had recently been enlarged; but it was still a square box with no chancel, and the holy table occupied an insignificant space between the reading desk and the pulpit. In most places, despite the efforts of Archdeacon Coster, Holy Communion was celebrated no more than four times a year. Many of the clergy wanted more reverence and beauty in both the Church buildings and the services, but—to quote John Medley’s biographer, William Quintard Ketchum, “there was a bitter and strong feeling against what were termed *innovations*.” Part of this was natural conservatism, but some of it grew out of a low doctrine of the Church which found the ecclesiasticism of the Tractarians repugnant.

It is interesting to note that Thomas Arnold, who a few years before had declared that the Church of England was folding its robes to die with as much dignity as it could muster, rejected the Oxford Movement on this ground of its ecclesiasticism, thereby rejecting the very means of its renewal. To them (to quote Ketchum again) "It seemed ... that real vital religion could not exist in connection with High Church views. But," he continues, "the principles which ruled his (Bishop Medley's) mind were well known. There was no attempt to disguise them. By the Evangelical party he was regarded with distrust, which was felt the more as accounts came of the terrible secessions to the Church of Rome... All this was diligently set forth in the public press ... it had its weight in many parishes, and with many minds. For a while they watched rather than yielded to the Bishop's teaching."

What was "the Bishop's teaching?" We might suppose from the controversy that he was promoting subversive ideas. No one today would find them so, as the sermon he preached at the consecration of St. Anne's Chapel in Fredericton in 1847 plainly shows. His text on Beauty and Bands from Zechariah 11 was the same used by Kenneth Kirk in preaching what became a famous sermon at the consecration of Glyn Simon in Brecon Cathedral in 1954. In it he met his critics head on. "If," he said, "there be no necessary connection between external beauty and spiritual religion, is there any closer connection between spiritual religion and external deformity . . . Holiness is not ensured by the observance of external rites, but is it ensured by their neglect? . . . God can be worshipped without a house of prayer . . . in a plain house if we have none to offer; but let us be well assured that God is not the more spiritually worshipped, when our meanness refuses to offer Him the best we have." He concluded by telling the congregation that "scarcely anyone" had been asked to contribute to the building of St. Anne's, but that he wanted everyone to get behind him in building the cathedral. "I claim this support," he told them, "as your Bishop; as your friend; as one who has no interest at heart but yours; as one who, whatever may be his personal failings and defects, desires to benefit you, your city, and the people of this Province."

His appeal fell largely on deaf ears. What benefit was there in a cathedral? Fredericton contributed very little money toward building the cathedral of which it is today so proud, and the Bishop had to dig deep into his own pocket to finish it. Ketchum tells us that a leading non-conformist, looking at the progress of the building, was heard to say, "So we went towards Rome!"

Bishop Medley was undeterred. He not only built his cathedral, but also put an end (in the words of Ketchum) "to the building of any more unsightly edifices." In 1841 the Cambridge Camden Society, then just two years old, published the first issue of its magazine, *The Ecclesiologist*. Its influence throughout the Anglican world, and beyond, was profound. Indeed, our idea of what a Church looks like, even today, we owe to the Ecclesiologists. It was a romantic attempt to recapture the atmosphere, if not the full reality, of medieval religion, by the use of Gothic arches and dim religious light. It, like Tractarianism itself, was not really a movement toward Rome at all, which is Classical and Baroque, but a return to the roots of the English Church behind what Dom Anselm Hughes calls "The Unsettling of the 16th century." Bishop Medley put it in these words: "We should take our tone of doctrine and practice, not from low interested writers, but, next to the pure fountain of Scripture, from the manly expositions of the master-spirits of the English Church."

One of the concerns of the Ecclesiologists was how to provide "correct" Gothic churches in the colonies, where wood, not stone, was often the chief material used in building. In New Brunswick it was Bishop Medley's own son, Edward, who produced brilliant designs for thoroughly Gothic wooden buildings, which profoundly influenced the architecture of Anglican churches all over the Maritime Provinces. There are only four of these Medley churches, so they are rare treasures. Edward Medley did not remain in New Brunswick; he returned to England where he lived out his life as a country parson, never designing another church.

Before we pass on from Fredericton to Nova Scotia, let us savour three further quotations from Bishop Medley's addresses. The first reveals his manner of dealing with his critics: in a Charge to his clergy in 1871 he declared, "Whoever reads the past history of our Church with candour, must see that excessive carelessness rather than excessive ritualism, has been the prevailing error, and that a hundred instances of slovenly irreverence have been passed over without notice whilst a great outcry is made against a single extreme in an opposite direction." The second dates from 1858, the year before Charles Darwin published *The Origin of Species*. If John Medley's view of the relationship between religion and science, rather than Samuel Wilberforce's, had determined the response of the Church to Darwin, the intellectual credibility of Christianity over the past 120 years might not have been shaken as badly as it was. He wrote, "We have to prove ourselves worthy of a Church which rejoices in the circulation of the Scriptures, because it acknowledges the Bible as its rule of faith; which clings to the decisions of primitive antiquity as the surest bulwark against ancient and modern heresy; and which has nothing to fear but everything to hope for from the progress of science and the spread of learning; and which desires nothing better than that its doctrines should be known, examined and sifted." Thirdly, it is only appropriate that we quote Bishop Medley on the Book of Common Prayer in the year of a General Synod held in Fredericton which voted to produce in Canada a so-called "Alternative Services Book". In this passage, incidentally, we see the Tractarian as teacher. We should note that there is probably no more prominent characteristic of a Tractarian than this, his desire to teach the Faith. At the risk of oversimplifying matters, one could contrast this passion of the Tractarian with the primary concern of the Evangelical to convert sinners. But the two are not mutually exclusive. What do you do with the sinner once he has been converted? The quotation comes from Bishop Medley's sermon on the consecration of St. Anne's Chapel, to which we have already made reference: "The Book of Common Prayer, a book so scriptural that it is full of Scripture, and built upon it; so Catholic that nothing therein is found contrary to the decrees of the Apostolic, nay, the Universal Church, men's private fantasies only being excluded; so comprehensive that every man finds his wants represented or his petitions anticipated; so varied that we may reap pleasure from it every time we wish . . . While others turn aside to drink of other waters on the right hand or the left, I desire no higher honour, blessing or happiness for myself or my children than to drink of the well of English undefiled, and to uphold in very poor measure "the staff of Beauty and the staff of Bands" as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer."

Despite Bishop Medley it was not until 1882 that a thoroughgoing Anglo-Catholic church was set up in New Brunswick, the Mission Church of St. John the Baptist in Saint John. "The old Tractarian patriarch," as Carrington calls him, was then 78 years old, but he carried on for ten years beyond that, dying in harness in 1892. The Mission Church was placed cheek by jowl with the Stone Church, the low church stronghold. Thirteen years earlier, with the sympathetic assistance of the fourth Bishop of Nova Scotia, some Catholic revival partisans had succeeded in obtaining a church of similar type for Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, St. Peter's Cathedral. Now Saint John and Charlottetown each had one—what about Halifax? Despite Bishop Binney's removal of his episcopal chair in Halifax from the low church confines of St. Paul's, the old Halifax parish church, to St. Luke's in the south end of the city, no genuinely "advanced" Anglo-Catholic parish church ever took hold in Halifax. Even today, the only place one can find a Solemn High Mass in the city is in the University of King's College Chapel, and that on a Thursday evening. St. Luke's never really made it as an Anglo-Catholic "high place", although it came close. Its first dean was William Bullock, author of a hymn full of ecclesiological feeling, "We love the place, O God." In 1870 a young architect's apprentice, William Harris, who the year before had been a member of the first class confirmed at St. Peter's Cathedral in Charlottetown, joined the "Surplice Choir" at St. Luke's, where he became imbued with

the dream of building a great Gothic cathedral in Halifax. Let me read you his description of Dean Bullock's funeral, for it was clearly a model Tractarian occasion, in both execution and sentiment: "On Sunday afternoon Mrs. Gregor and all the choristers went to take a last look at the dear old man as he lay silent in death, with a chalice clasped in his cold hand and a beautiful lily lying upon his breast while the soft light of the candles at his head bathed his quiet face with as halo of calmness. Mrs. Gregor cried. A very touching incident occurred as we went out. One of the choirboys bent over and kissed the pale forehead of the Dean as he lay calm and silent in death. The burial service was performed on Tuesday afternoon, and a very solemn one it was. The choir walked before the hearse with their cassocks and surplices. The larger boys of the choir all wore birettas, the smaller ones round caps covered with crepe. The singing at the grave was very good, and the tears could be seen in the Bishop's eyes as he performed the last rites of the Church over the remains of his old friend."

St. Luke's burned in 1904 and was eventually subsumed, together with St. Stephen's, an "episcopal peculiar" (popularly called the Bishop's Chapel) Binney had had built at the top of Spring Garden Road to advance his Tractarian views, and the little Church of St. Alban's near Point Pleasant Park, in All Saints' Cathedral, opened in 1910, where the Churchmanship was never allowed to rise too high. In the 1940s the Reverend Frederick Ellis, an Englishman of Anglo-Catholic inclination, was "priest-vicar" of the Cathedral. I recall stories of parishioners pressing money into his hand at the church door with which to buy vestments; but he was never appointed dean, because, it was said, he lacked a university degree. The Bishop (later primate), George Frederick Kingston, was his own dean, in order to make sure, one suspects, that the Cathedral did not go too "high". Eventually, Father Ellis departed Nova Scotia to end his days as Dean of Nassau in the Bahamas. Archbishop Kingston was succeeded as Bishop of Nova Scotia by Robert Harold Waterman, who was tall physically and not at all low in other respects. He stood in the Tractarian tradition and although he was elected Bishop¹ on the basis of his success as a money-raiser in the national Anglican Appeal, his strength lay in his ability as a teacher of the Faith, the way he upheld his hard-working priests, and the loyalty he inspired in clergy and laity alike.

You may think it strange that I should dwell on an episcopate of recent memory, but in a real sense Tractarianism only flowered in Nova Scotia in the 1950s. Certainly there had been earlier Tractarian influences: the stirrings in Bishop Binney's day, the building of the Gothic Hensley Chapel at King's College in 1873, the vestments and lights introduced into New Ross parish by Edward Woolard in the 1890s, and the building of All Saints' Church and Hospital (both designed by William Harris) and the introduction of Sisters in Springhill by J.M. Wilson (who earlier had taught at St. Peter's Cathedral School in Charlottetown) about the same time. However, the real flowering of the Tractarian movement did not take place until the 1950s, and then it was primarily a rural phenomenon, led by priests like Stavert Tanton and his brother in law, Karl Tufts, who flew about multipoint parishes resisting endless blandishments to forsake rural places like Mushaboom and Necum Teuch for urban and suburban preferment.

In Nova Scotia this latter-day Tractarianism did not present the sophisticated face of a Church of the Advent in Boston, a Church of St. John the Evangelist in Montreal, or even a St. Peter's Cathedral in Charlottetown. It was earthy and hearty and sought to integrate the whole life of small fishing and farming communities into the life of the Church. It was truly Catholic because nothing was left out of the passionate concern of the priests who embraced it. Staff Tanton, for example, became known in Halifax as *The Tangier Terror* as he fought for hospitals and schools and industries for his eastern shore communities. Russell Elliott chaired the Diocese's liveliest committee, the Council for

¹ At this point Fr. Staff Tanton interjected, "They thought he was a Mason!"

Social Service. This home-grown high Anglicanism almost succeeded in changing the Diocese of Nova Scotia, but not quite. The turning point, perhaps, was in 1957 when Bill Anthony lost his bid to become clerical secretary after a tied vote with George Arnold on the first ballot, and when the Anglo-Catholics could not muster enough votes to elect Stavert Tanton Bishop Coadjutor. The Diocese of Nova Scotia thereby chose to remain in effect the child of its founder, Charles Inglis. Indeed, everyone who has to deal with the Diocese of Nova Scotia should read Judith Fingard's turgidly written but nevertheless perceptive analysis of Charles Inglis, *The Anglican Design in Colonial Nova Scotia*. The blurb on the jacket sums up her thesis: "Charles Inglis believed strongly in the virtues of the British constitution, an ecclesiastical establishment, and the hierarchical organization of society; above all, he dreaded 'fanaticism' in religion. His failure to adapt Anglican attitudes and services to a colonial and religiously pluralistic environment contributed to the emergence during his episcopate of a church that was 'a minority denomination ... fearful for its privileges, jealous of its rivals' success, exclusive, conservative and unimaginative." Charles Inglis in old age became a recluse, withdrawing to his retreat at Clermont in the Annapolis Valley. To this day the Diocese of Nova Scotia is rather like a cocoon in which strange mutations occur, e.g. a Cathedral chapter which consists primarily of a dean and archdeacons rather than a dean and canons, and archdeacons most of whose traditional functions have been assigned to *rural deans*, now renamed *regional deans* in a move away from the rural emphasis described above. Rectors are inducted in parishes only after they have been in them for a while—rather like spouses living common law before having a wedding ceremony. It might be said that the Diocese of Nova Scotia suffers from a kind of peninsularity that is reflected in a wobbly ecclesiology.

The third Maritime Province is Prince Edward Island. Now, you will say to me, as Island Premier Lee said to Prince Charles, "you have saved the best for last." Allusion has already been made to St. Peter's Cathedral. Let me read you Archbishop Carrington's account of how St. Peter's Cathedral came to be, in the context of a sketch of the Anglican Church in Prince Edward Island. After you have heard it I hope you will abandon the notion—if you have ever held it—that Prince Edward Island is properly a part of the Diocese of Nova Scotia—a notion which, although endlessly articulated used not to be true, and has hindered the development of the Anglican Church on the Island. Carrington writes, in his history of the Anglican Church of Canada, "Another eastern Island colony was Prince Edward Island, which entered into Confederation with Canada as late as 1873. The churches on 'The Island' were under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Nova Scotia, though it was not at first represented in his synod; it was thought of as a separate jurisdiction There was a movement to make an independent diocese of it A conference was held with Bishop Binney in 1866, and it was agreed that action should be deferred on this question; but it was decided to build a second church in Charlottetown The old St. Paul's Church was evangelical in character, and would not agree to the establishment of a second church within the limits of the parish unless under its own strict control; for the new church was to be 'high' . . . a wise bishop would prefer to see both sides represented. He eluded the difficulty by recognizing the new church as his cathedral church for the island. It was opened in 1869 as St. Peter's Cathedral, *thus confirming the diocesan status of the Island*,² even though it was for the present associated with Nova Scotia. It retained its old Church Society as a means of local organization. It was given full representation in the Nova Scotia synod. So the arrangement continues."

Unfortunately, the Island's status as an *episcopal jurisdiction* was forgotten, and then denied, and the consequence has been a whole series of anomalies and incoherences which have imposed a

² My italics.

needless historical disability on the Anglican Church in Prince Edward Island. I say “needless” because the ecclesiological sense of the Tractarians, had it been listened to—as for example in the 1909 exchange between Canon James Simpson of St. Peter’s Cathedral and Judge Savary of Annapolis Royal in the pages of the periodical *Church Work*—in which Simpson argued that the Island was an extra-diocesan jurisdiction of the Bishop of Nova Scotia in opposition to Savary’s assertion that it was an integral part of his diocese—would have avoided it. Instead, an anomaly was created, and Prince Edward Island was provided with a cathedral that was cathedral in name only, with no dean and chapter, and with no built-in leadership role among the Island parishes—no doubt for fear that it might contaminate them with Tractarian notions.

At the same time it must be said that all too often St. Peter’s hasn’t been troubled by this isolation, partly because it meant that it would not be pressured too often to compromise its integrity, and because it helped make it free to spread its influence in other ways and across a wider field than Prince Edward Island. The only break in this calculated inhibition of St. Peter’s Cathedral in respect to its role as the cathedral church of Prince Edward Island came in the episcopates of Bishop Waterman and his successor, William Davis, who made it their practice to make the Archdeacon of Prince Edward Island incumbent also of St. Peter’s Cathedral. During the 1967-1974 incumbency of Archdeacon Stavert Tanton, a native Islander and staunch Tractarian, the Church on the Island underwent an all too-brief renaissance that gave promise of what might be possible if the anomalies attendant upon its ambiguous status and relationships were rationalized. Unfortunately this new life was regarded with suspicion in Nova Scotia, and when Tanton’s successor, the author of this paper, circulated copies of the 1908 correspondence between Simpson and Savary, Davis’s successor, Leonard Hatfield, sent Dr. Christmas Thomas into the Diocesan archives to see if he could find evidence that the Island had always been an integral part of the Diocese of Nova Scotia, intending to use it, he told Dr. Thomas, only if necessary to squelch certain individuals who would not otherwise be persuaded. When the Diocesan Church Society asked him to have a study made of the relationship between the Island and the Diocese of Nova Scotia it appeared that he might have to use Dr. Thomas’s discovery—which was that the colonial Governor of the Island had acted in Church matters only because there was no bishop available to do so. At about the same time, in 1982, the Rector of St. Paul’s Church in Charlottetown, the Reverend David Morrison, complained that the archdeacon had “insulted” St. Paul’s by having it listed in the yellow pages of the telephone book as “The Parish of Charlotte”. The Bishop, on short notice, and a week before the annual meeting of the Society, dispatched the Dean of Nova Scotia, the Very Reverend Austin Munroe, to Charlottetown to meet with the clergy to conduct the “study” that had been requested. This took place over lunch in a private room at a Charlottetown restaurant. Afterwards the archdeacon offered his resignation to the Bishop in an attempt to find out whether it was he or Dr. Morrison who had the support of the Bishop. At the subsequent meeting the Bishop announced (no prior notice having been given) that he would that day conduct an election of a new chairman for the Diocesan Church Society, the archdeacon having resigned, and that he would appoint the successful candidate archdeacon. Dr. Morrison thereupon nominated the Rev. Robert Power, the recently inducted rector of Summerside. But to the great annoyance of the bishop the ex-archdeacon was also nominated, and on the first ballot each candidate received the same number of votes. On a second ballot Power was declared the winner. A week later Bishop Hatfield offered to arrange the appointment of the erstwhile archdeacon as dean of the Diocese of the Yukon, an offer he declined.

At the first meeting of the Diocesan Church Society executive held after these events a motion was made asking the Metropolitan, the Archbishop of Fredericton, Harold Nutter, to conduct a study of the relationship between the Church on the Island and the Diocese of Nova Scotia. It passed by a

margin of 17—1, only Dr. Morrison voting against it. The Primate, Archbishop Ted Scott, made Archdeacon Harry Hilchey, the secretary of General Synod, available to carry out the study together with Mr. Justice Ronald Stevenson of the New Brunswick Supreme Court, who was nominated by Archbishop Nutter. In August 1985 Archdeacon Hilchey gave the Report to Archbishop Nutter, who sent it to Halifax, where Arthur Peters was now the diocesan bishop in succession to Leonard Hatfield. The Report said it was correct to describe Prince Edward Island as an episcopal jurisdiction, and not part of the Diocese of Nova Scotia—even though it had been for a long time administered as such. It recommended that Island Anglicans be allowed to choose their own future.

The Report shocked Halifax. It was kept secret and not shared with Island Anglicans. In December the Provincial Synod was scheduled to meet in Halifax, and the former archdeacon, suspecting that the Diocese was planning to submit a motion to the Synod declaring the Island to be part of the Nova Scotia Diocese, tracked down Archdeacon Hilchey, who had come to present his Report. He was astonished to hear that it had not been shared with the Island, and said that Archbishop Nutter would never accept any motion relating to it because Islanders had not been consulted. On December 13 copies of the Report were finally mailed out to members of the Island Diocesan Church Society and at its next meeting a kind of euphoria gripped many of those present.

Eventually a plebiscite was held following a lively debate that was waged in church halls, a few pulpits, in the Letters columns of newspapers, and on the radio. Andrew Roy of Alberton headed the campaign of those who wanted an independent jurisdiction. On November 1, 1987, six of the 11 parishes, and 709 (48%) individuals, voted for a Diocese of Prince Edward Island; but 781 voted to stay with the Diocese of Nova Scotia, but with “more say over our own affairs”—a phrase that had been included in the wording of the option at the insistence of the chairman of the committee appointed to oversee the plebiscite, the Reverend Ted Morgan, who in the meanwhile had succeeded Dr. Morrison as rector of St. Paul’s and was soon also to become archdeacon. St. Paul’s voted 82% and Summerside-St. Eleanor’s 78% to remain with Nova Scotia. At St. Peter’s Cathedral the vote was 90% for a Prince Edward Island diocese, the option also favoured by four of the six rural parishes. Only 37 individuals out of the 1644 (2%) who voted in the plebiscite chose to formalize the de facto situation, i.e. confirm the total integration of the Island into the Diocese of Nova Scotia.

However, that is what in the end was done. In 1999—after many tortuous twists and turns (and a few deaths, moves and retirements) the Provincial Synod, at the request of the Nova Scotia Synod, approved a change of name of the Diocese of Nova Scotia to *The Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island*, thereby putting an end to any hope that the Anglican parishes *in* Prince Edward Island might ever become a Diocese *of* Prince Edward Island. It was a cosmetic change designed to obscure the fact that in reality nothing had changed at all.

Since then, attendance at meetings of the Diocesan Church Society has declined. The archdeacon sends out notices complaining that people are not taking the Society seriously. Resource persons have been brought in to try to find out what’s wrong with it. In retrospect the “more say over our own affairs” proved to be nothing but an empty phrase, although at the time it served to give the Nova Scotia party the narrow margin it needed to stifle the aspirations of those who desired a change in the Anglican Church in Prince Edward Island that would have matured it and made it more effective in its life and mission.

Today St. Peter’s Cathedral carries on very much as before, a Tractarian enclave. It may have been hobbled as a cathedral for Prince Edward Island, but its contribution to the Tractarian impact on the Maritime Provinces and beyond has been immense. In its first 60 years St. Peter’s and its Cathedral School contributed 25 priests to the Church. Some of them began their ministries on the Island, but almost all soon left and very few returned. One of them was Walter Aidan Cotton C.R.. As a deacon he

started a new church in Murray River, and reopened an abandoned church in Mount Stewart. He was then whisked away to the pro-cathedral in Halifax, and the new congregations were left unshepherded and withered. He went to England where he joined the Community of the Resurrection and spent most of his ministry in South Africa. In retirement he returned to Canada and attempted without success to form a religious community on the eastern shore of Nova Scotia. When he returned to Mirfield the rule he wrote for it he deposited at St. Peter's Cathedral in the hope that one day a younger man might succeed where he had not. His cousin, Charles Harris, after starting at Cherry Valley on the Island, also went to Nova Scotia. He made stops at Rawdon and Port Medway before settling in Parrsboro, where he became archdeacon of Northumberland. Another Harris was his uncle Ned, my grandfather, who went to Mahone Bay, Nova Scotia, as curate in 1884, built a remarkable church to a design by his architect brother William, and died there as rector in 1931. In 47 years at Mahone Ned never got to put candles on the altar, just as in 33 years in Parrsboro Charles never got to wear vestments. But they were teachers whose style and content—and prejudices (as Ned's recently published *Letters From Mahone Bay* reveal)—were pure Tractarian. They believed that the Church is part of the Gospel, that it must be if it is the Body of Christ. And they believed the Ecclesia Anglicana to be a true part of the Catholic whole, the ancient Church of Briton and Anglo-Saxon, the Church of Alban and Augustine, Aidan and Becket, of Matthew Parker and William Laud and Charles I. This is what they learned from George Hodgson, the first incumbent of St. Peter's Cathedral, and his successor, James Simpson, who determined the character of St. Peter's and set its course. The walls of St. Peter's schoolroom were adorned by huge framed lithographs showing scenes from British Church history, like Augustine preaching to the King of Kent, the martyrdom of Becket, and the consecration of Matthew Parker. In Mahone Bay Ned Harris made magic lantern slides illustrating this Anglican heritage that had been impressed upon him at St. Peter's Cathedral, and with them he entertained and instructed his Deutch parishioners. When his grandson, Edward Tuck, became rector of Parrsboro in the 1960s he found the remains of Ned's old magic lantern in the rectory, where it had passed to Charles after Ned's death in 1931.

Through men like these the influence of St. Peter's Cathedral spread far and wide, particularly in Nova Scotia; but their concern was not so much to reproduce ceremonial externals familiar to them from their youth in Charlottetown (although, it must be remembered, that these externals were not as "advanced" as they later became). It was the teaching that mattered. And the backbone that went with it, stiffened by opposition: in Charlottetown the boys in the surpliced choir at St. Peter's were taunted derisively as "the nightshirt boys".

Let me end with some passages from letters written by Sarah Harris, the mother of William and Ned, and the grandmother of Charles and Walter. Sarah, in 1854, contemplating the prospect of emigration from England, had written, "My chief anxiety will be to be near a church where there is a conscientious and zealous minister of Christ—I have a greater dread of a Puseyite than a Roman Catholic." But her sons persuaded her—and their father Critchlow much less willingly—to move to St. Peter's from St. Paul's when St. Peter's was opened in 1869. In 1885, at the death of Father Hodgson, she wrote, "How wonderfully his conscientious and upright life has lived down the bitter prejudice that was felt in the first few years of his ministry at St. Peter's." But three years earlier in writing a description of the Easter services at St. Peter's she had made unfavourable note of an innovation: "We were surprised to see a change had been made in the dress of the cross-bearer (Dick Young). He wore a very bright scarlet cassock under the white surplice, showing the colour about one half yard below and about two inches round the wrists and neck; I cannot say that any of us like it."

But she noted what a good preacher George Hodgson was: "Eliza Lawson says Mr. Hodgson is not appreciated as he ought to be, and if he preached in the Market Hall the place would be crowded.

Tom LePage says he would rather hear Mr. Hodgson preach than anyone, but he can't endure the service."

The Reverend George Hodgson was succeeded by James Simpson. On March 25, 1887, Sarah wrote to her son Ned at Mahone Bay, "I have been hesitating about mentioning to you last Sunday's lesson in the school given by Mr. Simpson. He was telling about the proper observance of today, the Purification of the Virgin, and he told the children they must not worship but they might pray to her, and ask her to pray for them! Such teaching has completely upset me, and I have grieved over it day and night all this week. We should not have known about it if Sarah had not told us, and we all—Maggie, Will and Etta—are all troubled about it. This surely is a teaching that would lead to Rome . . . Do not allude to this when you write, because your Papa is sufficiently hostile to St. Peter's without this painful truth."

But a month earlier, at the Diocesan Church Society meeting, Mr. Simpson had put into words the main thrust of the Tractarian movement as it applied to the situation in which he found himself as an Anglican in the Maritime Provinces. Sarah wrote, "Mr. Simpson protested against the Church being classed as one of the denominations. If, he said, we are merely a denomination such as the others, then let us be content to die out; but if we believe we are a true branch of Christ's Church, then let us do our utmost to have more zeal, activity and union amongst ourselves."